



June 22, 2020

Jack Tekus
National IOA Program Coordinator, MAS Program Management Office
U.S. General Services Administration
1800 F Street, NW
Washington, DC 20405

Subject: Multiple Award Schedule (MAS) Draft Contractor Assessment Reference Guide

Dear Jack,

The Coalition for Government Procurement (“the Coalition”) sincerely appreciates your open engagement with GSA’s Schedule contractors on the development of the MAS Contractor Assessment Guide and the opportunity for industry to provide input.

The Coalition is a non-profit association of firms selling commercial services, products, and solutions to the Federal Government. Our members collectively account for tens of billions of dollars of the sales generated through the GSA Multiple Award Schedules (MAS) program. Coalition members include small, medium, and large businesses that account for more than \$145 billion in Federal Government contracts. The Coalition is proud to have worked with Government officials for 40 years towards the mutual goal of common-sense acquisition.

Coalition members sincerely appreciate GSA’s efforts to develop a comprehensive guide for contractors and the Government for MAS Contractor Assessments. The overall feedback from members is that the draft guide is well done and will be a helpful tool for both contractors and the Government, and that it will ultimately lead to greater compliance and success of the MAS program. To ensure even greater efficiency and results from contractor assessments in the future, we recommend that GSA consider:

1. Biennial Contractor Assessments, rather than annual reviews due, to the significant preparation involved, especially for contractors with multiple Schedule contracts.
2. Ensuring that Contractor Assessments are within the scope of and meet GSA’s objective of educating Schedule contractors on MAS contract management best practices and obligations, which is distinct from an audit by GSA’s Inspector General. Members report that IOA visits can mirror IG audits depending on the volume of data and review that is required.
3. In assessing compliance with Basis of Award (BOA) requirements, ensure that contractors are aware of their BOA and have a system in place to monitor it. More detailed reviews of BOA orders should be reserved for audits by the Inspector General.

In addition, members would like to submit the following more detailed input for GSA’s consideration:

Page	Subsection	Topic	Comment
4	2	Key Terms and Definitions	PPT is also an acronym for Price Proposal Template; even though not referenced in this guide it could be considered confusing.

4	2	Prompt Payment Discount Terms (PPT)	May we suggest "PPDT" instead of "PPT" since the acronym "PPTI" is often referred for Price Proposal Template?
5	3	Role of the Industrial Operations Analyst	First sentence: close the parenthesis after IOA.
5	3	Contract Clause 552.215-71 (Examination of Records)	This clause is now 552.238-83 Examination of Records by GSA (Federal Supply Schedules)
5	3	Role of the Industrial Operations Analyst	Suggest adding the IOA/ACO Locator on the VSC at vsc.gsa.gov/tools/aco_ioa.cfm
5	4	Contractor Assessments: Types and Frequency	First sentence: recommend a change from our to the - "There are two types of CAs the IOA team will perform..."
5	4	Contractor Assessments: Types and Frequency	Second paragraph (after the two bullets): there is an extra space after the word "virtually."
5	4	Contractor Assessments: Types and Frequency	Add the sentence in red to the end of the second paragraph: Assessments can either be conducted in-person onsite or virtually using telepresence. This will largely depend on the IOA's proximity to the contractor's records location and the ability of the contractor to provide the IOA requested files, records, and data via email or a TSC file.
6	4	Contractor Assessments: Types and Frequency	Function (top of page): should it read, "a check-up to see how the contractor is performing..." ?
6	4	Telecommunications Services Category (TSC) Portal	Is this new and is this only available for IOA Assessment or GSA in general?
7	4	Completion of all actions needed to resolve issues uncovered during the CAR	Will there be another report to document the completion of all actions/resolutions? If not, recommend it.
7	5	Preparing for a Contractor Assessment	Third paragraph, first sentence: there is an "I" between the words "large" and "data".
7	5	Telecommunications Services Category (TSC) Portal	Is this new? This is not something that was offered in the past. This information should be included in the initial email as an option.
8	5	Preparing for a Contractor Assessment	Last paragraph, first sentence: there are two periods.

8	6	Difference Between an OIG Audit and MAS Contractor Assessment	Second paragraph: there is a space missing after the period at the end of the first sentence.
8	6	Difference Between an OIG Audit and MAS Contractor Assessment	Recommend having two sections - one that only clarifies CA and another that only clarifies an IG Audit. Currently, the second paragraph bounces back and forth.
8	6	Difference Between an OIG Audit and MAS Contractor Assessment	While it states "not intended," it certainly is in reality. This paragraph does not clearly distinct the difference. This actually confirms that the CA is a mini IG audit.
9	6	Subpoena power	While the IOA may not have the direct subpoena power, can they contact the CO to do so?
9	7.1	Sales Reporting	Should the answer to the question of whether or not to report a sale as a GSA sale be clearly aligned to: the quote showing the GSA Contract number and the order showing the GSA Contract number?
10	7.1	Sales Reporting	What is the intent of the 3rd part of the graphic that states "Ensure there is not another contract vehicle in place"? Many contract vehicles have the same items on multiple contract vehicles.
10	7.1	OLMs	Recommend elaborating on the definition of OLMs. The font appears to also change towards the end of the OLMs paragraph.
16	7.11	Price Reductions Clause 552.238-75	This has been changed to 552.223-81.
11	7.3	Prompt Payment Terms (PPT)	Again, recommend using the "PPDT" instead of "PPT"
12	7.3		Remove extra "t" from "PPTt" in last sentence.
18	8	Closeout Meeting and Issue Resolution	Some of the information presented here is a bit repetitive from earlier sections (ex: types of assessments).

20	8	GSA Advantage	<p>Inactive schedules should be required to recertify pricing at least every 6 months.</p> <p>Rationale: Pricing changes happen frequently and there are enough contractors that do not keep their price lists current to cause issues for those that do attempt to keep them current. GSA compares price increase requests to outdated pricing and uses it as the basis for rejecting the price increases.</p>
21	9	Contractor Assessment Report	<p>So that contractors know when to expect their report assessment, is it possible to please provide the SLA for the IOA to finish their assessment analysis and have it approved by their supervisor?</p>

General Comments	
Notice Regarding Purpose and Parameters of Industrial Operations Analyst (IOA) Contractor Assessments (CA)	The "Notice Regarding Purpose and Parameters of Industrial Operations Analyst (IOA) Contractor Assessments (CA)" that the IOA requires contract holders to sign as part of the Assessment does not appear to be addressed anywhere in this document. Is this an oversight, or is it being eliminated?
Data Requests	From past IOA visits, one of the biggest issues was data. A reasonable sample size should be permissible for contractors who have thousands of transactions.
Modification Times	Members report that Schedule modifications are taking more time compared to past years. GSA Advantage SIP uploads as well.
Delivery Times during COVID-19 National Emergency	The delivery time can also be impacted by the customer. Due to so many changes and restrictions in what/when items can be delivered during the COVID-19 national emergency, we recommend that this item not be evaluated until the end of the pandemic.
ETS Items	Please incorporate into the MAS Contractor Assessment Guide how to block essentially the same (ETS) items in order to ensure compliance in this area.
Scoping Appropriate to Contractor Assessment vs IG Audit	<p>The scope of the assessment has expanded dramatically in the past two years: A more extensive review of GSA orders, Review of production, techniques for TAA compliance, Review of BOA orders.</p> <p>This expanded scope can now require hundreds of hours in preparation. This is an unnecessary burden and there should be a reduction of the many topics covered particularly in this climate of reducing burdens on industry.</p>

Scoping Appropriate to Contractor Assessment vs IG Audit (#2)	The foremost topic that should be drastically reduced is the review by the OIOA of the contractor’s BOA. If a contractor has shown that they are aware of their BOA and they have shown that they have a system in place to monitor the BOA, this should be the limit of the scope of review. The IOA should not review the BOA orders to verify compliance. Such a review cannot be meaningful unless the IOA has the contractor’s CSP and can understand the exceptions a contractor has in its contract. Such a step is tantamount to an OIG audit which this assessment is explicitly not. A contractor should be able to decline to show the BOA orders without a negative finding for the assessment report.
Focusing End of FY on Customers vs Contractor Assessments	There is also a significant problem with the timing that IOA choose for an assessment. It should be apparent that the end of the fiscal year is an important time for MAS contractors to focus on fulfilling EOY customer orders, although many assessments occur at just this time.
Biennial Assessments	The amount of time required to prepare for a “review” is significant, especially for contractors with multiple Schedule contracts. We recommend that GSA consider scheduling Contractor Assessments every two years or biennially.
Contract Administrative Information	<p>The problem is there is no fields for contractors to update the address for the POC for Contract Administration or an Authorized Negotiator in GSA’s eMod system. As Contractors, we are limited with the types of modification to submit against the contract. The POC for Contract Administration and Authorized Negotiators can update only the name, telephone, fax and email addresses. No physical address field is listed on our end of the system. The address change mod is the physical address with no individuals name.</p> <p>It’s been an ongoing issue for some time with GSA systems not flowing and our limitation. There are times that the PCO, ACO and IOA do not understand the limitation we have with the eMod system from our end.</p>

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide industry feedback in response to GSA’s Draft MAS Contractor Assessment Reference Guide. If there are any questions, please contact me at rwaldron@thecgp.org or (202) 331-0975.

Sincerely,



Roger Waldron
President