

Subpart 246.4 - GOVERNMENT CONTRACT QUALITY ASSURANCE

Parent topic: [Part 246 - QUALITY ASSURANCE](#)

246.401 General.

The requirement for a quality assurance surveillance plan shall be addressed and documented in the contract file for each contract except for those awarded using simplified acquisition procedures. For contracts for services, the contracting officer should prepare a quality assurance surveillance plan to facilitate assessment of contractor performance, see [237.172](#) . For contracts for supplies, the contracting officer should address the need for a quality assurance surveillance plan.

246.402 Government contract quality assurance at source.

Do not require Government contract quality assurance at source for contracts or delivery orders valued below \$350,000, unless—

- (1) Mandated by DoD regulation;
- (2) Required by a memorandum of agreement between the acquiring department or agency and the contract administration agency; or
- (3) The contracting officer determines that—
 - (i) Contract technical requirements are significant (e.g., the technical requirements include drawings, test procedures, or performance requirements);
 - (ii) The product being acquired—
 - (A) Has critical characteristics;
 - (B) Has specific features identified that make Government contract quality assurance at source necessary; or
 - (C) Has specific acquisition concerns identified that make Government contract quality assurance at source necessary; and
 - (iii) The contract is being awarded to—
 - (A) A manufacturer or producer; or
 - (B) A non-manufacturer or non-producer and specific Government verifications have been identified as necessary and feasible to perform.

246.404 Government contract quality assurance for acquisitions at or below the simplified acquisition threshold.

Do not require Government contract quality assurance at source for contracts or delivery orders valued at or below the simplified acquisition threshold unless the criteria at [246.402](#) have been met.

246.406 Foreign governments.

(1) *Quality assurance among North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) countries.*

(i) NATO Standardization Agreement (STANAG) 4107, Mutual Acceptance of Government Quality Assurance and Usage of the Allied Quality Assurance Publications—

(A) Contains the processes, procedures, terms, and conditions under which one NATO member nation will perform quality assurance for another NATO member nation or NATO organization;

(B) Standardizes the development, updating, and application of the Allied Quality Assurance Publications; and

(C) Has been ratified by the United States and other nations in NATO with certain reservations identified in STANAG 4107.

(ii) Departments and agencies shall follow STANAG 4107 when—

(A) Asking a NATO member nation to perform quality assurance; or

(B) Performing quality assurance when requested by a NATO member nation or NATO organization.

(2) *International military sales (non-NATO).* Departments and agencies shall—

(i) Perform quality assurance services on international military sales contracts or in accordance with existing agreements;

(ii) Inform host or U.S. Government personnel and contractors on the use of quality assurance publications; and

(iii) Delegate quality assurance to the host government when satisfactory services are available.

(3) *Reciprocal quality assurance agreements.* A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with a foreign country may contain an annex that provides for the reciprocal performance of quality assurance services. MOUs should be checked to determine whether such an annex exists for the country where a defense contract will be performed. (See Subpart 225.8 for more information about MOUs.)

246.407 Nonconforming supplies or services.

(f) If nonconforming material or services are discovered after acceptance, the defect appears to be

the fault of the contractor, any warranty has expired, and there are no other contractual remedies, the contracting officer—

- (i) Shall notify the contractor in writing of the nonconforming material or service;
- (ii) Shall request that the contractor repair or replace the material, or perform the service, at no cost to the Government; and
- (iii) May accept consideration if offered. For guidance on solicitation of a refund, see Subpart 242.71.

(S-70) The head of the design control activity is the approval authority for acceptance of any nonconforming aviation or ship critical safety items or nonconforming modification, repair, or overhaul of such items (see [209.270](#)). Authority for acceptance of minor nonconformances in aviation or ship critical safety items may be delegated as determined appropriate by the design control activity. See additional information at PGI [246.407](#) .

246.408 Single-agency assignments of Government contract quality assurance.

246.408-70 Subsistence.

(a) The Surgeons General of the military departments are responsible for—

- (1) Acceptance criteria;
- (2) Technical requirements; and
- (3) Inspection procedures needed to assure wholesomeness of foods.

(b) The contracting office may designate any Federal activity, capable of assuring wholesomeness and quality in food, to perform quality assurance for subsistence contract items. The designation may—

- (1) Include medical service personnel of the military departments; and
- (2) Be on a reimbursable basis.

246.408-71 Aircraft.

(a) The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has certain responsibilities and prerogatives in connection with some commercial aircraft and of aircraft equipment and accessories (Pub. L. 85-726 (72 Stat 776, 49 U.S.C. 1423)). This includes the issuance of various certificates applicable to design, manufacture, and airworthiness.

(b) FAA evaluations are not a substitute for normal DoD evaluations of the contractor's quality assurance measures. Actual records of FAA evaluations may be of use to the contract administration office (CAO) and should be used to their maximum advantage.

(c) The CAO shall ensure that the contractor possesses any required FAA certificates prior to acceptance.

246.470 Government contract quality assurance actions.

246.470-1 Assessment of additional costs.

(a) Under the clause at FAR 52.246-2, Inspection of Supplies—Fixed-Price, after considering the factors in paragraph (c) of this subsection, the quality assurance representative (QAR) may believe that the assessment of additional costs is warranted. If so, the representative shall recommend that the contracting officer take the necessary action and provide a recommendation as to the amount of additional costs. Costs are based on the applicable Federal agency, foreign military sale, or public rate in effect at the time of the delay, reinspection, or retest.

(b) If the contracting officer agrees with the QAR, the contracting officer shall—

(1) Notify the contractor, in writing, of the determination to exercise the Government's right under the clause at FAR 52.246-2, Inspection of Supplies—Fixed-Price; and

(2) Demand payment of the costs in accordance with the collection procedures contained in FAR Subpart 32.6.

(c) In making a determination to assess additional costs, the contracting officer shall consider—

(1) The frequency of delays, reinspection, or retest under both current and prior contracts;

(2) The cause of such delay, reinspection, or retest; and

(3) The expense of recovering the additional costs.

246.470-2 Quality evaluation data.

The contract administration office shall establish a system for the collection, evaluation, and use of the types of quality evaluation data specified in PGI [246.470-2](#) .

246.471 Authorizing shipment of supplies.

(a) *General.*

(1) Ordinarily, a representative of the contract administration office signs or stamps the shipping papers that accompany Government source-inspected supplies to release them for shipment. This is done for both prime and subcontracts.

(2) An alternative procedure (see paragraph (b) of this section) permits the contractor to assume the responsibility for releasing the supplies for shipment.

(3) The alternative procedure may include prime contractor release of supplies inspected at a

subcontractor's facility.

(4) The use of the alternative procedure releases DoD manpower to perform technical functions by eliminating routine signing or stamping of the papers accompanying each shipment.

(b) *Alternative Procedures—Contract Release for Shipment.*

(1) For foreign military sales contracts, do not use alternative procedures.

(2) The contract administration office may authorize, in writing, the contractor to release supplies for shipment when—

(i) The stamping or signing of the shipping papers by a representative of the contract administration office interferes with the operation of the Government contract quality assurance program or takes too much of the Government representative's time;

(ii) There is sufficient continuity of production to permit the Government to establish a systematic and continuing evaluation of the contractor's control of quality; and

(iii) The contractor has a record of satisfactory quality, including that pertaining to preparation for shipment.

(3) The contract administration office shall withdraw, in writing, the authorization when there is an indication that the conditions in paragraph (b)(2) of this section no longer exist.

(4) When the alternative procedure is used, require the contractor to—

(i) Type or stamp, and sign, the following statement on the required copy or copies of the shipping paper(s), or on an attachment—

The supplies in this shipment—

1. Have been subjected to and have passed all examinations and tests required by the contract;
2. Were shipped in accordance with authorized shipping instructions;
3. Conform to the quality, identity, and condition called for by the contract; and
4. Are of the quantity shown on this document.

This shipment was—

1. Released in accordance with section 246.471 of the Defense FAR Supplement; and
2. Authorized by (name and title of the authorized representative of the contract administration office) in a letter dated (date of authorizing letter). (Signature and title of contractor's designated official.)

(ii) Release and process, in accordance with established instructions, the DD Form 250, Material Inspection and Receiving Report, or other authorized receiving report.

246.472 Inspection stamping.

(a) DoD quality inspection approval marking designs (stamps) may be used for both prime contracts

and subcontracts. Follow the procedures at PGI [246.472](#) (a) for use of DoD inspection stamps.

(b) Policies and procedures regarding the use of National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) quality status stamps are contained in NASA publications. When requested by NASA centers, the DoD inspector shall use NASA quality status stamps in accordance with current NASA requirements.