

1816.405-274 Award fee evaluation factors.

- (a) Explicit evaluation factors shall be established for each award fee period. Factors shall be linked to acquisition objectives which shall be defined in terms of contract cost, schedule, and technical performance. If used, subfactors should be limited to the minimum necessary to ensure a thorough evaluation and an effective incentive.
- (b) Evaluation factors will be developed by the contracting officer based upon the characteristics of an individual procurement. Cost control, schedule, and technical performance considerations shall be included as evaluation factors in all CPAF contracts, as applicable. When explicit evaluation factor weightings are used, cost control shall be no less than 25 percent of the total weighted evaluation factors. The predominant consideration of the cost control evaluation should be a measurement of the contractor's performance against the negotiated estimated cost of the contract. This estimated cost may include the value of undefinitized change orders when appropriate.
- (c)
 - (1) The technical factor must include consideration of risk management (including mission success, safety, security, health, export control, and damage to the environment, as appropriate) unless waived at a level above the contracting officer, with the concurrence of the project manager. The rationale for any waiver shall be documented in the contract file. When safety, export control, or security are considered under the technical factor, the award fee plan shall allow the following fee determinations, regardless of contractor performance in other evaluation factors, when there is a major breach of safety or security.
 - (i) For evaluation of service contracts under 1816.405-273(a), an overall fee rating of unsatisfactory for any evaluation period in which there is a major breach of safety or security.
 - (ii) For evaluation of end item contracts under 1816.405-273(b), an overall fee rating of unsatisfactory for any interim evaluation period in which there is a major breach of safety or security. To ensure that the final award fee evaluation at contract completion reflects any major breach of safety or security, in an interim period, the overall award fee pool shall be reduced by the amount of the fee available for the period in which the major breach occurred if an unsatisfactory fee rating was assigned because of a major breach of safety or security.
 - (2) A major breach of safety must be related directly to the work on the contract. A major breach of safety is an act or omission of the Contractor that consists of an accident, incident, or exposure resulting in a fatality or mission failure; or in damage to equipment or property equal to or greater than \$1 million; or in any "willful" or "repeat" violation cited by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) or by a state agency operating under an OSHA approved plan.
 - (3) A major breach of security may occur on or off Government installations, but must be directly related to the work on the contract. A major breach of security is an act or omission by the contractor that results in compromise of classified information, illegal technology transfer, workplace violence resulting in criminal conviction, sabotage, compromise or denial of information technology services, equipment or property damage from vandalism greater than \$250,000, or theft greater than \$250,000.
 - (4) The Assistant Administrator for Procurement shall be notified prior to the determination of an unsatisfactory award fee rating because of a major breach of safety or security.

(d) In rare circumstances, contract costs may increase for reasons outside the contractor's control and for which the contractor is not entitled to an equitable adjustment. One example is a weather-related launch delay on a launch support contract. The Government shall take such situations into consideration when evaluating contractor cost control.

(e) Emphasis on cost control should be balanced against other performance requirement objectives. The contractor should not be incentivized to pursue cost control to the point that overall performance is significantly degraded. For example, incentivizing an underrun that results in direct negative impacts on technical performance, safety, or other critical contract objectives is both undesirable and counterproductive. Therefore, evaluation of cost control shall conform to the following guidelines:

(1) Normally, the contractor should be given an unsatisfactory rating for cost control when there is a significant overrun within its control. However, the contractor may receive a satisfactory or higher rating for cost control if the overrun is insignificant. Award fee ratings should decrease sharply as the size of the overrun increases. In any evaluation of contractor overrun performance, the Government shall consider the reasons for the overrun and assess the extent and effectiveness of the contractor's efforts to control or mitigate the overrun.

(2) The contractor should normally be rewarded for an underrun within its control, up to the maximum award fee rating allocated for cost control, provided the adjectival rating for all other award fee evaluation factors is very good or higher (see FAR 16.401(e)(iv)).

(3) The contractor should be rewarded for meeting the estimated cost of the contract, but not to the maximum rating allocated for cost control, to the degree that the contractor has prudently managed costs while meeting contract requirements. No award fee shall be given in this circumstance unless the average adjectival rating for all other award fee evaluation factors is satisfactory or higher.

(f) When an AF arrangement is used in conjunction with another contract type, the award fee's cost control factor will only apply to a subjective assessment of the contractor's efforts to control costs and not the actual cost outcome incentivized under the basic contract type (e.g. CPIF, FPIF).

(g)

(1) The contractor's performance against the subcontracting plan incorporated in the contract shall be evaluated. Emphasis may be placed on the contractor's accomplishment of its goals for subcontracting with small business, small disadvantaged business, HUBZone small business, women-owned small business, veteran-owned small business, service-disabled veteran-owned small business concerns, and Historically Black Colleges and Universities—Minority Institutions (HBCU/MIs). The evaluation should consider both goals as a percentage of subcontracting dollars as well as a percentage of the total contract value.

(2) The contractor's achievements in subcontracting high technology efforts as well as the contractor's performance under the Mentor-Protégé Program, if applicable, may also be evaluated.

(3) The evaluation weight given to the contractor's performance against the considerations in paragraphs (g)(1) and (2) of this section shall be 10 percent of available award fee and shall be separate from all other factors.

(h) When contract changes are anticipated, the contractor's responsiveness to requests for change proposals should be evaluated. This evaluation should include the contractor's submission of timely, complete proposals and cooperation in negotiating the change.

- (i) Only the award fee performance evaluation factors set forth in the performance evaluation plan shall be used to determine award fee scores.
- (j) The Government may unilaterally modify the applicable award fee performance evaluation factors and performance evaluation areas prior to the start of an evaluation period. The contracting officer shall notify the contractor in writing of any such changes 30 days prior to the start of the relevant evaluation period.

Parent topic: [Subpart 1816.4—Incentive Contracts](#)