

Office of Acquisition and Property Management

October 2, 2006

Department of the Interior Acquisition Policy Release (DIAPR) 2006-09

SUBJECT: Federal Acquisition Certification In Contracting and Contracting Officer Certificate of Appointment Programs

1. *Purpose:*

This DIAPR establishes department-wide policy for the Federal Acquisition Certification in Contracting (FAC-C) Program and transitions from the previous Department of the Interior Contracting Officer Warrant System (COWS) to a new Contracting Officer Certificate of Appointment (COA) Program. The respective manuals for the FAC-C Program and the COA Program are hereby released.

2. *Effective Date:*

Immediately. This document supersedes and cancels DIAPR 1997-4 and DIAPR 2006-01.

3. *Expiration Date:*

No expiration unless superseded or canceled.

4. *Background and Explanation:*

The Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) issued Policy Letter 05-01, Developing and Managing the Acquisition Workforce, effective April 15, 2005. A copy is available at www.whitehouse.gov/omb/procurement/policy_letters/05-01_041505.html. The Policy Letter established a government-wide framework for developing a Federal acquisition workforce with business and leadership skills. The acquisition workforce includes staff in the contracting series, as well as staff in other series who have been appointed as Contracting Officers, Contracting Officer's Representatives or Program Managers.

In January 2006, OFPP issued additional guidance to establish specifics of the FAC-C Program, calling for certification of some members of the acquisition workforce. In a June 8, 2006 memorandum, R. Thomas Weimer, Assistant Secretary, Policy Management and Budget and Chief Acquisition Officer, outlined the Department's overall plans to strengthen its acquisition workforce. The new manuals implement the portion of those Departmental plans that applies to contracting officers and procurement analysts.

A. The new FAC-C Program establishes requirements for education, training, and experience in accordance with OFPP standards, and establishes the DOI policy and

procedures for obtaining and issuing certification. The key elements of the FAC-C Program are:

- * An Acquisition Career Manager (ACM) will administer the FAC-C program. * Each Bureau will designate a Bureau Acquisition Career Coordinator (BACC) to facilitate FAC-C certification processing and recordkeeping.

- * A new training curriculum has been established. 80 hours of continuous learning are required every two years in order to maintain certification.

- * A fulfillment process is being established for employees who have previously completed training for which equivalency with the current curriculum cannot be established.

- * All procurement/policy analysts at or above the GS-13 level must be FAC-C Level 3 certified by January 1, 2008.

- * All Contracting Officers, regardless of job series, must be FAC-C certified by January 1, 2009.

B. The key changes in the new COA policy are:

- * FAC-C certification is required to receive a COA, except for transition COAs and COAs limited to space leasing.

- * There are three COA levels, versus the previous four warrant levels.

- * COA authority will not automatically be issued at the maximum dollar limitation, but rather will be granted at a level that corresponds to actual need.

C. The new COA Program will be implemented gradually, beginning October 1, 2006. All new COAs issued after that date must meet the new COA Program requirements. New COAs are those issued by a Bureau to an employee for the first time, and any increases in COA authority.

All warrants issued under the previous program (i.e., COWS) will be cancelled and, if justified, replaced with a transition COA no later than December 31, 2006. Transition COAs will include an expiration date, as specified below. This phase-in period will provide an opportunity to comply with the new education, experience, and training requirements. Transition COAs may not be extended past their expiration date.

The expiration dates are as follows:

- * All Contracting Officers with transition COA authority greater than \$100,000,000 must meet FAC-C Program requirements and have "permanent" COA authority granted by January 1, 2007.

* All Contracting Officers with transition COA authority greater than \$10,000,000 up to \$100,000,000 must meet FAC-C Program requirements and have “permanent” COA authority granted by January 1, 2008.

* All Contracting Officers with transition COA authority up to \$10M must meet FAC-C Program requirements and have “permanent” COA authority granted by January 1, 2009.

Persons holding transition warrants are subject to the requirement to gain 80 CLPs every two years. The date that triggers this requirement is the date the transition warrant was issued.

D. Frequently Asked Questions about these programs will be posted on the Office of Acquisition and Property Management website (www.doi.gov/pam).

5. Action Required:

Bureau Procurement Chiefs will provide a copy of this policy and any supplemental bureau information to all acquisition and other key personnel within their organizations.

Bureaus will comply with all procedures, requirements, and dates established in this DIAPR.

The advent of the new educational and training standards and the associated cost and resource commitments to comply with these standards dictate that bureaus carefully evaluate the need for local field purchasing support. As part of the conversion to the new FAC-C and COA Programs, bureaus must review their current policy of field procurement delegations; validate the need for such delegation at each location where COAs are to be reissued; and delegate authority only at the minimum authority level needed to provide effective and efficient acquisition support.

Questions may be referred to Gayle Fischetti on (202) 208 6705 or Dee Emmerich on (202) 208 3348.

/ signed Debra E. Sonderman, Director
Office of Acquisition and Property Management

Attachments

1. [FAC-C Program Manual](#)
2. [COA Program Manual](#)
3. [Transition Schedule Summary](#)