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Army

Army Bolsters Service Contract Oversight By Mandating Performance Objective Planning

Army principal assistants responsible for contracting (PARCS) must incorporate service contract oversight as a "distinct element or objective" in performance plans in fiscal year 2009, Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Procurement Wimpy Pybus said in a Nov. 17 memo.

The directive, distributed across the Army, is intended to eliminate the service's "material weakness" concerning service contracts oversight, Pybus said.

Consistent with Aug. 22 guidance by Deputy Defense Secretary Gordon England that requires performance evaluations of contracting officer's representatives (CORS) duties, Pybus said, "It is appropriate that contracting personnel are similarly held accountable for their oversight responsibilities."

Therefore, PARCS are to develop complementary performance objectives for contract services "for their managers, supervisors, and contracting officers as appropriate in their organizations," he said.

Despite the issuance of Army policies in February 2007 that require the appointment of CORS and the inclusion of surveillance plans in service contracts, Pybus said recent internal audits show that "we have failed to demonstrate sufficient progress in correcting the material weakness."

Until sufficient progress is made, "service contract oversight will remain a focus area," Pybus said, adding that he will annually review the necessity for the required service contracts performance objective.

Customized Performance Objectives.

The mandatory performance objectives for contracting personnel responsible for service contract oversight, including performance metrics, are to be customized according to the number, type, and complexity of service acquisitions handled by each Army command or agency and as performed by the individual, Pybus said.

"The performance objective will adhere to the requirements for the performance evaluation system under which the individual is rated, and the language of the performance objectives will be customized according to the individual level of responsibility and grade," he said.

Elements of the performance objective for service contract oversight must at least address the appointment of properly trained CORs and the inclusion of surveillance plans, as well as ensure that surveillance and monitoring plans are performance as scheduled, Pybus said.

"We must institutionalize contract administration and surveillance practices throughout our community," he said, adding that appropriate leadership attention will drive such practices in the area of service contracting.

The Army memo, "Mandatory Performance Objective for Oversight of Service Contracts" (11/17/08), is available at: <http://library.saalt.army.mil/archive/Memo/2008/Mandatory%20Performance%20Objective%20for%20Oversight%20of%20Service%20Contracts%20%20Nov%2017%202008.pdf>.

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