



## **ACQUISITION LETTER**

This Acquisition Letter is issued under the authority of the Senior Procurement Executives of DOE and NNSA. It is intended for use by the procurement professionals of DOE, primarily Contracting, and other officials of DOE and NNSA that are involved in the acquisition process. Other parties are welcome to its information, but definitive interpretation of its effect on contracts, and other related procedures, if any, may only be made by DOE and NNSA Contracting Officers.

**Subject: Strategic Integrated Procurement Enterprise System (STRIPES) Use Policy**

### **References:**

FAR part 1 and DEAR part 1	Federal Acquisition Regulations System
FAR part 4	Administrative Matters
FAR part 52.1	Instructions for Using Provisions and Clauses
DOE Acquisition Guide (AG) Chapter 1.1	Acquisition Regulation System
DOE AG Chapter 1.2	Head of Contracting Activity (HCA) Authority, Functions, and Responsibilities
DOE AG Chapter 71.1	Headquarters Business Clearance Review Process

### **When is this Acquisition Letter (AL) effective?**

This AL is effective upon issuance and rescinds AL-2021-05.

### **When does this AL Expire?**

This AL remains in effect until cancelled or superseded.

### **Who Is the Intended Audience For this AL?**

Department of Energy (DOE) and National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) Heads of Contracting Activity (HCAs), Procurement Directors (PDs), Contracting Officers (COs), and STRIPES Point of Contacts (SPOCs) are the intended audience for this AL.

### **Who is the Point of Contact for this AL?**

DOE personnel may email questions to [DOE\\_OAPMPolicy@doe.gov](mailto:DOE_OAPMPolicy@doe.gov).

NNSA personnel may contact NNSA at (505) 845-5639 with questions.

## **What Types of Instruments Are and Are Not Affected by this AL?**

This AL applies to the following unclassified acquisition instruments:

- Solicitations
- Contracts
- Delivery/Task Orders
- Purchase Orders
- Blanket Purchase Agreements (BPA)
- BPA Calls

This AL does not apply to actions listed at FAR 4.606(c), Reporting Data, as well as actions that do not obligate funds, e.g., sales contracts, payment-in-lieu of taxes, International Voluntary Contributions, etc.

This AL also does not apply to classified solicitations or contracts. No classified material shall be created, stored, transmitted, or entered in STRIPES.

## **What is the Purpose of this AL?**

To provide guidance to DOE and NNSA HCAs, PDs, COs, and SPOCs regarding the use of STRIPES for acquisition instruments, including use of the STRIPES clause/provision database and templates.

This AL also provides information and guidance specific to Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR), DOE Acquisition Regulation (DEAR), Corporate, and local clauses.

## **What is the Background Information?**

STRIPES serves as the Department's contract writing system and is the system-of-record for all DOE elements. STRIPES streamlines the acquisition requirement, announcement and award creation process with workflow capabilities that automate these processes. STRIPES is the primary source system for all acquisition instruments indicated in this AL.

STRIPES includes databases and templates for the latest FAR, DEAR, Corporate, and local clauses. Corporate and local clauses are neither prescribed by the FAR nor the DEAR. STRIPES is an automated and efficient way to ensure new contracts have up-to-date provisions and clauses (and thus are compliant) when constructed completely in STRIPES. Use of the clause database and applicable clause templates during the creation and administration of acquisition instruments is recommended.

Corporate clauses are developed by the Office of Acquisition Management (OAM) and go through an extensive development process to ensure they comply with statute, the FAR, the DEAR and other regulations. Corporate clauses are vetted by numerous entities to include the Office of General Counsel, NNSA, and HCAs among others. Corporate clauses are used to address situations and issues on a Department-wide basis. Their consistent use promotes a common understanding between DOE and its contractors, providing efficiency and transparency in contract execution. A listing of Corporate clauses is maintained in the STRIPES library, entitled "DOE Corporate Clauses (DOEC)" and is posted in

Acquisition and Financial Assistance Answers. NNSA corporate clauses are entitled “NNSA Corporate Clauses.”

Local clauses are developed and approved by field organizations, in consultation with OAM as needed, to address site-specific circumstances. Administration of local clauses and templates is the responsibility of the field organizations and shall be approved by the HCA, or designee, but not below the PD. Local clauses should include a site or program specific naming convention to allow effective and efficient management of local clauses similar to the DOE Corporate clauses.

Field organizations must review local clauses and templates annually and validate that the local clauses are: (1) still required and (2) do not conflict with the current FAR, DEAR, and/or Corporate clauses. Documentation of such should be kept at the local level. Local clauses will be reviewed by the Procurement Management Review (PMR) team to ensure they are being managed properly.

### **What Guidance is included in this AL?**

Actions for acquisition instruments identified in this AL, that require Contracting Officer approval, shall be completed in STRIPES.

For all acquisition instruments indicated in this AL, and to the extent practicable, required pre- and post-award documentation should be maintained in STRIPES. If documentation cannot be maintained in STRIPES, the STRIPES supporting document features shall be used to clearly identify and/or provide a link to the location of the file(s). HCAs and PDs should set local policies and procedures for the storage of contract file documents outside of STRIPES.

Some pre- and/or post-award documentation or information should be stored or available in other official systems and is not required to be maintained in STRIPES. Examples of these documents include: (1) contractor invoices and payment approvals found and stored in the Financial Accounting Support Tool (FAST); (2) vendor/contractor performance evaluations completed in the Contractor Performance Assessments Reporting System (CPARS), (3) vendor/contractor reporting submitted via the System for Award Management (SAM) system; and (4) vendor/contractor reporting submitted via the Electronic Subcontracting Reporting System (eSRS).

The Site Point of Contact (SPOC) is the field organization’s STRIPES Site Administrator. A listing can be found in the iPortal STRIPES Center under Frequently Asked Questions - [STRIPES Site Points Of Contact \(SPOCs\)](#).

### **STRIPES Clause Information and Guidance**

STRIPES contains databases and templates for FAR, DEAR, Corporate, and local clauses.

Requests for new clauses or provisions and changes or exceptions to any STRIPES clauses or provisions must be reviewed and approved by local policy, PDs, HCAs, and counsel, prior to being submitted, in accordance with the process to request changes outlined in this AL. This process does not replace or

supersede the process for deviations to FAR and DEAR clauses as required by these regulations and DOE Acquisition Guide.

Changes or exceptions to FAR and DEAR clauses are considered deviations as defined in FAR 1.4. COs must follow guidance in Acquisition Guide Chapter 1.1, Acquisition Regulations System, which requires a deviation package to be submitted to the Office of Contract Management, Field Assistance and Oversight Division (MA-621), for review and approval of any changes or exceptions to FAR and DEAR clauses.

### **Changes or Exceptions to Corporate Clauses**

**Editable Clauses.** COs may make changes to editable Corporate clauses on an individual use basis as indicated and authorized in the clause prescription. STRIPES will indicate an *alert* at the clause text indicating that the clause was revised. COs should consult on any substantive changes to editable Corporate clauses with their local policy, HCA, PD, and counsel. NNSA employees should coordinate and send their requests through NA-PAS-111 and the NNSA SPOC.

**Non-editable Clauses.** COs must request changes to Corporate clauses that do not have a prescription that provides that flexibility. COs must consult with their local policy, HCA, PD, and counsel on any changes to non-editable Corporate clauses prior to being discussed with MA-621 or being used in a contract or solicitation. Field sites must submit change or exception requests for Corporate clauses through their PD with a copy to their SPOC, and allow for sufficient review time and, if necessary, time to make changes in STRIPES. Any clause conflicts will be resolved prior to incorporation into STRIPES. Requests must be sent to the Office of Contract Management, Systems Division (MA-625) as outlined in the process below. Approved requests for changes to a non-editable Corporate clause creates a unique clause for site-specific use that must be added to STRIPES before the clause can be used. NNSA employees should coordinate and send their requests through NA-PAS-111 and the NNSA SPOC.

### **Business Clearance Reviews**

When an action requires Business Clearance Review (BCR) and contains changes or exceptions to non-editable Corporate or local clause(s), the CO must identify in their BCR package which clause(s) are affected and clearly highlight the changes or exceptions made from the original clause(s) and the rationale for the changes or exceptions (See DOE AG chapter 71.1). MA-621 will review changes or exceptions with MA-611 and other appropriate offices to determine whether the proposed clause language or use change should be made on a department-wide basis in the STRIPES system or whether the proposed clause single case revision should be processed.

The CO shall confirm whether clauses are in accordance with HCA-approved clauses or templates. For any new clauses not previously approved as required by this policy and local policy, the BCR package shall include evidence of the site or program office's review of the clause and HCA, or designee, approval of all new clauses included in the BCR package.

Note: If a Corporate or local clause pertaining to a procurement policy has either “a significant effect beyond the internal operating procedures of the agency issuing it” or “a significant cost or administrative impact on contractors or offerors,” it may need to be published in the Federal Register pursuant to the Office of Federal Procurement Policy Act, 41 U.S.C. § 1707.

### **Process for adding/updating a Corporate or local clause to/in STRIPES**

SPOC submits an email request to MA-625 via [hqprocurementsystems@hq.doe.gov](mailto:hqprocurementsystems@hq.doe.gov). The email must include:

- Subject line of email must indicate: “Create New Corporate or local clause” or “Update to existing Corporate or local clause”
- Attach completed [STRIPES Clause Detail form](#)
- Attach documentation indicating concurrence of new Corporate/local clause or Corporate/local clause update by local policy, PD, HCA, counsel and SPOC.

For Corporate clause requests, MA-625 reviews the request for completeness and sends it to MA-611 for review and approval. If the request is not complete or not approved, MA-625 will respond to the SPOC with additional information and guidance.

For local clause requests, MA-625 reviews the request for completeness. If the request is not complete, MA-625 will respond to the SPOC with additional information and guidance.

If request is complete and approved,

- MA-625 coordinates with the STRIPES Team to add new or revised Corporate/local clause to the STRIPES Quality Assurance (QA) environment for testing.
- For Corporate clauses, MA-625 tests the new or revised Corporate clause in STRIPES QA and coordinates any final changes with the STRIPES Team.
- For local clauses, MA-625 and the STRIPES SPOC tests the new or revised local clause in STRIPES QA and coordinates any final changes with the STRIPES Team.
- Once testing is complete, MA-625 approves implementation of the new or revised Corporate/local clause in STRIPES Production environment.
- New local clauses(s) will be added to the STRIPES clause database and made available to applicable DOE offices.