

## Contractor Performance Information



### Guiding Principles

- The primary purpose of past performance evaluations is to ensure that accurate data on contractor performance is current and available for use in source selections.
- A past performance evaluation report provides a record of a contractor's performance, both positive and negative, on a given contract during a specified period of time.
- The quality of the narrative component supporting the past performance information evaluation is critical.

[References: [FAR 42.15](#), [CPARS Guide](#) ]

### 1.0 Summary of Latest Changes

This update deletes duplicative and outdated guidance and makes various administrative changes.

### 2.0 Discussion

This chapter supplements other more primary acquisition regulations and policies contained in the references above and should be considered in the context of those references. The Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System (CPARS) Guide includes consistent processes and procedures for agencies to use when reporting on past performance information and should be read in conjunction with Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Part 42.15 and other FAR Parts related to past performance information.

2.1 Introduction. CPARS is a web-enabled application that collects and manages the library of automated evaluations and is available at <http://www.cpars.gov>. CPARS facilitates communication and cooperation between the Federal Government and industry. It provides

contractor performance information to include Government ratings and narratives, as well as industry narratives.

Irrespective of the type or complexity of the contractor performance appraisal systems (e.g., performance based acquisition reviews, performance evaluation and measurement reports, contract management plans, award fee determinations, etc.) that are used by DOE program elements, contractor performance evaluations required by FAR 42.15 must be entered into CPARS.

Since all Federal agencies use CPARS, the CPARS guidance and user manuals were updated to include civilian and defense agencies. Guidance for the Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System (CPARS), November 2016 or current version, herein referred to as the “CPARS Guide,” is based on the authorities prescribed by the FAR and Department of Energy Acquisition Regulation (DEAR) and its supplements. The CPARS Guide is non-regulatory in nature and intended to provide useful information and best practices for using CPARS. The CPARS Guide is available at <http://www.cpars.gov/>. It identifies roles and responsibilities and provides guidance and procedures for systematically assessing contractor performance as required by FAR Part 42.15.

2.2 Background. As of October 2008, CPARS is the mandatory Department of Energy (DOE) system used to report contractor performance into Past Performance Information Retrieval System (PPIRS). PPIRS is the official Government source to retrieve contractor performance information and report/track CPAR compliance rates.

The primary purpose of past performance evaluations is to ensure the contractor is held accountable for its performance and that accurate data on contractor performance is current and available for use in source selections. Performance evaluations will be used as a resource in awarding best value contracts and orders to contractors that consistently provide quality, on-time products and services that conform to contractual requirements. Evaluations can be used to effectively communicate a contractor’s strengths and weaknesses to source selection officials.

DOE uses CPARS for reporting and collecting past performance evaluations, as required by the FAR. CPARS is an automated contractor performance information database that serves as the entry point for evaluations which are fed into the government-wide PPIRS, which is the single, authorized application to retrieve contractor performance information.

Contractor performance on classified contracts are not exempt from evaluation. Contractor performance evaluations on classified programs are managed in accordance with the records management procedures of DOE Order 470.6, Technical Security Program (or its successor version). Copies of classified contractor performance evaluations are maintained and distributed

in accordance with DOE O 470.6. ***Evaluations of classified contracts shall not be entered into CPARS or PPIRS.***

Through PPIRS, the contractor performance information can be retrieved by the contracting activity for use in the source selection process to support making an award based on a best value. Government access to PPIRS is restricted to those individuals who are working on source selections. Each contracting activity shall have a PPIRS Access Authorization Agent who controls and provides government access.

2.3 **Roles and Responsibilities.** See the [CPARS Guide](#) Section C – Responsibilities Assigned for a thorough explanation of the roles and responsibilities for each party involved in the CPARS process. At DOE, the roles of Department Point of Contact and Agency Point of Contact are performed by the Office of Systems (MA-623).

2.4 **Records Retention for Contractor Performance Evaluations.** Contractor performance evaluations prepared in CPARS are retained for a period of one year after the FINAL CPAR evaluation is completed. For Architect-Engineer and Construction evaluations, these reports are retained for six years. The reports are then placed in an archive table where they can be retrieved if necessary. In PPIRS, CPAR evaluations reports are retained for three years after the contract completion date. Architect-Engineer and Construction evaluations reports are retained for six years. ***The CPAR report shall not be uploaded into the Strategic Integrated Procurement Enterprise System (STRIPES).***

2.5 **CPARS Training & Continuous Learning Points.**

- CPARS Training

The Assessing Official (AO), typically a contract specialist or contracting officer, is responsible for ensuring that the Assessing Official Representative (AOR), typically a contracting officer's representative (COR), and the contractor are knowledgeable about the CPARS and the on-line training that is available to them. Training for both the Government and contractors is offered monthly via webcast and the calendar can be found on the CPARS web site. See the table on the next page for additional training information.

The following classes are highly recommended to all DOE employees who are responsible at any stage of past performance evaluations:

- CPARS Overview at [https://www.cpars.gov/webtrain\\_auto.htm](https://www.cpars.gov/webtrain_auto.htm)
- Quality and Narrative Writing

- Plain Language writing (not sure if this is what is mean by the above)
- Focal Point Functions

For contractors to become familiar with CPARS, the following class is highly recommended:

- CPARS Overview Course at [https://www.cpars.gov/webtrain\\_auto.htm](https://www.cpars.gov/webtrain_auto.htm)

The DOE Acquisition Career Manager (ACM) has approved Continuous Learning Points (CLPs) for CPARS web based training classes. See the following table for list of all available past performance and Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity and Information System (FAPIS) training opportunities. The table is an excerpt from the OFFP's March 6, 2013 memorandum *Improving the Collection and Use of Information about Contractor Performance and Integrity*.

<b>Past Performance and FAPIS Training Opportunities</b>		
<b>Course</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Course Information</b>
DOD CPARS and FAPIS Training.	Provides information on how to use CPARS and FAPIS.  Upon completion, students receive a Certificate of Completion and continuous learning points (CLP).	Seminar, Online Training, and training material available at <a href="http://www.cpars.gov/allapps/cpcbt_dlf.htm">http://www.cpars.gov/allapps/cpcbt_dlf.htm</a> .
DOD PPIRS Training	Provides information about PPIRS and the valuable source selection sensitive information shared across federal government agencies and its use in source selection and contract award decisions.	Schedule of PPIRS classes is available at <a href="https://www.ppirs.gov/webtrain.htm">https://www.ppirs.gov/webtrain.htm</a>
DOD <i>Past Performance Information Course – CLC 028</i> .	Provides relevant information to all acquisition personnel required to participate in this contract administration function. Upon completion, students receive 3 CLPs.	The course schedule is available at <a href="http://www.dau.mil">www.dau.mil</a> .
FAI – 4 minute multi-media FAPIS overview.	Explains what the FAPIS module why it is important, how it impacts the acquisition and grants communities, as well as how the system interrelates with other systems containing similar Information.	FAI website available at <a href="http://www.fai.gov/FAPIS/trailer/module.htm">http://www.fai.gov/FAPIS/trailer/module.htm</a> .
FAI <i>Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity and Information System (FAPIS) - FAC 019</i> .	Provides guidance on how to consider the FAPIS information. Upon completion, students will receive 1 CLP.	This course is available on the Defense Acquisition University (DAU) website at <a href="http://www.dau.mil">www.dau.mil</a> .

		Note: FAPIIS courseware was developed by FAI and tested and hosted on the DAU website.
<p><b>Note:</b> It is highly recommended that these courses be made available to all agency acquisition personnel responsible for reporting and using performance and integrity information. Questions about the training should be directed to DOD, DAU, or FAI points of contact listed on their respective websites, or you may seek information from your Site Acquisition Career Manager.</p>		

2.6 Internal Management Controls/Compliance Assessments. Each contracting activity shall establish a process for conducting regular compliance assessments to include assigning a primary point of contact responsible for the compliance assessments. Part of the compliance assessment shall be to review the process and review the performance metrics used to measure compliance and quality on a regular basis. The objective is to achieve 100% quality CPARS submission and completion of all applicable contract/orders of contractor performance information. The regular compliance assessments of contractor performance information are comprised of quarterly CPARS data quality reviews and Procurement Management Reviews.

- CPARS Data Quality Reviews

The CPARS data quality reviews (see the [CPARS Quality Checklist](#)) shall be performed and submitted on a quarterly basis. The CPARS data quality reviews are part of the DOE Data Quality Reviews. The CPARS data quality reviews shall regularly measure the contractor performance information for compliance and quality. Each contracting activity shall review the activity's performance metrics to evaluate and validate the quality and timeliness of contractor performance evaluations. This review shall include the contracting activity's corrective action plan to address any unregistered contracts/orders/agreements, overdue evaluations and incomplete evaluations. The Office of Contract Management, Field Assistance and Oversight Division (MA-621) site assigned procurement analysts will provide oversight to ensure compliance with CPARS reporting requirements.

- Procurement Management Reviews

The DOE Procurement Management Reviews (PMRs) are a peer review process. The lines of inquiry are established in coordination with the Head of the Contracting Activity. The PMR may validate site compliance with the requirement for submitting past performance data into CPARS. Prior to performing a site PMR which includes a past performance review, the PMR team will examine the CPARS database. If CPAR reports were required but not performed, the PMR team will identify those contract actions to the site being reviewed to determine why the reports were not completed. The

field sites will be required to perform corrective action to comply with CPARS reporting requirements. Additionally, the PMR team will examine the timeliness, accuracy, and quality of the CPAR submittals.

## 2.7 Best Practices.

- **General**

- Past performance information is “For Official Use Only” and “Source Selection Information” and should be so marked.
- The narrative is the most critical aspect of past performance information evaluations.
- Use of Plain Language writing concepts

- **Solicitation and source selection**

- See the Acquisition Guide Chapter 15.1, Source Selection Guide, for its discussion and guidance on source selection.
- See the Acquisition Guide Chapter 15.304, Establishing Evaluation Criteria, for its discussion and guidance in the development of evaluation criteria for source selection.

- **Contract performance**

- If the AOR communicates with the contractor throughout the performance period, the evaluation should be easier to write. Then, the AOR can create a working evaluation draft off-line by documenting the important significant metrics and/or events and cut and paste this documentation into CPARS for the evaluation period.
- Include performance expectations in the Government’s and contractor’s initial post award meeting.
- Performance evaluations are the responsibility of the program/project/contracting team, considering the customer’s input. Feedback to contractors regarding ongoing performance issues should be

developed through discussions with reviews occurring on a regular basis and transmitted through CPARS. The Reviewing Official resolves disagreements in the evaluation report between the contractor and the Government. The Assessing Official (contracting officer or contract specialist) finalizes the evaluation.

- When exercising an option [FAR 17.207 (c)], the contracting officer needs to consider the contractor's past performance evaluations on other contract actions, as well as, the contractor's performance on the current contract has been acceptable, e.g., received satisfactory ratings.
- In addition to complying with FAR 17.207(c) before exercising an option, see Acquisition Guide Chapter 70.9, Contract Options: Evaluating Contractor Past Performance, for model guidelines to use in assessing a contractor's past performance for the purpose of making decisions regarding the exercising of contract options.
- Contracting activities should not downgrade a contractor for filing protests or claims or not agreeing to use alternative dispute resolution (ADR) techniques. Conversely, contracting activities should not rate a contractor positively for not having filed protests or not having made claims or agreeing to use ADR techniques. However, the quality of a contractor's performance that gave rise to the protest or claim may be considered. In other words, while performance must be considered, a contractor exercising its rights may not.
- **Advise the contractor:**
  - To take the CPARS Overview training.
  - That past performance information is handled with the same procedures as if it were "source selection information" in PPIRS.
  - To acknowledge receipt of the Government's request to the contractor to provide comments on an evaluation and to respond to this request within 30 calendar days.

## 2.8 Points of Contact.

- Questions regarding past performance policy issues may be directed to the Office of Policy, Contract and Financial Assistance Division MA-611.

- Questions on how to use the CPARS system, the PPIRS reporting capability, and account access issues may be directed to the DOE Agency Coordinator, Office of Systems, Systems Division MA-623, by e-mail to [HQProcurementSystems@hq.doe.gov](mailto:HQProcurementSystems@hq.doe.gov)
- Questions on the use of past performance information for source selection, internal management controls, CPARS data quality review and compliance assessments may be directed to the Office of Contract Management, Field Assistance and Oversight Division MA-621.