

CHAPTER 18 - ACQUISITION OF FEDERAL INFORMATION PROCESSING
RESOURCES

1. PURPOSE. This policy establishes principles and requirements that govern the acquisition of Agency Federal Information Processing (FIP) resources. It also defines the roles and responsibilities for implementing these principles and requirements to ensure appropriate management accountability.
2. SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY. This policy applies to all EPA organizations and their employees. It also applies to personnel who are involved in the acquisition of FIP resources for the Agency.
3. BACKGROUND.
 - a. The Federal Information Resources Management Regulation (FIRMR) is the principal regulation governing the acquisition of FIP resources.
 - b. FIP resources include the following major categories: equipment, software, services, support services (including maintenance), and related supplies and systems.
 - c. Acquisition, as defined in FIRMR Part 201-20, consists of a series of steps beginning with a requirements analysis and ending with the implementation of the most advantageous alternative to satisfy the requirement. This cyclical set of activities is designed to provide the Government with efficient and effective technology and services to support information needs.
 - d. Acquisition, as defined in FIRMR Part 201-20, also includes obtaining FIP resources from sources external to the Agency (e.g., through contracts issued by other Federal agencies), and through in-house sources (e.g., using in-house Agency employees or existing Agency contracts) or development (e.g., re-engineering existing software).
 - e. The General Services Administration (GSA), the Federal oversight agency which issues the FIRMR, has primary

authority to contract for FIP resources. GSA redelegates this authority to individual agencies through a Delegation of Procurement Authority (DPA) to each agency's Designated Senior Official (DSO) for Information Resources Management (IRM). An agency's ability to retain its DPA from GSA depends on how well it manages this delegation. GSA makes this determination through its IRM Review Program.

4. AUTHORITIES.

- a. Public Law 89-306, Brooks Act, vests in the Administrator of the GSA the authority and responsibility to provide for the economic and efficient purchase, lease, maintenance, operation and utilization of automated data processing (ADP) resources by Federal departments and agencies.
- b. Public Law 98-369, Competition in Contracting Act, requires, among other things, that full and open competition be utilized in the acquisition of supplies and services, and that specifications not be unnecessarily restrictive of competition.
- c. The Office of Federal Procurement Policy Act contains provisions regarding inherently governmental functions and procurement integrity that apply to contractors and government officials involved with Federal procurements.
- d. 44 U.S.C. Chapter 35, Paperwork Reduction Act of 1986, significantly expands the Brooks Act definition of automatic data processing equipment (ADPE) to reflect the merging of ADP, communications, and related technologies.
- e. The Administrator of GSA redelegates the authority to contract for FIP resources to agency heads through Delegations of Procurement Authority (DPA).
- f. 41 CFR, Chapter 201.20 and 201.39, FIRMR, provides Government-wide policies, procedures and guidelines pertaining to the acquisition and management of FIP resources. Chapter 201-18 addresses the requirement for FIP acquisitions to be consistent with agency IRM plans.

- g. 48 CFR, Chapter 15, EPA Acquisition Regulation (EPAAR), codifies the policies and procedures of EPA which implement and supplement the FAR.
- h. Executive Order 12845, issued April 1993, requires agencies to purchase energy-efficient computer equipment.
- i. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-11, Section 43, includes a requirement for agencies to submit information on acquisition plans for information technology, including telecommunication systems.
- j. OMB Circular A-76, Policies for Acquiring Commercial or Industrial Products and Services Needed by the Government, contains policies and procedures for determining whether functions should be performed by outside sources (such as contractors) or by Government personnel. The Circular also includes requirements for performance-based statements of work.
- k. OMB Circular A-109, issued August 1976, in part describes the cycle for the ADP Systems Acquisition Process.
- l. OMB Circular A-130, Management of Federal Information Resources, establishes policy for the management of Federal information resources. Among other requirements, it addresses the need for agencies to conduct IRM planning, with special focus on the information lifecycle.

5. POLICY.

- a. EPA shall plan, budget and acquire all FIP resources in a cost-effective manner consistent with the FAR, FIRMR, and EPAAR, as well as applicable Executive Orders, and other Federal and EPA IRM-related regulations and policies. FIP resources shall meet and support the documented mission-related needs of EPA Program and Regional Offices, and Laboratories, and shall be consistent with the Agency's IRM Plans, and technology and information architectures.

- b. Delegations of Procurement Authority are redelegated to Program and Regional Offices and Laboratories based on those organizations' demonstrated competence in IRM. Some factors demonstrating competence include an organization's compliance with Federal and Agency IRM and procurement policies, procedures, standards, and conformance with approved IRM Plans. Other factors include effective organizational structure, adequate resources, well-trained staff, and effective performance in IRM functional areas as well as procurement management.
- c. EPA organizations shall ensure that, when applicable, acquisition of FIP resources complies with the FIRMR requirements for Requirements Analysis, Analysis of Alternatives, and development of an Implementation Plan. These analyses and the planning documents must be commensurate with the size and complexity of the FIP resources needed.
- d. EPA organizations shall acquire FIP resources in a manner that minimizes total lifecycle costs and avoids duplication of effort and resources.
- e. EPA organizations shall ensure that acquisition of their computer equipment is compliant with energy efficient requirements as stipulated by Executive Order 12845.
- f. EPA organizations shall consider the needs of persons with disabilities in the acquisition of FIP resources. These persons may include employees, contractor personnel and members of the public who may use, develop, maintain or operate a proposed system.
- g. Appropriate information security requirements will be incorporated into specifications for the acquisition of FIP resources.
- h. EPA organizations shall track FIP resource estimates and actual costs according to Federal and Agency planning, budgeting and procurement requirements. In addition, EPA organizations shall ensure that all FIRMR-applicable FIP resource-related contract costs

are tracked against the specific ceiling established by the contract.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES.

- a. The Assistant Administrator for Administration and Resources Management (OARM) is the Designated Senior Official (DSO) responsible for the conduct of and accountability for acquisition of FIP resources made under a DPA from GSA. The DSO may redelegate GSA's exclusive authorities for FIP resources to qualified Agency officials. However, such redelegation does not relieve the DSO from responsibility and accountability for acquiring FIP resources.
- b. The Director, Office of Information Resources Management (OIRM) is responsible for:
 - (1) Organizing and managing an Agency-wide IRM planning process which integrates FIP resources acquisition activities with IRM planning and budgeting.
 - (2) Providing guidance and direction to client organizations involved in procurement of FIP resources.
 - (3) Negotiating and managing the redelegation process of FIP acquisition authority to client organizations.
 - (4) Reviewing and approving procurement packages for FIP equipment, software, services and/or support services where this authority for review and approval has not been further redelegated.
 - (5) Resolving FIRMR applicability issues in procurement actions.
 - (6) Recommending, when appropriate, alternative acquisition methods or sources, and promoting coordination with other research, programmatic and/or Regional IRM efforts.
 - (7) Developing, in consultation with the client organization, Implementation Plans for

- acquisitions of FIP resources to ensure conformance and compatibility with the Agency's technology architecture.
- (8) Reviewing and approving, if appropriate, waiver requests to purchase non-energy efficient computer equipment and/or non-standard hardware and software.
 - (9) Approving and forwarding FIP resource acquisition Agency Procurement Requests (APRs) to GSA for approval when a DPA is required.
 - (10) Coordinating and forwarding progress reports to GSA, as required in DPAs.
- c. The Office of the Administrator, Assistant Administrators, Associate Administrators, Regional Administrators, General Counsel, and Inspector General are responsible for providing effective implementation of this policy within their respective organizations.
- d. Senior IRM Officials are responsible for consulting with their Senior Resource Officials and other key management and technical personnel to review and approve all applicable FIP resource acquisitions and associated documents to:
- (1) Ensure compliance with Federal, EPA and Program/Regional Office policies, standards, directives, regulations, approved IRM plans, and planning and budgeting requirements and processes.
 - (2) Ensure that FIP resource requirements are not fragmented into separate procurements in an attempt to circumvent the delegated thresholds.
 - (3) Identify, resolve or justify potentially duplicative procurement activities, as well as opportunities to "share" FIP resources, within their organizations and/or with other Agency organizations.
- e. Client organization managers and staff who originate requirements for acquisition of FIP resources (System

Managers, Project Officers, etc.) are responsible for:

- (1) Adhering to the Federal and Agency policies and procedures governing the acquisition of FIP resources.
 - (2) Documenting the initial determination of FIRMR applicability.
 - (3) Determining if a DPA is required for their procurement action and developing an APR, if needed.
 - (4) Developing the Requirements Analysis, the Analysis of Alternatives, and Implementation Plan (if appropriate) to ensure that the acquisition is cost effective and fully meets their mission needs.
 - (5) Verifying the adequacy and soundness of technical content, and accuracy and completeness of documentation.
 - (6) Obtaining appropriate review and approval from their organization's Senior IRM Official and other key officials noted in this policy.
 - (7) Categorizing and tracking FIP resource estimates and actual costs according to Federal and Agency planning, budgeting and procurement requirements.
 - (8) Tracking FIRMR-applicable FIP resource costs in contracts to ensure the DPA is not exceeded and to allow appropriate budgetary reporting.
 - (9) Submitting progress reports to OIRM, as required by the DPA.
- f. The Office of Acquisition Management (OAM) is responsible for:
- (1) The acquisition of the Agency's central information processing resources, including telecommunications (voice, video and data.)
 - (2) Providing client organizations with technical

assistance on Federal and Agency procurement laws, regulations, and policies.

- (3) Performing final quality assurance, review, and approval of all Agency FIP resource acquisitions.
- (4) Ensuring that the procurement of FIP resources includes a well-documented audit trail.
- (5) Ensuring that all procurements of FIP resources comply with Federal and Agency procurement laws, regulations and policies.

7. DEFINITIONS.

- a. Acquisition, as defined in FIRMR Part 201-20, consists of a series of steps beginning with a requirements analysis and ending with the implementation of the most advantageous alternative to satisfy the requirement (e.g., actual award of the contract). Acquisition also includes obtaining FIP resources from sources external to the Agency, and through in-house sources or development.
- b. Acquisition Lifecycle is the period covering all acquisition-related activities. The lifecycle begins when Agency needs are established and ends with the disposal of the FIP resources.
- c. Agency Procurement Request (APR) is a request to GSA by an agency for contracting authority above their regulatory or specific agency delegation.
- d. Analysis of Alternatives is the process of identifying, analyzing and documenting feasible alternatives that satisfy requirements for FIP resources.
- e. Automated Data Processing (ADP) refers to the production, conversion, reduction, destruction, storage, transfer or communication of data by electronic digital computers and related peripheral devices. The term "electronic data processing" (EDP) and ADP are frequently used interchangeably with no significant distinction. Automated data processing may be performed by a stand-alone unit or by several connected units.

- f. Delegation of Procurement Authority (DPA) is the authority provided by the GSA to Federal agencies which allows them to contract for FIP resources above the dollar ceilings found in regulatory or specific agency delegations.
- g. Federal Information Processing (FIP) Equipment is any equipment or interconnected system or subsystem of equipment used in the automatic acquisition, storage, manipulation, management, movement, control, display, switching, interchange, transmission, or reception of data or information.
- h. Federal Information Processing (FIP) Resources include equipment, software, services, support services (including maintenance), and related supplies and systems.
- i. Federal Information Processing (FIP) Software is any software, including firmware, specifically designed to make use of and extend the capabilities of FIP equipment.
- j. Federal Information Processing (FIP) Supplies are any consumable item designed specifically for use with FIP equipment, software, services, or support services.
- k. Federal Information Processing (FIP) Support Services are any commercial, non-personal services, including FIP maintenance, used in support of FIP equipment, software, or services.
- l. Implementation Plan describes the tasks, responsibilities, resources and schedules necessary to ensure successful implementation of the FIP acquisition.
- m. Information architecture refers to the technologies, interfaces, and geographical locations of functions involved within an agency's information activities.
- n. Life Cycle Costs refers to the sum total of the direct, indirect, recurring, nonrecurring, and other related

costs incurred, or estimated to be incurred, in the design, development, production, operation, maintenance, and support of a system over its anticipated useful life span. Costs include, but are not limited to, equipment software, personnel (both agency and contractor), timeshare and telecommunications.

- o. Requirements Analysis is the process of determining and documenting an agency's requirements for FIP resources.
 - p. Technology architecture refers to the configuration of the Agency's hardware platforms, software tools and data communications that together to form the infrastructure within which the Agency's information systems operate.
8. PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES. Procedures and guidelines regarding EPA acquisition of FIP resources will be issued under separate cover. The GSA publishes an Acquisition Guide Series to help promote effective and efficient acquisition of FIP resources. These Guides are available from the GSA IRM Reference Center, 18th and F Streets, NW, Washington, DC 20405; telephone (202) 501-4860. See Chapter 17 of the EPA IRM Policy Manual for the Agency's policy on system life cycle management.