9-4. Computer Hardware, Enterprise Software and Solutions (CHESS)

a. CHESS is the mandatory source for all purchases of commercial-off-the-shelf software, desktops, notebook computers, video teleconferencing equipment, and other commercial Information Technology (IT) equipment (e.g., routers, servers, peripherals, regardless of dollar value). CHESS is the mandatory source for all Army IT purchases, except for the Air National Guard, which is exempt from the CHESS requirement and must purchase IT through Air Force Advantage / GSA-2GIT to retain IT compatibility. Per AFARS 5108.7403, before procuring commercial software outside of the CHESS contracts, the contracting officer or contract ordering official CH must ensure that the requiring activity obtains a waiver. Any IT hardware or software purchase made outside of CHESS requires a Statement of Non-availability (SoNA). See AFARS 5139.101-90(a) and AR 25-1.

b. All desktops and notebooks must be purchased during one of the Consolidated Buy ordering periods that occur three times annually (Oct/Jan, Feb/May, and Jun/Sep). Consolidated Buy exception memos are prepared by the requiring activity and are approved by an O6/GS-15 (or equivalent) within the requiring activity and must remain a part of the transaction document file. An exception memo example is available at CHESS Exception Request.

c. IT hardware or software purchases require an Army Deputy Chief of Staff (DCS), G-6 approved Information Technology Approval System (ITAS) Memorandum. CHs must include the ITAS Approval Memorandum in the transaction file along with all other supporting documentation. Supporting documentation must include documentation submitted with the ITAS approval request such as a CHESS SoNA. The CHESS website provides information concerning ITAS approvals. CHs may also consult their local command for guidance. The ITAS Approval website is located at https://cprobe.army.mil/enterprise-portal/web/itas/home.

d. Any IT hardware or software purchase made outside of CHESS requires a SoNA. A SoNA is a notice that a particular product is not currently available through a CHESS contract. It is not a waiver to purchase, nor does it authorize use on the Army network. For detailed instructions on SoNA requirements and how to obtain a SoNA, see CHESS SONA.

Parent topic: CHAPTER 9 - REQUIRED SOURCES OF SUPPLIES AND SERVICES