# 1631.203-70 Allocation techniques.

(a) Carriers shall use the following methods for allocating groupings of business unit indirect costs. Carriers shall consistently apply the methods and techniques established to classify direct and indirect costs, to group indirect costs and to allocate indirect costs to cost objectives.

(1) *Input method.* The preferred allocation technique is one that shows the consumption of resources in performance of the activities (input) for the function(s) represented by the cost grouping. This allocation technique should be used in circumstances where there is a direct and definitive relationship between the function(s) and the benefiting cost objectives. Measures of input ordinarily may be expressed in terms such as labor hours or square footage. This means costs may be allocated by use of a rate, such as a rate per labor hour or cost per square foot.

(2) *Output method.* Where input measures are unavailable or impractical to determine, the basis for allocation may be a measure of the output of the function(s) represented by the cost grouping. The output becomes a substitute measure for the use of resources and is a reasonable alternative when a direct measure of input is impractical. Output may be measured in terms of units of end product produced by the function(s). Examples of output measures include number of claims processed by a claims processing center, number of pages printed in a print shop, number of purchase orders processed by a purchasing department, or number of hires by a personnel office.

(3) *Surrogate method.* Where neither activity (input) nor output of the function(s) can be measured practically, a surrogate must be used to measure the resources utilized. Surrogates used to represent the relationship generally measure the benefit to the cost objectives receiving the service and should vary in proportion to the services received. For example, if a personnel department provides various services that cannot be measured practically on an activity (input) or output basis, number of personnel served might reasonably represent the use of resources of the personnel function for the cost objectives receiving the service, where this base varies in proportion to the services performed.

(4) *Other method.* Some cost groupings cannot readily be allocated on measures of specific beneficial or causal relationships under paragraph (a)(1), (a)(2), or (a)(3) of this section. Such costs do not have a direct and definitive relationship to the benefiting cost objectives. Generally, the cost of overall management activities falls in this category. Overall management costs should be grouped in relation to the activities managed. The base selected to measure the allocation of these indirect costs to cost objectives should be a base representative of the entire activity being managed. For example, the total operating expenses of activities managed might be a reasonable base for allocating the general indirect costs of a business unit. Another reasonable method for allocating general indirect costs might be to base them on a percentage of contracts. These examples are not meant to be exhaustive, but rather are examples of allocation methods that may be acceptable under individual circumstances. See also General and Administrative (G&A) expenses, FEHBAR 1631.203-71.

(b) Carriers that use multiple cost centers to accumulate and allocate costs shall apply the techniques in paragraph (a) of this section at each step of the allocation process. Accordingly, the allocation of costs among cost centers at the initial entry into the cost accounting system shall be made in compliance with paragraph (a) of this section. Likewise, the allocation of the cost of interim cost centers to final cost centers is subject to paragraph (a) of this section. If costs of final cost centers are allocated among final cost objectives, the allocation shall also be made in accordance with paragraph (a) of this section. It is possible that carriers using multiple cost centers to

accumulate and allocate costs may not have any direct costs, i.e., costs identified specifically with a final cost objective.

(c) The allocation of business unit general and administrative expenses and the allocation of home office expenses to segments are also subject to FEHBAR 1631.203-71 and FEHBAR 1631.203-72, respectively.

**Parent topic:** Subpart 1631.2—Contracts With Commercial Organizations