

16.601 Time-and-materials contracts.

(a) Definitions for the purposes of Time-and-Materials Contracts.

“Direct materials” means those materials that enter directly into the end product, or that are used or consumed directly in connection with the furnishing of the end product or service.

“Hourly rate” means the rate(s) prescribed in the contract for payment for labor that meets the labor category qualifications of a labor category specified in the contract that are-

(1) Performed by the contractor;

(2) Performed by the subcontractors; or

(3) Transferred between divisions, subsidiaries, or affiliates of the contractor under a common control.

“Materials” means-

(1) Direct materials, including supplies transferred between divisions, subsidiaries, or affiliates of the contractor under a common control;

(2) Subcontracts for supplies and incidental services for which there is not a labor category specified in the contract;

(3) Other direct costs (*e.g.*, incidental services for which there is not a labor category specified in the contract, travel, computer usage charges, etc.); and

(4) Applicable indirect costs.

(b) *Description.* A time-and-materials contract provides for acquiring supplies or services on the basis of-

(1) Direct labor hours at specified fixed hourly rates that include wages, overhead, general and administrative expenses, and profit; and

(2) Actual cost for materials (except as provided for in [31.205-26](#)(e) and (f)).

(c) *Application.* A time-and-materials contract may be used only when it is not possible at the time of placing the contract to estimate accurately the extent or duration of the work or to anticipate costs with any reasonable degree of confidence. See [12.207](#)(b) for the use of time-and-material contracts for certain commercial services.

(1) *Government surveillance.* A time-and-materials contract provides no positive profit incentive to the contractor for cost control or labor efficiency. Therefore, appropriate Government surveillance of contractor performance is required to give reasonable assurance that efficient methods and effective cost controls are being used.

(2) *Fixed hourly rates.*

(i) The contract shall specify separate fixed hourly rates that include wages, overhead, general and

administrative expenses, and profit for each category of labor (see [16.601](#)(f)(1)).

(ii) For acquisitions of noncommercial items awarded without adequate price competition (see [15.403-1](#)(c)(1)), the contract shall specify separate fixed hourly rates that include wages, overhead, general and administrative expenses, and profit for each category of labor to be performed by-

(A) The contractor;

(B) Each subcontractor; and

(C) Each division, subsidiary, or affiliate of the contractor under a common control.

(iii) For contract actions that are not awarded using competitive procedures, unless exempt under paragraph (c)(2)(iv) of this section, the fixed hourly rates for services transferred between divisions, subsidiaries, or affiliates of the contractor under a common control-

(A) Shall not include profit for the transferring organization; but

(B) May include profit for the prime contractor.

(iv) For contract actions that are not awarded using competitive procedures, the fixed hourly rates for services that meet the definition of commercial item at [2.101](#) that are transferred between divisions, subsidiaries, or affiliates of the contractor under a common control may be the established catalog or market rate when-

(A) It is the established practice of the transferring organization to price interorganizational transfers at other than cost for commercial work of the contractor or any division, subsidiary or affiliate of the contractor under a common control; and

(B) The contracting officer has not determined the price to be unreasonable.

(3) *Material handling costs.* When included as part of material costs, material handling costs shall include only costs clearly excluded from the labor-hour rate. Material handling costs may include all appropriate indirect costs allocated to direct materials in accordance with the contractor's usual accounting procedures consistent with [part 31](#).

(d) *Limitations.* A time-and-materials contract or order may be used only if-

(1) The contracting officer prepares a determination and findings that no other contract type is suitable. The determination and finding shall be-

(i) Signed by the contracting officer prior to the execution of the base period or any option periods of the contracts; and

(ii) Approved by the head of the contracting activity prior to the execution of the base period when the base period plus any option periods exceeds three years; and

(2) The contract or order includes a ceiling price that the contractor exceeds at its own risk. Also see [12.207](#) (b) for further limitations on use of time-and-materials or labor-hour contracts for acquisition of commercial items.

(e) Post award requirements. Prior to an increase in the ceiling price of a time-and-materials or labor-hour contract or order, the contracting officer shall-

(1) Conduct an analysis of pricing and other relevant factors to determine if the action is in the best interest of the Government;

(2) Document the decision in the contract or order file; and

(3) When making a change that modifies the general scope of-

(i) A contract, follow the procedures at [6.303](#);

(ii) An order issued under the Federal Supply Schedules, follow the procedures at [8.405-6](#); or

(iii) An order issued under multiple award task and delivery order contracts, follow the procedures at [16.505\(b\)\(2\)](#).

(f) Solicitation provisions.

(1) The contracting officer shall insert the provision at [52.216-29](#), Time-and-Materials/Labor-Hour Proposal Requirements-Non-Commercial Item Acquisitions With Adequate Price Competition, in solicitations contemplating use of a Time-and-Materials or Labor-Hour type of contract for noncommercial items, if the price is expected to be based on adequate price competition. If authorized by agency procedures, the contracting officer may amend the provision to make mandatory one of the three approaches in paragraph (c) of the provision, and/or to require the identification of all subcontractors, divisions, subsidiaries, or affiliates included in a blended labor rate.

(2) The contracting officer shall insert the provision at [52.216-30](#), Time-and-Materials/Labor-Hour Proposal Requirements-Non-Commercial Item Acquisitions without Adequate Price Competition, in solicitations for noncommercial items contemplating use of a Time-and-Materials or Labor-Hour type of contract if the price is not expected to be based on adequate price competition.

(3) The contracting officer shall insert the provision at [52.216-31](#), Time-and-Materials/Labor-Hour Proposal Requirements-Commercial Item Acquisitions, in solicitations contemplating use of a Commercial Time-and-Materials or Labor-Hour contract.

Parent topic: [Subpart 16.6 - Time-and-Materials, Labor-Hour, and Letter Contracts](#)