



CALL Lesson of the Day

SUBJECT: Operational Contract Support

Theater: OEF

Date: 29 July 2012

1. Observation: Units (BN and higher) deploying to Afghanistan need to have a command structure you understand of how operational contract support (OCS) operates in a deployed theater and personnel who have proper training to conduct contract management (CM) tasks in support of OCS.

2. Discussion:

- a. Contract management is a higher level of management in support of OCS for an executing agent of a contract. Normally a contracting officer's representative (COR) serves as an executing agent for a contract. A unit's S4 would be the primary source of CM if a dedicated OCS section was not identified on a unit's Modified Tables of Organization and Equipment (MTO&E).
- b. Contracting is an integral part of a majority of sustainment functions and serves as a base for most commodities. Without an understanding of how to integrate contracting into a unit's mission, commanders can miss a fundamental element of support on today's battlefield.
- c. Contract management, in support of overall OCS, is a critical function heavily leveraged and utilized in Afghanistan by units to manage and prioritize requests for funding based on operational needs and requirements.
- d. Integration of OCS (with supporting CM and tactical support from CORs) into plans, doctrine, and operations, to include OPORDS, will build situational awareness of the subject for leaders and staff. Contracting information in an OPORD is listed as an appendix under the sustainment annex. In Joint doctrine, OCS has moved to an independent Annex W.
- e. Training in how to integrate OCS (CM and COR) is an established need prior to deployment. The number of required CORs is codified and published in Department of Army (DA) guidance.

- f. A two-week resident OCS course is offered by the Army Logistics University (ALU) at Fort Lee, Virginia, and also as a mobile course with prior coordination from ALU.
- g. Currently in Afghanistan an expeditionary sustainment command (ESC) forms the headquarters for Joint Sustainment Command–Afghanistan (JSC-A). Within the ESC, the OCS section is located underneath the support operations (SPO) section. It conducts the CM and OCS functions in coordination with the JSC-A J4 and J8. For most units, the J4/S4 (Logistics) reviews the initial contract requests with a J8 (organic or from higher) managing the unit spend plans to support contract support.
- h. The ESC-level OCSS branch members oversee JSC-A and all subordinate unit contract packets through a standardized request process for new contracts and current contract extensions. The brigade-level resource management POC performing a role of S8 (if assigned) or higher headquarters J8 manages the contract funding process, while the battalion level oversees execution of the contract.
- i. The unit nominates personnel to be (CORs). CORs provide oversight of contractors on the battlefield and support functions that contractors provide. CORs provide general guidance regarding an existing requirement defined in a performance work statement (PWS) or statement of work (SOW) document. CORs are required to attend online training from Defense Acquisition University.
- j. The contracting officer (KO) as a Warranted Acquisitions Officer can be any rank in United States forces (military or civilian). A unit will nominate someone to serve as a COR, but only Warranted KO's can appoint the COR. KO's have authority on behalf of the United States Government (USG) to enter into, administer, change, or terminate an existing contract. In addition, the KO can make determinations and findings.
- k. A Principal Assistant Responsible for Contracting (PARC) conducts CM at the highest level within a defined area of operations (AO) and serves as primary advisor to a geographic combatant command in all areas involving contracts. The geographic combatant commander serves as head of contracting activity (HCA) and effectively fills the position at a single point where military command and legal authority over contracts meet in a single person.
- l. Once a requirement is identified for contract support, the contract packet, including a PWS or SOW, is developed and serves as definition for work a contractor must perform.

- m. Contracting request packets are presented at an Acquisition Review Board (ARB). In Afghanistan, a local Joint ARB (JARB) has authority to review and validate contract requests up to \$5 million dollars. The United States Forces – Afghanistan (USFOR-A) Headquarters JARB can validate up to \$10 million requests and the Army Central Command (ARCENT) Super Combined/Coalition ARB (CARB) can validate over \$10 million requests.
- n. After a request is validated with cost estimates, it goes to a supporting resource management (RM) shop for review and support by adding the validated contract packet to the unit's spend plan. After a validated contract packet receives funding, the entire packet will be sent to the supporting procurement activity where the numbers are finalized and approved.
- o. Most contracts are annual in nature and require re-validation for funding each year.

3. Lessons Learned: Currently in Afghanistan, some units are arriving without a basic understanding of the OCS process. Some units are sending incorrect contracting requests up through their chain of command, while other units are sending requests directly to USFOR-A without visibility through the chain of command. In logistics command and control (C2) for Afghanistan, JSC-A should receive visibility of requests that flow up from subordinate units (sustainment brigade, Army field support brigade, Joint movement control battalion, and so on). A unit's S4 needs to be involved in the initial aspects of review at the appropriate level. Incoming unit leaders need to understand contract actions that support their operations; leaders also need to know how small changes in contract actions can have long-term impacts over the life of a contract. Units should have personnel identified for OCS roles in both CM and COR duties, who understand their roles and responsibilities plus are properly trained before deployment. Many times, a legal contract question should be routed to the Supporting Contract Activity (SCA). In Afghanistan, the SCA is a Regional Contracting Center.

4. Recommendation: Approximately six to twelve (6–12) months before deployment to Afghanistan, units need to identify personnel to receive training on OCS in the CM area and also as CORs. Due to the dynamic nature of today's battlefield, COR training should be received by all senior NCOs (E6 and above), warrant officers and commissioned officers. Several options are available to receive contract-related training, including the OCS course at Fort Lee through ALU for CM duties as well as on-line COR courses with DAU for everyone. In addition, hands-on knowledge and information can be gained from subject matter experts (SMEs) who have already experienced OCS support of operations from both CM-level functions and CO- related duties. This experience can and should include contact with the unit being replaced in theater once a replacement unit is identified. Due to shortened deployments (less than a year), a unit should start OCS training as soon as a unit is identified to deploy. Planning is the key to OCS preparation due to the long timeline needed for the process and details involved.

5. Related CALL publications: *Deployed COR* (Sep 08), *Commanders Guide to Money as a Weapons System-MAAWS* (Apr 09), *Developing a Performance Work Statement in a Deployed Environment* (Sep 09), *Contracting Basics for Leaders* smartcard GTA 70-01-001 (Sep 08).

6. References: Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) and all supplements, Joint Publication (JP) 4-10, Army Tactics, Techniques & Procedures (ATTP) 4-10 (JP4-10 Supplement) and Army Regulation (AR) 715-9: Operational Contract Support Planning and Management

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