

**9904.406 Cost accounting standard—
cost accounting period.****9904.406-10 [Reserved]****9904.406-20 Purpose.**

The purpose of this Cost Accounting Standard is to provide criteria for the selection of the time periods to be used as cost accounting periods for contract cost estimating, accumulating, and reporting. This Standard will reduce the effects of variations in the flow of costs within each cost accounting period. It will also enhance objectivity, consistency, and verifiability, and promote uniformity and comparability in contract cost measurements.

9904.406-30 Definitions.

(a) The following are definitions of terms which are prominent in this Standard. Other terms defined elsewhere in this part 99 shall have the meanings ascribed to them in those definitions unless paragraph (b) of this subsection, requires otherwise.

(1) *Allocate* means to assign an item of cost, or a group of items of cost, to one or more cost objectives. This term includes both direct assignment of cost and the reassignment of a share from an indirect cost pool.

(2) *Cost objective* means a function, organizational subdivision, contract, or other work unit for which cost data are desired and for which provision is made to accumulate and measure the cost of processes, products, jobs, capitalized projects, etc.

(3) *Fiscal year* means the accounting period for which annual financial statements are regularly prepared, generally a period of 12 months, 52 weeks, or 53 weeks.

(4) *Indirect cost pool* means a grouping of incurred costs identified with two or more cost objectives but not identified specifically with any final cost objective.

(b) The following modification of terms defined elsewhere in this chapter 99 are applicable to this Standard: None.

9904.406-40 Fundamental requirement.

(a) A contractor shall use this fiscal year as his cost accounting period, except that:

(1) Costs of an indirect function which exists for only a part of a cost accounting period may be allocated to cost objectives of that same part of the period as provided in 9904.406-50(a).

(2) An annual period other than the fiscal year may, as provided in 9904.406-50(d), be used as the cost accounting period if its use is an established practice of the contractor.

(3) A transitional cost accounting period other than a year shall be used whenever a change of fiscal year occurs.

(4) Where a contractor's cost accounting period is different from the reporting period used for Federal income tax reporting purposes, the latter may be used for such reporting.

(b) A contractor shall follow consistent practices in his selection of the cost accounting period or periods in which any types of expense and any types of adjustment to expense (including prior-period adjustments) are accumulated and allocated.

(c) The same cost accounting period shall be used for accumulating costs in an indirect cost pool as for establishing its allocation base, except that the contracting parties may agree to use a different period for establishing an allocation base as provided in 9904.406-50(e).

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9904.406-50 Techniques for application.

(a) The cost of an indirect function which exists for only a part of a cost accounting period may be allocated on the basis of data for that part of the cost accounting period if the cost is:

- (1) Material in amount,
- (2) Accumulated in a separate indirect cost pool, and
- (3) Allocated on the basis of an appropriate direct measure of the activity or output of the function during that part of the period.

(b) The practices required by 9904.406-40(b) of this Standard shall include appropriate practices for deferrals, accruals, and other adjustments to be used in identifying the cost accounting periods among which any types of expense and any types of adjustment to expense are distributed. If an expense, such as taxes, insurance or employee leave, is identified with a fixed, recurring, annual period which is different from the contractor's cost accounting period, the Standard permits continued use of that different period. Such expenses shall be distributed to cost accounting periods in accordance with the contractor's established practices for accruals, deferrals, and other adjustments.

(c) Indirect cost allocation rates, based on estimates, which are used for the purpose of expediting the closing of contracts which are terminated or completed prior to the end of a cost accounting period need not be those finally determined or negotiated for that cost accounting period. They shall, however, be developed to represent a full cost accounting period, except as provided in paragraph (a) of this subsection.

(d) A contractor may, upon mutual agreement with the Government, use as his cost accounting period a fixed annual period other than his fiscal year, if the use of such a period is an established practice of the contractor and is consistently used for managing and controlling the business, and appropriate accruals, deferrals or other adjustments are made with respect to such annual periods.

(e) The contracting parties may agree to use an annual period which does not coincide precisely with the cost accounting period for developing the data used in establishing an allocation base: Provided,

(1) The practice is necessary to obtain significant administrative convenience,

(2) The practice is consistently followed by the contractor,

(3) The annual period used is representative of the activity of the cost accounting period for which the indirect costs to be allocated are accumulated, and

(4) The practice can reasonably be estimated to provide a distribution to

cost objectives of the cost accounting period not materially different from that which otherwise would be obtained.

(f) When a transitional cost accounting period is required under the provisions of 9904.406-40(a)(3), the contractor may select any one of the following:

(1) The period, less than a year in length, extending from the end of his previous cost accounting period to the beginning of his next regular cost accounting period,

(2) A period in excess of a year, but not longer than 15 months, obtained by combining the period described in paragraph (f)(1) of this subsection with the previous cost accounting period, or

(3) A period in excess of a year, but not longer than 15 months, obtained by combining the period described in paragraph (f)(1) of this subsection with the next regular cost accounting period.

A change in the contractor's cost accounting period is a change in accounting practices for which an adjustment in the contract price may be required in accordance with paragraph (a)(4) (ii) or (iii) of the contract clause set out at 9903.201-4(a).

9904.406-60 Illustrations.

(a) A contractor allocates general management expenses on the basis of total cost input. In a proposal for a covered negotiated fixed-price contract, he estimates the allocable expenses based solely on the estimated amount of the general management expense pool and the amount of the total cost input base estimated to be incurred during the 8 months in which performance is scheduled to be commenced and completed. Such a proposal would be in violation of the requirements of this Standard that the calculation of the amounts of both the indirect cost pools and the allocation bases be based on the contractor's cost accounting period.

(b) A contractor whose cost accounting period is the calendar year, installs a computer service center to begin operations on May 1. The operating expense related to the new service center is expected to be material in amount, will be accumulated in a separate indirect cost pool, and will be allocated to the benefiting cost objectives on the