

Office of the Secretary, USDA

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Subpart B—Rules of Procedure

- 24.21 Rules of Procedure of Agriculture Board of Contract Appeals—AGBCA.

APPENDIX TO SUBPART B—RULE OF PROCEDURE

AUTHORITY: 5 U.S.C. 301; 15 U.S.C. 714b, 714g, and 714h; 16 U.S.C. 551; 40 U.S.C. 486(c); 41 U.S.C. 601-613.

SOURCE: 60 FR 56207, Nov. 7, 1995, unless otherwise noted.

Subpart A—Organization and Functions

§ 24.1 General.

The Board of Contract Appeals, United States Department of Agriculture (referred to as the “Board”) is an agency of the Department established by the Secretary of Agriculture in accordance with the requirements of the Contract Disputes Act of 1978 (41 U.S.C. 601-613). The provisions of 5 U.S.C. 551-559 (Administrative Procedure Act) are not applicable to proceedings before the Board except for the requirements under 5 U.S.C. 552 respecting public information, agency rules, opinions, orders, and records.

§ 24.2 Composition of the Board.

The Board consists of a Chair, Vice Chair, and other members, all of whom are attorneys at law duly licensed by a state, commonwealth, territory, or the District of Columbia. The Board members are designated Administrative Judges. The Chair shall manage the business and operations of the Board, assign cases to members, and establish panels for cases. Except as provided in Rule 12.2, the Small Claims (Expedited) Procedure, and Rule 12.3, the Accelerated procedure, decisions of the Board will be rendered by a panel of three Administrative Judges, and the decision of the majority of the panel will constitute the decision of the Board. The Vice Chair shall perform the functions of the Chair upon request of the Chair or in the event of absence or unavailability of the Chair to act.

§ 24.3 Presiding Administrative Judge.

The Chair acts as presiding Administrative Judge, or designates a member of the Board or an examiner to so act, in each proceeding. The Presiding Administrative Judge or the examiner has power to:

- (a) Rule upon motions and request;
- (b) Adjourn the hearing from time to time and change the time and place of hearing;
- (c) Administer oaths and affirmations and take affidavits;
- (d) Receive evidence;
- (e) Order the taking of depositions;
- (f) Admit or exclude evidence;
- (g) Hear oral argument on facts or law;
- (h) Consolidate appeals filed by two or more appellants; and
- (i) Do all acts and take all measures necessary for the maintenance of order at the hearing and the efficient conduct of the proceeding.

In cases considered by the Board under § 24.4(b), (c), and (d) the Chair is hereby delegated authority to request subpoenas pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 304.

§ 24.4 Jurisdiction.

(a) *Contract Disputes Act.* Pursuant to the Contract Disputes Act of 1978 (41 U.S.C. 601-613), the Board shall consider and determine appeals from decisions of contracting officers relating to contracts entered into on or after March 1, 1979, and, at the contractor's election, contracts entered into prior to March 1, 1979, with respect to claims pending before the contracting officer on March 1, 1979, or initiated thereafter. For purposes of this paragraph (a) the term “contracts” shall mean express or implied contracts made by the Department of Agriculture, agencies of the Department, or by any other executive agency when such agency or the Administrator for Federal Procurement Policy has designated the Board to decide the appeal, for:

- (1) The procurement of property, other than real property in being;
 - (2) The procurement of services;
 - (3) The procurement of construction, alternation, repair, or maintenance of real property; or
 - (4) The disposal of personal property.
- (b) *Federal Crop Insurance Corporation.* The Board shall have jurisdiction

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of appeals of final administrative determinations of the Corporation pertaining to standard reinsurance agreements under 7 CFR 400.169(d). Decisions of the Board shall be final within the Corporation and the Department.

(c) *Suspension and debarment.* (1) The Board shall have jurisdiction to hear and determine the issue of suspension or debarment, and the period thereof, on an appeal by a person suspended or debarred by:

(i) An authorized official of the Department of Agriculture under 48 CFR 409.470; or

(ii) An authorized official of the Commodity Credit Corporation under 7 CFR part 1407.

(2) In addition, the Board shall have jurisdiction to hear and determine the issue of debarment, and the period thereof, on an appeal by a timber purchaser debarred by an authorized official of the Forest Service under 36 CFR 223.138.

(3) Decisions of the Board shall be final within the Department.

(d) *Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act.* The Board shall have jurisdiction to act for the head of the agency in appeals of the administrative determinations of liquidated damages under the Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act (40 U.S.C. 327-333), 40 U.S.C. 330.

§ 24.5 Time for filing notice of appeal.

A notice of appeal under § 24.4(a), (c)(1)(i), or (c)(1)(ii) shall be filed within 90 days from the date of receipt of a contracting officer's or suspending or debarring official's decision. A notice of appeal under § 24.4(b) shall be filed within 90 days from the date of receipt of the Corporation's final determination. A notice of appeal under § 24.4(c)(2) shall be filed within 30 days from the date of receipt of the debarring official's decision. A notice of appeal under § 24.4(d) shall be filed within 60 days from the date of withholding of liquidated damages. The time for filing a notice of appeal shall not be extended by the Board.

§ 24.6 Board location and address.

The Board of Contract Appeals is located in Washington, DC. All correspondence and all documents to be

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filed with the Board should be addressed to the Board of Contract Appeals, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250-0600. The Board's telephone number is 202-720-7023; the Board's facsimile number is 202-720-3059.

§ 24.7 Public information.

(a) The records of the Board are open to the public for inspection and copying at the Office of the Board. Decisions and rulings of the Board shall be published from time to time and copies made available to the public upon request at cost of duplication except that the Board shall, in its discretion, have authority to make copies of decisions and rulings available at no charge in accordance with Department policy, appendix A to 7 CFR part 1, subpart A. Hearings before the Board shall be open to the public.

(b) Information that is to be made available for public inspection and copying under provisions of 5 U.S.C. 552(a)(2) and 7 CFR 1.5 may be obtained at the office of the Board. The address of the Board is set forth in § 24.6. Except for such information as is generally available to the public, requests should be in writing and submitted in accordance with 7 CFR 1.6 and paragraphs (c) and (d) of this § 24.7.

(c) Facilities for copying are available at the office of the Board.

(d) Facilities for inspection and copying are available during established office hours for the Board, usually 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. The Department of Agriculture has established a schedule of fees for copies of information. The Board charges for copies of records in accordance with the Department fee schedule, appendix A to 7 CFR part 1, subpart A.

(e) The Vice Chair is authorized to receive requests for records submitted in accordance with 7 CFR 1.6(a), and to make determinations regarding whether to grant or deny requests for records exempt from mandatory disclosure under the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 552(b). This official is authorized to

(1) Extend the ten-day administrative deadline for reply pursuant to 7 CFR 1.14,