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9904.407 Use of standard costs for direct material and direct labor.

9904.407–10 [Reserved]

9904.407–20 Purpose.

(a) The purpose of this Cost Accounting Standard is to provide criteria under which standard costs may be used for estimating, accumulating, and reporting costs of direct material and direct labor; and to provide criteria relating to the establishment of standards, accumulation of standard costs, and accumulation and disposition of variances from standard costs. Consistent application of these criteria where standard costs are in use will improve cost measurement and cost assignment.

(b) This Cost Accounting Standard is not intended to cover the use of pre-established measures solely for estimating.

9904.407–30 Definitions.

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

(1) *Labor cost at standard* means a pre-established measure of the labor element of cost, computed by multiplying labor-rate standard by labor-time standard.

(2) *Labor-rate standard* means a pre-established measure, expressed in monetary terms, of the price of labor.

(3) *Labor-time standard* means a pre-established measure, expressed in temporal terms, of the quantity of labor.

(4) *Material cost at standard* means a pre-established measure of the material element of cost, computed by multiplying material-price standard by material-quantity standard.

(5) *Material-price standard* means a pre-established measure, expressed in monetary terms, of the price of material.

(6) *Material-quantity standard* means a pre-established measure, expressed in physical terms, of the quantity of material.

(7) *Production unit* means a grouping of activities which either uses homogeneous inputs of direct material and direct labor or yields homogeneous outputs such that the costs or statistics related to these homogeneous inputs or outputs are appropriate as bases for allocating variances.

(8) *Standard cost* means any cost computed with the use of pre-established measures.

(9) *Variance* means the difference between a pre-established measure and an actual measure.

(b) The following modifications of terms defined elsewhere in this Chapter 99 are applicable to this Standard:

(1) Actual cost. An amount determined on the basis of cost incurred.

(2) [Reserved]

9904.407–40 Fundamental requirement.

Standard costs may be used for estimating, accumulating, and reporting costs of direct material and direct labor only when all of the following criteria are met:

(a) Standard costs are entered into the books of account.

(b) Standard costs and related variances are appropriately accounted for at the level of the production unit.

(c) Practices with respect to the setting and revising of standards, use of standard costs, and disposition of variances are stated in writing and are consistently followed.

9904.407–50 Techniques for application.

(a)(1) A contractor's written statement of practices with respect to standards shall include the bases and criteria (such as engineering studies, experience, or other supporting data) used in setting and revising standards; the period during which standards are to remain effective; the level (such as ideal or realistic) at which material-quantity standards and labor-time standards are set; and conditions (such as those expected to prevail at the beginning of a period) which material-price standards and labor-rate standards are designed to reflect.

(2) Where only either the material price or material quantity is set at standard, with the other component stated at actual, the result of the multiplication shall be treated as material

cost at standard. Similarly, where only either the labor rate or labor time is set at standard, with the other component stated at actual, the result of the multiplication shall be treated as labor cost at standard.

(3) A labor-rate standard may be set to cover a category of direct labor only if the functions performed within that category are not materially disparate and the employees involved are interchangeable with respect to the functions performed.

(4) A labor-rate standard may be set to cover a group of direct labor workers who perform disparate functions only under either one of the following conditions:

(i) Where that group of workers all work in a single production unit yielding homogeneous outputs (in this case, the same labor-rate standard shall be applied to each worker in that group).

(ii) Where that group of workers, in the performance of their respective functions, forms an integral team (in this case, a labor-rate standard shall be set for each integral team).

(b)(1) Material-price standards may be used and their related variances may be recognized either at the time purchases of material are entered into the books of account, or at the time material cost is allocated to production units.

(2) Where material-price standards are used and related variances are recognized at the time purchases of material are entered into the books of account, they shall be accumulated separately by homogeneous groupings of material. Examples of homogeneous groupings of material are:

(i) Where prices of all items in that grouping of material are expected to fluctuate in the same direction and at substantially the same rate, or

(ii) Where items in that grouping of material are held for use in a single production unit yielding homogeneous outputs.

(3) Where material-price variances are recognized at the time purchases of material are entered into the books of account, variances of each homogeneous grouping of material shall be allocated (except as provided in paragraph (b)(4) of this subsection), at least annually, to items in purchased-items inventory and to production units receiving items from that homogeneous grouping of material, in accordance with either one of the following practices, which shall be consistently followed:

(i) Items in purchased-items inventory of a homogeneous grouping of material are adjusted from standard cost to actual cost; the balance of the material-price variance, after reflecting these adjustments, shall be allocated to production units on the basis of the total of standard cost of material received from that homogeneous grouping of material by each of the production units; or

(ii) Items, at standard cost, in purchased-items inventory of a homogeneous grouping of material, are treated, collectively, as a production unit; the material-price variance shall be allocated to production units on the basis of standard cost of material received from that homogeneous grouping of material by each of the production units.

(4) Where material-price variances are recognized at the time purchases of material are entered into the books of account, variances of each homogeneous grouping of material which are insignificant may be included in appropriate indirect cost pools for allocation to applicable cost objectives.

(5) Where a material-price variance is allocated to a production unit in accordance with paragraph (b)(3) of this subsection, it may be combined with material-quantity variance into one material-cost variance for that production unit. A separate material-cost variance shall be accumulated for each production unit.

(6) Where material-price variances are recognized at the time material cost is allocated to production units, these variances and material-quantity variances may be combined into one material-cost variance account.

(c) Labor-cost variances shall be recognized at the time labor cost is introduced into production units. Labor-rate variances and labor-time variances may be combined into one labor-cost variance account. A separate labor-cost variance shall be accumulated for each production unit.

(d) A contractor's established practice with respect to the disposition of variances accumulated by production unit shall be in accordance with one of the following subparagraphs:

(1) Variances are allocated to cost objectives (including ending in-process inventory) at least annually. Where a variance related to material is allocated, the allocation shall be on the basis of the material cost at standard, or, where outputs are homogeneous, on the basis of units of output. Similarly, where a variance related to labor is allocated, the allocation shall be on the basis of the labor cost at standard or labor hours at standard or, where outputs are homogeneous, on the basis of units of output; or

(2) Variances which are immaterial may be included in appropriate indirect cost pools for allocation to applicable cost objectives.

(e) Where variances applicable to covered contracts are allocated by memorandum worksheet adjustments rather than in the books of account, the bases used for adjustment shall be in accordance with those stated in paragraph (b)(3) and paragraph (d) of this subsection.

9904.407–60 Illustrations.

(a) Contractor A's written practice is to set his material-price standard for an item on the basis of average purchase prices expected to prevail during the calendar year. For that item whose usage from month to month is stable, a purchase contract is generally signed on May 1 of each year for a 1-year commitment. The current purchase contract calls for a purchase price of $3 per pound; an increase of 5 percent, or 15¢ per pound, has been announced by the vendor when the new purchase contract comes into effect next May. Contractor A sets his material-price standard for this item at $3.10 per pound for the year ([$3.00×4+$3.15×8]÷ 12). Since Contractor A sets his material-price standard in accordance with his written practice, he complies with provisions of 9904.407–40(c) of this Cost Accounting Standard.

(b) Contractor B accumulates, in one account, labor cost at standard for a department in which several categories of direct labor of disparate functions, in different combinations, are used in the manufacture of various dissimilar outputs of the department. Contractor B's department is not a production unit as defined in 9904.407–30(a)(7) of this Cost Accounting Standard. Modifying his practice so as to comply with the definition of production unit in 9904.407–30(a)(7), he could accumulate the standard costs and variances separately,

(1) For each of the several categories of direct labor, or

(2) For each of several subdepartments, with homogeneous output for each of the subdepartments.

(c) Contractor C allocates variances at the end of each month. During the month of March, a production unit has accumulated the following data with respect to labor:

	Labor hours at standard	Labor dollars at standard	Labor cost variance
Balance, March 1	5,000	$25,000	$2,000
Additions in March	15,000	75,000	5,000
Total	20,000	100,000	7,000
Transfers-out in March	8,000	40,000	.....
Balance, March 31	12,000	60,000	.....

Using labor hours at standard as the base, Contractor C establishes a labor-cost variance rate of $.35 per standard labor hour ($7,000 ÷ 20,000), and deducts $2,800 ($.35 × 8,000) from the labor-cost variance account, leaving a balance of $4,200 ($7,000–$2,800). Contractor C's practice complies with provisions of 9904.407–50(d)(1) of this Cost Accounting Standard.

(d) Contractor D, who uses materials the prices of which are expected to fluctuate at different rates, recognizes material-price variances at the time purchases of material are entered into the books of account. He maintains one purchase-price variance account for the whole plant. Purchased items are requisitioned by various production units in the plant. Since prices of material are expected to fluctuate at different rates, this plant-wide grouping does not constitute a homogeneous grouping of material. Contractor D's practice does not comply with provisions of 9904.407–50(b)(2) of this Cost Accounting Standard. However, if he would maintain several purchased-