

**31.001 Definitions.**

As used in this part—

*Accrued benefit cost method* means an actuarial cost method under which units of benefits are assigned to each cost accounting period and are valued as they accrue; *i.e.*, based on the services performed by each employee in the period involved. The measure of normal cost under this method for each cost accounting period is the present value of the units of benefit deemed to be credited to employees for service in that period. The measure of the actuarial accrued liability at a plan's inception date is the present value of the units of benefit credited to employees for service prior to that date. (This method is also known as the unit credit cost method without salary projection.)

*Accumulating costs* means collecting cost data in an organized manner, such as through a system of accounts.

*Actual cash value* means the cost of replacing damaged property with other property of like kind and quality in the physical condition of the property immediately before the damage.

*Actual costs* means (except for subpart 31.6) amounts determined on the basis of costs incurred, as distinguished from forecasted costs. Actual costs include standard costs properly adjusted for applicable variances.

*Actuarial accrued liability* means pension cost attributable, under the actuarial cost method in use, to years prior to the current period considered by a particular actuarial valuation. As of such date, the actuarial accrued liability represents the excess of the present value of future benefits and administrative expenses over the present value of future normal costs for all plan participants and beneficiaries. The excess of the actuarial accrued liability over the actuarial value of the assets of a pension plan is the unfunded actuarial liability. The excess of the actuarial value of the assets of a pension plan over the actuarial accrued liability is an actuarial surplus and is treated as a negative unfunded actuarial liability.

*Actuarial assumption* means an estimate of future conditions affecting pension cost; *e.g.*, mortality rate, employee turnover, compensation levels, earnings on pension plan assets, and

changes in values of pension plan assets.

*Actuarial cost method* means a technique which uses actuarial assumptions to measure the present value of future pension benefits and pension plan administrative expenses, and that assigns the cost of such benefits and expenses to cost accounting periods. The actuarial cost method includes the asset valuation method used to determine the actuarial value of the assets of a pension plan.

*Actuarial gain and loss* means the effect on pension cost resulting from differences between actuarial assumptions and actual experience.

*Actuarial valuation* means the determination, as of a specified date, of the normal cost, actuarial accrued liability, actuarial value of the assets of a pension plan, and other relevant values for the pension plan.

*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.

*Compensated personal absence* means any absence from work for reasons such as illness, vacation, holidays, jury duty, military training, or personal activities for which an employer pays compensation directly to an employee in accordance with a plan or custom of the employer.

*Compensation for personal services* means all remuneration paid currently or accrued, in whatever form and whether paid immediately or deferred, for services rendered by employees to the contractor.

*Cost input* means the cost, except general and administrative (G&A) expenses, which for contract costing purposes is allocable to the production of goods and services during a cost accounting period.

*Cost objective* means (except for subpart 31.6) 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.

*Deferred compensation* means an award made by an employer to compensate an employee in a future cost accounting period or periods for services rendered in one or more cost accounting periods before the date of the receipt of compensation by the employee. This definition shall not include the amount of year end accruals for salaries, wages, or bonuses that are to be paid within a reasonable period of time after the end of a cost accounting period.

*Defined-benefit pension plan* means a pension plan in which the benefits to be paid, or the basis for determining such benefits, are established in advance and the contributions are intended to provide the stated benefits.

*Defined-contribution pension plan* means a pension plan in which the contributions to be made are established in advance and the benefits are determined thereby.

*Directly associated cost* means any cost which is generated solely as a result of the incurrence of another cost, and which would not have been incurred had the other cost not been incurred.

*Estimating costs* means the process of forecasting a future result in terms of cost, based upon information available at the time.

*Expressly unallowable cost* means a particular item or type of cost which, under the express provisions of an applicable law, regulation, or contract, is specifically named and stated to be unallowable.

*Final cost objective* means (except for subparts 31.3 and 31.6) a cost objective that has allocated to it both direct and indirect costs and, in the contractor's accumulation system, is one of the final accumulation points.

*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.

*Funded pension cost* means the portion of pension cost for a current or prior cost accounting period that has been paid to a funding agency.

*Home office* means an office responsible for directing or managing two or more, but not necessarily all, segments of an organization. It typically estab-

lishes policy for, and provides guidance to, the segments in their operations. It usually performs management, supervisory, or administrative functions, and may also perform service functions in support of the operations of the various segments. An organization which has intermediate levels, such as groups, may have several home offices which report to a common home office. An intermediate organization may be both a segment and a home office.

*Immediate-gain actuarial cost method* means any of the several actuarial cost methods under which actuarial gains and losses are included as part of the unfunded actuarial liability of the pension plan, rather than as part of the normal cost of the plan.

*Independent research and development (IR&D) cost* means the cost of effort which is neither sponsored by a grant, nor required in performing a contract, and which falls within any of the following four areas: (a) basic research, (b) applied research, (c) development, and (d) systems and other concept formulation studies.

*Indirect cost pools* means (except for subparts 31.3 and 31.6) groupings of incurred costs identified with two or more cost objectives but not identified specifically with any final cost objective.

*Insurance administration expenses* means the contractor's costs of administering an insurance program; e.g., the costs of operating an insurance or risk-management department, processing claims, actuarial fees, and service fees paid to insurance companies, trustees, or technical consultants.

*Intangible capital asset* means an asset that has no physical substance, has more than minimal value, and is expected to be held by an enterprise for continued use or possession beyond the current accounting period for the benefits it yields.

*Job* means a homogeneous cluster of work tasks, the completion of which serves an enduring purpose for the organization. Taken as a whole, the collection of tasks, duties, and responsibilities constitutes the assignment for one or more individuals whose work is of the same nature and is performed at the same skill/ responsibility level—

as opposed to a position, which is a collection of tasks assigned to a specific individual. Within a job, there may be pay categories which are dependent on the degree of supervision required by the employee while performing assigned tasks which are performed by all persons with the same job.

*Job class of employees* means employees performing in positions within the same job.

*Labor cost at standard* means a preestablished measure of the labor element of cost, computed by multiplying labor-rate standard by labor-time standard.

*Labor market* means a place where individuals exchange their labor for compensation. Labor markets are identified and defined by a combination of the following factors:

- (1) Geography,
- (2) Education and/or technical background required,
- (3) Experience required by the job,
- (4) Licensing or certification requirements,
- (5) Occupational membership, and
- (6) Industry.

*Labor-rate standard* means a preestablished measure, expressed in monetary terms, of the price of labor.

*Labor-time standard* means a preestablished measure, expressed in temporal terms, of the quantity of labor.

*Material cost at standard* means a preestablished measure of the material elements of cost, computed by multiplying material-price standard by material-quantity standard.

*Material-price standard* means a preestablished measure, expressed in monetary terms, of the price of material.

*Material-quantity standard* means a preestablished measure, expressed in physical terms, of the quantity of material.

*Moving average cost* means an inventory costing method under which an average unit cost is computed after each acquisition by adding the cost of the newly acquired units to the cost of the units of inventory on hand and dividing this figure by the new total number of units.

*Nonqualified pension plan* means any pension plan other than a qualified pension plan as defined in this part.

*Normal cost* means the annual cost attributable, under the actuarial cost method in use, to current and future years as of a particular valuation date excluding any payment in respect of an unfunded actuarial liability.

*Original complement of low cost equipment* means a group of items acquired for the initial outfitting of a tangible capital asset or an operational unit, or a new addition to either. The items in the group individually cost less than the minimum amount established by the contractor for capitalization for the classes of assets acquired but in the aggregate they represent a material investment. The group, as a complement, is expected to be held for continued service beyond the current period. Initial outfitting of the unit is completed when the unit is ready and available for normal operations.

*Pay-as-you-go cost method* means a method of recognizing pension cost only when benefits are paid to retired employees or their beneficiaries.

*Pension plan* means a deferred compensation plan established and maintained by one or more employers to provide systematically for the payment of benefits to plan participants after their retirements, provided that the benefits are paid for life or are payable for life at the option of the employees. Additional benefits such as permanent and total disability and death payments, and survivorship payments to beneficiaries of deceased employees, may be an integral part of a pension plan.

*Pension plan participant* means any employee or former employee of an employer or any member or former member of an employee organization, who is or may become eligible to receive a benefit from a pension plan which covers employees of such employer or members of such organization who have satisfied the plan's participation requirements, or whose beneficiaries are receiving or may be eligible to receive any such benefit. A participant whose employment status with the employer has not been terminated is an active participant of the employer's pension plan.

*Profit center* means (except for subparts 31.3 and 31.6) the smallest organizationally independent segment of a company charged by management with profit and loss responsibilities.

*Projected benefit cost method* means either—

(1) Any of the several actuarial cost methods that distribute the estimated total cost of all of the employees' prospective benefits over a period of years, usually their working careers; or

(2) A modification of the accrued benefit cost method that considers projected compensation levels.

*Proposal* means any offer or other submission used as a basis for pricing a contract, contract modification, or termination settlement or for securing payments thereunder.

*Qualified pension plan* means a pension plan comprising a definite written program communicated to and for the exclusive benefit of employees that meets the criteria deemed essential by the Internal Revenue Service as set forth in the Internal Revenue Code for preferential tax treatment regarding contributions, investments, and distributions. Any other plan is a non-qualified pension plan.

*Self-insurance charge* means a cost which represents the projected average loss under a self-insurance plan.

*Service life* means the period of usefulness of a tangible capital asset (or group of assets) to its current owner. The period may be expressed in units of time or output. The estimated service life of a tangible capital asset (or group of assets) is a current forecast of its service life and is the period over which depreciation cost is to be assigned.

*Spread-gain actuarial cost method* means any of the several projected benefit actuarial cost methods under which actuarial gains and losses are included as part of the current and future normal costs of the pension plan.

*Standard cost* means any cost computed with the use of preestablished measures.

*Tangible capital asset* means an asset that has physical substance, more than minimal value, and is expected to be held by an enterprise for continued use or possession beyond the current accounting period for the services it yields.

*Termination of employment gain or loss* means an actuarial gain or loss resulting from the difference between the assumed and actual rates at which pension plan participants separate from employment for reasons other than retirement, disability, or death.

*Variance* means the difference between a preestablished measure and an actual measure.

*Weighted average cost* means an inventory costing method under which an average unit cost is computed periodically by dividing the sum of the cost of beginning inventory plus the cost of acquisitions by the total number of units included in these two categories.

*Welfare benefit fund* means a trust or organization which receives and accumulates assets to be used either for the payment of postretirement benefits, or for the purchase of such benefits, provided such accumulated assets form a part of a postretirement benefit plan.

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### **31.002 Availability of accounting guide.**

Contractors needing assistance in developing or improving their accounting systems and procedures may request a copy of the Defense Contract Audit Agency Pamphlet No. 7641.90, Information for Contractors. The pamphlet is available via the Internet at <http://www.dcaa.mil>.

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## **Subpart 31.1—Applicability**

### **31.100 Scope of subpart.**

This subpart describes the applicability of the cost principles and procedures in succeeding subparts of this part to various types of contracts and subcontracts. It also describes the need for advance agreements.

### **31.101 Objectives.**

In recognition of differing organizational characteristics, the cost principles and procedures in the succeeding