



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

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SUBJ: USING THE OFFICE AUTOMATION TECHNOLOGY AND SERVICES CONTRACT

1. PURPOSE. This order establishes specific criteria and a waiver procedure under which offices may acquire office automation hardware, software, networks, and services from non-OATS sources. This order provides guidance to implement the FAA policy contained in Order 1370.72, Transition to an Office Automation Technology and Services (OATS) Environment.

2. DISTRIBUTION. This order is distributed to the division level in Washington, regions, and centers to all Information Resource Managers (IRM).

3. BACKGROUND.

a. The DOT-wide OATS contract was awarded to American Telephone and Telegraph (AT&T) December 21, 1989. OATS was conceived and is being implemented as the baseline configuration platform for all FAA office automation and distributed data processing applications. It is enabling us to migrate from our current, highly fragmented state towards a fully compatible, integrated distributed data processing environment. The OATS contract is used to provide FAA and other DOT operating administrations with both desktop and laptop workstations; a full range of technical software, including word processing, spreadsheet, desktop publishing, electronic mail, relational and personal data bases, graphics, and other microcomputer-based applications; networking capabilities, modems, and associated cabling; and, a full range of technical support services, including configuration analysis, installation support, training, and maintenance. The Office of Acquisition Support and the Office of Information Technology distributed copies of the OATS contract and associated technical information to Information Resource Managers and other key personnel who are involved in OATS implementation.

b. Since the OATS contract was awarded, there have been numerous questions concerning agency policies and procedures for using the OATS contract and procurements of office automation technology from non-OATS sources. A general policy on use of the OATS contract within FAA is stated in Order 1370.72 by the Administrator as follows: "...as a matter of general policy, all future acquisitions of microcomputer/minicomputer type hardware, software, and associated network products should be through the OATS contract." The Administrator also affirmed the need to develop transition plans, and the need to establish criteria and a waiver process for acquisition of non-OATS products. This order provides guidance on transition planning and guidance for acquisition of hardware, software and networking products from non-OATS sources.

4. SCOPE. All guidelines and procedures described in this order apply to acquisitions both by FAA and those performed on behalf of FAA by its contractors. This order also applies to acquisitions under existing blanket purchase agreements.

5. TRANSITION PLANS. With the OATS contract in place, each office must develop transition plans which outline the optimum migration paths for each office to follow in attaining a fully compatible OATS environment. It is recognized that the support of existing office automation environments cannot be discontinued immediately in favor of the target OATS environment because of economics, training, conversion requirements, and other transition considerations. However, program organizations and Information Resource Managers must work together to develop innovative and cost-effective solutions for expediting OATS transitions.

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a. Washington headquarters, regional, and center IRM's and designated NAS program managers should coordinate transition planning activities with one another and with the Office of Information Technology. At a minimum, OATS transition plans need to assess requirements for continued support of existing office automation environments, strategies for conversion of current applications, and resources required to support transition to a full OATS environment.

b. The Information Resources Management Division (AIT-300) provides assistance in structuring individual transition plans and will facilitate coordination among the Washington headquarters, regions, and centers in transition planning.

6. **PROCUREMENT OF OFFICE AUTOMATION TECHNOLOGY FROM NON-OATS SOURCES.** It is important not to add to FAA's existing incompatible, fragmented office automation base environment any more than necessary to meet critical short-term mission requirements. Accordingly, IRM's should only approve procurement requests for non-OATS hardware, software, and network products which are consistent with the guidelines provided in Appendix 1, Acquisition and Use of Non-OATS Technology. You may direct specific questions concerning the attached guidelines to AIT-340.



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APPENDIX 1. ACQUISITION AND USE OF NON-OATS TECHNOLOGY

1. INTRODUCTION. The procurement guidance contained in paragraph 6 and guidelines outlined in this appendix contain the criteria which will be used in approving non-OATS hardware, software, and services procurements and describe the process for obtaining a waiver from using the OATS contract. Information Resource Managers (IRM) are expected to evaluate acquisition procurement requests (PR) that fall within their authority based on the same criteria.

Agency organizations and program offices are encouraged to complete their transition plans for migration to a full OATS environment. Transition plans will be used in evaluating waiver requests. Lack of a transition plan may prolong the process of evaluating a waiver request.

The key factor in assessing requests will not be the particular functionality offered by non-OATS items, but the difference in application development and the impact on performance of not using the OATS standard. The impact of the compatibility issues on FAA as a whole, the impact on data standards and information sharing, and the cost of deviating from the OATS standard will also be considered. Cost evaluations will not be limited to the cost of the individual item, but the entire cost of the project.

2. GUIDELINES.

a. There will be no exemptions granted from mandatory use of the OATS contract for the following conditions/circumstances:

- (1) OATS-equivalent standalone hardware procured from anywhere other than OATS sources.
- (2) Non-OATS software when the major functional requirements can be met by OATS-procured products.
- (3) Requests based on the assertion that OATS capacity exceeds requirements; e.g., the OATS workstation is more powerful than needed.
- (4) Non-OATS hardware or software based solely on lower cost.
- (5) OATS hardware or software to be obtained from anywhere other than the OATS vendor via the OATS contract.

b. The following exemptions from mandatory use of the OATS contract do not require review by AIT or the approval of a waiver, for procurement requests (PR's) up to \$5,000:

- (1) Local Area Network (LAN) software purchased to connect OATS workstations to existing networks.
- (2) Hardware to connect existing networks to OATS hardware.
- (3) Repairs and maintenance for existing personal computers (PC) and LAN's.
- (4) Minor expansions for configurations where there is no OATS equivalent product; i.e., to add one or two new employees to an existing LAN environment or to train such users.
- (5) Copies of software that have OATS equivalents which are necessary to meet existing operational requirements and to meet minor expansions of LAN's.
- (6) Upgrades to existing PC's, so that they can use OATS software.
- (7) Acquisitions for use outside the United States, although OATS should be used if feasible.

(8) Upgrades to existing PC's for anything other than OATS software after considering both the investment in the current system and its economic and functional benefits.

NOTE: All of the exemptions in paragraph 2b should be considered in light of their costs and the timing of the planned transition to an OATS environment.

c. The following conditions and/or circumstances must be reviewed and approved before proceeding with an acquisition:

(1) Other than minimal expansions to existing LAN's; i.e., adding five or more workstations will not be considered without a full-scale transition plan. Users with new LAN requirements must consider establishing a STARLAN network with a bridge or other integration approach for connection to the old environment.

(2) Requirements based on claims of insufficient hardware capacity in an OATS solution must be documented with an analysis of the OATS client/server architecture. Frequency of use and computational requirements will be considered when analyzing capacity issues.

(3) Requirements based on claims of insufficient software features or unique features of non-OATS software will be analyzed to determine how the features affect application development, performance, and planned usage. The alternative of using OATS software must be compared with a non-OATS solution.

3. APPROVALS.

a. After completion of a review of the waiver request, a recommendation for either approval or disapproval will be made to AIT-1.

b. Imprest fund purchases that meet the above guidelines are acceptable.

c. IRM's may approve PR's up to \$5,000 for non-OATS items providing the conditions above are met. Copies of PR's between \$1,000 - 5,000 should be sent to AIT-340 for statistical evaluation. Proposed procurements of new software products in excess of \$1,000 which are not within the scope of the OATS functional requirements should be submitted to AIT-340 for informational purposes.

d. PR's above \$5,000 must be sent to AIT-340 for review. The information described in the "WAIVER DOCUMENTATION" section must accompany the PR.

4. SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES. Limited specific waivers may be granted in rare instances in response to circumstances which are temporary in nature or cannot be foreseen, and therefore are not addressed by the guidelines in this order. Any such waiver granted will contain language describing the conditions which accompany the waiver.

5. WAIVER DOCUMENTATION. Requests for waivers which are deficient in documentation requirements will be returned to the originator. If an item is not applicable or not known, indicate "N/A" or "unknown" as appropriate.

a. Existing Environment:

Describe the current hardware, software, and application environments and their relationship to the requested item(s).

b. Proposed Hardware:

1/2/92

1370.75
Appendix 1

(1) Include the analysis which shows that your application cannot operate in a networked configuration of OATS servers and workstations. Please remember that all software does not need to run on every workstation. Spreading applications across several servers in a client-server architecture is the usual design approach for Local Area Networks (LAN) and is transparent to individual users.

(2) The discussion of hardware capabilities MUST be distinct from the discussion of software. The possibility of running non-OATS software on OATS hardware, and vice versa, must be considered.

c. Proposed Software:

(1) List the unique aspects of the requested software and how it relates to your application.

(2) Show which parts of your solution will be developed or processed differently using your requested software rather than the OATS standard. Considerations should include:

- (a) what additional costs will be incurred;
- (b) what parts cannot be completed; and
- (c) similar distinctions that you find relevant.

FOR EXAMPLE: If your software is storing data base rules for automatically accessing incompatible systems, you should list the alternatives that would be used if the OATS software was the development language. Alternatives could include manual updating of rules, rules stored in tables but with no automatic accessing, rules kept on hardcopy, etc.

(3) Describe the performance impacts of operating the different software version or network type, if known.

d. Application Development Costs:

Estimated acquisition and development costs of the complete system, not just the non-OATS items, should be given so that the entire cost of the noncompatible solution can be assessed.

e. Data Accessibility:

(1) Describe the data produced, gathered, and/or used by your application.

(2) If your application is storing or managing information which has potential for use by any other agency organizations/program offices in FAA, provide that information here.

f. Other Costs:

If the approval of the waiver request will result in a new computer operation, estimates for maintenance, operating system, ongoing operations, and training costs must be included.

g. Signature of IRM: _____

Waiver Documentation:

- cover letter to AIT-340;
- waiver request documentation (items 5a through 5g); and
- organization PR signed by IRM.