

additional supporting materials with their tariff filings. These proposals may impose additional reporting or recordkeeping requirements on entities. The Commission seeks comment on the possible burden these requirements would place on small entities. Also, the Commission seeks comment on whether a special approach toward any possible compliance burdens on small entities might be appropriate. Entities, especially small businesses, are encouraged to quantify the costs and benefits of any reporting requirement that may be established in this proceeding.

Steps Taken To Minimize Significant Economic Impact on Small Entities, and Significant Alternatives Considered

39. The RFA requires an agency to describe any significant alternatives that it has considered in reaching its proposed approach, which may include (among others) the following four alternatives: (1) The establishment of differing compliance or reporting requirements or timetables that take into account the resources available to small entities; (2) the clarification, consolidation, or simplification of compliance or reporting requirements under the rule for small entities; (3) the use of performance, rather than design, standards; and (4) an exemption from coverage of the rule, or any part thereof, for small entities.

40. The Commission's primary objective is to develop a framework for ensuring that rates remain just and reasonable, as required by section 201(b). The Commission seeks comment here on the effect the various proposals described in the Notice will have on small entities, and on what effect alternative rules would have on those entities. The Commission invites comment on ways in which the Commission can achieve its goal of protecting consumers while at the same time imposing minimal burdens on small entities.

Federal Rules That May Duplicate, Overlap, or Conflict With the Proposed Rules

41. None.

Ordering Clauses

42. Accordingly, *It is ordered*, pursuant to Sections 4(i), 160, 201–204, and 254(g) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, 47 U.S.C. 154(i), 160, 201–204, and 254(g), that this Notice of Proposed Rulemaking is adopted.

43. *It is further ordered* that the Commission's Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau, Reference

Information Center, shall send a copy of this Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, including the Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis, to the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administration.

44. *It is further ordered* that pursuant to applicable procedures set forth in Sections 1.415 and 1.419 of the Commission's rules, 47 CFR 1.415, 1.419, interested parties may file comments on this Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on or before December 17, 2007 and reply comments on or before December 31, 2007.

Federal Communications Commission.

Marlene H. Dortch,
Secretary.

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION

48 CFR Part 31

[FAR Case 2006–021; Docket 2007–0001; Sequence 10]

RIN: 9000–AK84

Federal Acquisition Regulation; FAR Case 2006–021, Post Retirement Benefits (PRB), FAS 106

AGENCIES: Department of Defense (DoD), General Services Administration (GSA), and National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

ACTION: Proposed rule.

SUMMARY: The Civilian Agency Acquisition Council and the Defense Acquisition Regulations Council (Councils) are proposing to amend the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) to permit the contractor to measure accrued PRB costs using either the criteria in Internal Revenue Code (IRC) 419 or the criteria in Financial Accounting Standard (FAS) 106.

DATES: Interested parties should submit written comments to the FAR Secretariat on or before January 14, 2008 to be considered in the formulation of a final rule.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments identified by FAR case number 2006–021 by any of the following methods: Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>.

• To search for any document, first select under “Step 1,” “Documents with

an Open Comment Period” and select under “Optional Step 2,” “Federal Acquisition Regulation” as the agency of choice. Under “Optional Step 3,” select “Proposed Rules”. Under “Optional Step 4,” from the drop down list, select “Document Title” and type the FAR Case number “2006–021”. Click the “Submit” button. Please include your name and company name (if any) inside the document. You may also search for any document by clicking on the “Search for Documents” tab at the top of the screen. Select from the agency field “Federal Acquisition Regulation”, and type “2006–021” in the “Document Title” field. Select the “Submit” button.

• Fax: 202–501–4067.

• Mail: General Services

Administration, Regulatory Secretariat (VIR), 1800 F Street, NW, Room 4035, ATTN: Laurieann Duarte, Washington, DC 20405.

Instructions: Please submit comments only and cite FAR case 2006–021 in all correspondence related to this case. All comments received will be posted without change to <http://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal and/or business confidential information provided.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Edward Chambers, Procurement Analyst, at (202) 501–3221, for clarification of content. For information pertaining to status or publication schedules, contact the FAR Secretariat at (202) 501–4755. Please cite FAR case 2006–021.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

A. Background

FAR 31.205–6(o) allows contractors to choose among three different accounting methods for PRB costs: cash basis, terminal funding, and accrual basis.

When the accrual basis is used, the FAR currently requires that costs must be measured based on the requirements of FAS 106.

However, the tax-deductible amount that is contributed to the retiree benefit trust is determined using IRC 419, which has different measurement criteria than FAS 106. As a result, the FAS 106 amount can often exceed the IRC 419 measured costs, and contractors that choose to accrue PRB costs for Government reimbursement face a dilemma: whether to fund the entire FAS 106 amount to obtain Government reimbursement of the costs, regardless of tax implications, or fund only the tax deductible amount and not be reimbursed for the entire FAS 106 amount under their Government contracts.

The Councils are proposing to amend FAR 31.205-6(o) to alleviate this dilemma. This amendment would provide the contractor an option of measuring accrued PRB costs using criteria based on IRC 419 rather than FAS 106, thereby permitting the contractor to fund the entire tax deductible amount without having a portion disallowed because it did not meet the FAR's current measurement criteria. The Councils note that this amendment will not change the total measured PRB costs, i.e., the total measured PRB costs over the life of the PRB plan would be the same whether the contractor chose to apply the criteria in FAS 106 or IRC 419.

The Councils note that the proposed rule may result in the Government paying higher PRB costs, since under the current rule some contractors may have chosen to fund the IRC amount rather than the full FAS amount in current and future accounting periods. Absent this proposed revision, the resulting difference will be an unallowable cost. However, the Councils are unable to estimate the specific cost impact because the number of contractors who may choose to use the proposed IRC 419 measurement option is unknown. Moreover, the Councils further note that there may be a cost impact if the rule remains unchanged. For example, in lieu of funding the lower IRC amount, contractors could decide to fund the full FAS amount (and forego the tax benefit), change from accrual to pay-as-you go accounting, or terminate their PRB plans rather than fund amounts that are not tax deductible.

This is not a significant regulatory action and, therefore, was not subject to review under Section 6(b) of Executive Order 12866, Regulatory Planning and Review, dated September 30, 1993. This rule is not a major rule under 5 U.S.C. 804.

B. Regulatory Flexibility Act

The Councils do not expect this proposed rule to have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities within the meaning of the Regulatory Flexibility Act, 5 U.S.C. 601, et seq., because most small entities do not accrue PRB costs for Government contract costing purposes.

C. Paperwork Reduction Act

The Paperwork Reduction Act does apply; however, these changes to the FAR do not impose additional information collection requirements to the paperwork burden previously

approved under OMB Control Number 9000-0013.

List of Subjects in 48 CFR Part 31

Government procurement.

Dated: October 24, 2007

Al Matera,

Director, Office of Acquisition Policy.

Therefore, DoD, GSA, and NASA propose amending 48 CFR part 31 as set forth below:

1. The authority citation for 48 CFR part 31 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 40 U.S.C. 121(c); 10 U.S.C. chapter 137; and 42 U.S.C. 2473(c).

PART 31—CONTRACT COST PRINCIPLES AND PROCEDURES

2. Amend section 31.205-6 by revising paragraphs (o)(2)(iii)(A) and (B) to read as follows:

31.205-6 Compensation for personal services.

* * * * *

(o) * * *

(2) * * *

(iii) * * *

(A) Measured and assigned in accordance with—

(1) Generally accepted accounting principles. However, the portion of PRB costs attributable to the transition obligation assigned to the current year that is in excess of the amount assignable under the delayed recognition methodology described in paragraphs 112 and 113 of Financial Accounting Standards Board Statement 106 is unallowable. The transition obligation is defined in Statement 106, paragraph 110; or

(2) The costs shall—

(i) Be measured using reasonable actuarial assumptions, which may include a healthcare inflation assumption;

(ii) Be assigned to accounting periods on the basis of the average future working lives of active employees covered by the PRB plan or a 15 year period, whichever period is longer; and

(iii) Exclude Federal income taxes, whether incurred by the fund or the contractor (including those taxes associated with any increase in PRB costs), unless the fund holding the plan assets is tax-exempt under the provisions of 26 U.S.C. 501(c);

(B) Paid to an insurer or trustee to establish and maintain a fund or reserve for the sole purpose of providing PRB to retirees. The assets shall be segregated in the trust, or otherwise effectively

restricted, so that they cannot be used by the employer for other purposes; and

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[FR Doc. 07-5669 Filed 11-14-07; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6820-EP-S

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Parts 600 and 635

RIN 0648-AU89

Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Atlantic Shark Management Measures; Amendment 2 to the Consolidated Highly Migratory Species Fishery Management Plan

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Proposed rule; reopening comment period.

SUMMARY: NMFS is reopening the comment period to provide additional opportunity for public comment on the draft Amendment 2 to the Consolidated Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Fishery Management Plan (FMP) and its July 27, 2007, proposed rule. More specifically, NMFS is interested in receiving comments on a modification to shark dealer weigh-out slips that would facilitate compliance with measures proposed in the draft Amendment 2 to the HMS FMP, which would require fishermen to land sharks with all fins naturally attached. Additionally, over the course of the comment period, NMFS has received suggestions on ways to modify the proposed measures to minimize impacts to fishermen. NMFS is interested in receiving additional comments regarding those suggestions. Furthermore, as is required under the current regulations and was proposed to be maintained in the July 27, 2007, proposed rule, any overharvests that occur in the 2007 or 2008 commercial shark fishery will be accounted for with the implementation of final Amendment 2 to the Consolidated HMS FMP. Thus, NMFS is reopening the comment period for 30 days to gather further public comment on these issues. The draft Amendment 2 to the Consolidated HMS FMP and its proposed rule also describe a range of other management measures that could impact fishermen and dealers for HMS fisheries.

DATES: The public comment period for receiving written comments on the July 27, 2007 (72 FR 41392), proposed rule