

Subpart 434.0 - General

Parent topic: PART 434 - MAJOR SYSTEM ACQUISITION

434.001 Definitions.

Pursuant to OMB Circular No. A-109 (A-109) and the definition at FAR 2.101, within USDA, a system shall be considered a major system if:

(a) The total acquisition costs (for information technology, life cycle costs) are estimated to be \$50 million or more, or

(b) The system, regardless of estimated acquisition or life cycle costs, has been specifically designated to be a major system by the USDA Acquisition Executive or by the Major Information Technology Systems Executive.

434.002 Policy.

In addition to the policy guidance at FAR 34.002 and other parts of the FAR, the policies outlined in paragraph 6 of A-109 should serve as guidelines for all contracting activities in planning and developing systems, major or otherwise.

434.003 Responsibilities.

(a) The Secretary of Agriculture or other designated USDA key executive is responsible for making four key decisions in each major system acquisition process. These are listed in paragraph 9 of A-109 and elaborated on in paragraphs 10 through 13. The key executives of USDA (Secretary, Deputy Secretary, Under Secretaries and Assistant Secretaries) individually or as a group will participate in this decision making process.

(b) The Chief Information Officer (CIO) is the Major Information Technology Systems Executive. For acquisitions of information technology, the CIO will ensure that A-109 is implemented in USDA and that the management objectives of the Circular are realized. The CIO is responsible for designating the program manager for each major information technology system acquisition, designating an acquisition to be a major information technology system acquisition, and approving the written charter and project control system for each major information technology system acquisition.

(c) The Assistant Secretary for Administration (ASA) is the USDA Acquisition Executive for major system acquisitions other than acquisitions of information technology. The ASA will ensure that A-109 is implemented in USDA and that the management objectives of the Circular are realized. The ASA is responsible for designating the program manager for each major system acquisition, designating an acquisition to be a major system acquisition, and approving the written charter and project control system for each major system acquisition.

(d) Heads of contracting activities must:

- (1) Ensure compliance with the requirements of A-109, FAR Part 34 and AGAR Part 434.
- (2) Ensure that potential major system acquisitions are brought to the attention of the USDA Acquisition Executive or the Major Information Technology Systems Executive, as appropriate.
- (3) Recommend qualified candidates for designation as program managers for each major system acquisition within their jurisdiction.
- (4) Ensure that program managers fulfill their responsibilities and discharge their duties.
- (5) Cooperate with the ASA and Major Information.

Technology Systems Executive in implementing the requirements of A-109.

(e) The program manager is responsible for planning and executing the major system acquisition, ensuring appropriate coordination with the USDA Acquisition Executive and Major Information Technology Systems Executive and other key USDA executives.

434.004 Acquisition strategy.

- (a) The program manager will develop, in coordination with the Acquisition Executive or Major Information Technology Systems Executive, a written charter outlining the authority, responsibility, accountability, and budget for accomplishing the proposed objective.
- (b) The program manager will develop, subject to the approval of the Acquisition Executive or Major Information Technology Systems Executive, a project control system to schedule, monitor, and regularly report on all aspects of the project. The control system shall establish reporting periods and milestones consistent with the key decisions listed in paragraph 9 of A-109.
- (c) Upon initiation of the project, the program manager will report regularly to the Acquisition Executive or Major Information Technology Systems Executive.
- (d) Specific procedures and requirements for information technology systems are included in the USDA Information Technology Capital Planning and Investment Control Guide which can be accessed on the USDA OCIO Web site at <http://www.ocio.usda.gov>.

434.005 General requirements.

434.005-6 Full production.

The Secretary or the USDA key executive designated by the Secretary for the specific program is the agency head for the purposes of FAR 34.005-6.