

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT NETCENTS-2 & RELATED MANDATORY USE POLICY

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- Questions regarding the NETCENTS-2 strategy and contracts may be directed to netcents@gunter.af.mil
 - Questions regarding the NETCENTS-2 Mandatory Use policy may be directed to netcents2waiver@gunter.af.mil.
 - See also the NETCENTS-2 Overview and updates, and the Mandatory Use Policy and information, at www.netcents.af.mil/contracts/netcents-2/index.asp.
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1) When does the mandatory use policy to use NETCENTS-2 contracts become effective?

- A. The policy applies to each NETCENTS-2 contract (e.g. Applications Services, NetOps and Infrastructure, etc.) as it is awarded. Notifications of awards will be made through SAF/A6 and AQ chains and by other means. Meanwhile, the NETCENTS Mandatory Use Policy remains in effect for requirements within the scope of NETCENTS. The NETCENTS ordering period ends 9 Sep 13 and performance period ends 9 Sep 15. NETCENTS waiver requests can be approved by MAJCOM/DRU A6s. The Contracting Officer may also approve NETCENTS waivers to meet Small Business goals.

2) Is there an anticipated date when contracts will be awarded under NETCENTS-2?

- A. In contrast to NETCENTS, NETCENTS-2 consists of 7 individual multiple award IDIQ contracts covering 5 separate requirements categories. The Enterprise Integration and Service Management and Application Services for Small Business contracts have been awarded and are available for use. EISM provides enterprise level A&AS support to help decision makers at the center, MAJCOM and Air Staff levels plan, integrate and manage IT efforts within their domain. AppSrvs (SB) provides application services such as sustainment, migration, integration, training, help desk support, testing and operational support. Projected schedules for the remaining NETCENTS-2 awards can be found at <http://www.netcents.af.mil/contracts/netcents-2/index.asp> . NETCENTS continues to be available for ordering until 9 Sep 13 and performance can continue until 9 Sep 15 IAW the terms of individual task orders. See also the NETCENTS-2 Overview and updates, and the Mandatory Use Policy and information, at www.netcents.af.mil/contracts/netcents-2/documents/index.asp

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3) Will units have more opportunities to meet AF small business goals within NETCENTS-2?

- A. Supporting AF small business goals is a key component of the NETCENTS-2 initiative. There will be three total small business only contracts within NETCENTS-2, one of which is set aside for Service Disabled Veteran Owned Businesses. Contracts that are not set-aside for SBs will REQUIRE a minimum of 23% of the subcontracting goes to SBs--that could be \$11B or more that will be available to SBs out of the ceiling of \$24.2B. In general, units will not need to go outside of NETCENTS-2 to meet AF small business goals. For example, the Products contract is expected to have several small business awardees who will have the opportunity to compete on every order. Additionally, contracting officers preparing to compete NetOps and Infrastructure requirements, historically the most needed support on NETCENTS, will have a small business-only competitive pool to use if they determine the effort can be reasonably accomplished by SBs.

4) When will the AFWAY (and soon AFWAY II) website reflect NETCENTS 2 information?

- A. AFWAY will not reflect NETCENTS-2 information. AFWAY II will include information on NETCENTS-2 as contracts are awarded.

5) Will MAJCOMs be required to buffer/validate SAF/CIO NETCENTS-2 waiver requests?

- A. This is not required by the policy, but most MAJCOMs will want to at least be in the loop.

6) Will contracts that were pursued outside of NETCENTS with option years beyond the 8 Sep 12 (expiration of NETCENTS), be required to pursue NETCENTS-2 instead of exercising option years with a small business?

- A. As described in **Atch 1** to the policy memo, once the NETCENTS-2 contracts are awarded, contracting officers must coordinate their plans to exercise options on existing contracts with the NETCENTS-2 Program Office 6 months prior to exercising the option to determine if a waiver is required. This is for existing contracts or task orders that fall under the scope of NETCENTS-2, including small business contracts. The reason for this coordination is to provide an opportunity for the IT Governance structure to prevent continued acquisition of services or solutions that no longer align with the USAF strategic direction or that duplicate existing NETCENTS-2 enterprise level task orders for the same work.



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7) Do programs need to revise existing acquisition strategies to use NETCENTS-2 instead?

- A. Programs need to consider the projected award date for the NETCENTS-2 contract that supports their requirements. If a program must be on contract before a pertinent NC-2 contract will be awarded, or will be at risk if not on contract within several months after the projected NC-2 award, the program should meet their requirements outside of NC-2 (no notification to AFPEO EIS HIJ (NETCENTS-2) or request for NC-2 waiver is required). While doing this, they must continue to review the scope of NETCENTS for applicability IAW the NETCENTS Mandatory Use Policy. Once a pertinent NC-2 contract is awarded, contracting officers must coordinate their plans to exercise options on existing contracts with the NETCENTS-2 Program Office 6 months prior to exercising the option to determine if a waiver is required (see FAQ#6).



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8) When are MAJCOMs required to stop accepting NETCENTS waivers and direct the customer to the NETCENTS-2 process?

- A. Once a NETCENTS-2 contract is awarded, waivers for requirements within that scope set will need to be submitted through the NETCENTS-2 waiver process.

9) Will a waiver be required if a particular product is unavailable through any NETCENTS-2 vendors (e.g., all NETCENTS-2 vendors respond to a solicitation with "no bid" responses)?

- A. Yes. However, note that the existing NETCENTS contract was designed to be a solutions contract, and not a COTS products contract. NETCENTS-2 has a standalone IDIQ contract for Netcentric Products. The awardees will be a pool of qualified IT resellers. Currently, NETCENTS beats GSA pricing by 10%-15% on many items and has similar pricing as NASA SEWP and ITES-H. The expectation is that NETCENTS-2 prices will be lower than this and all netcentric products, IT COTS, and "appliances" are covered in the scope of the NC-2 Products contract. If it's IT and available commercially, it can be purchased using NC-2 or other AF Enterprise purchasing vehicle (for example, The Quantum Enterprise Buy, or QEB, for PCs). The contract has standards for the products to meet such as DISR, Energy Compliant, Trade Agreement Act Compliant, plus measures to mitigate supply chain risk. The contract even allows customers to purchase products that have been tested (example JITC) but that are not available yet for commercial use.

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10) What if the price of an IT product offered by a non-NETCENTS-2 vendor is lower than the price offered by a NETCENTS-2 vendor for the exact same product (including terms of warranty, etc.)? How is placing the order with the higher-priced NETCENTS-2 vendor rather than the lower-priced non-NETCENTS-2 vendor providing best value for the Air Force? How does this promote competition in the market for IT products (in either the narrower NETCENTS-2 market or the broader market-at-large for IT products)?

- A. The decision to make the use of NETCENTS-2 contracts mandatory, including the Products contract, was driven in part by the need to gain visibility and control of IT/netcentric product purchases. For example, the end of year spending rush has sometimes resulted in the purchase of obsolete or near obsolete equipment. The benefit of having visibility and control outweighs the potential small cost increase for individual products. However, part of the terms and conditions of the contract is that the contractors will not offer lower prices for products anywhere else. Furthermore, contractors are selected competitively and task/purchase order awards will be made on the basis of full and open competition within the pertinent NETCENTS-2 awardee pool. That said, examples of lower pricing on COTS items outside of NC-2 should be provided to the program to help identify any needed changes in strategy.

11) What steps have been taken to ensure timely delivery of products purchased via NETCENTS-2?

- A. The NC-2 Products contract requires different levels of delivery to meet critical timelines as part of terms and conditions of the contract. The companies had to have at least ISO 9001:2008 certifications to ensure their processes and supply chain management was of high quality/efficient. The requirements in the PWS, the terms and conditions of the contract, and special clauses were designed to have the fastest delivery times possible of equipment that meets the applicable DoD/federal standards (TAA, DISR, etc).

12) Will current NETCENTS contracts automatically flow into NETCENTS-2 for the option years remaining?

- A. No, task orders from one contract can't be executed under another contract. See also #4 above.

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13) Attachment 1 to the Mandatory Use policy states that cost savings alone is not a justification for a waiver; a significant cost savings would be needed to justify a waiver based on cost. What is considered "significant" in terms of cost differential?

- A. Reference the prior answers on products that are not available or priced lower on NETCENTS-2. There is no prescribed threshold that will trigger an automatic waiver. Based on the history of NETCENTS and the removal of a layer of the reseller chain, it is expected that on the whole the NETCENTS-2 prices will be as low or lower than pricing found elsewhere. If that is not the case then we encourage users to provide the NETCENTS/NETCENTS-2 team with direct feedback.

14) The last sentence of paragraph 3 of the policy memo states, "Finally, Air Force IT assets under the cognizance of the Special Access Program Coordination Office (SAPCO) are exempt from this policy." Does Air Force IT assets include IT services as well?

- A. Units under the cognizance of the SAPCO do not need to seek waivers from the NETCENTS-2 Mandatory Use Policy.

15) Does every Operational C2 requirement that falls under the scope of a NETCENTS-2 contract need to be coordinated with A6 or some other organization? If so, what would be the purpose of the coordination? And what form would it take?

- A. The intent of this part of the policy is to ensure all applicable functional coordination is accomplished on a waiver prior to submitting it up the chain. It would not be good for a MAJCOM/A6 to first see a waiver for any of their requirements during an IT Governance review. If the requirements are for C2, ISR, Medical, etc, then their functional counterparts should review it before the IT Governance forum reviews it. The different governance groups have representation from across the MAJCOM/A6s, and domains (medical, C2) and some A7s, A4s, ISR, (AFMC A6/7), ESC, and USM(x) as well as SAF/A6.

16) Will the approved rates on the Application Services SB contracts be made available to users for use on Independent Government Cost Estimates (IGCE)?

- A. The only rates incorporated into the contract are the Maximum Labor Hour Rates used for CLIN XX30, Labor Hour. If an RFQ is using the LH CLINS, once they receive proposals, the Contracting Officer can send them to nc-2.app.services@gunter.af.mil and we will validate that they are not proposing a rate higher than the ones put on contract. The incorporated rates are only 12 labor categories and do not cover all the categories that would be proposed on a solution to a task order. However, these rates are not for use of developing the IGCE since an IGCE should be done independent of the contracts. When developing an IGCE commercial sites that can be used are salary.com, payscale.com, GSA Alliant, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

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