



FEB 05 2020

GSA Office of Governmentwide Policy

Acquisition Letter MV-20-02

MEMORANDUM FOR THE GSA ACQUISITION WORKFORCE

FROM: JEFFREY A. KOSES, SENIOR PROCUREMENT EXECUTIVE  
OFFICE OF ACQUISITION POLICY (MV)

SUBJECT: IN-depth Feedback through Open Reporting Methods (INFORM 2.0)

**1. Purpose.**

This acquisition letter (AL) provides guidance for the the acquisition workforce on GSA's next iteration of enhanced post-award feedback procedures known as IN-depth Feedback through Open Reporting Methods 2.0 (INFORM 2.0). INFORM 2.0 builds upon the success of the round one pilot to fully implement the program across GSA through a phased approach.

**2. Background.**

On October 12, 2018, the Senior Procurement Executive (SPE) issued AL MV-19-03 which provided guidance for the implementation of the INFORM pilot. Overall the pilot was a success.

GSA Acquisition Workforce survey indicated that 73% of the acquisition workforce favored INFORM over traditional methods and 74% said it did not cause any delays. Industry response was also very positive. Those who used the INFORM process had a higher perception of the:

- Fairness of GSA's evaluation and selection process (4.58 vs. 4.14 control group),
- Quality of information provided (4.50 vs. 4.10 control group), and
- Usefulness of the information to improve their future submissions (4.50 vs. 4.33 control group).

Our industry partners who received the INFORM enhanced feedback letters were less than half as likely to request a meeting or debriefing. Only 17% of contractors who went through INFORM requested a meeting after receiving the letter compared with 38% in the control group.

Building on the INFORM pilot success and considering feedback from both industry and the acquisition workforce, GSA will scale the INFORM policy across GSA through a phased implementation approach. Using a phased approach will allow GSA contracting activities to increase the skills and confidence in using the INFORM process over time.

**3. Authority.**

This AL is issued under the authorities in GSAM 501.370.

INFORM 2.0 satisfies the requirements of the DoD Class Deviation 2018-O0011<sup>1</sup> and exceeds Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) minimum requirements for feedback as prescribed in:

- FAR 8.405 (Ordering Procedures for the Federal Supply Schedules),
- FAR 12.301 (Solicitation Provisions),
- FAR 15.503 (Notifications to Unsuccessful Offerors),
- FAR 15.506 (Post-award Debrief of Offerors), and
- FAR 16.505 (Orders under multiple-award contracts).

#### **4. Effective Date.**

This AL is effective immediately and remains in effect until rescinded or incorporated into the GSAM.

#### **5. Cancellation.**

AL MV-19-03 is hereby cancelled.

#### **6. Applicability.**

The INFORM 2.0 procedures apply to all acquisitions which have a planned solicitation date on or after April 1, 2020 and meet the criteria below, except where expressly excluded per Section 7 or exempted per Section 8:

Procurements with a total estimated contract value (including options) at or above \$10M

- Public Buildings Service (PBS)
- Office of Administrative Services (OAS)
- Federal Acquisition Services (FAS) Assisted Acquisition Services (AAS) Department for Defense (DoD) actions

Procurements with a total estimated contract value (including options) at or above \$100M

- FAS procurements for non-DoD actions

INFORM 2.0 procedures do not apply to GSA lease acquisitions.

#### **7. INFORM 2.0 Exclusions.**

The following procurements are not required to participate the INFORM 2.0 process:

- Multiple award contracts with ten (10) or more awards expected, including but not limited to, the Federal Supply Schedules (FSS), One Acquisition Solution for Integrated

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<sup>1</sup> DOD Class Deviation 2018-O0011

Services (OASIS), and the City Pairs Program (CPP). This exclusion does not extend to orders placed against these contracts.

- Awards evaluated on a lowest price technically acceptable (LPTA) basis.
- Emergency acquisitions conducted under the procedures outlined in FAR 18.

## 8. INFORM 2.0 Exemptions.

Heads of Contracting Activity (HCAs) in FAS, PBS, and OAS may exempt procurements that they deem are not appropriate to implement using the INFORM 2.0 process.

HCAs must submit all exemptions quarterly to the SPE via the [spe.request@gsa.gov](mailto:spe.request@gsa.gov) with the subject line entitled "INFORM 2.0 Exemption Quarterly Report". The report must contain the following information:

- Service (FAS/PBS/OAS)
- Office (e.g., TTS, if applicable)
- Region Number
- Project Title
- Brief Reason for Exemption (e.g., extremely high number of offerors expected)

## 9. Phased Implementation.

OGP will assess how well INFORM 2.0 scales during this phase of implementation to determine timing and next steps.

## 10. Requirements.

Applicable procurements should embed the INFORM 2.0 components throughout the acquisition lifecycle - acquisition planning, solicitation, evaluation, award, and post-award. Each step in the acquisition lifecycle is summarized below and is more fully explained in the INFORM 2.0 Guide, available on the Acquisition Portal topic page for INFORM 2.0.

- **Solicitation Phase**  
Use the standardized solicitation language found on the INFORM 2.0 topic page. Plan for your enhanced post-award feedback opportunities. Ensure evaluation factors are easy to use and explain.
- **Evaluation Phase**  
Document your evaluation in a manner that you are comfortable releasing to the offeror in an un-redacted manner.

- **Award Phase**

Update the notification of decision statement template to include a customized decision statement explaining the offeror's strengths and weaknesses. Template letters are located on the INFORM 2.0 topic page on the Acquisition Portal to simplify the notification requirement.

- **Post-Award Phase**

Afford additional opportunities for communication. The notification statement provides the offeror with the opportunity to request a post-award oral feedback meeting. A suggested format for the oral feedback meeting is provided on the INFORM 2.0 topic page on the Acquisition Portal.

In-person meetings are preferred, though other methods to include telephone or electronic meetings are also acceptable.

## **11. Legal Reviews.**

INFORM 2.0 does not require any additional level of legal review beyond what is already set forth in GSA Order ADM 5000.4B Office General Counsel Legal Review, which includes specific requirements for each Service.

## **12. Metrics.**

OGP will continue to assess the effectiveness of INFORM on GSA's post-award communications and industry perceptions of GSA's evaluation and selection process through the second round. The specific areas to be assessed are:

- **Quality:** The extent to which post-award communications are perceived as being: clear, concise, thorough, candid, and in plain language.
- **Usefulness:** The extent to which post-award communications are perceived as improving future procurement approach (bid/no-bid decision, capture strategy) and proposal preparation (technical, past performance, and pricing approach).
- **Fairness:** The extent to which evaluation procedures are perceived as: consistent, free of bias, independent, professional, and timely.

OGP will collect data via industry survey and through the Federal Procurement Data System (FPDS). The data collected will be used to determine the level of industry satisfaction with INFORM 2.0 in regards to the fairness, usefulness and quality of the post award communication process. GSA's acquisition workforce will not need to track lead times or prepare special reports for INFORM 2.0. At a later date, OGP may survey members of the GSA Acquisition workforce to understand how well INFORM 2.0 has scaled.

### **13. Points of Contact.**

For questions concerning:

- This acquisition letter send your inquiries to [gsarpolicy@gsa.gov](mailto:gsarpolicy@gsa.gov).
- FAS Policy questions send your inquiries to [documentreview-fasqv@gsa.gov](mailto:documentreview-fasqv@gsa.gov).
- PBS Policy questions send your inquiries to [pbsoampolicy@gsa.gov](mailto:pbsoampolicy@gsa.gov).

### **14. Resources.**

The following resources are available on the Acquisition Portal topic page for INFORM 2.0:

- INFORM 2.0 Guide
- INFORM 2.0 Solicitation Language Templates
- INFORM 2.0 Notification of Decision Statement Templates
- INFORM 2.0 Oral Feedback Meeting Format