



1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to provide the SPAWAR claimancy with policy and guidance for postaward debriefings and conferences. The SCPPMs were recently combined to help highlight the difference between these events. While any offeror may request a debriefing to better understand source selection results, only the successful offeror is invited to discuss contract requirements at a postaward conference.

1.1 Postaward Debriefing

Debriefings inform successful or unsuccessful offerors of the basis for the selection decision and contract award. Meaningful debriefings serve to strengthen and enhance the Government's relationship with industry, instilling greater confidence in the acquisition process, through comprehensive and open debriefings in which the offeror is given an opportunity to provide feedback regarding the solicitation, discussions, evaluation, and the source selection process.

1.2 Postaward Conference

The postaward conference is held with the successful offeror to ensure a clear understanding of contract requirements. Before the successful offeror begins working on the contract, the PCO must ensure that the contractor understands the following:

- Contract terms and conditions;
- Security requirements;
- Value engineering provisions;
- Inspection, acceptance, and invoicing procedures; and
- Authority, responsibilities, and limitations of the COR.

Related guidance is available under CMPG sections [4.2.5 Conduct Postaward Debriefing](#) and [5.2.1 Hold Postaward Conference](#).

2. POLICY

2.1 Postaward Debriefings

Whenever the Government awards a contract based on competitive proposals, successful and unsuccessful offerors are entitled to a debriefing IAW [FAR 15.506](#) if:

- a. The offeror makes a written request for a debriefing;
- b. The offeror has not requested a prior debriefing (offerors are entitled to one debriefing per proposal); and
- c. The request is received *within three days* after the offeror received notice of contract award. Untimely debriefing requests may be accommodated.

The purpose of a debriefing is to provide the basis for the selection decision to successful and unsuccessful offerors; it is not the forum to challenge evaluation and award results. A debriefing does not compare offers in detail, nor does it include page-by-page analysis of the offeror's proposal. The objectives of a debriefing include:

- Explaining the rationale for excluding the offeror from competition (if applicable);
- Instilling confidence in the offeror that they were treated fairly;
- Assuring the offeror that proposals were evaluated in accordance with the solicitation, as well as applicable laws and regulations;
- Identifying weaknesses in the offeror's proposal, so the offeror can prepare better proposals in response to future Government acquisitions; and
- Reducing misunderstandings and protests.



2.2 Postaward Conference

A postaward conference is held with the successful offeror after award to foster a clear and mutual understanding of all contract requirements. Using the criteria in [FAR 42.503](#), the Contracting Officer shall determine whether or not a postaward conference is necessary to identify and resolve potential problems.

- a. For those procurements where a postaward conference is not necessary (e.g., the contractor performed satisfactorily on a recent similar contract), document the file accordingly.
- b. A postaward conference shall be held promptly after award. Postaward conferences are encouraged to assist small business, small disadvantaged and women-owned small business concerns. This conference is not to be used to alter the final agreement arrived at in any negotiations leading to contract award.
- c. The contractor is generally responsible for conducting postaward conferences with subcontractors; however, the prime contractor may invite government representatives to a conference with subcontractors, or the government may request that the prime contractor initiate a conference with subcontractors.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 Postaward Debriefing

3.1.1 PROCUREMENT CONTRACTING OFFICER (PCO)

Responsible for the overall debriefing and assembling the debriefing team. PCO is not responsible for conducting the entire debriefing, but may rely on Government technical and cost/price personnel to present the portions of the debriefing that address those specialized areas of the offeror's proposal.

3.1.2 CONTRACT SPECIALIST - Participates in the debriefing and ensures that a copy of the debriefing memorandum is filed in the official contract file.

3.1.3 OFFEROR (SUCCESSFUL OR UNSUCCESSFUL) – Asks to be debriefed.

3.2 Postaward Conference

3.2.1 PROCUREMENT CONTRACTING OFFICER (PCO)

Decides whether a postaward conference is necessary; determines the type of conference that best suits the contract; arranges for the conference and conducts the meeting; completes the Post-Award Conference Record (DD Form 1484).

3.2.2 CONTRACT SPECIALIST - Assists PCO to plan and administer the meeting.

3.2.3 SUCCESSFUL OFFEROR - Participates in the conference; hosts a separate conference to communicate requirements to subcontractors.

4. PROCEDURE

4.1 Postaward Debriefing

4.1.1 PREPARATION

Debriefings are time-sensitive; preparations for debriefings should begin before proposal evaluations are complete. The following factors should be looked at early on during the acquisition process to avoid possible pitfalls:

- A good source selection plan;
- A well-documented evaluation of the offeror's proposal, citing both good and bad points (strengths and weaknesses); and
- A knowledgeable and strong chairperson for the technical evaluation committee.

1. Qualified **Offeror** requests a debriefing *within three days* of notice of contract award.



2. **PCO** identifies the Government debriefing team members, with the selection based on the complexities presented in the acquisition.
 - a. Ensure that knowledgeable Government personnel are present.
 - b. Due to the statutory requirement for a prompt debriefing, the PCO should tentatively select the team before the contract award is announced.
 - c. Usually, the proposal evaluation board will assist in preparing debriefing charts and conducting the debriefing. Accordingly, at the time the evaluation board is formed, the evaluators should be informed that their duties include assisting with debriefings.
3. **PCO** determines whether the debriefing is conducted orally, in writing, or by electronic means.
4. Prior to the debriefing, the **PCO** asks Contractor for a list of debriefing attendees. No limit is placed on the number of personnel the Contractor may bring to a debriefing, though space constraints may limit the number of contractor personnel invited to attend. Nonetheless, PCOs should not impose such restrictions unless all suitable alternate facilities are unavailable.
5. **Contractor** identifies all individuals by name and position that will attend the debriefing.
6. **PCO** briefs Government personnel attending the debriefing on their roles and expected demeanor during the debriefing. Argumentative or overly defensive conduct is discouraged, and Government personnel are instructed to make a positive presentation.
7. **PCO/Contract Specialist** assembles debriefing material: briefing charts and notes prepared for debriefing use.
8. **PCO** ensures that necessary notes or other documents are accessible during the debriefing. Government personnel should NOT bring proposals or evaluation reports of other offerors into the debriefing room.

By law, a debriefing may NOT include point-by-point comparisons of the debriefed offeror's proposal with those of other offerors. In addition, debriefings may NOT disclose information that is exempt from release under the [Freedom of Information Act \(FOIA\)](#), relating to:

- Trade secrets;
- Privileged or confidential manufacturing processes and techniques;
- Commercial and financial information that is privileged or confidential, including cost breakdowns, profits, indirect cost/rates, and similar information; and
- Names of individuals providing reference information about an offeror's past performance.

Information contained in a proposal that the submitter has marked as proprietary may not be shared with other offerors. Proprietary information does NOT include information that is otherwise available without restriction to the Government or public. Before releasing anything incorrectly marked as proprietary, contact the assigned **Legal Counsel** for an appropriate determination.

9. **PCO** notifies the offeror of the scheduled date in writing or by electronic means, with immediate acknowledgement requested. It is extremely important that the Government schedules a debriefing *within 5 days* of receipt of the offeror's request. Also, debriefings are conducted with one offeror at a time.
10. **Contractor** acknowledges receipt. If unable to attend the scheduled date, the Contractor acknowledges in writing that it was offered an earlier date and



requests the later date instead. This procedure serves to protect the Government’s interests in the event the offeror subsequently files a protest.



*Note: Offering a postaward debriefing within 5 days of receipt helps minimize the Competition in Contracting Act (CICA) Stay window for protests. When a protest is filed **within 10 days of award or 5 days of the debriefing date offered to the protester, whichever is later**, contract award or performance ceases unless a D&F for continued performance is approved by the HCA.*

4.1.2 CONDUCTING THE DEBRIEFING

PCO chairs any debriefing session(s), with individuals who conducted the evaluations providing support. The **Office of Legal Counsel** may also attend the debriefing, as well as assist in preparations for the debriefing.

11. **PCO/Contract Specialist** records debriefing attendance. If the meeting is face to face, everyone present at the debriefing signs in.
12. **PCO/Contract Specialist** takes meeting minutes, recording the substance of debriefing conversations. The minutes of a debriefing become a key document in cases where a protest is filed, and it is difficult to remember every statement that is made and by whom. Faulty memory or misstatements by Government personnel are detrimental to a successful debriefing.
13. **PCO** chairs the debriefing, ensuring it discloses appropriate information and conforms to law. Suggested outline to follow when conducting a debriefing:
 - I. **Introduction**
 - II. Explain the **purpose** of the debriefing.
 - III. Announce the **ground rules**.
 - IV. Summarize the **source selection process** that was used.
 - V. State the **proposal evaluation factors and sub factors**.
 - VI. Reveal the **evaluation results**:
 - a. The significant **advantages** of the offeror’s proposal.
 - b. The significant **weaknesses** of the offeror’s proposal. Significant weaknesses typically warrant discussion during the negotiation phase of the acquisition.
 - c. The **evaluation ratings** of the offeror’s proposal to the second level of evaluation, explaining the rating definitions. Be prepared to explain the rationale for the offeror’s proposal ratings.

The **second level** is defined as the subsections that fall under each major section title in the proposal (e.g., under Management, the second level of evaluation would include Management Approach, Proposed Staffing, and Past Experience).

- d. At the **PCO's** discretion, the Government’s total **evaluated cost/price** of the offeror’s proposal for each contract line item (CLIN), explaining any significant cost realism adjustments made by the Government to the major cost element level. The total final evaluated cost/price may not be released without obtaining consent or determining, in consultation with the offeror, it would not suffer harm from the information’s release.

If the evaluation included a cost realism analysis, include information about the results of the analysis as it relates to the offeror being debriefed and its effect on the offeror’s evaluated cost ([NMCARS 5215.506](#)).



- VII. A summary of the **rationale for the contract award decision**.
 - a. When debriefing an unsuccessful offeror, identify the significant advantages of the awardee's proposal in general terms, without revealing confidential proprietary information. If the awardee's proposal includes a commercial item as an end item under the contract, the make and model of the item must be disclosed.
 - b. Although debriefing an awardee is similar in many respects to debriefing an unsuccessful offeror, there is one significant difference — very little information is revealed regarding the proposals of the unsuccessful offerors.
- VIII. The **overall ranking of all proposals**, but do not identify the unsuccessful offerors by name (use alphanumerical letter or other designators).
- IX. **Answer relevant questions** pertaining to whether the Government followed the source selection procedures set forth in the solicitation, applicable regulations, and other authorities.
- 14. **PCO** fields any unanticipated questions from the offeror through the following process:
 - a. Allow the offeror to present the question.
 - b. Ask for any clarification needed.
 - c. Discuss the Government's answer in private to reach a firm consensus.
 - d. Deliver the Government's answer.

4.1.3 DOCUMENTING THE DEBRIEFING

- 15. **PCO** creates the debriefing memorandum in as much detail as possible. Good debriefing memorandums are essential if the acquisition is reopened or resolicited within one (1) year of the contract award date. Site-specific samples are listed in the [Toolbox](#). Include at a minimum:
 - a. A list of all persons who attended the debriefing.
 - b. A summary of the information disclosed during the briefing. Identify the charts that were used at the debriefing and attach a copy of them to the memorandum.
 - c. The substance of all questions and answers discussed at the debriefing, including answers provided after the debriefing. Include minutes from the debriefing.
- 16. Both the **PCO** and **Technical Government Representatives** should sign the debriefing memorandum.
- 17. **PCO** includes the debriefing memorandum in the contract file IAW [FAR 15.506\(f\)](#).

4.2 Postaward Conference

The PCO may hold a Postaward Conference with the successful offeror to ensure a thorough understanding of contract requirements.

- 1. **PCO** determines what type of conference best suits the procurement. In some circumstances, a formal letter or other form of communication (e.g., e-mail message or telephone call) to the contractor may be adequate postaward orientation in lieu of a face-to-face conference.
- 2. **Contract Specialist** prepares the [DD Form 1484](#) (Post-Award Conference Record); the **PCO** should review it to determine the appropriate agenda items.
- 3. **Contract Specialist** contacts the principal participants to solicit agenda items and obtain a listing of their invitees (name, phone number and position). Request the contractor team include individual(s) who can commit the contractor.



4. **Contract Specialist** notifies all participants of conference date, time, place and final agenda.
5. As appropriate, **PCO** convenes a pre-conference meeting of government representatives to establish a unified government position on the agenda items.
6. **PCO/Contract Specialist** prepares for and hosts the conference.
7. At the conclusion of the conference, the **Contract Specialist** will complete the [DD Form 1484](#) with minutes (if recorded) of the conference.
8. **PCO/Chairman** signs the completed DD Form 1484.
9. **Contract Specialist** distributes the completed form to the PCO (for the official contract file), CAO, contractor, COR, and others as required.

5. APPROVALS

PCO signs the debriefing memorandum and the postaward conference record.

6. TOOLBOX

6.1 Debriefings

1. [“Mythbusting”: Addressing Misconceptions to Improve Communications with Industry during the Acquisition Process](#) - DASN(AL&M), Apr 2011
2. [Dangers of Source Selections: Debriefings](#) – Sep 2013
3. [Debriefing Outline](#)
4. SSC Atlantic - [Unsuccessful Debrief](#)
5. SSC Atlantic - [Sample Unsuccessful Debrief Slides](#)
6. SSC Atlantic - [Sample Debriefing Memo](#)
7. SSC Atlantic - [Sample Debriefing Slides](#)
8. SSC Pacific - [Post Award Debrief Handout](#)

6.2 Conference

1. [DD Form 1484](#) – Post-Award Conference Record
2. [Postaward Conference Checklist](#)
3. [Sample Waiver Postaward Letter](#)
4. [Sample Postaward Conference Agenda](#)
5. [Sample Notification of Postaward Conference](#)
6. [Sample Telephone Conversation Transcript](#)

7. CHANGE HISTORY

Updated material is highlighted by *purple text* and an Alert/New  icon.

Date	Description of Changes
June 2016	Combined Postaward Debriefing and Postaward Conferences SCPPMs. Content formatted and reorganized; updated links and CICA stay information. Added Postaward Conference sample documents to the Toolbox.
September 2012	Last version of Postaward Debriefings SCPPM; no change notes.
July 2009	Last version of Postaward Conferences SCPPM in old format; no change notes available.