

PART 165—REGULATED NAVIGATION AREAS AND LIMITED ACCESS AREAS

■ 1. The authority citation for part 165 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 33 U.S.C. 1231; 50 U.S.C. 191; 33 CFR 1.05–1, 6.04–1, 6.04–6, and 160.5; Department of Homeland Security Delegation No. 0170.1.

■ 2. Add § 165.T01–3029 to read as follows:

§ 165.T01–0329 Safety Zone—Casco Bay Islands Swim Event—Casco Bay, Portland, Maine.

(a) *General.* Establish a temporary safety zone:

(1) *Location.* The following area is a safety zone: All navigable waters, from surface to bottom, within (200) feet from the participants and vessels in support of events in Casco Bay, Portland, ME, and enclosed by a line connecting the following points (NAD 83):

Latitude	Longitude
43°42'47" N	70°07'07" W.; thence to.
43°38'09" N	70°11'57" W.; thence to.
43°38'57" N	70°12'55" W.; thence to.
43°41'31" N	70°11'37" W.; thence to.
43°43'25" N	70°08'25" W.; thence to point of origin.

(2) *Effective and Enforcement Period.* This rule will be effective on August 14, 2016, from 6:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

(b) *Regulations.* While this safety zone is being enforced, the following regulations, along with those contained in 33 CFR 165.23, apply:

(1) No person or vessel may enter or remain in this safety zone without the permission of the Captain of the Port (COTP) or the COTP's representatives. However, any vessel that is granted permission by the COTP or the COTP's representatives must proceed through the area with caution and operate at a speed no faster than that speed necessary to maintain a safe course, unless otherwise required by the Navigation Rules.

(2) Any person or vessel permitted to enter the safety zone shall comply with the directions and orders of the COTP or the COTP's representatives. Upon being hailed by a U.S. Coast Guard vessel by siren, radio, flashing lights, or other means, the operator of a vessel within the zone shall proceed as directed. Any person or vessel within the safety zone shall exit the zone when directed by the COTP or the COTP's representatives.

(3) To obtain permissions required by this regulation, individuals may reach the COTP or a COTP representative via VHF channel 16 or 207–767–0302

(Sector Northern New England Command Center).

(c) *Penalties.* Those who violate this section are subject to the penalties set forth in 33 U.S.C. 1232 and 50 U.S.C. 1226.

(d) *Notification.* Coast Guard Sector Northern New England will give notice through the Local Notice to Mariners, Broadcast Notice to Mariners, and to mariners for the purpose of enforcement of this temporary safety zone. Sector Northern New England will also notify the public to the greatest extent possible of any period in which the Coast Guard will suspend enforcement of this safety zone.

(e) *COTP Representative.* The COTP's representative may be any Coast Guard commissioned, warrant, or petty officer or any Federal, state, or local law enforcement officer who has been designated by the COTP to act on the COTP's behalf. The COTP's representative may be on a Coast Guard vessel, a Coast Guard Auxiliary vessel, a state or local law enforcement vessel, or a location on shore.

Dated: May 16, 2016.

M.A. Baroody,

Captain, U. S. Coast Guard, Captain of the Port, Sector Northern New England.

[FR Doc. 2016–13342 Filed 6–3–16; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 9110–04–P

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION

48 CFR Parts 5, 14, 19, 22, 25, 28, 43, 47, 49, 52, and 53

[FAR Case 2015–035; Docket 2015–0035; Sequence 1]

RIN 9000–AN23

Federal Acquisition Regulation; Removal of Regulations Relating to Telegraphic Communication

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

ACTION: Proposed rule.

SUMMARY: DoD, GSA, and NASA are proposing to amend the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) to delete the use of “telegram”, “telegraph”, and related terms. The objective is to delete reference to obsolete technologies no longer in use and replace with references to electronic

communications. In addition, conforming changes are proposed covering expedited notice of termination and change orders.

DATES: Interested parties should submit written comments to the Regulatory Secretariat Division at one of the addresses shown below on or before August 5, 2016 to be considered in the formulation of a final rule.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in response to FAR Case 2015–035 by any of the following methods:

- *Regulations.gov:* <http://www.regulations.gov>. Submit comments via the Federal eRulemaking portal by searching for “FAR Case 2015–035”. Select the link “Comment Now” that corresponds with FAR Case 2015–035. Follow the instructions provided at the “Comment Now” screen. Please include your name, company name (if any), and “FAR Case 2015–035” on your attached document.

- *Mail:* General Services Administration, Regulatory Secretariat Division (MVCB), ATTN: Ms. Flowers, 1800 F Street NW., 2nd Floor, Washington, DC 20405.

Instructions: Please submit comments only and cite FAR Case 2015–035, in all correspondence related to this case. Comments received generally will be posted without change to <http://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal and/or business confidential information provided. To confirm receipt of your comment(s), please check www.regulations.gov, approximately two to three days after submission to verify posting (except allow 30 days for posting of comments submitted by mail).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Zenaida Delgado, Procurement Analyst, at 202–969–7207, for clarification of content. For information pertaining to status or publication schedules, contact the Regulatory Secretariat Division at 202–501–4755. Please cite FAR case 2015–035.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

DoD, GSA, and NASA are proposing to amend the FAR to delete the use of the terms “telegram”, “telegraph”, “telegraphic”, and related terminology.

The word “telegram” emerged shortly after the invention of the electrical telegraph in the 1840s. This terminology and way of communicating was incorporated into the first issue of the FAR, effective April 1, 1984. The emergence of electronic means of communication, starting with the facsimile machine, and then followed by email and mobile-phone text

messages in the 1990s, resulted in the sparing use of telegraph services and use of telegrams. On this basis, the Councils are proposing to delete telegraphic services from the FAR and replace these terms with an option for electronic communications.

This case is consistent with the Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) Memorandum dated December 4, 2014 on transforming the marketplace, which describes ongoing actions to support the needs of a 21st century Government.

II. Discussion and Analysis

(1) This rulemaking proposes to delete all references to “telegraph” and “telegram” and replace these terms with an option for electronic communication.

(2) At FAR 49.601–1, a revised policy statement is added to allow the use of electronic means to notify the contractor of a termination for convenience. The objective is to provide an expeditious way to notify the contractor of the termination. This change is necessary because the abbreviated version of the notice of termination for the convenience of the Government is currently linked with the telegraphic notice procedure.

(3) At FAR 49.102, a conforming change is added to allow the use of electronic means to notify the contractor of a termination whether the termination is for convenience or default.

III. Executive Orders 12866 and 13563

Executive Orders (E.O.s) 12866 and 13563 direct agencies to assess all costs and benefits of available regulatory alternatives and, if regulation is necessary, to select regulatory approaches that maximize net benefits (including potential economic, environmental, public health and safety effects, distributive impacts, and equity). E.O. 13563 emphasizes the importance of quantifying both costs and benefits, of reducing costs, of harmonizing rules, and of promoting flexibility. This is not a significant regulatory action and, therefore, was not subject to review under section 6(b) of E.O. 12866, Regulatory Planning and Review, dated September 30, 1993. This proposed rule is not a major rule under 5 U.S.C. 804.

IV. Regulatory Flexibility Act

DoD, GSA, and NASA 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.* However, an Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis (IRFA) has been prepared consistent

with 5 U.S.C. 603. The analysis is summarized as follows:

The reason for this action is to delete the use of “telegraph”, “telegram”, and related terms. The Councils are proposing to replace these terms with an option for electronic communications. The objective is to delete reference to obsolete technologies no longer in use within the context of the FAR requirements. The proposed rule would apply to all entities, both small and other than small, performing as contractors or subcontractors on U.S. Government contracts. In 2014 there were about 350,000 active registrants in the System for Award Management (SAM). DoD, GSA, and NASA estimate approximately half of the registrants in SAM (175,000) are small entities that will receive a contract or subcontract in a given year. In 2014 small entities received 1,398,605 or about 9 percent of all actions in that year per the Federal Procurement Data System (FPDS). However, the small entities will not be materially affected by this rule, as the only change provided in this rule is recognition of current options for transmitting documents between the Government and contractors. It does not change the policy requiring the Government to notify contractors of a contract termination. The Government is still responsible to obtain evidence of receipt of termination from the contractor.

There are no reporting or recordkeeping requirements associated with this rule.

The rule does not duplicate, overlap, or conflict with any other Federal rules.

There were no significant alternatives identified that would meet the objective of the rule.

The Regulatory Secretariat Division has submitted a copy of the IRFA to the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administration. A copy of the IRFA may be obtained from the Regulatory Secretariat Division. DoD, GSA, and NASA invite comments from small business concerns and other interested parties on the expected impact of this proposed rule on small entities.

DoD, GSA, and NASA will also consider comments from small entities concerning the existing regulations in subparts affected by the proposed rule in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 610. Interested parties must submit such comments separately and should cite 5 U.S.C. 610 (FAR Case 2015–035), in correspondence.

V. Paperwork Reduction Act

The proposed rule does not contain any information collection requirements that require the approval of the Office of Management and Budget under the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. chapter 35).

List of Subjects in 48 CFR Parts 5, 14, 19, 22, 25, 28, 43, 47, 49, 52, and 53

Government procurement.

Dated: May 31, 2016.

William Clark,

Director, Office of Government-wide Acquisition Policy, Office of Acquisition Policy, Office of Government-wide Policy.

Therefore, DoD, GSA, and NASA propose amending 48 CFR parts 5, 14, 19, 22, 25, 28, 43, 47, 49, 52, and 53 as set forth below:

■ 1. The authority citation for 48 CFR parts 5, 14, 19, 22, 25, 28, 43, 47, 49, 52, and 53 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 40 U.S.C. 121(c); 10 U.S.C. chapter 137; and 51 U.S.C. 20113.

PART 5—PUBLICIZING CONTRACT ACTIONS

5.504 [Amended]

■ 2. Amend section 5.504 by removing from paragraph (d) “, telegrams,”.

PART 14—SEALED BIDDING

14.201–6 [Amended]

■ 3. Amend section 4.201–6 by removing and reserving paragraph (g).

14.202–2 [Removed and Reserved]

■ 4. Remove and reserve section 14.202–2.

■ 5. Amend section 14.208 by revising paragraph (b) to read as follows:

14.208 Amendment of invitation for bids.

* * * * *

(b) Before amending an invitation for bids, the contracting officer shall consider the period of time remaining until bid opening and the need to extend this period.

* * * * *

14.301 [Amended]

■ 6. Amend section 14.301 by removing and reserving paragraph (b).

■ 7. Revise section 14.302 to read as follows:

14.302 Bid submission.

Bids shall be submitted so that they will be received in the office designated in the invitation for bids not later than the exact time set for opening of bids.

■ 8. Amend section 14.303 by revising paragraph (a) to read as follows:

14.303 Modification or withdrawal of bids.

(a)(1) Bids may be modified or withdrawn by any method authorized by the solicitation, if notice is received in the office designated in the solicitation not later than the exact time set for opening of bids. If the solicitation authorizes facsimile bids, bids may be modified or withdrawn via facsimile received at any time before the exact time set for receipt of bids, subject to the conditions specified in the provision prescribed in 14.201–6(v). Modifications

received by facsimile shall be sealed in an envelope by a proper official. The official shall write on the envelope:

(i) The date and time of receipt and by whom; and

(ii) The number of the invitation for bids, and shall sign the envelope.

(2) No information contained in the envelope shall be disclosed before the time set for bid opening.

* * * * *

14.407-3 [Amended]

■ 9. Amend section 14.407-3 by removing paragraph (g)(4), and redesignating paragraph (g)(5) as (g)(4).

14.408-1 [Amended]

■ 10. Amend section 14.408-1 by removing from paragraph (d)(2) “telegrams or electronic transmissions,” and adding “electronic communications,” in its place.

PART 19—SMALL BUSINESS PROGRAMS

19.302 [Amended]

■ 11. Amend section 19.302 by removing from paragraph (d)(1)(ii) “telegram,”.

PART 22—APPLICATION OF LABOR LAWS TO GOVERNMENT ACQUISITIONS

22.1003-3 [Amended]

■ 12. Amend section 22.1003-3 by removing from paragraph (d) “telegram,”.

PART 25—FOREIGN ACQUISITION

25.401 [Amended]

■ 13. Amend section 25.401 in the table, by removing from paragraph (b)(2)(iii) the words “telegraph services,” and removing “47 U.S.C. 153(20)” and adding “47 U.S.C. 153(24)” in its place.

PART 28—BONDS AND INSURANCE

28.101-4 [Amended]

■ 14. Amend section 28.101-4 by removing paragraph (c)(6), and redesignating paragraphs (c)(7) through (9) as paragraphs (c)(6) through (8), respectively.

PART 43—CONTRACT MODIFICATIONS

■ 15. Amend section 43.201 by revising paragraph (c) to read as follows:

43.201 General.

* * * * *

(c) The contracting officer may issue a change order by electronic means without a SF 30 under unusual or urgent circumstances, *provided* that the

message contains substantially the information required by the SF 30 and immediate action is taken to issue the SF 30.

PART 47—TRANSPORTATION

■ 16. Amend section 47.305-10 by revising paragraph (c) to read as follows:

47.305-10 Packing, marking, and consignment instructions.

* * * * *

(c) If necessary to meet required delivery schedules, the contracting officer may issue instructions by telephone or electronic means. The contracting officer shall confirm telephonic instructions in writing, and confirm electronic instructions if the contracting officer did not receive confirmation of receipt.

* * * * *

PART 49—TERMINATION OF CONTRACTS

■ 17. Amend section 49.102, paragraph (a), by revising the first and second sentences of the introductory text, to read as follows:

49.102 Notice of termination.

(a) *General.* The contracting officer shall terminate contracts for convenience or default only by a written notice to the contractor. The notice of termination may be expedited by means of electronic communication capable of providing confirmation of receipt by the contractor. When the notice is mailed, it shall be sent by certified mail, return receipt requested. * * *

* * * * *

■ 18. Amend section 49.601-1 by—
■ a. Revising the section heading; and adding an introductory paragraph;
■ b. Removing from paragraph (a) “telegraphic”, “[insert “immediately””, and “Telegraph”, and adding “electronic”, “[insert “immediately”, (today’s date)”, and “Provide by electronic means” in their places, respectively; and
■ c. Removing from paragraph (b) “telegraphic”, “[insert “immediately””, and “Telegraph”, and adding “electronic”, “[insert “immediately”, (today’s date)”, and “Provide by electronic means” in their places, respectively.

The revision and addition reads as follows:

49.601-1 Electronic notice.

The contracting officer may provide expedited notice of termination, by electronic means, that includes a requirement for the contractor to confirm receipt. If the contractor does

not confirm receipt promptly, the contracting officer shall resend the notice electronically, and expedite the letter notice described in 49.601-2. If confirmation of the electronic notice is received, and the electronic notice includes all content in 49.601-2, the contracting officer, at her or his discretion, need not send the letter notice described in 49.601-2.

* * * * *

■ 19. Amend section 49.601-2 by—

■ a. Revising the third and fourth sentences of the introductory paragraph;

■ b. Removing from paragraph (a) “telegram” and adding “electronic notice” in their places, two times; and
■ c. Revising the introductory paragraph of the Alternate notice.

The revisions read as follows:

49.601-2 Letter notice.

* * * This notice shall be sent by certified mail, return receipt requested, or electronically, provided evidence of receipt is received by the contracting officer. If no prior electronic notice was issued, or if no confirmation of an electronic notice was received, use the alternate notice that follows this notice.

* * * * *

Alternate notice. Substitute the following paragraph (a) for paragraph (a) of 49.601-2, Notice of Termination to Prime Contractors, if no prior electronic notice was issued, or if no confirmation of an electronic notice was received:

* * * * *

PART 52—SOLICITATION PROVISIONS AND CONTRACT CLAUSES

■ 20. Amend section 52.214-3 by—

■ a. Revising the date of the provision; and

■ b. Revising paragraph (b).

The revisions read as follows:

52.214-3 Amendments to Invitations for Bids.

* * * * *

Amendments to Invitations for Bids (Date)

* * * * *

(b)(1) Bidders shall acknowledge receipt of any amendment to this solicitation:

(i) By signing and returning the amendment;

(ii) By identifying the amendment number and date in space provided for this purpose on the form for submitting a bid;

(iii) By letter;

(iv) By facsimile, if facsimile bids are authorized in the solicitation; or

(v) By email, if email bids are authorized in the solicitation.

(2) The Government must receive the acknowledgment by the time and at the place specified for receipt of bids.

■ 21. Amend section 52.214–5 by—

■ a. Revising the date of the provision;

■ b. Removing paragraph (c); and

■ c. Redesignating paragraphs (d) and (e), as paragraphs (c) and (d), respectively.

The revision reads as follows:

52.214–5 Submission of Bids.

* * * * *

Submission of Bids (Date)

* * * * *

52.214–13 [Removed and Reserved]

■ 22. Remove and reserve section 52.214–13.

PART 53—FORMS

53.213 [Amended]

■ 23. Amend section 53.213 by removing from paragraph (b) “(10/83)” and adding “(Date)” in its place.

53.215–1 [Amended]

■ 24. Amend section 53.215–1 by removing from paragraph (b) “(10/83)” and adding “(Date)” in its place.

53.243 [Amended]

■ 25. Amend section 53.243 introductory text by removing “(10/83)” and adding “(Date)” in its place.

■ 26. Revise section 53.301–30 to read as follows:

53.301–30 Standard Form 30, Amendment of Solicitation/Modification of Contract.

BILLING CODE 6820–EP–P

AMENDMENT OF SOLICITATION/MODIFICATION OF CONTRACT				1. CONTRACT ID CODE	PAGE	OF	PAGES
2. AMENDMENT/MODIFICATION NUMBER	3. EFFECTIVE DATE	4. REQUISITION/PURCHASE REQUISITION NUMBER	5. PROJECT NUMBER (if applicable)				
6. ISSUED BY	CODE	7. ADMINISTERED BY (If other than Item 6)		CODE			
8. NAME AND ADDRESS OF CONTRACTOR (Number, street, county, State and ZIP Code)				(X)	9A. AMENDMENT OF SOLICITATION NUMBER		
				☐	9B. DATED (SEE ITEM 11)		
				☐	10A. MODIFICATION OF CONTRACT/ORDER NUMBER		
				☐	10B. DATED (SEE ITEM 13)		
CODE		FACILITY CODE					
11. THIS ITEM ONLY APPLIES TO AMENDMENTS OF SOLICITATIONS							
☐ The above numbered solicitation is amended as set forth in Item 14. The hour and date specified for receipt of Offers ☐ is extended. ☐ is not extended.							
Offers must acknowledge receipt of this amendment prior to the hour and date specified in the solicitation or as amended, by one of the following methods: (a) By completing Items 8 and 15, and returning _____ copies of the amendment; (b) By acknowledging receipt of this amendment on each copy of the offer submitted; or (c) By separate letter or electronic communication which includes a reference to the solicitation and amendment numbers. FAILURE OF YOUR ACKNOWLEDGMENT TO BE RECEIVED AT THE PLACE DESIGNATED FOR THE RECEIPT OF OFFERS PRIOR TO THE HOUR AND DATE SPECIFIED MAY RESULT IN REJECTION OF YOUR OFFER. If by virtue of this amendment you desire to change an offer already submitted, such change may be made by letter or electronic communication, provided each letter or electronic communication makes reference to the solicitation and this amendment, and is received prior to the opening hour and date specified.							
12. ACCOUNTING AND APPROPRIATION DATA (if required)							
13. THIS ITEM APPLIES ONLY TO MODIFICATIONS OF CONTRACTS/ORDERS.							
IT MODIFIES THE CONTRACT/ORDER NUMBER AS DESCRIBED IN ITEM 14.							
CHECK ONE	A. THIS CHANGE ORDER IS ISSUED PURSUANT TO: (Specify authority) THE CHANGES SET FORTH IN ITEM 14 ARE MADE IN THE CONTRACT ORDER NUMBER IN ITEM 10A.						
☐							
☐	B. THE ABOVE NUMBERED CONTRACT/ORDER IS MODIFIED TO REFLECT THE ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES (such as changes in paying office, appropriation date, etc.) SET FORTH IN ITEM 14, PURSUANT TO THE AUTHORITY OF FAR 43.103(b).						
☐	C. THIS SUPPLEMENTAL AGREEMENT IS ENTERED INTO PURSUANT TO AUTHORITY OF:						
☐	D. OTHER (Specify type of modification and authority)						
E. IMPORTANT: Contractor ☐ is not ☐ is required to sign this document and return _____ copies to the issuing office.							
14. DESCRIPTION OF AMENDMENT/MODIFICATION (Organized by UCF section headings, including solicitation/contract subject matter where feasible.)							
Except as provided herein, all terms and conditions of the document referenced in Item 9A or 10A, as heretofore changed, remains unchanged and in full force and effect.							
15A. NAME AND TITLE OF SIGNER (Type or print)				16A. NAME AND TITLE OF CONTRACTING OFFICER (Type or print)			
15B. CONTRACTOR/OFFEROR				15C. DATE SIGNED		16B. UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	
(Signature of person authorized to sign)				(Signature of Contracting Officer)		16C. DATE SIGNED	
Previous edition unusable				STANDARD FORM 30 (REV. [DATE]) Prescribed by GSA FAR (48 CFR) 53.243			

INSTRUCTIONS (*Back Page*):

Instructions for items other than those that are self-explanatory, are as follows:

- (a) Item 1 (Contract ID Code). Insert the contract type identification code that appears in the title block of the contract being modified.
- (b) Item 3 (Effective date).
- (1) For a solicitation amendment, change order, or administrative change, the effective date shall be the issue date of the amendment, change order, or administrative change.
 - (2) For a supplemental agreement, the effective date shall be the date agreed to by the contracting parties.
 - (3) For a modification issued as an initial or confirming notice of termination for the convenience of the Government, the effective date and the modification number of the confirming notice shall be the same as the effective date and modification number of the initial notice.
 - (4) For a modification converting a termination for default to a termination for the convenience of the Government, the effective date shall be the same as the effective date of the termination for default.
 - (5) For a modification confirming the contracting officer's determination of the amount due in settlement of a contract termination, the effective date shall be the same as the effective date of the initial decision.
- (c) Item 6 (Issued By). Insert the name and address of the issuing office. If applicable, insert the appropriate issuing office code in the code block.
- (d) Item 8 (Name and Address of Contractor). For modifications to a contract or order, enter the contractor's name, address, and code as shown in the original contract or order, unless changed by this or a previous modification.
- (e) Items 9, (Amendment of Solicitation Number - Dated), and 10, (Modification of Contract/Order Number - Dated). Check the appropriate box and in the corresponding blanks insert the number and date of the original solicitation, contract, or order.
- (f) Item 12 (Accounting and Appropriation Data). When appropriate, indicate the impact of the modification on each affected accounting classification by inserting one of the following entries:
- (1) Accounting classification
Net increase \$
 - (2) Accounting classification
Net decrease \$
- NOTE: If there are changes to multiple accounting classifications that cannot be placed in block 12, insert an asterisk and the words "See continuation sheet".
- (g) Item 13. Check the appropriate box to indicate the type of modification. Insert in the corresponding blank the authority under which the modification is issued. Check whether or not contractor must sign this document. (See FAR 43.103.)
- (h) Item 14 (Description of Amendment/Modification).
- (1) Organize amendments or modifications under the appropriate Uniform Contract Format (UCF) section headings from the applicable solicitation or contract. The UCF table of contents, however, shall not be set forth in this document.
 - (2) Indicate the impact of the modification on the overall total contract price by inserting one of the following entries:
 - (i) Total contract price increased by \$
 - (ii) Total contract price decreased by \$
 - (iii) Total contract price unchanged.
 - (3) State reason for modification.
 - (4) When removing, reinstating, or adding funds, identify the contract items and accounting classifications.
 - (5) When the SF 30 is used to reflect a determination by the contracting officer of the amount due in settlement of a contract terminated for the convenience of the Government, the entry in Item 14 of the modification may be limited to --
 - (i) A reference to the letter determination; and
 - (ii) A statement of the net amount determined to be due in settlement of the contract.
 - (6) Include subject matter or short title of solicitation/contract where feasible.
- (i) Item 16B. The contracting officer's signature is not required on solicitation amendments. The contracting officer's signature is normally affixed last on supplemental agreements.

STANDARD FORM 30 (REV. [DATE]) BACK

[FR Doc. 2016-13189 Filed 6-3-16; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6820-EP-C

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 648

[Docket No. 160301164-6164-01]

RIN 0648-BF87

Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Northeast Skate Complex Fishery; Framework Adjustment 3 and 2016-2017 Specifications

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

ACTION: Proposed rule; request for comments.

SUMMARY: This rule proposes regulations to approve and implement measures in Framework Adjustment 3 and 2016-2017 Specifications (Framework 3) to the Northeast Skate Complex Fishery Management Plan (FMP). Framework 3 would implement skate fishery specifications and a new seasonal quota allocation for the skate wing fishery. The action is necessary to update the Skate FMP to be consistent with the most recent scientific information, and improve management of the skate fisheries. The proposed action is expected to help conserve skate stocks, while maintaining economic opportunities for the skate fisheries.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before June 21, 2016.

ADDRESSES: Copies of the framework, including the Environmental Assessment and Regulatory Impact Review (EA/RIR) and other supporting documents for the action are available from Thomas A. Nies, Executive Director, New England Fishery Management Council, 50 Water Street, Mill 2, Newburyport, MA 01950. The framework is also accessible via the Internet at: <http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov>.

You may submit comments, identified by NOAA-NMFS-2016-0054, by any one of the following methods:

- **Electronic Submissions:** Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal e-Rulemaking portal. Go to www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=NOAA-NMFS-2016-0054, click the "Comment Now!" icon, complete the required fields, and enter or attach your comments.

- **Mail:** NMFS, Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930. Mark the outside of the envelope "Comments on Skate Framework 3."

Instructions: Comments must be submitted by one of the above methods to ensure that the comments are received, documented, and considered by NMFS. Comments sent by any other method, to any other address or individual, or received after the end of the comment period, may not be considered. All comments received are a part of the public record and will generally be posted for public viewing on www.regulations.gov without change. All personal identifying information (e.g., name, address) submitted voluntarily by the sender will be publicly accessible. Do not submit confidential business information, or otherwise sensitive or protected information. NMFS will accept anonymous comments (enter "N/A" in the required fields if you wish to remain anonymous).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Tobey Curtis, Fishery Policy Analyst, (978) 281-9273.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**Background**

The New England Fishery Management Council is responsible for developing management measures for skate fisheries in the northeastern U.S. through the Northeast Skate Complex Fishery Management Plan (Skate FMP). Seven skate species are managed under the Skate FMP: Winter; little; thorny; barndoor; smooth; clearnose; and rosette. The Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee reviews the best available information on the status of skate populations and makes recommendations on acceptable biological catch (ABC) for the skate complex (all seven species). This recommendation is then used as the basis for catch limits and other management measures for the skate fisheries.

The regulations implementing the Skate FMP at 50 CFR part 648, subpart O, outline the management procedures and measures for the skate fisheries. Specifications including the annual catch limit (ACL), annual catch target (ACT), total allowable landings (TALs) for the skate wing and bait fisheries, and possession limits may be specified for up to 2 years. The current specifications were implemented as part of Framework Adjustment 2 to the Skate FMP (79 FR 51504, August 29, 2014). The Council is required to develop new specifications for the 2016 and 2017 fishing years. The

existing specifications and possession limits remain in effect until they are replaced. In addition to setting specifications, the Council desired to modify the in-season management of the skate wing fishery, including a new seasonal allocation of the quota in a framework adjustment.

In September 2015, the Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee reviewed updated information on the status of the seven species in the skate complex, including new research on discard mortality rates, and recommended an ABC of 31,081 mt for 2016 and 2017 (a 12-percent reduction from 2015). The recommended catch reduction is based on trawl survey biomass declines in little and clearnose skates, as well as adjustments to historical catch estimates derived from the new discard mortality rate data (lower than previously assumed). According to the most recent stock status information, no skates are experiencing overfishing, and only thorny skate is in an overfished condition. Thorny skate continues to be a prohibited species as part of its long-term stock rebuilding plan. More details are provided in the EA (see **ADDRESSES**).

The Council's Skate Oversight Committee and Advisory Panel (AP) met in October 2015 to develop specification recommendations for Council consideration, following the procedures in Amendment 3 to the Skate FMP (75 FR 34049, June 16, 2010). Following these procedures, the recommended ABC reduction, in addition to increases in the skate discard rate in recent years, resulted in a 23-percent decline in the total allowable landings (TAL) from 2015 levels. Due to the 23-percent reduction in the TAL, the Committee and AP discussed tradeoffs between reducing possession limits versus seasonally allocating the TAL in an effort to avoid in-season closures and maintain a steady supply of skate wings across the year.

Proposed Framework Adjustment Measure

The Council ultimately decided to recommend status quo possession limits (see *Proposed Specification Measures*), but to use a framework adjustment to allocate 57 percent of the skate wing TAL to a Season 1 quota (May 1-August 31). Under this action, the Regional Administrator would be given the authority to reduce the skate wing possession limit from 2,600 lb (1,179 kg) to an incidental catch level of 500 lb (227 kg) when 85 percent of the Season 1 quota is projected to be landed. If 85 percent of the Season 1 quota is projected to be landed between May 1