



# Supply Chain Symposium: DFARS Flow-Downs

David Dixon
Travis Mullaney



### Goals

- Review the mechanisms by which flow-downs are commonly incorporated
- Understand the differences in flow-down requirements for commercial item v. noncommercial item contracts
- Distinguish between mandatory DFARS and recommended flow-downs applicable to various types of defense-related subcontracts



### FAR v. DFARS

- FAR = Federal Acquisition Regulations
  - 48 C.F.R. § 1.101 et seq.
- DFARS = Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement
  - 48 C.F.R. § 201.104 et seq.
  - "[A]pplies to purchases and contracts by DoD contracting activities made in support of foreign military sales or North Atlantic Treaty Organization cooperative projects without regard to the nature or sources of funds obligated, unless otherwise specified in this regulation." DFARS 201.104
- FAR & DFARS requirements work in harmony with one another



# Quick Overview of Flow-Downs



### What Are Flow-down Provisions?

- USG prime contract clauses inserted into a subcontract
- These "flow-down" the responsibilities of the prime to the subcontractor
- Can significantly impact the obligations and risks for performing the subcontract



### What Is A Subcontract?

- A contract entered into by a subcontractor to furnish supplies or services <u>for performance of</u> a prime contract or subcontract. It includes, but is not limited to, purchase orders and changes and modifications to purchase orders. FAR 44.101
- "Subcontractor" means any supplier, distributor, vendor, or firm that furnishes supplies or services to or for a prime contractor or another subcontractor. FAR 44.101



## Mandatory vs. Non-Mandatory Flow-downs

### **Mandatory Flow-downs**

- Specifically require the prime to include them in subcontracts
- Not negotiable
- E.g., whistleblower rights, export controls, cybersecurity reporting

### **Non-Mandatory Flow-downs**

- Prime contract does not explicitly require they be included in subcontracts
- Yet, Prime must ensure subcontractor compliance with Prime contract requirements
- Certain clauses should also be flowed-down even if not required
- E.g., changes, termination for default, requests for equitable adjustment



### Why Do Flow-downs Matter?

### **Prime Contractor**

- Meet contract requirements
- USG consent to subcontract (FAR Subpart 44.2) & purchasing system approval (FAR Subpart 44.3)
- Maximize cost recovery by ensuring cost reasonableness
- Manage/allocate performance uncertainties and risk

### **Subcontractor**

- Ability to participate in huge federal marketplace
- Develop past performance history
- Minimize exposure to prime contractor risks
- Ensure company can meet compliance obligations



# What If A Mandatory Clause Is Not Flowed Down?

### **Prime** Contractor



- In breach of USG Prime contract
- Can be subject to numerous remedies, such as:
- Withholding of payments,
- Termination of contact, and
- Suspension or debarment

#### **Subcontractor**

- Under "Christian Doctrine," subs can be subject to USG mandatory requirements even if not in subcontract
  - UPMC Braddock, et al. v. Harris, Civ. 09-1210 (D.D.C. Mar. 30, 2013)
    - Incorporated mandatory socio-economic requirements into subcontract even though not in subcontract
    - Based on G.L. Christian & Associates v. United States, 312 F.2d 418, 426 (Ct. Cl. 1963) finding contract requirements reflecting a "significant or deeply ingrained strand of public procurement policy" apply to government contracts even if requirements not in contract
- Before UPMC Braddock. Christian Doctrine only applied to Prime contracts





### How Can I Tell When A Clause Is Required To Be Flowed Down To A Subcontract?

- 1. Read the clause—it will specify
  - Some clauses must be flowed-down verbatim
    - "Contractor shall include this clause in subcontracts"
  - Other clauses can be modified
    - "Contractor shall include the substance of this clause in subcontracts"
- 2. Read the text reference that prescribes use of the clause (e.g., conditions or threshold)



# Which Clauses are Required to be Flowed Down Depend on the Type and Value of the Contract:

#### Type of goods or services

- Commercial Items
- Non-Commercial Items

#### Prime and subcontract payment terms

- Fixed price
- Cost reimbursement
- Time and materials

#### Contract value

- OFCCP Socio-Economic Clauses: \$10,000
- Simplified Acquisition Threshold: \$150,000 (FAR 2.101)
- •TINA Threshold: \$750,000 as of October 1, 2015





### Incorporation Strategies

- List out only clauses specifically applicable to each subcontract
  - Greatest accuracy, largest administrative burden
- Incorporate entirety of prime contract FAR / DFARS provisions by reference
  - Easy to accomplish, but over-inclusive and may create logical inconsistencies
- Create and use templates specific to various types of subcontracts
  - Achieves balance of burden and tailoring, but may not obtain 1 to 1 match



## Incorporation Strategies: Traps for the Unwary

- The Purchase Order Problem
  - POs unconnected to a larger subcontract must incorporate required flow-downs as well
  - Flow-downs that are always mandatory for purchases of a specific type should be incorporated into the PO template
  - For larger contractors, it is also common to reference a standard template document stored online
  - Beware Battle of Forms issues
    - Christian doctrine may help resolve such issues



# Incorporation Strategies: Traps for the Unwary (cont'd)

- Failure to Include Appropriate Preface Language
  - "Government" shall mean "Contractor". . . "Contractor" shall mean "Subcontractor"
  - Without such language, subcontractor requirements with respect to flow-downs are unclear
  - Need to make sure all necessary terms are translated
    - e.g., Contracting Officer, Contracting Officer's Representative, etc.



# Commercial Item v. Noncommercial Item Subcontracts



### What Is A Commercial Item? FAR 2.101

- Generally, any item that is of a type customarily used by the general public, and has been sold, leased, or licensed to the general public, or
- Any item that would satisfy a criterion above, but for-
  - (i) Modifications of a type customarily available in the commercial marketplace; or
  - (ii) Minor modifications of a type not customarily available in the commercial marketplace made to meet Federal Government requirements



# Laws Not Applicable to Commercial Item Subcontracts – DFARS 212.504

10 U.S.C. 2306(b)	Prohibition on Contingent Fees
10 U.S.C. 2313(c)	Examination of Records of a Contractor
10 U.S.C. 2324	Allowable Costs Under Defense Contracts
10 U.S.C. 2327	Reporting Requirement Regarding Dealings with Terrorist Countries
10 U.S.C. 2384(b)	Requirement to Identify Suppliers
10 U.S.C. 2391	Notification of Substantial Impact on Employment
10 U.S.C. 2393	Prohibition Against Doing Business with Certain Offerors or Contractors
10 U.S.C. 2397(a)(1)	Reports by Employees or Former Employees of Defense Contractors
10 U.S.C. 2397b(f)	Limits on Employment for Former DoD Officials
10 U.S.C. 2397c	Defense Contractor Requirements Concerning Former DoD Officials
10 U.S.C. 2408(a)	Prohibition on Persons Convicted of Defense Related Felonies
10 U.S.C. 2410b	Contractor Inventory Accounting System Standards
10 U.S.C. 2501	Notification of Proposed Program Termination
10 U.S.C. 2534	Miscellaneous Limitations on the Procurement of Goods Other Than United States Goods.
10 U.S.C. 2631	Transportation of Supplies by Sea (with exceptions, see DFARS 252.247-7023)
Others:	E.g., various provisions of authorization acts, including domestic content restrictions,



# Exemption to Domestic Preference for COTS items

- DFARS 212.570 Applicability of certain laws to contracts and subcontracts for the acquisition of commercially available off-the-shelf item.
- "Paragraph (a)(1) of 10 U.S.C. 2533b, Requirement to buy strategic materials critical to national security from American sources, is not applicable to contracts and subcontracts for the acquisition of commercially available off-the-shelf items, except as provided at 225.7003-3(b)(2)(i)."



### Limited Flow-Downs for Commercial Item Subcontracts

### 252.244-7000 - SUBCONTRACTS FOR COMMERCIAL ITEMS

- (a) The Contractor is *not required to flow down the terms* of any Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement (DFARS) clause in subcontracts for commercial items at any tier under this contract, unless so specified in the particular clause.
- (b) While not required, the Contractor may flow down to subcontracts for commercial items a minimal number of additional clauses necessary to satisfy its contractual obligation.
- (c) The Contractor shall include the terms of this clause, including this paragraph (c), in subcontracts awarded under this contract, including subcontracts for the acquisition of commercial items.



# Mandatory DFARS Flow-Downs For All Commercial-Items Subcontracts

252.203-7002	Requirement to Inform Employees of Whistleblower Rights
252.204-7012	Safeguarding Covered Defense Information and Cyber Incident Reporting
252.204-7015	Notice of Authorized Disclosure of Information for Litigation Support
252.225-7048	Export-Controlled Items
252.227-7015	Technical Data – Commercial Items
227.227-7037	Validation of Restrictive Markings on Technical Data
227-244-7000	Subcontracts for Commercial Items

- Additional mandatory flow-downs are dependent on contract specifics
- Required flow-downs for commercial item subcontracts generally set the floor or minimum requirements for contracts of a particular type or character



# Breakdown of Mandatory DFARS Flow-Downs For All Commercial-Items Subcontracts

#### Whistleblower Protections

- 252.203-7002 Requirement to Inform Employees of Whistleblower Rights
  - Must inform employees in writing of whistleblower rights

### Government May Disclose Info to Lit Support

- 252.204-7015 Notice of Authorized Disclosure of Information for Litigation Support
  - Government may disclose to a litigation support contractor sensitive information received in a quote, offer, or during performance of the contract

### Export Controls

- 252.225-7048 Export-Controlled Items
  - Contractor must follow ITAR, EAR, and other export controls laws



# Breakdown of Mandatory DFARS Flow-Downs For All Commercial-Items Subcontracts (cont'd)

### **Cyber Protections and Reporting**

- 252.204-7012 Safeguarding Covered Defense Information and Cyber Incident Reporting (DEC 2015)
  - Applies to all defense contracts, including commercial-item contracts
  - Requires "adequate security" for information systems that have CDI resident on or transitioning through it
    - Must comply with NIST SP 800-171 security controls
  - Cyber incident and compromise reporting within 72 hours of discovery
  - Requires cooperation with any post-report investigations,
    - Includes preserving images of all affected systems for 90 days
  - Flow-down "this clause" to all subcontracts including for small business and commercial items



# Breakdown of Mandatory DFARS Flow-Downs For All Commercial-Items Subcontracts (cont'd)

### **Intellectual Property**

- 252.227-7015 Technical Data Commercial Items
  - Contractor generally allowed to place restrictions on Government use of data, subject to certain restrictions
  - Contrasts sharply with rights afforded under contracts for noncommercial items
- 227.227-7037 Validation of Restrictive Markings on Technical Data
  - Subcontractor must be able to justify restrictive markings and such restrictions. can be challenged



- Monetary threshold triggers (examples):
  - > \$500K
    - 252.226-7001 Utilization of Indian Organizations, Indian-Owned Economic Enterprises, and Native Hawaiian Small Business Concerns
  - > \$650K
    - 252.219-7003 Small Business Subcontracting Plan (DoD Contracts)
      - Required for contracts > \$650k (\$1.5M for construction) unless for personal services or performed OCONUS
      - See 252.219-7004(f) for incorporation requirement
  - > \$1.5M
    - 252.211-7000 Acquisition Streamlining
  - >\$50M
    - 252.234.7004 Cost and Software Data Reporting System
      - "Contractor shall require CSDR reporting from subcontractors at any tier with a subcontract that exceeds \$50 million."



### **SOW Dependent:**

- **Sensitive Information** 
  - 252.204-7000 Disclosure of Information
    - Required where contractor will have access to or generate unclassified information that may be sensitive

#### **Precious Metals**

- 252.208-7000 Intent to Furnish Precious Metals as Government-Furnished Material
  - Required unless known that the item being purchased contains no precious metals

### Items critical to safety or integral to a system

- 252.246-7003 Notification of Potential Safety Issues
  - Requires notification of nonconformances or deficiencies that may have an impact on critical safety items or integral systems
- 252.237-7023 Continuation of Essential Contractor Services
  - Requires plan to provide mission-essential contractor services and must notify if unable to perform such services



- SOW Dependent: (cont'd)
  - **Toxic or Hazardous Materials** 
    - 252.204-7010 Requirement to Notify DoD if the Contractor's Activities are Subject to Reporting Under the U.S.-International Atomic Energy Agency Additional Protocol
    - 252.223-7006 Prohibition on Storage, Treatment, and Disposal of Toxic or Hazardous Materials
    - 252.223-7002 Safety Precautions for Ammunition and Explosives
    - 252.223-7007 Safeguarding Sensitive Conventional Arms, Ammunition, and Explosives
    - 252.223-7008 Prohibition of Hexavalent Chromium



- **SOW Dependent:** (cont'd)
  - Contracts requiring transport by sea
    - 252.247-7023 Transportation of Supplies by Sea
      - Requires subcontractors to use U.S. Flag vessels under certain circumstances
  - Research and development contracts
    - 252.235-7002 Animal Welfare
      - Must comply with laws and regulations pertinent to treatment of research animals
    - 252.235-7003 Frequency Authorization
      - Requires approval for use of unallocated radio frequencies
    - 252.235-7004 Protection of Human Subjects
      - Mandates certain approvals required when using human subjects



- Particular types of contracts:
  - **Aviation related contracts** 
    - 252.228-7001 Ground and Flight Risk
      - Outlines conditions of Government's self-insurance of loss of aircraft
    - 252.228-7005 Accident Reporting and Investigation Involving Aircraft, Missiles, and Space Launch Vehicles
  - Litigation support contracts
    - 252.204-7014 Limitations on the Use or Disclosure of Information by **Litigation Support Contractors**



- Particular types of contracts:
  - Foreign Acquisitions
    - Restrictions on acquisition of materials from foreign countries
      - 252.225-7007 (Items on Munitions List) Can't buy from China
      - 252.225-7009 (Specialty Metals)
        - Subject to exceptions, "[a]ny specialty metals incorporated in items delivered under this contract shall be melted or produced in the United States, its outlying areas, or a qualifying country."



- Particular types of contracts:
  - Foreign Acquisitions (cont'd)
    - Flow-downs related to certain duties and levies
      - 252.225-7013 (Duty Free Entry)
        - Contract price does not include duty
        - Contractor may claim duty-free entry for supplies to be delivered under the contract
        - Contractor must pay duty on supplies diverted to nongovernmental use
      - 252.229-7011 (Foreign taxes for contracts in support of U.S. Assistance) Programs)
        - Commodities acquired under contracts for U.S. Assistance Programs are exempt from all value added taxes and customs duties imposed by the recipient country
        - Contractor must report taxes that are nonetheless imposed





- Particular types of contracts:
  - Foreign Acquisitions (cont'd)
    - Performance of work overseas
      - 252.225-7039 Defense Contractors Performing Private Security **Functions Outside the United States** 
        - Must register weapons and armored vehicles
        - Must comply with federal requirements
      - 252.225-7040 Contractor Personnel Supporting U.S. Armed Forces Deployed Outside the United States
        - Contractor accepts risk of performing in dangerous or austere conditions
        - Contractor may only use arms in self defense
        - Contractor must comply with regulations regarding government provided security, reporting, investigations, etc.



- Particular types of contracts:
  - IT contracts
    - 252.239-7016 Telecommunications Security Equipment, Devices, Techniques, and Services
      - Contractor must secure telecommunications systems and use government approved systems
    - 252.246-7007 Contractor Counterfeit Electronic Part Detection and Avoidance System
      - Required in prime contracts involving delivery of electronic parts, See DFARS 246.870-3
        - Small business set-asides excluded
      - Applies only to CAS-covered contractors
      - If applicable, requires flow-down of the "substance of this clause" to all subcontracts for electronic items



### Intellectual Property under the DFARS

- Technical Data v. Computer Software
  - **Technical Data** (DFARS 252.227-7013)
    - Recorded information of a scientific or technical nature
      - Any form or method of recording
    - Does not include:
      - Computer software (covered in a another clause)
      - Financial, administrative, cost or pricing, or management data
      - Other information incidental to contract administration.
  - Computer Software (DFARS 252.227-7014)
    - Computer programs and related materials that would enable software to be reproduced
      - Does not include databases



# Intellectual Property under the DFARS (cont'd)

- IP Rights Framework
  - Unlimited Rights (DFARS 227-7103-5)
    - Government's right to use is unlimited and perpetual
    - USG has the right:
      - Use, disclose, reproduce, prepare derivative works, distribute copies to the public
      - Perform publicly and display publicly, in any manner and for any purpose
      - Permit others to do so.
    - See DFARS 252.227-7013(b)(1) (Rights In Technical Data--Noncommercial Items)



# Intellectual Property under the DFARS (cont'd)

- IP Rights Framework
  - Government Purpose Rights (DFARS 227-7103-5)
    - USG can:
      - Use, modify, reproduce, release, perform, display, or disclose technical data within the Government without restriction
      - Release or disclose technical data outside the Government
        - authorize persons to whom release or disclosure has been made to use, modify, reproduce, release, perform, display, or disclose that data
        - for USG purposes.
    - See DFARS 252.227-7013(b)(2) (Rights In Technical Data--Noncommercial Items)



## Intellectual Property under the DFARS (cont'd)

### IP Rights Framework

- **Limited Rights** (Technical Data) (DFARS 227-7103-5)
  - USG may use or reproduce technical data
  - USG may *not*, without the written permission:
    - Release or disclose the technical data outside the Government.
    - Use the technical data for manufacture, or
    - Authorize the technical data to be used by another party, except under very limited circumstances.
- **Restricted Rights** (Software) (DFARS 252.227-7014)
  - Government's get minimal rights when software developed at private expense
  - Examples of permitted uses:
    - Use on computer for which acquired
    - Copy for use as a backup
    - Modified, but derivative software subject to same restrictions
    - Use by IT support personnel



- DFARS IP provisions determine what types of rights are granted:
  - 252.227-7013 Rights in Technical Data Noncommercial Items
    - USG gets:
      - **Unlimited rights** in data developed exclusively with USG funds in performance of USG contract
      - Government purpose rights in data developed with mixed funding
      - Limited rights in technical data developed exclusively at private expense and marked with limited rights legend
  - 252.227-7014 Rights in Noncommercial Computer Software and Noncommercial Computer Software Documentation
    - USG gets:
      - **Unlimited rights** in software developed exclusively with USG funds in performance of USG contract
      - Government purpose rights in software developed with mixed funding
      - Restricted rights in software developed exclusively at private expense



- DFARS IP provisions determine what types of rights are granted (cont'd):
  - 252.227-7018 Rights in Noncommercial Technical Data and Computer Software—Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Program
    - USG gets:
      - From contract award until 5-years after completion of project (Phase I— III):
        - Limited Rights in Technical Data (generated under SBIR contract)
        - Restricted Rights in Computer Software (generated under SBIR contract)
      - After expiration of the SBIR data protection period:
        - USG gets Government use rights



- DFARS IP provisions determine what types of rights are granted:
  - 252.227-7038 Patent Rights—Ownership by the Contractor (Large **Business**)
    - Contractor may elect to retain ownership of inventions, subject to disclosure obligations, notice, and filing obligations
      - Government gets a nonexclusive, nontransferable, irrevocable, paid-up license
    - Otherwise, Contractor gets nonexclusive worldwide royalty-free license
    - Generally a mandatory flow-down if contract is for experimental, developmental, or research work
    - For flow-down purposes, license stays with Government
    - Contractor may not condition award of subcontract on obtaining rights to subcontractor's inventions



#### Key Takeaways:

- Prime should ensure subs provide required licenses to USG
- Prime must be careful not to overstep in requesting patent rights from subs



# Recommended Non-Mandatory DFARS Clauses Prime Contractors Should Consider Flowing Down



- 252.211-7007 Reporting of Government-Furnished Property
  - Contractor remains responsible for reporting when Government-Furnished Property is in subcontractor's possession
- 252.215-7009 Proposal Adequacy Checklist
  - Matches proposal requirements with specific pages to ensure coverage
  - "offerors may elect to have their prospective subcontractors use the same or similar checklist as appropriate."
- 252.217-7003 Changes
  - CO can unilaterally dictate changes, subject to equitable adjustment
- 252.243-7002 Requests for Equitable Adjustment
  - Incorporation allows Prime to pass on Sub REAs



- 252.217-7001 Surge Option
  - Allows increase in the quantity of supplies or services or acceleration of the schedule for delivery
- 252.217-7009 Default
  - Allows termination for default
- 252.249-7002 Notification of Anticipated Contract Termination or Reduction
  - Prime must require subs to provide notice to lower tier subs
- 252.243-7001 Pricing of Contract Modifications
  - Cost principles apply to price adjustments



- 252.222-7006 Restrictions on the Use of Mandatory Arbitration Agreements
  - Requires Prime to certify that it requires subs not to agree to or enforce a
    mandatory arbitration agreement with respect to certain tort and civil
    rights claims
- 252.247-7022 Representation of Extent of Transportation by Sea
  - Prime offeror required to represent whether it anticipates supplies will be transported by sea in performance of the contract <u>or any subcontract</u>



#### Additional Warranties

- 252.246-7001 Warranty of Data
  - Contractor must warranty accuracy of technical data, to the extent a sub is providing such data, Prime will want a warranty from the sub as well
- 252.239-7000 Protection Against Compromising Emanations
  - Provided IT must be accredited to meet appropriate information assurance requirements, and Prime must correct or replace deficient IT found deficient within 1 year after proper installations



#### Indemnification

- 252.235-7000 Indemnification Under 10 U.S.C. 2354–Fixed Price
- 252.235-7001 Indemnification Under 10 U.S.C. 2354–Cost Reimbursement
- Indemnification flow-down only allowed if Sub has same obligations to Prime as Prime has to the Government



#### Foreign Acquisition

- 252.225-7028 Exclusionary Policies and Practices of Foreign Governments
  - "Contractor and its subcontractors shall not ..."
- 252.225-7043 Antiterrorism/Force Protection Policy for Defense Contractors Outside the United States
  - "Contractor and its subcontractors. . . shall"



#### Specialty IP Provisions

- 252.227-7020 Rights in Special Works
  - USG gets:
    - Unlimited rights in works first produced and required to be delivered under the contract
    - A royalty-free, world-wide, nonexclusive, irrevocable *license* to use copyrighted works not first produced under the contract but incorporated into a deliverable
  - Contractor indemnifies USG against unauthorized use of third party copyrighted data
  - If Prime owes indemnity, will want Sub to owe indemnity to Prime



#### Specialty IP Provisions

- 252.227-7021 Rights in Data—Existing Works
  - USG gets nonexclusive, paid-up, world-wide license to distribute works called for under the contract
  - USG may authorize others to use works
  - Contractor must indemnify USG for unauthorized use of third party copyrighted data
  - If Prime owes indemnity, will want Sub to owe indemnity to Prime
- 252.227-7025 Limitations on the Use or Disclosure of Government-Furnished Information Marked with Restrictive Legends
  - Contractor's use of marked data limited in accordance with markings
  - Contractor must indemnify USG for unauthorized use



#### Flow-Down Best Practices – Prime Contractor

Understand your contract - paying close attention to clauses incorporated by reference (FAR, DFARS, etc. clauses)

Create a matrix that identifies flow-down requirements specific to each contract based on subcontract value and type

Incorporate non-mandatory clauses that are necessary to mitigate risk and ensure subcontractor compliance

Monitor subcontractor compliance

Monitor new clauses in contract mods, and modify subcontracts to flow-down



#### Flow-Down Best Practices – Subcontractor

Beware of language incorporating all prime contract requirements

**Know which flow-downs are mandatory** 

These are non-negotiable, so don't waste time on them

Potentially push back on non-mandatory flow-downs

Monitor new clauses in modifications



#### Presenters



**David Dixon** david.dixon@pillsburylaw.com



**Travis Mullaney** travis.mullaney@pillsburylaw.com