



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Record Group 330

Series: Records of Prime Contracts Awarded by the Military Service and Agencies (Military Prime Contract Files (MPCF)), 7/1/1965 – 6/30/1975

1. What information is in these records?
2. Why were these records created?
3. How do these records differ from the original contracts?
4. How can I access the original contracts documented in these records?
5. Where can I learn more about retention of contract records?

1. What information is in these records?

This series contains information about contracts for goods and services with a value of \$10,000 or more between the private sector and the military services and agencies of the Department of Defense. There is a record for each contract with information derived from Department of Defense Form 350, the Individual Contracting Action Report. Records include information on the dates of contract action, estimated completion, and reporting; a code identifying the reporting department within the Department of Defense; the business names of the government contractors and contracting offices, including city, county, and state or country of the contractor; description of the defense spending involved in the purchase of the military supplies, systems, or services, and its dollar value; and type of procurement, including the extent of competition, type of contract, whether the contract related to foreign military sales, and whether it was awarded to a large or small business, a nonprofit institution, or for work outside the U.S. and its possessions. For prime contracts of \$200,000 or more during fiscal years 1966 through 1974, the records also document whether the contract was in support of the U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War.

2. Why were these records created?

The agency created the database to provide administrative and management control over military supplies and services procurements within the Department of Defense. The agency also used these data to prepare special reports to the President, the Secretary of Defense, the Congress, and to private industry.

3. How do these records differ from the original contracts?

For this database, the Department of Defense took information from contract documents to create each record about a contract. They did this to have a systematic source for managing information about Department of Defense contracts. Hence, these records are separate from but related to the original contracts.

4. How can I access the original contracts documented in these records?

In general, individual paper contracts are appraised as temporary records so they are destroyed after a set period of time upon completion of the contract.

Thus, in general, the National Archives does not have the original contracts as part of its holdings. What is in these electronic records is likely the only information at the National Archives about these contracts.

5. Where can I learn more about retention of contract records?

Since contracts are records common to all agencies of the Federal Government, the records retention schedule for contracts falls under the General Records Schedules instead of specific schedules per agency. General Records Schedule 1.1: Financial Management and Report Records covers contract records. You can view General Records Schedule 1.1. at <https://www.archives.gov/files/records-mgmt/grs/grs01-1.pdf>. Background information on General Records Schedules and a list of all General Records Schedules is available at: <https://www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/grs.html>.

In addition, records retention schedule (or records disposition authority) “General Administration Records Required for Routine Office Administration” (NC1-330-77-4), dated May 26, 1977, also indicates that almost all contract records in the Office of the Secretary of Defense were appraised as temporary and to be disposed of after a period of time. You can view this records disposition authority at: http://www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/rcs/schedules/departments/department-of-defense/office-of-the-secretary-of-defense/rg-0330/nc1-330-77-04_sf115.pdf (see category number 208 for contracts).

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