

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT  
FOR PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT SUBMISSION  
OMB CONTROL NO. 9000-0153  
Alternatives to Government-Unique Standards**

**FAR section affected: 52.211-7**

**A. Justification.**

**1. Administrative requirements.** This clearance covers the information that offerors must submit to comply with the following Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) requirements:

- **52.211-7, Alternatives to Government-Unique Standards.** This solicitation provision permits offerors to propose alternatives to Government-unique standards in response to Government solicitations. When an offeror proposes a voluntary consensus standard as an alternative to a Government-unique standard included in a solicitation, the offeror must furnish data and/or information regarding the alternative in sufficient detail for the Government to determine if it meets the Government's requirements. This provision is prescribed in FAR 11.107 for use when a solicitation uses Government-unique standards and the agency uses the transaction-based reporting method to report its use of voluntary consensus standards to the National Institutes of Standards and Technology (NIST). This provision is optional for use if an agency uses the categorical method to report to the NIST.<sup>1</sup>

**2. Uses of information.** In accordance with Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-119, Federal Participation in the Development and Use of Voluntary Consensus Standards and in Conformity Assessment Activities, and section 12(d) of the National Technology Transfer and Advancement Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-113, 15 U.S.C. 272 note), agencies must use voluntary consensus standards, when they exist, in lieu of Government-

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<sup>1</sup> According to NIST (<https://standards.gov/NTTAA/Report/main.aspx>), 22 out of 24 departments and agencies use transaction-based reporting on the use of Government-unique standards, in lieu of categorical reporting. The Department of Defense and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration provide reports on a category basis. While use of the provision is optional for these two agencies, the Department of Defense has prescribed this provision at DFARS 211.107 for use in solicitations that include military or Government-unique specifications.

unique standards, except where inconsistent with law or otherwise impractical. The information collected from offerors will be used by Federal agencies to determine if voluntary consensus standards will satisfy the Government's needs for a particular solicitation.

**3. Consideration of information technology.** We use improved information technology to the maximum extent practicable. Where both the Government agency and contractors are capable of electronic interchange, the contractors may submit this information collection requirement electronically.

**4. Efforts to identify duplication.** These requirements are issued under the FAR, which has been developed to standardize Federal procurement practices and eliminate unnecessary duplication.

**5. If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other entities, describe methods used to minimize burden.** The burden applied to small businesses is the minimum consistent with applicable laws, Executive orders, regulations, and prudent business practices.

**6. Describe consequence to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently.** Collection on a basis other than solicitation-by-solicitation is not practical.

**7. Special circumstances for collection.** Collection is consistent with guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.6.

**8. Efforts to consult with persons outside the agency.**

A. A 60-day notice was published in the *Federal Register* at 85 FR 70622, on November 5, 2020. No comments were received.

B. A 30-day notice was published in the *Federal Register* at 86 FR 1974, on January 11, 2020.

**9. Explanation of any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.** Not applicable.

**10. Describe assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents.** This information is disclosed only to the extent consistent with prudent business practices, current regulations, and statutory requirements.

**11. Additional justification for questions of a sensitive nature.** No sensitive questions are involved.

**12 & 13. Estimated total annual public hour and cost burden.**

While the NIST website provides access to agency annual OMB Circular A-119 reports regarding the use of Government-unique standards, the reports do not include the level of detail necessary to determine whether such standards are used in solicitations for Government contracts (see <https://standards.gov/NTTAA/Report/main.aspx>). At this time there is no repository of data on: (1) the number of Government solicitations that included a Government-unique standard; or (2) the number of offers submitted in response to those solicitations that proposed an alternative voluntary consensus standard. Such information is maintained in individual contract files at the local level.

Given that agencies are required to use voluntary consensus standards, when they exist, if not inconsistent with law or otherwise impractical, the number of solicitations that use Government-unique standards is expected to be low. As such, the estimated number of unique respondents remains at 100 with one response per respondent. It is also estimated that it will continue to take a respondent one hour to prepare and furnish the required information.

Estimated respondents/yr.....	100
Responses annually.....	<u>x 1</u>
Total annual responses.....	100
Estimated hrs/response.....	<u>x 1</u>
Estimated total burden/hrs.....	100
Hourly rate*.....	<u>x \$57</u>
Estimated cost to public.....	\$5,700

\* Based on the Office of Personnel Management 2020 General Schedule 12/step 5 salary for the rest of the United States (\$41.66 per hour) plus a 36.25 percent fringe and overhead factor, rounded to the nearest whole dollar. Reference Salary

Table 2020-RUS, effective January 2020, found at [www.opm.gov](http://www.opm.gov). The fringe factor used is pursuant to the rate provided in OMB memorandum M-08-13 for use in public-private competition.

**14. Estimated cost to the Government.**

It is estimated that it will continue to take the Government eight hours per response to review the data and/or information provided by an offeror.

Total annual responses.....	100
Review time/response (hours).....	<u>x 8</u>
Review time/year (hours).....	800
Hourly rate*.....	<u>x \$57</u>
Estimated cost to the Government.....	\$45,600

**15. Explain reasons for program changes or adjustments reported in Item 13 or 14.** The number of responses and the associated estimated burden hours remain unchanged. The estimated cost to the public and the Government has increased slightly because of the use of the 2020 hourly rate of \$57.

**16. Outline plans for published results of information collections.** Results will not be tabulated or published.

**17. Approval not to display expiration date.** Not applicable.

**18. Explanation of exception to certification statement.** Not applicable.

**B. Collections of Information Employing Statistical Methods.** Statistical methods are not used in this information collection.