

Applying MRLs in Contract Language

1. Assess the need for MRL Assessments

Will you need to perform MRL Assessments (also known as MRAs – Manufacturing Readiness Assessments) during this contract? Are there potential manufacturing or quality risks you need to identify and assess? Will this contract include a major technical review or audit? Will this contract lead to a major milestone or gate review? If so, then a requirement for MRL Assessments should be included in the contract. MRL Assessments should be conducted prior to major technical and milestone reviews.

2. Coordinate with Program Managers and Chief Engineers

Discuss the need to perform MRL Assessments with the Program Manager and Chief Engineer and coordinate your RFP and SOW inputs with them. If they are not familiar with MRLs or do not understand their importance, you may need to provide them MRL training or education.

3. Develop Statement of Work (SOW) Language for Contracts

There are two approaches to requiring MRL Assessments in a SOW. For best results, both paragraphs should be included in the SOW.

(1) Require the use of SAE AS6500, “Manufacturing Management Program.” This commercial standard requires the conduct of MRL Assessments. Use the following paragraph to invoke AS6500:

Manufacturing Management Program: The contractor shall establish and maintain a Manufacturing Management Program that meets the requirements of AS6500A and flow this requirement down to key and critical suppliers. The contractor and key and critical suppliers shall document this program as part of their Manufacturing Plan. The contractor shall include its plans for MRL Assessments in the Manufacturing Plan. (Note: This last sentence is not required if DI-SESS-81974 is required.)

(2) Insert a SOW paragraph that specifically requires MRL Assessments:

MRL Assessments: The contractor shall conduct MRL Assessments using the Manufacturing Readiness Level (MRL) definitions, criteria, and process defined in the latest version of the DoD MRL Deskbook available at DoDMRL.org as a guide. MRAs shall be conducted at the locations and frequencies specified in (SOW Section/Appendix X). The government will

lead MRAs at the contractor's facilities; and the contractor will lead MRAs at their suppliers and will include government representatives. The selection of suppliers to be reviewed will be made using the MRL Deskbook, Section 4.3 as a guide. The contractor shall develop and implement Manufacturing Maturation Plans (MMPs) for risks identified in the MRAs, against the target MRL Criteria, to ensure the required manufacturing maturity will be achieved. The contractor shall monitor and provide status at all program reviews for in-house and supplier MRAs and shall reassess areas for which design, process, source of supply, or facility location changes have occurred that could impact manufacturing maturity and risk. The contractor shall provide substantiating objective evidence (artifacts) to support all target MRL criteria assessed in MRAs.

4. Identify Deliverables

Implementation of MRL Assessments using the MRL criteria may require some deliverable documentation from the contractor and, if so, should be included in the SOW.

For MRL Assessments, use DI-SESS-81974, "Assessment of Manufacturing Risk and Readiness." This Data Item can be used for both the contractor's plan to conduct MRL Assessments as well as to document Manufacturing Maturation Plans for risk areas.

DD Form 1423, Contract Data Requirements List (CDRL), can be used to tailor the format, content, frequency, and approval requirements for the plans being submitted. Consult your local Contracting Officer or Configuration and Data Manager for help with this form.

5. Coordinate with the Prime Contractor

In a sole source environment, it is recommended that you coordinate MRL Assessment requirements with the prime contractor prior to definitizing the contract. In addition to any potential tailoring the SOW wording, the customer and supplier should agree on the scope of the reviews (the companies and processes to be assessed, the number of assessments at each location, and a draft schedule). This agreement should be documented and included in the contract as an attachment to the SOW.

6. Additional Information

For additional information, refer to the DoD MRL Deskbook, at www.dodmrl.org

Appendix - Developing RFP inputs (Sections L&M) for Competitive Purchases

If your program has multiple potential contractors and is going into a competitive source selection to choose a single contractor (or smaller subset of contractors), you may need to have each offeror describe their plans to accomplish MRL Assessments and their current MRLs as part of their proposals. (NOTE: For DoD programs, DFARS Subpart 215.304, *Evaluation Factors and Significant Subfactors* requires that the manufacturing readiness of offerors be considered during source selection for ACAT I programs.) If so, use the following inputs for Section L (Instructions, Conditions, and Notices to Offerors or Respondents) and Section M (Evaluation Factors for Award):

Section L: Manufacturing Readiness Level Demonstration. The offeror's proposal shall identify those elements being assessed for manufacturing maturity and risk and their target MRL using the criteria and process identified in the DoD Manufacturing Readiness Level Deskbook available at DoDMRL.org. The offeror shall describe the approach used to assess the MRL criteria. The offeror shall address in Manufacturing Maturation Plans (MMPs) how risks identified in the MRA, against the MRL Criteria, will be managed to ensure that the required manufacturing maturity will be achieved.

Section M of the RFP should specify the evaluation criteria for the offeror's submission detailed under Section L on their use of assessments or best practices.

Section M: Manufacturing Readiness Level Demonstration. The offeror's proposal will be evaluated on the maturity of their stated manufacturing and quality capabilities, the adequacy of supporting documentation that justifies the stated capabilities, and the risks identified and the offeror's process and plans to mitigate or manage those risks and achieve the required level of manufacturing maturity (as described in the Manufacturing Readiness Level Deskbook).