

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION  
Washington, DC 20405

January 30, 1991

FIRMR BULLETIN C-21

TO: Heads of Federal agencies

SUBJECT: Purchase of telephones and services (POTS) contracts

1. Purpose. This bulletin provides guidance on the use of POTS contracts. POTS contracts cover the purchase, installation, maintenance, repair, removal, and relocation of new and used telephone equipment.

2. Expiration date. This bulletin contains information of a continuing nature and will remain in effect until canceled.

3. Contents.

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4. Related material.

- a. FIRMR Part 201-24 - GSA Services and Assistance
- b. FIRMR Subpart 201-39.8 - Required Sources of Supplies and Services
- c. FIRMR Bulletin C-17 - Information Resources Service Center

TC 90-1

Attachment

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### 5. Information and assistance.

(a) Contractor performance. Problems or concerns regarding the POTS contractors should be reported to the GSA zone or branch offices for resolution. See Attachment A for a list of telephone numbers.

(b) Bulletin board. Up-to-date information on POTS is available through an electronic bulletin board known as the GSA Information Resources Service Center. FIRMR Bulletin C-17 describes how to access the center.

(c) POTS manual. A manual describing how to use POTS contracts is available from GSA offices listed in Attachment A.

(d) Other information. Further assistance or information about the program may be obtained by contacting:

General Services Administration  
Technical Contract Management Division (KVT)  
18th & F Streets, NW  
Washington, DC 20405  
Telephone: FTS 241-3881 or (202) 501-3881

### 6. Acronyms.

CPE Customer premise equipment

POTS Purchase of telephones and services

### 7. Program description.

a. Mandatory sources or optional usage. Some POTS contracts are mandatory sources of supply for purchase of CPE by agencies at most GSA-consolidated local telecommunications service locations. They are available for optional use at other locations in accordance with the terms of the contracts. 1990 and future POTS contracts will be optional for use at all locations.

b. POTS can be used for. In addition to being used for the purchase of new and used equipment, POTS contracts can provide maintenance and repair services on most Government-owned telephone equipment. Equipment available under POTS contracts includes single and multibutton non-proprietary telephones, proprietary electronic key systems and PBX telephones, electronic key equipment, and PBX's. Cable and wiring is available in various sizes and types for purchase and installation. Cross-connecting services are also available and should be

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considered for use where existing wiring is satisfactory. Lease-to-ownership plans (LTOP) are offered for acquisition of relatively expensive equipment, such as a PBX.

c. POTS cannot be used for. POTS contracts cannot be used to service, maintain, or repair CPE leased to the Government or any CPE covered under another contract.

d. Locations where POTS is not available. The Aggregated Switch Procurement (ASP) contract, currently in place in Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Maine, and Rhode Island, provides for equipment (including CPE) and services. A separate POTS contract is not available for these states. The Washington Interagency Telecommunications System (WITS) contract provides for the acquisition of CPE and related services in the Washington, DC metropolitan area. A separate POTS contract is not available for this area.

e. Using the POTS contracts. Agencies using POTS contracts should administer and place orders directly with the POTS contractor. FIRMR 201-39.8 requires that the contracting officer informally analyze prices or examine the market to support a determination that using a nonmandatory POTS contract is the most advantageous alternative to the Government.

f. Exemption from the use. Users at consolidated local service locations may request that the GSA Regional Telecommunications Offices exempt them from the mandatory use of POTS, if they have--

- (1) A need for special equipment or services not available from the contractor;
- (2) Unique budget problems that require lease rather than purchase;
- (3) A short-term requirement that is more economically served by a lease; or
- (4) Other reasons approved by the GSA Regional Telecommunications Office.

### 8. Agency responsibilities.

a. The FIRMR requires agencies to use POTS contracts when their requirements are within the scope of these contracts and the equipment or services are for use at certain GSA consolidated local service locations.

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b. Agencies at other locations may use a POTS contract when requirements are within the scope of the contract and the contracting officer determines that placing the order would be the most advantageous method of fulfilling requirements.

c. Agencies should assure availability of funds for GSA's administrative surcharge. By use of the contracts, agencies agree to pay their bills as rendered by GSA.

### 9. GSA responsibilities.

a. With the exception of telephone station equipment that has been turned over to agencies, GSA will continue to manage consolidated local service telephone systems and will be responsible for oversight and administration of the POTS contracts.

b. GSA will provide administration of all POTS contracts through its GSA zone or regional offices. These offices will also serve as liaison between the POTS contractors and the agencies. In addition, GSA will issue regional bulletins on the use of POTS contracts, announce POTS contract awards, and list the locations of existing POTS contracts.

c. GSA will recover the cost of administering the POTS contracts by imposing a surcharge on their use.

d. POTS users will be billed through the On-Line Payment and Collection (OPAC) system. Simultaneously, GSA's Office of Finance will transmit to the appropriate United States Treasury account orders to transfer funds from the agency account into the GSA Information Technology (IT) Fund. Non-OPAC customers will receive a GSA Form 789, along with backup documentation, for payment.

### 10. Cancellation. FIRMR Bulletin 20, Revision 2 is canceled.

Thomas J. Buckholtz  
Commissioner  
Information Resources  
Management Service

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Attachment A

GSA ZONES  
AND  
TELECOMMUNICATIONS OPERATIONS BRANCH OFFICES

Zone Office and States	City	Telephone Numbers	
		FTS	Commercial
Eastern Zone			
Operations Br. (Reg. 1) serving ME, VT, NH, MA, RI, and CT	Boston	835-5750	(617) 565-5750
Operations Br. (Reg. 2) serving NY, NJ, PR, and VI	New York	264-1257	(212) 264-1257
Operations Br. (Reg. 3) serving PA, DE, MD, WV, and VA	Phila.*	597-4901	(215) 597-4901
Central Zone			
Operations Br. (Reg. 4) serving GA, AL, MS, FL, SC, NC, TN, and KY	Atlanta*	841-3039	(404) 331-3039
Operations Br. (Reg. 5) serving WI, MN, MI, IN, OH, and IL	Chicago	886-3800	(312) 886-3800
Western Zone			
Operations Br. (Reg. 6) serving KS, MO, LA, and NB	Kansas City	926-5615	(816) 926-5615
Operations Br. (Reg. 7) serving TX, NM, OK, AR, and LA	Ft. Worth*	334-2371	(817) 334-2371
Operations Br. (Reg. 8) serving CO, UT, WY, MT, SD, and ND	Denver	776-7191	(303) 236-7191

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GSA ZONES  
AND  
TELECOMMUNICATIONS OPERATIONS BRANCH OFFICES

Zone Office and States	City	Telephone Numbers	
		FTS	Commercial
Pacific Zone			
Operations Br. (Reg. 9) serving CA, NV, AZ, HI, and Guam	San Fran.*	484-8592	(415) 744-8592
Operations Br. (Reg. 10) serving WA, OR, ID, and AK	Auburn	396-7529	(206) 931-7529
Capital Zone			
Zone office serving the District of Columbia (DC)	Wash.*	458-5380	(202) 708-5380

\* Zone headquarters office

