



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
Defense Contract Management Agency

INSTRUCTION

Critical Safety Items - QA

Quality Assurance Directorate
CPR: DCMA-QA

DCMA-INST 303
April 10, 2013

Incorporating Change 1, November 9, 2016

1. PURPOSE. This Instruction:

a. Reissues and updates DCMA Instruction (DCMA-INST) 303, “Critical Safety Items – QA” (Reference (a)).

b. Implements the requirements of DCMA INST CSI (AV) “Joint Aeronautical Commanders Group (JACG) Joint Instruction for Management of Aviation Critical Safety Items” (Reference (o)).

b c. Ensures DCMA surveillance is intensively focused on CSIs to mitigate risk of failure of those items with characteristics, which if nonconforming, would likely cause serious injury or death to the user or catastrophic failure of a major platform and to assure conformity of those items prior to acceptance.

e d. Establishes policies, assigns responsibilities, and provides procedures for DCMA Quality Assurance (QA) personnel to plan for and execute Government Contract Quality Assurance (GCQA) surveillance on CSIs.

d e. Is established in accordance with (IAW) DoD Directive 5105.64, “Defense Contract Management Agency (DCMA) (Reference (b)).

2. APPLICABILITY. This Instruction applies to all DCMA activities performing GCQA on aviation and non-aviation CSIs.

3. MANAGERS’ INTERNAL CONTROL PROGRAM. This Instruction is subject to evaluation and testing IAW DCMA-INST 710, “Managers’ Internal Control Program” (Reference (c)). The process flowchart is located at the resource [Web](#) page.

4. RELEASABILITY – UNLIMITED. This Instruction is approved for public release.

5. LABOR CODE(S): *Located on resource page*

6. RESOURCE PAGE. <https://360.dcma.mil/sites/policy/QA/SitePages/303r.aspx>

April 10, 2013

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7. EFFECTIVE DATE. By the order of the Director, DCMA, this Instruction is effective immediately.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael E. Shields, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

Michael E. Shields, Jr.
Executive Director
Quality Assurance

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REFERENCES

- (a) DCMA-INST 303, “Critical Safety Items - QA,” April 10, 2013
- (b) DoD Directive 5105.64, “Defense Contract Management Agency (DCMA),” January 10, 2013
- (c) DCMA-INST 710, “Managers’ Internal Control Program,” April 21, 2014
- (d) DCMA-INST 325, “Contract Technical Review,” January 23, 2014
- (e) DCMA-INST 324, “Product Examination,” July 26, 2013
- (f) DoD Test Method Standard, MIL-STD 1916, “DoD Preferred Methods for Acceptance of Product,” April 1, 1996
- (g) Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR), Part 52, “Solicitation Provisions and Contract Clauses”
- (h) DCMA-INST 311, “Process Review – QA,” July 31, 2013
- (i) DCMA-INST 316, “Delegate Surveillance - Quality Assurance,” September 2010
- (j) DCMA-INST 326, “Risk Assessment – QA,” February 2012
- (k) DCMA-INST 309, “Government Contract Quality Assurance (GCQA) Surveillance Planning,” January 27, 2014
- (l) DCMA-INST 323, “Data Collection and Analysis,” June 26, 2015
- (m) DCMA-INST 1207, “Effective Control of Nonconforming Material,” July 2, 2015
- (n) DCMA-INST 1201, “Corrective Action Process,” September 8, 2015
- (o) DCMA INST CSI (AV) “Joint Aeronautical Commanders Group (JACG) Joint Instruction for Management of Aviation Critical Safety Items” January 25, 2006*
- (p) DCMA-INST 313, “International Requests for Contract Administration Services,” July 7, 2015*
- (q) FAR 52.246-15, “Certificate of Conformance (CoC) Clause”*

CHAPTER 1

POLICY

1.1. OVERVIEW. It is DCMA policy that:

1.1.1. DCMA surveillance is intensively focused on CSIs to mitigate risk of failure of those items with characteristics, which if nonconforming, would likely cause serious injury or death to the user or catastrophic failure of a major platform and to assure conformity of those items prior to acceptance.

1.1.2. GCQA surveillance for CSIs will be performed IAW the established GCQA surveillance plan.

1.1.3. DCMA will coordinate with customer's engineering support activity (ESA) when problems or concerns are identified.

1.1.4. DCMA will only authorize a contractor Material Review Board (MRB) when delegated in writing by the ESA.

CHAPTER 2

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1. FIRST-LEVEL SUPERVISOR (FLS). The FLS shall assure QA personnel possess the necessary competencies to perform the tasks defined in this Instruction as it relates to the assigned facility, contract, or product.

2.2. QA PERSONNEL. QA personnel shall:

2.2.1. Assure GCQA surveillance events that serve as a basis of confidence have been accomplished IAW the established GCQA surveillance plan.

2.2.2. Review contract and technical data package (TDP) to determine if items are identified as CSI.

2.2.3. Coordinate with customers to correct any problems/concerns identified during contract technical review (CTR).

2.2.4. Develop a GCQA surveillance strategy and document it on the Risk Profile and Plan and adjust the Plan as warranted by data analysis.

2.2.5. Participate in contractor's MRB when delegated by the ESA.

2.2.6. Issue corrective action requests (CAR) when contractual nonconformances are identified.

2.2.7. Communicate with customers when problems/concerns arise during the performance of the GCQA surveillance plan.

2.2.8. Request QA engineer assistance when additional technical expertise may be needed for TDP review to determine if items are identified as CSI and associated critical characteristics.

CHAPTER 3**PROCEDURES****3.1. REVIEW CONTRACT, TECHNICAL DATA, AND QUALITY ASSURANCE**

LETTER OF INSTRUCTION (QALI) TO IDENTIFY CSI. QA personnel shall perform a CTR as described in DCMA-INST 325, "Contract Technical Review" (Reference (d)) on the contract, TDP, QALI, purchase order, and letter of delegation (LOD) to determine if the item is a CSI and to identify technical requirements, inspections, and acceptance criteria, particularly those associated with critical characteristics and important manufacturing processes (IMP). CSIs from legacy systems may be identified as Flight Safety Part, Flight Critical Part, Flight Critical, Critical I, II, Special, etc. QA personnel shall initiate contact with the procuring activity to request guidance ~~from the ESA~~ when an item, *based on objective evidence*, may be inappropriately identified as a CSI or when an item is not identified as a CSI and the QA personnel, *based on objective evidence*, believes it should be a CSI. *In either case, the item shall be treated as CSI until the criticality is verified with the procuring contracting officer (PCO).*

3.1.1. Items not identified as CSIs during a CTR that have ESA-identified critical characteristics and critical processes, (i.e., identified via QALI, drawings, *Joint Services Critical Item Dataviewer*) shall be treated as CSI. CSIs at the subcontract level are identified through the delegation and shall reference the actual CSI components and source document for the CSI designation; e.g., contract, TDP, or QALI. Delegations for CSIs shall ~~reference~~ *identify* the actual CSI critical characteristics or IMPs requiring surveillance.

3.1.1.1. Where the TDP or QALI does not formally identify critical characteristics, the results of a contractor or ESA performed formal failure analysis; e.g., failure modes and effects criticality analysis, if available, should be used to identify items that will cause a catastrophic failure. The identified cause of the failure mode can be used as a basis for determining surveillance requirements and that cause should be treated as critical.

3.1.2. Aviation CSIs and their associated critical characteristics are only determined by the military service ESA.

3.1.2.1. The Joint Services Critical Item Data Viewer is a Web portal that encompasses a total listing of Army and Navy ESA-identified Aviation CSIs as well as *Aviation* items identified as Critical Application Items (CAI) ~~or~~ *and* noncritical items. The Data Viewer address is located on the resource ~~Web~~ page. The Air Force (AF) CSI listing is located ~~address is located via a link~~ on the resource ~~Web~~ page. The Data Viewer/AF CSI lists are to be used as a reference when QA personnel, based on ~~knowledge~~ *objective evidence* or during technical data review, suspect an item should be identified as a CSI or is incorrectly identified as a CSI. The Data Viewer/AF CSI lists ~~are should~~ not ~~to~~ be used to develop a list of items by supplier or weapon system *unless the listing is updated regularly. (NOTE: The CSI data contained in Dataviewer and AF CSI Listing is dynamic and the problem with developing a supplier or weapon system list is that it can change which could result in a new CSI being missed or an item being downgraded from CSI.)* Items found to be CSI in the Joint CSI Data Viewer/AF CSI list shall be treated as CSI even if the contract does not identify the item as CSI. The procurement office shall be notified of the contract error via the Contract Deficiency Report process and confirmation of the CSI designation requested. If an item is identified as CSI in the contract but not classified as CSI in

the Data Viewer/AF CSI list, confirmation of the CSI designation shall be requested from the procurement office. The item shall be treated as CSI until the contract is modified *or correspondence is received from the PCO that the item is not CSI and that correspondence will be filed with the official contract documentation.*

3.1.2.2. Documentation for critical characteristics (identified as a physical characteristic, installation characteristic, test parameter or process; e.g., shot peen) may be found in the contract, TDP, or QALI. Critical characteristics may be identified as any feature throughout the life cycle of a CSI, such as dimension, tolerance, finish, material or assembly, manufacturing or inspection process, operation, field maintenance, or depot overhaul requirement that, if nonconforming, missing or degraded may cause failure or malfunction of the item. CSI critical characteristics at the subcontract level are identified through the delegation and shall ~~reference~~ *identify* the source document for the CSI designation; e.g., contract, TDP, or QALI. ~~QA personnel shall contact the procurement contracting officer to request critical characteristics be identified for CSI contracts that are awarded to ESA approved alternate sources.~~

~~3.1.2.3. Aviation and ship CSIs may not be accepted by the Government using Certificate of Conformance (CoC) unless specifically approved by the ESA.~~

3.2. DETERMINE SURVEILLANCE STRATEGY FOR CRITICAL CHARACTERISTICS (RISK PROFILE AND PLAN). QA personnel shall determine the appropriate critical characteristic strategy for initial and continuing surveillance of identified CSIs with defined critical characteristic(s). Unless the customer specifies otherwise, the following methodologies outline the Agency approach for critical characteristic surveillance.

3.2.1. When a critical characteristic is defined as a product feature, the following applies:

3.2.1.1. Initial Surveillance. Perform product examination of the critical characteristic on the first available production piece.

~~3.2.1.1~~ **2. Continuing Surveillance.** Perform product examination (DCMA-INST 324, “Product Examination” (Reference (e)) *on the item(s) with of* critical characteristics IAW a zero-based statistically valid sampling plan using an acceptable quality level (AQL) of 0.40 or Verification Level IV for contracts requiring MIL-STD-1916, “DoD Preferred Methods for Acceptance of Product” (Reference (f)), unless a sampling plan is defined specifically in the contract or QALI. *NOTE: AQLs for CSI with CCs can be tightened to 0.25 but cannot be reduced past 0.40.*

3.2.1.3. Alternate Surveillance strategy for Critical Characteristics at Primes/original equipment manufacturer (OEMs). In lieu of performing product examinations on the CCs, QA personnel may determine to validate CCs by performing process review on the important manufacturing process (IMP) that produces them. If this alternate strategy is employed, the QAS shall identify the IMP(s) that produces the critical characteristic.

3.2.1.4. Initial Surveillance for Alternate Surveillance strategy. Perform a full process review (DCMA-INST 311, “Process Review – QA” (Reference (h))) including a product examination on the CCs from the process output to verify they meet the contract requirement.

3.2.1.5. Continuing Surveillance for Alternate Surveillance strategy. After the initial process review has been performed and the process has proven capable of producing the CC, the IMP shall be risk assessed per paragraph 3.5. Process review frequency and intensity will be determined based on the results of the risk assessed. Production rates must be considered when establishing the frequency for recurring PRs. When the likelihood rating is moderate or high, the frequency of the process review (PR) must be commensurate with the risk but accomplished monthly, as a minimum until the likelihood risk is lowered. A low likelihood risked IMP process review will be accomplished, as a minimum, semi-annually.

3.2.1.2 6. For critical characteristics that cannot be verified by product examination due to automated manufacturing, it is required to verify the process through automated inspection equipment controls.

3.2.2. When a process is identified as a critical characteristic and the contract quality requirement is IAW FAR, Part 52, “Solicitation Provisions and Contract Clauses,” subpart 52.246-11, “Higher Level Quality Requirement” (Reference (g)), the following applies:

3.2.2.1. Initial Surveillance. Conduct an initial process review (DCMA-INST 324, “Process Review” (Reference (h))) in addition to verifying the output of the process through product examination.

3.2.2.2. Continuing Surveillance. Assess the process until all process characteristics have been evaluated. ~~and periodically perform product examination to verify process adequacy;~~ The frequency of the review is dependent on the process activity, ~~and~~ supplier performance, ~~and as detailed in the applicable GCQA surveillance plan.~~

3.2.3. When a process is defined as a critical characteristic and the contract quality requirement is any standard inspection clause IAW FAR, Part 52, subparts 52.246-2 through 52.246-9 (Reference (g)), the following applies. Since standard inspection systems (FAR, Part 52, subparts 52.246-2 through 52.246-9 (Reference (g))) do not require process controls, QA personnel shall notify the customer to request direction and comply with the direction received. Pending direction, assure that the supplier inspection system verifies the output of the process defined as a critical characteristic. QA personnel should recommend that FAR, Part 52 subpart 52.246-11, “Higher Level Quality Requirement” (Reference (g)) be added as a contract modification.

3.2.4. Alternate Surveillance Strategy. If the CSI is contracted to the prime or original equipment manufacturer (OEM) with design authority, and surveillance of critical characteristics requires a significant investment of time, the ESA, or the customer’s technical representative for nonaviation items shall be contacted with proposed alternative surveillance strategies. The alternate surveillance strategy shall contain a reduced sampling plan for product examination of critical characteristics and be supplemented with a process review technique focused on surveillance of IMPs as defined in paragraphs 3.3. or 3.4. Concurrence for the use of the alternative surveillance strategy shall be documented and kept as a part of the surveillance strategy.

3.2.5. QA personnel shall issue an LOD IAW DCMA-INST 316, “Delegate Surveillance - Quality Assurance” (Reference (i)) for subcontract QA surveillance where identified critical characteristics/processes or IMPs are produced/accomplished at a subcontractor facility and cannot be adequately verified at the prime supplier location using the methodologies described above. (**NOTE:** Coordination between the prime contract management office (CMO) and the delegated CMO will be required to assure proper identification of IMPs prior to issuing the delegation). Surveillance performed at a subcontractor through an LOD shall be included as a part of the surveillance strategy. *CSI delegations to foreign Host Nations shall be issued IAW DCMA-INST 313, "International Requests for Contract Administration Services" (Reference (p)).*

3.2.6. Where critical characteristics apply to the item’s installation, sometimes known as “installation critical,” and that installation is not accomplished where the item is produced, the point of installation is responsible for those critical characteristics. This may be the military service in the case of spare parts or the next higher assembly where a component or platform is being procured/overhauled.

3.2.7. DCMA CSI QA surveillance strategies do not apply to commercial aircraft or subsystems purchased and maintained IAW Federal Aviation Administration regulations unless required by the military service ESA. DCMA CSI QA surveillance strategies do apply to those portions of the commercial aircraft or subsystems modified or maintained to meet unique military requirements.

3.2.8. CSIs procured under a commercial contract requirement IAW FAR, Part 52 subpart 52.212-4, “Contract Terms and Conditions-Commercial Items” (Reference (f)) will need a clause addendum to give the Government the authority to perform the necessary in-process product examinations and/or process reviews to verify conformity. This clause, subpart 52.212-4 without the addendum, limits Government surveillance to what is compatible with common industry practice for inspection and acceptance, at the point of tender. Where CSIs are procured with a commercial contract clause and no clause addendum, QA personnel should determine if the necessary product examination and/or process review could be accomplished to determine critical characteristic conformity. If QA personnel are unable to perform the necessary product examinations, the procuring activity shall immediately be notified and an addendum, ~~a-QALI~~, or acceptance instructions requested.

3.3. DETERMINE THE IMPORTANT MANUFACTURING PROCESSES (IMP) THAT NEED TO BE MONITORED WITH IDENTIFIED CRITICAL CHARACTERISTICS.

Surveillance of CSI is not limited to verification of critical characteristics. IMPs ~~need to~~ *shall* be considered when identifying risk factors. The processes on the IMP list located on the resource ~~Web~~ page, are not all inclusive. If there are other important processes identified through the planning effort, surveillance strategies shall be established accordingly. *All identified IMPs must be impact risk assessed against the CSI risk statement.*

3.4. DETERMINE SURVEILLANCE STRATEGY FOR CSI WITHOUT IDENTIFIED CRITICAL CHARACTERISTICS.

Although the ESAs are working to formally define critical characteristics, there will always be an outstanding population of CSIs without defined critical characteristics. QA surveillance in these instances is contingent on whether the CSI

manufacturer is a prime supplier, an OEM with design authority from the prime supplier/ESA, or an alternative source.

3.4.1. When the CSI is the responsibility of the prime supplier or OEM with design authority and critical characteristics have not been identified, the surveillance strategy shall consist of applying the process review technique associated with the selected IMP as outlined in paragraph 3.3. ~~Product examinations of the process output on these processes may be performed as necessary.~~—The following significant characteristics' criteria should be considered when determining the characteristics inspected during *the performance of* product examination, *either as a part of process review or when selected as the surveillance method.* Application of these criteria does not impose any additional contractual requirements on the supplier. Typical significant characteristics are:

- Diametrical and linear dimensions having a total tolerance of .001 or less
- Geometric features other than diametrical and linear dimensions (e.g., run out, perpendicularity, parallelism, and concentricity) with a total tolerance of .002 or less
- Surface finishes having a value of 16 RMS or less
- Threads specified to class 3 or greater or classified as Safety Critical
- Angular dimensions with total tolerance range of 1 degree (60 minutes) or less
- Test Methods and Acceptance Criteria for Nondestructive Testing (e.g., magnetic particle, liquid penetrant, radiographic inspection, ultrasonic, eddy current)
- Hardness testing (e.g., Rockwell)
- Shot peen requirements
- Material properties and material certifications
- Dynamic balancing of rotating units and static balancing of flight control surfaces
- Flow checks for blades and vanes
- Spray pattern requirements for fuel nozzles (including afterburner rings)
- Weight checks

3.4.2. When the CSI is the responsibility of an alternate source, the surveillance strategy shall consist of applying the process review technique associated with selected IMP as outlined in paragraph 3.3. Product examinations of the process output shall be performed as detailed in the GCQA surveillance plan. The significant characteristics' criteria *cited* in paragraph 3.4.1. should be considered when determining the characteristics inspected during *the performance of* product examination, *either as a part of process review or when selected as the surveillance method.*

3.5. PERFORM RISK ASSESSMENT. *All identified IMPs must be impact risk assessed against the CSI risk statement.* QA personnel shall perform a *likelihood* risk assessment *on all IMPs identified as a potential risk cause* as described in DCMA-INST 326, "Risk Assessment - QA" (Reference (j)). *Any IMPs determined to not be a likelihood risk cause based on the risk assessment process are not required to have GCQA surveillance activity performed on them.* *NOTE: Data collection and analysis will continue to be performed to monitor the contractor's performance for changes that may lead to a new likelihood risk being assigned.*

3.6. DEVELOP THE GCQA SURVEILLANCE PLAN FOR CSI. QA personnel shall develop/update their GCQA surveillance plan as described in DCMA-INST 309, “Government Contract Quality Assurance (GCQA) Surveillance Planning” (Reference (k)). This may be a CSI-specific plan or incorporated into the appropriate facility or program surveillance plan. The plan shall also include:

- Identification of the CSIs. **NOTE:** The identified CSIs can be listed as a tab on the surveillance plan or on a separate list whose location is referenced in the surveillance plan
- Critical characteristics
- IMPs, if applicable, *shall be identified on the facility process list with “(IMP)” designation listed beside the process*
- Surveillance methodology; e.g., product examination, process review
- Intensity and frequency of surveillance
- Nonconforming material authority, if applicable
- QALI mandated customer communication requirements

NOTE: QA personnel can use all three surveillance methods (PE, PR, QMS) as well as all four (test, witness, inspect, verify) PE techniques when developing their GCQA surveillance plan for CSIs.

3.6.1. Procurements of former Government owned CSI surplus shall require a QALI from the procuring activity. QALIs for CSI surplus shall serve as the only GCQA activity performed to determine the item’s acceptance. Normal GCQA will still need to be performed on the other processes associated with the procurement (e.g., QA systems compliance, inspection system compliance, IRAPT Receiving Report (RR), packaging).

NOTE: QALIs typically augment DCMA’s GCQA surveillance but in this case they will serve as DCMA QA personnel’s CSI surplus acceptance criteria.

NOTE: DLA internal QA processes require a QALI be issued for surplus buys, if a QALI is not received from the procuring activity, contact the PCO and request one be issued detailing the acceptance criteria.

3.6.2. Aviation and ship CSIs shall not be accepted by the Government using FAR 52.246-15, “Certificate of Conformance (CoC) Clause” (Reference (q)) unless specifically approved by the ESA through the PCO.

3.6.3. Alternate Release Procedure (ARP) is authorized for CSIs. QA personnel shall continue to perform their CSI surveillance activities as detailed on the GCQA surveillance plan. ARP authorization does not relieve QA personnel from performing the planned surveillance activities detailed on their GCQA surveillance plan. ARP is not a method of accepting items in lieu of performing the required GCQA.

3.7. DOCUMENT THE CSI SURVEILLANCE ACTIVITY PERFORMED. Documentation of surveillance results shall be as required in DCMA-INST 324 (Reference (e)) *and DCMA-INST 311 (Reference (h))*. In addition, the following requirements shall be included, as required:

- The specific CSI serial or lot number, as applicable
- Associated critical characteristics
- Associated IMPs, as applicable

3.8. ADJUST SURVEILLANCE. QA personnel shall adjust the appropriate risk assessment and corresponding surveillance plan as a result of data analysis for the identified IMPs. Data shall be analyzed on a periodic basis as detailed in the GCQA surveillance plan. Refer to DCMA-INST 323, “Data Collection and Analysis” (Reference (1)).

3.9. MANAGING NONCONFORMING CSI. Management of nonconforming CSIs shall be IAW DCMA-INST 1207, “Effective Control of Nonconforming Material” (Reference (m)).

3.9.1. The authority to disposition minor nonconformances of Aviation CSIs is vested with the military service ESA unless specifically delegated. All use-as-is or repair dispositions being applied to contractually designated CSIs shall be forwarded through the procuring activity to the ESA for approval. In certain situations, the procuring activity has vested authority for disposition of minor nonconformances with DCMA. In these cases, the ESAs have delegated minor nonconformance authority to DCMA by commercial and government entity (CAGE) code or have detailed DCMA authority in the contract. The following documents (located on the resource [Web](#) page) identify where the military service ESAs have delegated minor nonconformance authority to DCMA:

- Army CSI MRB authorization
- Navy CSI MRB authorization
- Air Force CSI MRB authorization letter

3.10. ISSUING CSI CORRECTIVE ACTIONS. Contractual nonconformities noted during CSI surveillance shall be documented IAW DCMA-INST 1201, “Corrective Action Process” (Reference (n)). Nonconformity of critical characteristics shall result in a Level II CAR, as a minimum.

3.11. MANAGING CSI SUPPLIED BY DEALERS/DISTRIBUTORS. Dealers or distributors do not always possess the measuring devices and/or technical data associated with the CSIs they are offering for acceptance. If QA personnel are unable to perform product examination due to unavailability of measuring devices or technical drawings/specifications, the procuring/delegating activity shall be immediately notified to request that they either provide specific acceptance criteria or require inspection and acceptance at destination in lieu of source. Instances of procurement office nonresponsiveness should be elevated to the next level of management.

3.12. MINIMUM CUSTOMER COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENTS. The following constitutes minimum customer communication requirements:

3.12.1. ESA coordination and approval of alternate surveillance strategies when surveillance activities are too resource intensive.

3.12.2. Advise the procuring activity of any CARs issued by DCMA to the supplier relative to nonconforming CSI, CSI critical characteristics, or deficient manufacturing, configuration

management, quality management, or supplier management processes. Advise procuring activities of supplier responses and status of corrective actions relating to defective CSI or CSI processes.

3.12.3. Notify affected procuring activities when DCMA becomes aware that a supplier removes a source from the supplier's approved subcontractors or suppliers because of improper or suspect manufacturing, quality management, or configuration management processes and there may be an impact on CSIs.

3.12.4. Advise the procuring activity of recommendations for the use of the CoC in lieu of GCQA and assure that the contract has been appropriately modified prior to implementing an ESA-approved CoC.

3.12.5. Initiate contact with the procuring activity to request guidance when an item may be inappropriately identified as a CSI, or when an item is not identified as a CSI and QA personnel believe it should be. Instances of procurement office nonresponsiveness should be elevated to the next level of management.

3.12.6. Provide comments and recommendations regarding concessions (formerly known as waivers), requests for deviation permits, and engineering change proposals to the procuring activity for coordination and approval by the cognizant ESA.

3.12.7. When frozen planning is required by the contract and the suppliers propose to make a change to frozen planning that could affect a critical characteristic, the change must be sent for approval through the procuring activity to the ESA.

3.12.8. ~~DCMA should not accept product manufactured to unapproved planning without approval from the ESA~~ *For aviation CSIs, request critical characteristics from the Procuring Activity if absent in an award to an alternate source.*

GLOSSARY**DEFINITIONS**

Alternate Source. A supplier, other than the prime supplier or OEM, approved by the ESA, to manufacture a prime's or OEM's part, and contracts directly with the Government; i.e., the Defense Logistics Agency, Navy Inventory Control Point. The alternate source uses the prime's or OEM's technical data and does not have design control of the data.

Critical Application Item. An item that is essential to weapon system performance or operation, or the preservation of life or safety of operating personnel as determined by the military services. The subset of CAIs whose failure could have catastrophic or critical safety consequences (Category I or II as defined by MIL-STD-882, "System Safety") is called a CSI.

Critical Characteristic. Any feature throughout the life-cycle of a critical item, such as dimension, tolerance, finish, material or assembly, manufacturing or inspection process, operation, field maintenance, or depot overhaul requirement that, if nonconforming, missing, or degraded, may cause the failure or malfunction of the item.

Critical Safety Item. A part, assembly, installation equipment, launch equipment, recovery equipment, or support equipment for a weapons system that contains a characteristic, any failure, malfunction, or absence of which could cause a catastrophic or critical failure resulting in the loss or serious damage to the weapons system, an unacceptable risk of personal injury or loss of life, or an uncommanded engine shutdown that jeopardizes safety. For DCMA GCQA purposes, CSIs include aviation CSIs; personal protective devices such as Small Arms Protective Insert (SAPI) vests, gas masks, chemical/biological suits and personnel parachutes; conventional ammunition including small/large caliber munitions, artillery rounds, bombs, and missiles and Naval Sea System ships CSIs.

Dealer/Distributor. Any business organization that sells, conveys, or otherwise transfers a product (not his own) to another party. The dealer performs no manufacturing or testing and may sell a manufacturer's product without the manufacturer's control or knowledge. Dealers must be able to provide the required product traceability documentation manufacturer.

Design Control Activity. A contractor or Government activity having responsibility for the design of a given part and for the preparation and currency of engineering drawings and other technical data for that part. The design control activity may or may not be the OEM. The term design control activity is synonymous with design activity.

Engineering Change. A change to the current approved configuration documentation of an item at any point in the life cycle of the item.

Engineering Change Proposal. The documentation by which a proposed engineering change is described, justified, and submitted to: (1) the cognizant design control authority for approval or disapproval of the design change in the documentation, and (2) to the procuring activity for approval or disapproval of implementing the design change in units to be delivered or retrofit into assets already delivered.

Engineering Support Activity. The military service organization assigned responsibility and authority to perform and approve engineering and quality assurance actions necessary to evolve detail design disclosures for systems, subsystems, equipment, and components exhibiting attributes essential for products to meet specific military requirements. During the operational phase, it includes any engineering activity, the results of which would add to or alter the design of equipment in such a manner, or to such an extent, as to change its operational capabilities or its design attributes of performance, reliability, maintainability and parts interchangeability, or to render it capable of alternative or additional use. For the purpose of this Instruction, the ESA is the Service's aircraft airworthiness authority. With respect to formal Requests for Engineering Support, the ESA is the military service organization designated as responsible for engineering support and technical decisions for a given part or component in that Service. In the case of multiple recorded users in a Service, there may be more than one ESA.

Important Manufacturing Process. Processes that are associated with the manufacturing, production, and assembly of CSIs. Identified IMPs are to be risk assessed against the CSI risk statement on the GCQA surveillance plan which leads to a high impact risk being associated with them.

Life Support Items. All man-mounted or weapon system installed equipment and components designed to protect, sustain, or save human lives are categorized as life support. This includes, but is not limited to, ejection systems, crew seats, passenger seats, emergency escape slides, parachutes, life rafts and preservers, survival kits, emergency radios and beacons, aircrew helmets, oxygen masks, goggles, visors, chemical defense equipment, and selected clothing and uniform items.

Material Review Board. The formal contractor-Government board established for the purpose of reviewing, evaluating, and disposing of specific nonconforming supplies or services, and for assuring the initiation and accomplishment of corrective action to preclude reoccurrence.

Nonconformance. The failure of an item to meet a defined characteristic or process.

Original Equipment Manufacturer. The individual, activity, or organization that performs the physical fabrication processes that produce the deliverable part or other items of supply for the prime supplier. The OEM may or may not be granted design responsibility by the prime supplier for preparation and technical currency of drawings and technical data.

Prime Supplier. A contractor having responsibility for design and/or delivery of a system, subsystem, or equipment such as aircraft, engines, ships, tanks, vehicles, guns and missiles, ground communications and electronics systems, and test equipment.

Procuring Activity. The Government Agency who awards the contract. It is usually found in Block 6 of the contract document.

Technical Data. Data required for the accomplishment of logistics and engineering processes in support of the contract end item. It includes drawings, operating and maintenance instructions, provisioning information, specifications, inspection and test procedures, instruction cards and equipment placards, engineering and support analysis data, special purpose computer programs,

and other forms of audiovisual presentation required to guide personnel in the performance of operating and support tasks.

Technical Data Package. A technical description of an item adequate for supporting an acquisition strategy, production, engineering and logistics support. The description defines the required design configuration and procedures required to ensure adequacy of item performance. It consists of all applicable technical data such as drawings and associated lists, specifications, standards, performance standards, quality assurance requirements, software and packaging details.

GLOSSARY**ACRONYMS**

AF	Air Force
AQL	acceptable quality level
ARP	alternate release procedure
CC	critical characteristic
CAGE	commercial and Government entity
CAI	critical application item
CAR	corrective action request
CMO	contract management office
CoC	certificate of conformance
CSI	critical safety item
CTR	contract technical review
DCMA-INST	DCMA Instruction
ESA	engineering support activity
FAR	Federal Acquisition Regulation
FLS	first-level supervisor
GCQA	Government contract quality assurance
IAW	in accordance with
IMP	important manufacturing process
LOD	letter of delegation
MRB	Material Review Board
OEM	original equipment manufacturer
<i>PCO</i>	<i>procuring contracting officer</i>
PLAS	Performance Labor Accounting System
<i>PR</i>	<i>process review</i>
QA	quality assurance
QAE	quality assurance engineer
QALI	quality assurance letter of instruction
SAPI	small arms protective insert
TDP	technical data package
WAWF	Wide Area Workflow