



ACQUISITION RESEARCH PROGRAM SPONSORED REPORT SERIES

Effects of Market Research Quality in the Services Contract Life Cycle

June 2026

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Department of Acquisition, Finance and Manpower

Naval Postgraduate School

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Prepared for the Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA 93943

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ABSTRACT

This research examines how the quality and documentation of market research influence acquisition outcomes across the Department of Defense (DoD) contract life cycle. Given the DoD's extensive reliance on private-sector contracts and substantial annual spending, effective market research is critical for promoting competition, controlling costs, and improving contractor performance. However, prior research and oversight consistently identify deficiencies in the execution and documentation of market research, creating risk throughout the acquisition process. Using an exploratory quantitative approach, this study analyzed 28 completed service contract files from Army and Navy contracting organizations. A standardized Market Research Report (MRR) template and scoring rubric were developed to evaluate the depth and quality of market research and compare it to measurable outcomes across pre-award, award, and post-award phases. Findings reveal significant variability in market research documentation, including missing reports and gaps in required performance assessments. Despite these inconsistencies, no discernible relationship was identified between market research quality and acquisition outcomes, largely due to the study's limited scope. The results highlight challenges in standardization, documentation, and auditability, and indicate a need for expanded research to better understand how market research contributes to improved contracting performance.



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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

After more than seven months of sustained collaboration and research, we are proud to present the culmination of our Capstone project. This effort required significant dedication and sacrifice, including many evenings and weekends spent away from our loved ones while developing the Market Research Report (MRR) template, scoring rubric, and supporting spreadsheets, as well as analyzing contract files to extract critical data. This achievement would not have been possible without the unwavering love and support of our families—our wives, children, and even our fur companions—who stood by us throughout this process. We extend a special thank you to Marie Martel, whose generosity and expertise in graphic design greatly enhanced the professional quality of the figures included in this paper. We are also deeply grateful to the Army and Navy contracting organizations for granting us access to service contract files, which were essential to our research. In addition, we sincerely thank our respective organizations for sponsoring our participation in the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) distance learning program and for providing the flexibility needed to balance academic and professional responsibilities. We would like to express our profound appreciation to Dr. Rene Rendon and Commander Nathan Woodward for their invaluable guidance and mentorship. Dr. Rendon, in particular, devoted countless hours beginning in November 2025 to help refine and develop our initial concept into a completed project. His leadership and commitment were instrumental to our success. We also extend our gratitude to the professionals at the NPS Graduate Writing Center (GWC), whose expertise and dedication significantly strengthened the quality of our work. We especially thank our writing coach, Lauren Callihan, for her extensive support over more than five months, helping us adapt our writing from a Department of Defense (DoD) style to one appropriate for academic scholarship. Finally, we would like to thank all of our professors at NPS. The past two years have been an invaluable experience, enriching both our professional capabilities and personal growth. We are deeply appreciative of the knowledge and guidance shared throughout our journey.



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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CMBOK	Contract Management Body of Knowledge
CMS	Contract Management Standard
CPARS	Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System
DFARS	Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DoD	Department of Defense
DoDI	Department of Defense Instruction
DOT	Department of Transportation
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
FAR	Federal Acquisition Regulation
FASA	Federal Acquisition Streamlining Act
FLC	Fleet Logistics Center
FPDS	Federal Procurement Data System
FY	fiscal year
GAO	Government Accountability Office
MRR	market research report
MSC	military sealift command
NAICS	North American Industry Classification System
NCMA	National Contract Management Association
NPS	Naval Postgraduate School
OCC	object class code
PCF	paperless contract file
PGI	procedures, guidance, and information
POP	period of performance
PSC	product service code
R&D	research and development
RFI	request for information
RFO	Revolutionary Federal Acquisition Regulation Overhaul
RFP	request for proposal
SAT	simplified acquisition threshold



UCF
WAU

uniform contract format
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DISCLOSURES

This applied capstone project incorporated the use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools as part of the research and writing process, consistent with guidance provided by Professor Alan Nelson in the Defense-Focused Managerial Inquiry (Fall 2026, MN4045) course. The primary AI tool utilized was Microsoft 365 Copilot, an AI companion developed by Microsoft Corporation. Perplexity AI was also employed during the initial phase to identify potential academic sources; however, the authors determined several of these sources were inaccurate or hallucinated during verification. NIPR GPT was briefly explored but did not contribute to the final project.

The authors ultimately adopted Microsoft Copilot exclusively for its accessibility and quality of outputs. During the MN4045 course, the authors implemented additional guidance using meta-prompts to improve source authenticity. Copilot was primarily used to assist with:

- Enhancing academic tone, clarity, and flow
- Improving transitions and logical structure
- Ensuring compliance with American Psychological Association (APA) 7th Edition formatting
- Identifying and organizing academic references for review and use
- Utilized within methodology as an additional tool to check market research reports against the rubric and template to identify any included assessable information that was missed by the human and prompt human verification if any scoring discrepancies.

While AI accelerated the integration of research and editing of the report, all AI-generated content was rigorously reviewed and verified by the authors to ensure accuracy and alignment with intended meaning. Every sentence in the final manuscript was examined to confirm that the report reflects human-authored intent and scholarly standards.



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I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the reader to the role of market research within the Department of Defense (DoD) contract life cycle and its implications in affecting that life cycle. First, this chapter provides background information relating to federal contracting, DoD contracting, and the need for market research. Next, it identifies a problem statement concerning the prevalence of a lack of sufficient market research. Then, this chapter introduces the purpose of this research and the specific research questions. Finally, this chapter reviews benefits and limitations, outlines the report, and concludes with a brief summary.

A. BACKGROUND

It is commonly understood among the acquisition community and defense contractors that the federal government spends hundreds of billions of dollars annually on products and services from the private sector to fulfill its missions. The Government Accountability Office (GAO) released an article summarizing total federal government obligations for 2024, which was “about \$755 billion on contracts” (2025). Within the same article the GAO included a figure which breaks down all civilian federal agencies and the DoD branches with their individual obligations using 2024 Federal Procurement Data System (FPDS) data (2025). This figure depicts how the DoD accounted for \$445.1 billion in contract spending in fiscal year (FY) 2024, which is more than half of the federal government’s total contract spending of \$755 billion. The DoD depends heavily on both defense-specific and commercial markets, making robust market research critical throughout all phases of the contract life cycle to appropriately steward limited financial resources.

Regulatory guidance underscores the role of market research in acquisition planning, enabling agencies to develop accurate and effective solicitation documents. Examples of key decisions are contract type, evaluation criteria, and small business participation. Despite these mandates derived from statute and regulation, GAO (2014) report 15–8 highlighted insufficient research across several federal agencies that yielded negative downstream effects including increased risk, reduced competition and higher



costs over the contract life cycle. In the pre-award phase, comprehensive market research helps contracting officers craft clearer and more accurate solicitations. During the award phase, adequate market research can help contracting officers comply with what is declared in the solicitation with respect to whether discussions will be held. In post-award, the depth of market research directly and indirectly impacts performance, which is measured and documented in the Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System (CPARS) for applicable contracts depending on business sector and dollar threshold as specified in the Guidance for the CPARS (Department of Defense [DoD], 2025).

B. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Suboptimal outcomes, which are inherently wasteful of taxpayer money, are patently evidenced by occurrences such as increased pre-award clarifications and solicitation amendments, limited competition, and poor contractor performance. Despite widespread acknowledgment that market research influences contract success, contemporary empirical research mapping and measuring this relationship remains scarce.

These suboptimal procurement outcomes within the DoD are frequently characterized by limited competition among contractors, leading to higher costs and less innovation. Recent analyses show that the competition rate for DoD contracts—measured by the proportion of dollars obligated through competitive contracting—remains in the 50–60% range for fiscal years, significantly limiting the government’s ability to leverage market forces for better value (DoD, 2022b; Sanders et al., 2023). For instance, in FY22, 44.1% of research and development (R&D) obligations were awarded without competition, representing the highest level since 2006 and an indication of persistent weaknesses in the defense industrial base (Sanders et al., 2023). Programs plagued by insufficient competition are especially prone to inflated prices, cost overruns, poor performance, and schedule delays—issues thoroughly documented by government oversight bodies and highlighted as drivers of wasted taxpayer dollars (U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, 2024).

Also plaguing DoD acquisition is lack of communication, an essential part of the pre-award process (Johnson et al., 2025). Therefore, the DoD must become a smarter



customer by refining its acquisition strategies through better market research and improved communication with potential contractors, ultimately enabling more effective utilization of America's private industry.

C. PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of this study is to act as an exploratory examination of the influence of market research on contracting outcomes to inform increasing the effectiveness of market research. This pilot study then, while limited in scope, will enable follow on research with similar goals. Focus will be placed on pre-award, award, and post-award impacts within DoD service contract acquisitions, emphasizing its role in informing decision-making, enhancing contractor selection, and supporting performance management. The Revolutionary Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Overhaul (RFO), which was in the process of being drafted at the time of this research, may superficially seem to devalue market research by eliminating complex and lengthy prescriptions and expanding the discretionary authority of contracting officers. In actuality, the significance of custom-designed market research report templates by educated acquisition professionals becomes more pivotal to enabling agile, intelligent acquisition, in accordance with the goals of the overhaul, while fulfilling the inherent duty of responsibly stewarding taxpayer resources.

D. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This research will address the following questions:

- How does the quality and depth of market research relate to pre-award outcomes such as the frequency of solicitation amendments and the number of proposals received?
- How does the quality and depth of market research relate to award outcomes following the solicitation such as awarding without discussions and awarding with discussions?
- How does the quality and depth of market research relate to post-award outcomes such as contractor performance outcomes, as measured in the CPARS ratings?

Figure 1 provides a visual mental map to relate tracking the ideas of these questions from the input of market research to the life cycle impacts as outputs in the contract life cycle phases. Chapter II, Literature Review, includes an orientation to the



contract life cycle. The grey boxes in Figure 1 indicate identified potential life cycle impacts that will not be assessed within the scope of this study. Those non-assessed potential impacts include: # of Canceled RFPs, Delayed Award, # of Protests, Award Fees, Modifications due to Foreseeable Reasons, and Contract Terminations or Options Not Exercised.

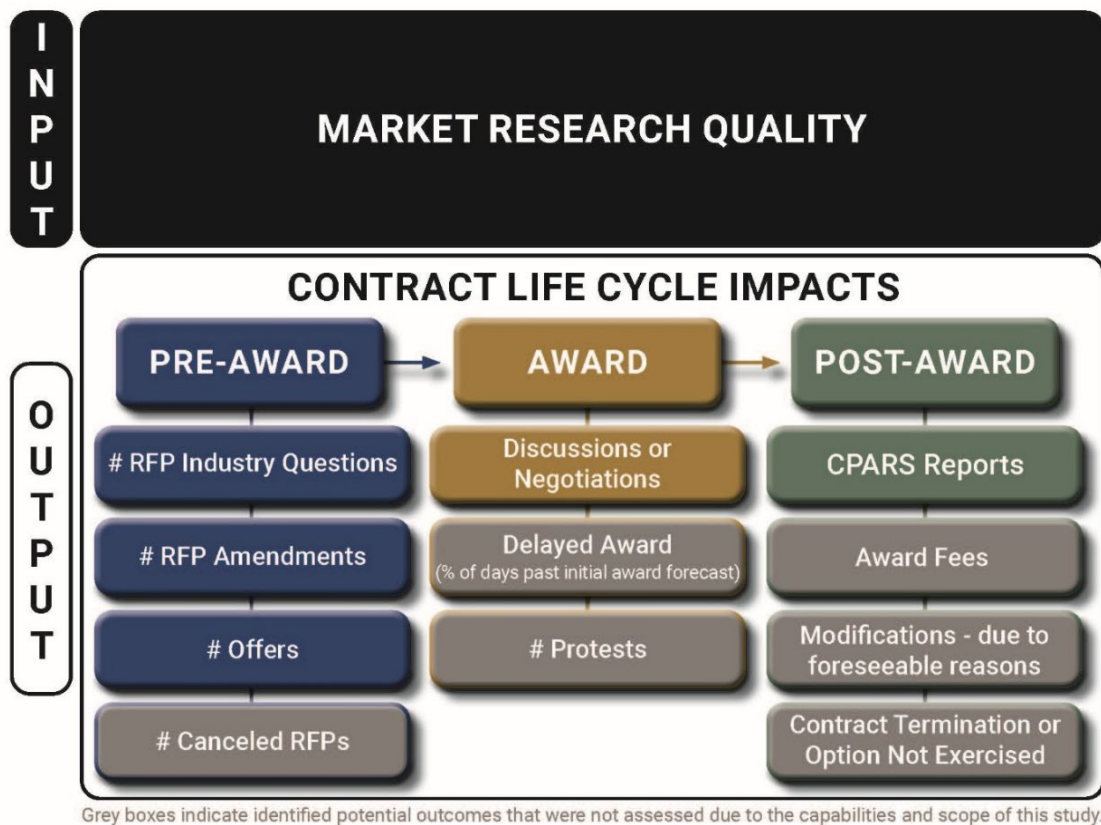


Figure 1. Mental Map of Market Research Quality (Input) to Anticipated Contract Life Cycle Impacts (Outputs)

E. BENEFITS OF THE RESEARCH

The contribution of this research may initiate an update to the DoD Office of Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy 2017 Market Research Report Guide for Improving Tradecraft in Services Acquisition, professionally referred to in shorthand as the Market Research Report Guide, as well as the development of a DoD-wide Market Research Report (MRR) Template. Additionally, it may motivate the Warfighting Acquisition University (WAU) to build more robust market research training for acquisition professionals in the DoD. Finally, it will encourage contracting organizations

to instill internal controls to ensure personnel are producing high-quality and in-depth market research up front to yield better pre-award, award, and post-award results in the contract process. Ultimately the overarching benefit to the DoD will be to give acquisition professionals the tools and knowledge of where to put a spotlight on the need for robust performance of market research rather than merely pencil-whipping the process.

F. LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

There are two limitations to this research. First, we expect some files to lack market research documentation. This will occur for one of three reasons:

1. The contracting officer did not conduct market research and therefore there is not any documentation on file.
2. The contracting officer conducted market research but did not summarize and file it in a market research report.
3. The contracting officer conducted market research and documented it but failed to file the market research report.

The second constraint is the fact that our research cannot reflect a true scientific sampling across the breadth of the DoD because we are only able to pull contract files from two organizations where we have allowable access. These organizations are more operational in nature and do not have a large percentage of service contract files greater than \$1M in their portfolios. According to the *Guidance for the Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System (CPARS)*, the dollar threshold for doing annual assessments for services contracts over \$1M for the entire Period of Performance (PoP) (2025). Therefore, we expect to collect a mix of both service contracts that require CPARS and service contracts that do not require CPARS based on their total PoP dollar value.

G. METHODOLOGY

The research methodologies include a quantitative analysis of existing contract data files retrieved from Department of the Army and Department of the Navy contracting activities. We developed a standard market research report template and corresponding scoring rubric to quantitatively evaluate the adequacy of market research inputs, assigning scores to each file. After collecting and analyzing the data, assigned scores to each file and search for links between market research inputs and acquisition



outcomes. The analysis focused on the different market research strategies used and correctly documented to evaluate impact on the award and post award phases. We provided further details on methodology in Chapter III.

H. OUTLINE OF REPORT

This report is composed of five chapters. Chapter I provides foundational information surrounding federal contracting and where market research falls within the contract life cycle. Once the foundational information is addressed, we introduced the problem statement, purpose statement, and research questions centered around pre-award, award, and post-award effects of market research. Moving forward, we examined both the advantages and limitations of the research prior to outlining our methodology. To conclude this chapter, we outlined the report and provided a summary.

Chapter II provides a literature review, starting with an overview of Agency Theory. Following the foundational theory, we discuss the contract management framework, which is comprised of three sections: Contract Management Standard (CMS; National Contract Management Association [NCMA], 2025), Federal Acquisition Streamlining Act (FASA), and Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR). We will end this chapter by capturing past research, our research's contribution to literature, and a summary.

Chapter III presents methodology and includes data sources, data access, data analysis, and a brief summary. This chapter will include details about the development of a Market Research Report (MRR) Template and a corresponding MRR Evaluation Rubric for the analysis of data during the course of this research.

Chapter IV unveils the findings of our research where we analyze the market research data collected from the contract files, market research scores, and discovered impacts on the contract life cycle elements identified in our Market Research Report (MRR) Scoring Sheet. We will offer recommendations based on our findings and a summary of our research.



Chapter V provides a synthesis of the research and presents the study's conclusions. It also identifies opportunities for further examination of market research across the contract life cycle.

I. SUMMARY OF INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter was to introduce the reader to the role of market research within the DoD contract life cycle and its implications for that life cycle. First, the chapter provided background information related to federal contracting, DoD contracting, and the need for market research. Next, it identified a problem statement concerning the prevalence of insufficient market research. The chapter then introduced the purpose of the research and the specific research questions. In conclusion, the study's benefits and limitations were discussed, the report's structure was described, and a concise summary was provided at the end.

Chapter II provides a literature review on agency theory before introducing the contract management framework, where we will discuss the CMS, FASA, and FAR. Furthermore, Chapter II presents past research and our research's anticipated contribution to literature.



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II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides a literature review beginning with the foundational principal-agent theory which predicts the inherent conflicting interests and asymmetry between a buyer and seller(s). The chapter then orients the reader to the place of market research within the professional body of knowledge and continues into the laws and regulations defining the purpose and prescription of market research. This chapter synthesizes GAO reports, federal regulations, and peer-reviewed publications to identify requirements and best practices that enhance market research capabilities within the DoD acquisition workforce and optimize service contract cost, schedule, and performance outcomes. Finally, this chapter examines the intended contribution of this research in assessing the relationships between market research and measurable outcomes in other portions of the contract life cycle based on recent real world service contracts.

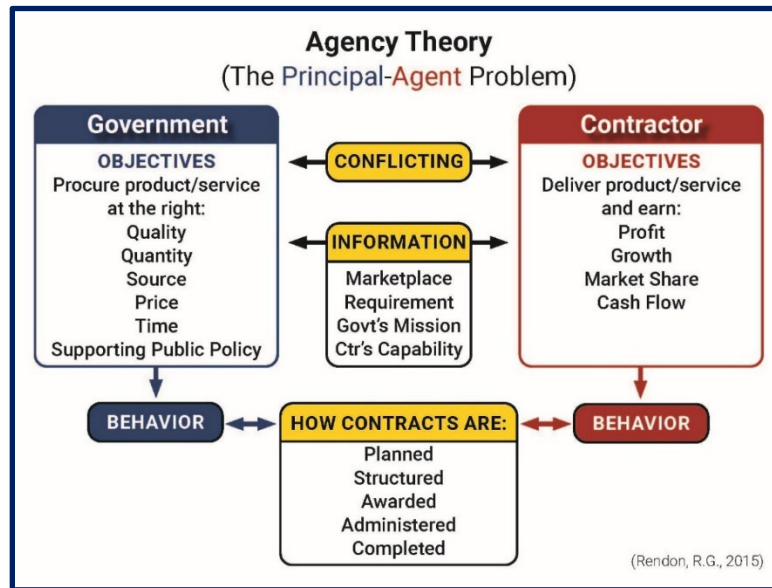
A. AGENCY THEORY

Principal-Agent Theory, or Agency Theory, applied to contracting by Jensen and Meckling (1976), helps to explain behaviors and outcomes when a principal delegates decisions or tasks to an agent. Generally, there are always elements of incomplete information, miscommunication, competing interests, and inherent risks (Rendon, 2015). The theory informs how principals can reduce those risks and improve outcomes via contractual, governance, monitoring, and incentive mechanisms (Eisenhardt, 1989).

In federal procurement, the elements of Principal-Agent Theory reference the government as the principal and the contractor as the agent, as depicted in Figure 2. The theory posits the following three assumptions, adapted from Rendon (2015): delegation, goal conflict, and information asymmetry. The first assumption is that delegation inherently grants discretion to the agent to act on the principal's behalf, exposing the principal to actions that are potentially in conflict with the principal's desires. The second assumption is goal conflict and competing desires, which arises because principals and agents have different ultimate objectives. The contractor (agent) has the corporate goals of profit, growth, and increased market share. The government (principal) focuses on optimal outcomes of cost, schedule, and performance, and must also fulfill statutory



obligations, political objectives, and stewardship of public funds. The third assumption, information asymmetry, means that each party uniquely has some information that is withheld, concealed, or unknown and difficult or costly for the other party to verify. Furthermore, Rendon (2015) provides examples that involve the contractor's true cost structure, technical capability, or effort exertion, versus the government's full set of budget constraints, internal priorities, or future requirements.



Adapted from Rendon (2015).

Figure 2. Agency Theory

In his 2025 article, Rendon concisely relates the essence of this principal-agent challenge as: “Because of conflicting objectives and asymmetrical information, the first organization [principal] must monitor the second organization’s [the agent’s] activities or risk [the agent’s] opportunistic behavior” (p. 38). Under the conditions of delegation, conflicting goals, and asymmetric information, agency theory predicts the agent’s opportunistic behaviors that are known as adverse selection and moral hazard.

In contracting, the first opportunistic behavior of adverse selection occurs in the *pre-award* and *award phase* (National Contract Management Association, 2025). The phases of the contract life cycle will be discussed in greater detail in the contract management framework portion of the paper. Eisenhardt (1989) frames adverse selection as the “misrepresentation of ability by agents before contracting” (p. 61). In other words,

adverse selection in government contracting manifests when the government cannot accurately assess a bidder's technical competence, cost realism, or past performance, and then the government awards to a contractor that it should not have.

The second opportunistic behavior of moral hazard risks arise occurs within the post-award phase when agents exploit monitoring gaps to reduce effort, escalate costs, or assume unobservable risks (Holmstrom, 1979). In other words, moral hazard risks occur when someone reduces their effort or the quality of their work while carrying out a contract.

In government contracting, the relationship between the government and the contractor “reflects a principal-agent relationship” (Rendon, 2025). That is to say the government defines requirements and terms, while the contractor performs the work on the government's behalf. Agency theory characterizes this as delegation of decision-making authority to an agent whose actions cannot be fully observed (Eisenhardt, 1989), a structure that is reflected in federal acquisition practice (Rendon, 2015; Rendon, 2025).

Continuing our application of Agency Theory to government contracting we observe the conflicting objectives between the government and contractors. As Rendon (2025) observes, the government's objectives of procuring “the product or service at the right quality, right quantity, right source, right time, and right price,” while also meeting public-policy and statutory requirements. conflicts with the contractor's objectives of maximizing profit and growth (pp. 38–39). These conflicting objectives between the government and the for-profit contractor generate predictable tensions over cost, scope, schedule, and compliance. We also observe the information asymmetry, where uncertainty and information gaps are endemic. Brown et al. (2010) highlight that unavailability of information becomes even more extreme in government contracting for complex systems since the government cannot fully specify requirements or future contingencies, and contractors cannot fully reveal cost drivers or technical risks at reasonable proposal costs. The factors of delegation, conflicting objectives, and information asymmetry in government contracts then create great risk to the government's objectives throughout the contract's lifespan.



Agency Theory applied to government contracting does not just describe and predict risks but is “...also concerned with structuring the appropriate mechanisms for selecting the contractor (to counter the problem of adverse selection) and for monitoring the contractor’s performance (to counter the effects of moral hazard)” (Rendon 2025, p. 39). These mechanisms for reducing risk directly correlate to the purpose of market research under the FAR which is “to arrive at the most suitable approach to acquiring, distributing, and supporting supplies and services” (FAR 10.000, 2026). Market research informs requirements shaping, cost realism, risk identification, and competitive strategy i.e., source selection, and contract structure including monitoring, incentives, surveillance of the execution etc. The logical conclusion then is that by preventing or enabling adverse selection and moral hazard, market research creates benefits or detriments across the life cycle.

Having outlined principal-agent theory as the core analytical lens, and market research as the principal risk mitigation with effects throughout the contract life cycle, the next sections examine how market research is embedded in the professional knowledge framework which is the Contract Management Standard™ (CMS), and in federal statute, regulation, and policy and what prior studies reveal about its implementation and effects.

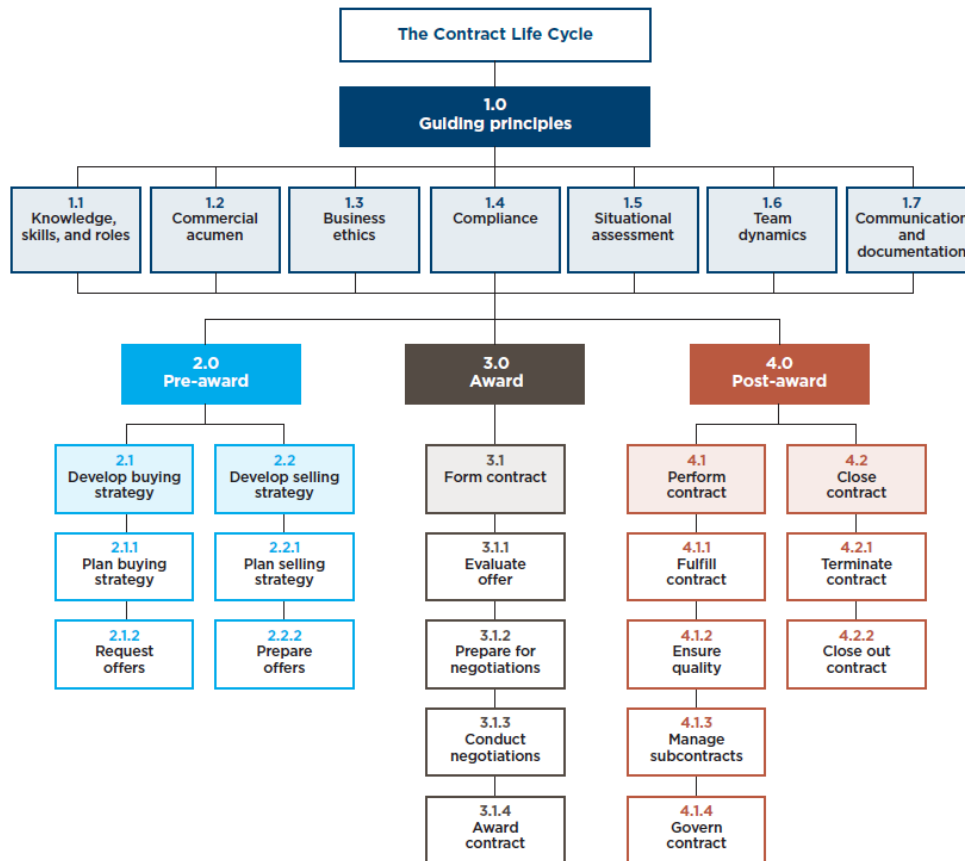
B. CONTRACT MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

This section summarizes the statutory, regulatory and policy guidance that governs market research in DoD service acquisition. It begins with the National Contract Management Association’s (NMCA) CMS (2025), which frames market research as a core pre-award activity integral to shaping requirements and acquisition strategy. It then examines the Federal Acquisition Streamlining Act of 1994, which codified market research as a statutory requirement to enhance competition, enable commercial solutions, and support small business participation. Finally, it reviews the Federal Acquisition Regulation and Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement provisions that operationalize these requirements by prescribing when, how, and to what degree market research must be conducted and documented. These references define expectations for the quality, depth and documentation of market research that inform acquisition planning and risk management.



1. Contract Management Standard

The National Contract Management Association (NCMA) anchors the acquisition profession's common body of practice in its Contract Management Standard (CMS). The CMS is the global standard and accepted or adopted by the DoD, has a detailed figure, included in this report as Figure 3, which below their guiding principles depicts the three phases of acquisition, as well as the subsequent domains and then competencies (National Contract Management Association, 2025).



Source: National Contract Management Association (2025, p. 6).

Figure 3. The Contract Life Cycle

As depicted in the CMS, during the *pre-award phase* the government develops the buying strategy, plans the buying strategy, and requests offers (2025). To develop the buying strategy the government conducts market research. The CMS identifies *shape requirements, conduct market research, and formulate contracting approach and strategy* as discrete separate tasks of the plan buying strategy competency. (2025). However, in

DoD practice, these three tasks are typically executed concurrently at the requiring-activity level and are colloquially referred to together as *market research*. This study employs the term in this practitioner sense and examines market research in this wider lens as it is understood and applied in practice. This practitioner sense encapsulates what the CMS describes as the value of developing the buying strategy which is “the accurate presentation of the customer requirement through a buying strategy leading to responsive offers and resulting in successful contract performance” (2025, p. 12). It is in this *pre-award* phase where the government may hold *industry days*, or industry may ask *questions* about the *request for proposals* (solicitation), which can lead to *amendments* of the solicitation, and the government *receives offers/responses* from industry.

As depicted in the CMS, in the *award phase* the government forms a contract, evaluates the offers, prepares for negotiations, conducts negotiations, and awards the contract (2025). It is in this phase where the government may or may not hold discussions prior to awarding the contract.

Again, as depicted in the CMS, during the *post-award phase* the contractor performs the contract and fulfills the contract requirements (2025). The government ensures quality, it manages any subcontracts and it administers or governs the contract. This entails evaluating the contractor’s performance and documenting an assessment of the contractor’s performance annually and during *close contract* in CPARs for applicable contracts.

2. Federal Acquisition Streamlining Act

Thematically, the intent and design of federal market research policy is largely to yield better economic outcomes through federal acquisition. In understanding the marketplace through market research, the federal government can expect a larger number of offerors (competition), award contracts faster through commercial solutions, and equitably distribute economic wealth between private-sector small businesses. Through the enactment of the FASA, Congress made the conduct of market research a statutory requirement intended to increase competition within the federal acquisition system.



Specifically, the requirement to perform market research was written into Title 10 U.S.C. § 2377, which is now codified as Title 10 U.S.C. § 3453 Preference for commercial products and commercial services (PCPCS). As of 17 December 2025, the statute states the following:

1. (c) Preliminary Market Research. – (1) The head of an agency shall conduct market research appropriate to the circumstances -
2. (A) before developing new specifications for a procurement by that agency;
3. (B) before soliciting bids or proposals for a contract in excess of the simplified acquisition threshold; and
4. (C) before awarding a task order or delivery order in excess of the simplified acquisition threshold. (PCPCS, 2025)

Since then, market research has been a foundational requirement in DoD acquisitions, as promulgated in both statute and regulation to enable informed decision making, increase competition, enable small business participation, and mitigate risk (FAR 10, 2025) (Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement [DFARS] 210, 2025). The desired output from adequate market research includes the acquisition topoi of achieving the right service, at the right time, and at the right price. It involves collecting information on industry standards and market capabilities to satisfy the requiring agency's needs and is required at various stages throughout the contract life cycle of the acquisition as prescribed in FAR Part 10 and DFARS Part 210. These regulations are discussed in the next paragraph.

3. Federal Acquisition Regulation

FAR Part 10 details the regulatory requirements for market research, as shown in Table 1 below. It states that federal agencies must conduct market research before developing requirements, advertising solicitations, and awarding contracts (FAR 10, 2025). In conjunction with FASA, FAR Part 10 also emphasizes the importance of procuring commercial products and services. DFARS Part 210 contains specific guidance for the DoD, which mandates conducting market research prior to issuing solicitations with tiered evaluations of offers. It also requires market research to determine whether



small business set-aside requirements are met under FAR Part 19 and to ensure fair and reasonable prices are determined.

DFARS Part 210, which further extends FAR market research policy, also requires documentation of market research methods, timing, and that conclusions be included in the contract file and refers acquisition professionals to the DoD 2017 Market Research Report Guide for Improving Tradecraft in Services Acquisition. Specifically referenced in DFARS Part 210 is, “When contracting for services, see PGI 210.070 for the ‘Market Research Report Guide for Improving the Tradecraft in Services Acquisition.’” (DFARS 210, 2025).

In DFARS Procedures, Guidance, and Information PGI (DFARS PGI) Part 210, contracting officers are “encouraged” to document the contract file to include the market research methodology; timeline of conducting market research; capability analysis of all potential offerors found as a result of market research; and conclusions yielded after finalizing all market research. Furthermore, DFARS Part 210 provides the link to the DoD 2017 Market Research Report Guide, which can be a reference for contracting officers to document market research in service acquisitions.

In the DoD 2017 Market Research Report Guide, there are three well-defined parts which provide robust data points to address in order to conduct quality, in-depth market research. Part 1 includes market research objectives, service description, background, potential supplier information, market research techniques used, small business opportunities, and required sources, to include the AbilityOne Program and Federal Prison Industries. Part 2 provides guidance on researching performance requirements, as well as market research and industry analysis. Part 3 wraps up with conclusions and recommendations. Finally, there is a glossary of resources and links to find more information online. Ultimately, the market research report is intended to yield key conclusions that are tailored to the urgency, dollar value, and complexity of the requirement to aid in acquisition planning documents such as the Acquisition Strategy and Source Selection Plan.



4. Department of Defense Policy

DoDI 5000.02 Operation of the Adaptive Acquisition Framework “Establishes policy and prescribes procedures for managing acquisition programs, pursuant to the relevant sections of Title 10, United States Code.” Because of the importance of services acquisition in the DoD the instruction includes the Defense Acquisition of Services as an acquisition pathway, emphasizes the requirement to research potential contractors, and directs components to DoDI 5000.74 for policies and procedures.

DoDI 5000.74 establishes policy and oversight for service acquisitions in DoD contracts that exceed the Simplified Acquisition Threshold (SAT). Its purpose is to ensure that service procurements receive the same level of scrutiny and discipline as major defense projects (Department of Defense, 2021). The policy highlights market research as a fundamental and ongoing process throughout the contract life cycle, designating it as the third step among the “Seven Steps to the Services Acquisition Process” shown in Figure 4. Market research guides the development of requirements, shapes acquisition strategies, influences decisions about competition, helps define performance measures, and determines cost feasibility. Instead of treating market research as merely an isolated contracting task, the DoD considers it a strategic approach to align mission needs with available commercial solutions.

SEVEN STEPS TO THE SERVICES ACQUISITION PROCESS						
PLAN			DEVELOP		EXECUTE	
STEP 1	STEP 2	STEP 3	STEP 4	STEP 5	STEP 6	STEP 7
Form the Team	Review Current Strategy	Perform Market Research	Define Requirements	Develop Acquisition Strategy	Execute Strategy	Manage Performance

Source: Department of Defense (2021, p. 6).

Figure 4. Seven Steps to the Services Acquisition Process

Table 1 provides a crosswalk of these regulations and instructions according to purpose, timing, documentation, and emphasis for market research. As depicted, the cumulative instruction of FAR Part 10, DFARS Part 210, DoDI 5000.02, and DoDI 5000.74 is that DoD components must conduct market research to discover commercial capabilities, identify relevant technologies, and seek innovative approaches to service



delivery. This process aims to improve productivity, increase efficiency, and promote affordability within service acquisitions. It also supports informed choices regarding cost, performance, scheduling, and risk, while encouraging broader competition, including greater involvement from small businesses.

Table 1. Market Research Regulation and Instruction Crosswalk

Adapted from FAR, DFARS, DODI 5000.02, and DODI 5000.74 Market Research Guidance.

	FAR Part 10	DFARS Part 210	DoDI 5000.02	DODI 5000.74
PURPOSE	Establishes government-wide policy for market research to promote competition and identify commercial items.	Supplements FAR with DoD-specific requirements; links market research to pricing, small business, and services acquisition.	Integrates market research into acquisition planning across all pathways; supports tailoring strategies.	Establishes DoD wide policy, roles, and governance for the acquisition of services; integrates market research and acquisition planning to achieve cost, schedule, and performance outcomes.
TIMING	Required before developing new requirements, soliciting offers above the SAT and awarding task/delivery orders.	Required before solicitations with tiered evaluation as well as informs price reasonableness and small business set-asides.	Continuous throughout contract life cycle; early engagement during requirements development and strategy formulation.	Continuous throughout the services contract life cycle; early planning and market research required during requirements development, SRRB review, and acquisition strategy formulation.
DOCUMENTATION	Market research report or acquisition plan must reflect findings.	Must document methods, timing, and conclusions in contract file; PGI 210.070 provides standardized reporting recommendation with a link to the Market Research Report Guide for Improving Tradecraft in Services Acquisition.	Incorporated into acquisition strategy and milestone documentation.	Market research results incorporated into services acquisition strategy or acquisition plan; supporting documentation includes market research summaries, SRRB package inputs, and acquisition planning documentation.
EMPHASIS	Focus on commercial item availability and small business participation.	Emphasizes tradecraft in services acquisition; requires retention of vendor data; bundling notifications.	Encourages engagement with non-traditional vendors; supports innovation and commercial solutions.	Establishes DoD wide policy, roles, and governance for the acquisition of services; integrates market research and acquisition planning to achieve cost, schedule, and performance outcomes.

Professional graphic created by research team from a table generated by M365 Copilot. This table crosswalks Market Research Guidance from FAR 10, DFARS 210, DoDI 5000.02, and DoDI 5000.74, adapted from content generated by M365 Copilot in response to user prompt.

It should also be noted that according to the FAR, agencies are required to prepare contractor performance evaluations in the CPARS for contracts and orders that exceed the SAT, with specific threshold variations for construction and architect-engineer contracts (FAR 42.15, 2025). However, the Guidance for the CPARS sets the threshold for contractor assessment at one million dollars for services contracts for the DoD (DoD, 2025).



C. PAST RESEARCH

Over the previous 30 years, there have been several recurring themes of market research documentation, risk mitigation, past performance outcomes, quality deficiencies and lack of standardization of practice (see Figure 5). This is found in numerous GAO reports, IG findings, journal articles and NPS Theses. According to Defense Acquisition Magazine, a substantial share of DoD contracts exhibits inadequate or inconsistent MR files with poor traceability to acquisition strategy, leading to downstream ambiguity (Cable, 2018). Market research is situated as step 3 in WAU's 7 step process and is foundational for performance-based requirements (PWS) and in developing surveillance plans essential to service contracts (Beers, 2011). In 1996, two years after FASA was introduced, the GAO issued a report on acquisition reform in which it identified issues with the performance of market research. Through analysis of 21 contracts and discussions with DoD and non-DoD civilian agency officials, the study identified wide variation influenced by acquisition complexity, requirement recurrence, dollar value, and industry type (GAO, 1996, pp. 30–31).

Another key theme in past research focuses on industry engagement up to the award phase. In a 2019 NPS Thesis, Carkhuff summarized the lack of performance in MR within the DoD as stemming from the government's poor job in communicating with private industry (Carkhuff, 2019). Particularly in services, engaging industry early through RFIs, draft PWS and industry days conferences are essential to understand commercial practices, refine the requirement and improve proposal evaluations (Beers, 2011). Providing clarity of the requirements is more likely to yield awards with fewer discussions (Cable, 2018).

A 2014 GAO report identified deficiencies in market research documentation that limited effective acquisition planning at certain federal agencies. In this study, the GAO focused on market research initiatives at the DoD. After reviewing 28 contracts across all four agencies, the GAO found every file included some form of market research documentation and for the 12 contracts that were above \$10 million, the documentation was more robust than the lower-dollar contracts. For the 18 lower-dollar contracts with inadequate market research, 50% were sole-source awards and thus did not involve



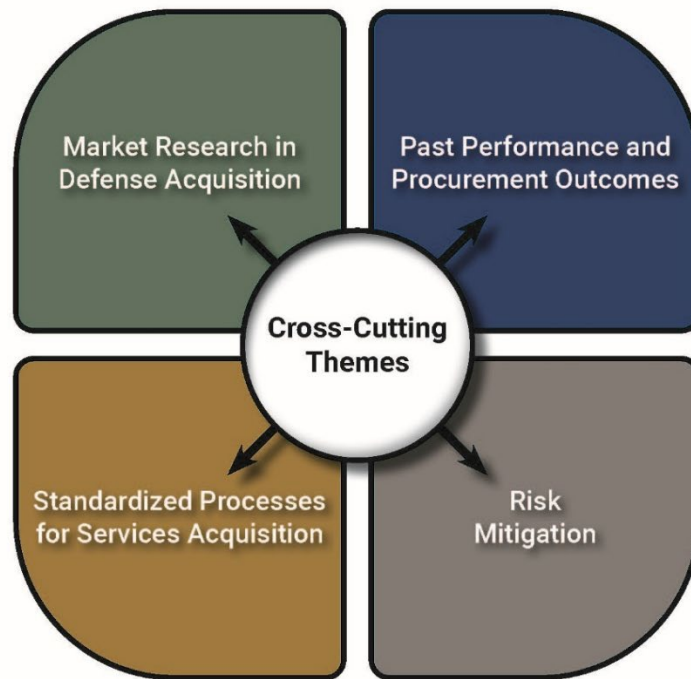
competition. Finally, in 14 of the files, GAO found that the agencies did not address at least one of the basic elements for market research. In the report, GAO stated that failure to document “basic elements of market research potentially limits the ability of agency acquisition personnel to use market research to inform future procurements, a goal identified in agency guidance” (GAO, 1996, p. 2). These findings underscore the importance of structured, comprehensive market research documentation, as deficiencies at the pre-award stage can carry forward and affect post-award outcomes and performance assessment.

The mechanism to evaluate past performance alongside price is applicable to services contracts where performance outcomes depend on clarity of the requirement and understanding of vendor capabilities through past performance (Andreyanov, 2024). Service acquisitions that were precluded with high-quality, comprehensive market research are expected to exhibit higher CPARS ratings across cost, schedule, and performance.

In order to synthesize existing literature on service acquisition and performance within Department of Defense contracting, our team modified Figure 5 from a graphic originally produced by M365 Copilot based on a user-submitted prompt.



Past Research on Services Acquisition and Performance in DoD Contracting



Professional graphic created by research team from a figure generated by M365 Copilot.

Figure 5. Cross-Cutting Themes of Literature on Services Acquisition

D. RESEARCH'S CONTRIBUTION TO LITERATURE

Existing research includes GAO reports, IG findings, journal articles and NPS theses that focus primarily on documentation adequacy and administrative compliance. This pilot study extends the scope of literature by examining how market research practices relate to measurable outcomes across all phases of a services requirement acquisition. Ultimately, examining the influence of market research on the effectiveness of pre-award, award, and post-award activities in DoD service acquisitions may contribute to the existing literature by offering empirical insights into how market research practices relate to acquisition outcomes. Prior studies and oversight reports suggest persistent challenges in the consistency, depth, and documentation of market research, indicating a potential need for evidence-based approaches to improve tools, training, and professional practice. Accordingly, the findings of this study may inform future revisions to the DoD 2017 *Market Research Report Guide for Improving*

Tradecraft in Services Acquisition and support the development of strengthened internal controls within contracting organizations to promote accountability and proficiency in market research execution.

This research seeks to inform efforts to bridge the gap identified in the literature between policy prescriptions and observed acquisition practice. The research seeks to do this by empirically examining how variations in the depth and rigor of market research are associated with contracting outcomes across the contract life cycle. By developing and applying standardized rubric to assess market research quality in historical service contract files, the study may yield insights into practices that appear related to favorable outcomes, including increased competition, improved contractor performance, and reduced administrative burden. The study may also yield insights into practices related to unfavorable effects on those outcomes. Collectively, these findings may inform acquisition professionals and contribute to ongoing efforts to refine guidance and training, particularly considering the forthcoming Revolutionary FAR Overhaul (RFO), which is said will emphasizes flexibility over prescriptive compliance. In doing so, this study aims to incrementally advance scholarly understanding of market research as a strategic enabler of procurement effectiveness while offering practical considerations for more effective stewardship of public resources.

E. SUMMARY OF LITERATURE REVIEW

The Literature Review Chapter reviewed theoretical, regulatory, and statutory foundations that establish market research as a key enabler of DoD service acquisition. Principal-agent theory provided the framework for how delegation, goal conflict, and information asymmetry yields risks of adverse selection and moral hazard throughout the contract life cycle. Within this foundation, market research serves as a mechanism for mitigating these risks through informing acquisition strategy, source selection, and contract oversight.

The Literature Review also explained the role of market research within the Contract Management Framework. The Contract Management Standard identifies market research as a core pre-award activity for shaping requirements and acquisition strategy. The Federal Acquisition Streamlining Act provided statutory requirements to conduct



market research to enhance competition, promote small business opportunities, and leverage commercial services. Prior studies and GAO reports revealed a gap between policy and execution. Professional literature and prior Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) theses identify deficiencies between these prescriptions, particularly in service contracts. While existing literature confirms the importance of market research, the primary focus is on compliance rather than the relationship between market research adequacy and measurable outcomes.

The literature supports two primary conclusions: market research is an essential component of effective acquisition, and it is often inadequate in yielding intended results throughout the contract life cycle. What remains insufficiently examined is whether the scope, rigor and documentation of market research link to measurable differences in pre-award, award, and post-award outcomes. This gap informs our study, and Chapter III describes the methodology used to examine this relationship in completed DoD service contracts.



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III. METHODOLOGY

The intent of this chapter is to introduce the methodology our team will use to perform this research. First, we will discuss the data sources in addition to where the data is housed. Next, we present how we will access and collect the data for this research, followed by how the data will be filtered to conduct the analysis. In conclusion, this chapter will close with a concise summary.

A. DATA SOURCES

In preparation for this research, we will pull and assess 28 completed service contract files from two DoD contracting organizations, one Department of the Army and one Department of the Navy. The Navy contracting entity will be a regional-level Fleet Logistics Center (FLC) with service contracts typically covering requirements for installation support (e.g., grounds maintenance), ship repair, and Military Sealift Command (MSC). The source for the Navy contract files assessed will be the FLC's locally maintained digital storage Contract E-file.

The Army contracting office will be a regional health contracting office that conducts contracting in support of services and supplies for Army military treatment facilities. Examples will include personal services contracts to staff doctor and nurse positions, specialized maintenance of medical equipment, laboratory reagents, and information technology services. The source for the Army contract files assessed will be the Army's Paperless Contract File (PCF) system at <https://pcf.army.mil>. Use of PCF will be uniformly required across the Army as the system of record for the filing and storage of all contract documentation. We will also ensure access to CPARS in order to pull assessment reports for contracts with a total value equal to or greater than \$1 million.

B. DATA ACCESS

Access to the contract files will be available because two of our team members will have digital access and explicit organizational permission to pull the required data as part of this research, including publication. However, as part of that permission agreement, all attributable information such as contract numbers, contractor names,



contracting officer names, etc., will be sanitized from inclusion in this report. To access CPARS, all three team members will have active accounts incidental to the duty of their job positions, ensuring the ability to review current and past performance data at <https://www.cpars.gov/cparsweb/home>.

C. DATA FILTER

This research will focus on evaluating how agencies conduct and document market research for DoD service contracts. As a result, the contract file portfolios in both organizations will be filtered to include only those contracts related to service requirements. An additional filter will be applied to the dollar value of the contract, considering all periods of performance. Of the 28 contract files selected, 27 will have values exceeding \$250,000, with a primary focus on contracts at or above the SAT.

As of October 1, 2025, the SAT will have been updated to \$350,000, as reflected in FAR 2.201 (2025). However, because this research will focus on contracts awarded prior to fiscal year 2026, the \$250,000 SAT will be used for purposes of this analysis.

D. DATA ANALYSIS

Drawing from the literature review outlined in the previous chapter, we plan to create an assessment rubric for scoring the MRR found within contract files. Our first step will be designing a standardized MRR template (Appendix A) which is tailored to service requirements, using the DoD 2017 Market Research Report Guide as a foundation. Ultimately the goal will be to use a customized and current Navy MRR template and have Microsoft 365 Copilot (Artificial Intelligence) ensure all areas of the DoD 2017 Market Research Report Guide are addressed while putting it into a more intuitive format. The final MRR template the team produces will reduce redundant sections, clarify instructions, and leverage the researchers' acquisition expertise to add enhancements—such as a dedicated Category Management section and identification of the Object Class Code (OCC).

OCCs will be tracked because they align with the Product Service Code (PSC) and classify contract obligations by requirement rather than outcome. Because the OCC is not required in the DoD ODPAP 2017 Market Research Report Guide, it will not be



counted as a gradable component when individual MRRs are scored. Based on the research team's years of acquisition professional experience, extensive discussions, and final consensus, we will assign a weight of either 5 or 10 points to each of the 13 information sections within the template to create the MRR Evaluation Rubric, which will be included as Appendix B. The possible score for each section will range from any discrete value between 0 and 5 points or 0 and 10 points, with higher values corresponding to stronger performance. The overall market research score will range from a minimum of 0 to a maximum of 100.

In order to ensure consistency when team members independently score contract files, the team will establish an interrater agreement and ensure scoring calibration. The inter-rater agreement will be established prior to independent scoring of the MRRs in order to promote consistency in interpretation and application of the scoring rubric. Before reviewing any contract files independently, the three-member research team will conduct a structured calibration process using the standardized 13-section MRR scoring template. The team will jointly review the template in its entirety, discussing the intent, scope, and wording of each section until all members reach a shared understanding of how each criterion is to be interpreted and applied.

Following this initial alignment, the team will select a service contract(s) as a calibration case(s). Each researcher will independently score the same contract file MRR by applying the rubric section-by-section. Scores will be recorded separately. The team will then convene to compare results and discuss any scoring differences, focusing on clarifying rubric interpretation rather than altering scores to achieve conformity. Inter-rater agreement will be considered achieved when independent from each other, the researchers' scores demonstrate at least 90 percent total similarity across the 13 rubric sections for the pilot contract file. That is to say that the total score for the contract file will be no more than 10pts higher or lower than the total score assessed by any other researcher. This threshold will be selected to balance methodological rigor with the qualitative judgment inherent in evaluating narrative market research documentation.

Once agreement is reached, the scoring rubric and assessors will be deemed sufficiently calibrated for independent review of the remaining contract files. This



process will reflect a consensus-based reliability approach, appropriate for document analysis involving professional judgment, where the objective is consistency of interpretation rather than statistical generalization.

After the contract files are collected, all contract files will be reviewed for the presence of MRR documentation. When an MRR is identified within a contract file, it will be scored using the MRR Evaluation Rubric. The organizational layout of the MRR documentation will not be required to follow or align with the standardized template. Instead, the entire MRR will be reviewed for relevant content, and information identified will contribute to the score associated with the appropriate MRR section. Microsoft Copilot AI will be used as a supplemental quality-assurance tool to scan Market Research Reports for rubric-relevant information that may have been missed by the human assessor.

Scores will be recorded by rubric section, as depicted in Table 2. The overall MRR scores for each contract file assessed will be presented in summary form and color-coded for ease of visual reference in Appendix C.

Table 2. Market Research Report Scoring by Section

Market Research Report Scoring by Section - Template																													
MRR Section	MRR Section Total Possible Points	KT File #1	KT File #2	KT File #3	KT File #4	KT File #5	KT File #6	KT File #7	KT File #8	KT File #9	KT File #10	KT File #11	KT File #12	KT File #13	KT File #14	KT File #15	KT File #16	KT File #17	KT File #18	KT File #19	KT File #20	KT File #21	KT File #22	KT File #23	KT File #24	KT File #25	KT File #26	KT File #27	KT File #28
1	5																												
2	10																												
3	10																												
4	10																												
5	10																												
6	5																												
7	5																												
8	5																												
9	5																												
10	10																												
11	5																												
12	10																												
13	10																												
TOTAL	100																												

Market research quality will serve as the primary input, with contract life-cycle impacts or outputs systematically measured and evaluated during the pre-award phase. Metrics for assessment will include the occurrence of Industry Days, the volume of questions submitted by industry participants, the number of Request for Proposal (RFP)



amendments issued, and the quantity of offers or proposals received, all detailed in Appendix D.

For award-phase impacts, we will review whether the contracting officer follows Section M, “Evaluation of Offers,” of the solicitation when awarding the contract. This section will be used to determine whether the contracting officer’s actions align with the intent communicated to offerors. For additional information regarding the sections of a solicitation under the Uniform Contract Format (UCF), see Appendix E. One specific requirement of Section M will be to indicate whether award will be made without discussions, as defined in FAR 15.306 as without “[communication] exchanges with offerors after receipt of proposals.” If the contracting officer states that award will be made with or without discussions, we will document whether the contracting officer complies with the published intent

1.3. The Government intends to make an award after conducting a price/cost analysis and the award determination will be based on price alone. The Government reserves the right to hold negotiations/discussions with the offeror, if necessary. Offeror is encouraged to include their best terms and conditions in the initial proposal. By submitting an

Figure 6. Example of Contracting Officer Indicating Intent in the Solicitation to Award without Negotiations or Discussions

Finally, for the post-award phase of the contract life cycle, we will record the CPARS scores for quality, schedule, cost control, management, small business contracting, and regulatory compliance. These scores will be averaged for each contract to calculate the overall, or mean, CPARS rating for the contractor associated with that contract.

We will also analyze whether CPARS reporting is required for each contract and whether the associated contract file is compliant with CPARS requirements. In cases where CPARS is required but no performance ratings are available in the database, we will note that no report was identified, as illustrated in Appendix F.

E. SUMMARY OF METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this chapter was to present our methodology for this research. First, we introduced the data sources and then discussed how the data will be filtered. Next, we presented how the data we collected will be analyzed.



Chapter IV will showcase the findings of our research and analyze the impacts on the contract life cycle, followed by recommendations for future market research, best practices for the DoD and a summary.



IV. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

This chapter presents the reader with findings of the study and examines the observations between market research techniques and acquisition outcomes across the pre-award, award, and post-award phases of the CMS contract life cycle. The chapter is organized into four sections. First, the findings section is descriptive and includes observed patterns that relate market research quality and documentation to measurable outcomes, followed by the discussion section which interprets these patterns relative to the primary research questions. Next, we present the implications section, which synthesizes the findings to determine what the results of the research suggest in practice. Finally, recommendations are presented, informed by the findings and related patterns.

A. FINDINGS

Our findings and scores are categorized under documentation inputs, pre-award inputs, award outputs, and post-award outputs as depicted in Table 3.

Table 3. Market Research Report Scoring by Section

Market Research Report Scoring by Section																														
MRR Section	MRR Section Total Possible Points	KT File #1	KT File #2	KT File #3	KT File #4	KT File #5	KT File #6	KT File #7	KT File #8	KT File #9	KT File #10	KT File #11	KT File #12	KT File #13	KT File #14	KT File #15	KT File #16	KT File #17	KT File #18	KT File #19	KT File #20	KT File #21	KT File #22	KT File #23	KT File #24	KT File #25	KT File #26	KT File #27	KT File #28	
1	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	5	5	4	4	5	5	4	5	4	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	0	0	0	
2	10	8	9	5	5	7	2	8	9	4	5	7	8	9	7	7	8	9	8	7	9	0	9	8	8	9	0	0	0	
3	10	10	8	5	8	10	10	7	8	1	8	8	4	10	4	6	9	9	7	7	4	0	10	10	8	10	0	0	0	
4	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	9	10	10	8	10	10	10	10	7	0	10	8	9	10	0	0	0	
5	10	5	8	5	3	4	4	8	7	2	8	9	8	10	10	6	8	10	10	10	8	5	5	6	10	8	0	0	0	
6	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	0	0	0	
7	5	4	4	2	0	4	3	5	5	4	0	5	4	5	2	5	4	4	5	4	2	3	4	4	2	5	0	0	0	
8	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	1	0	4	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	
9	5	0	5	0	0	0	5	4	5	5	0	5	5	5	0	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	0	0	0
10	10	8	8	6	2	7	8	7	6	5	8	6	6	8	6	6	7	8	7	8	7	1	9	8	9	8	0	0	0	
11	5	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	1	0	5	5	5	5	0	4	4	2	5	0	0	0	
12	10	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	2	3	4	4	1	3	2	5	0	1	1	6	4	2	6	0	0	0	
13	10	3	8	3	2	4	4	6	6	2	5	6	5	7	6	6	6	8	7	6	5	3	7	6	8	6	0	0	0	
TOTAL	100	59	74	47	41	57	57	71	67	44	55	67	61	83	60	63	71	79	83	72	62	28	79	74	73	83	0	0	0	

1. Documentation Inputs

Scores were assigned to each MRR that measured the inputs against 12 sections of the template (see Appendix A). The 12 sections were valued at either 5 or 10 points with the maximum possible score being 100. For example, we identified quality based on the presence or absence of key information in Section 1 titled *General Information*. This section is scored 0 to 5 and identifies the documentation of the Product Service Code



(PSC), Object Classification Code (OSC), and North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). This information informed us whether the acquisition involved goods or services and the business size for potential offerors. This same protocol was used for the remaining 11 sections to assign an aggregate score for each file. We identified a significant variation in market research documentation quality across the 28 service contract files reviewed. Using the standardized MRR scoring rubric, three files were rated unsatisfactory due to missing market research documentation, four were rated satisfactory, 18 were rated good, and only three were rated excellent.

2. Pre-Award Inputs

Pre-award inputs that were looked at included whether Industry Days (Pre-Solicitation Conference, Pre-Proposal Conference, or any other meeting between government and industry) were held, the number of questions submitted by industry in response to the solicitation, the number of solicitation amendments issued, and the number of offers received. This information was gathered through analysis of the Request for Proposal (RFP), subsequent amendments to the RFP, and all offers received from industry. Of the 28 files reviewed, 8 included pre-award questions from industry, and 5 contracts were awarded without any amendments to the solicitation. Two files could not be adequately evaluated due to missing solicitations. Across the 28 files, the number of offers received ranged from 1 single offer to 22 offers. Cancelled RFPs are another input in the pre-award phase but were not evaluated due to the limited scope of this pilot study.

3. Award Outputs

The award phase indicator focused on discussions. Mainly, did the contracting officer indicate in Section M of the solicitation that award would be made with or without discussions? In 18 of the RFPs analyzed, the use of discussions was only mentioned in that the government reserves the right to award with discussions, if necessary. Two RFPs could not be evaluated due to the absence of a solicitation in the contract file. The remaining 8 RFPs indicated that the contracting officer intended to award without discussions, however, that the government still reserves the right to have discussions. Zero files indicated the contracting officer's intent to award with discussions. If the



award was intended to be made without discussions, we asked whether the contracting officer used the option to have discussions. Of the 8 files that indicated the intent to award without discussions, 7 showed evidence that the contracting officer followed their published intent, and 1 file showed the contracting officer held discussions with offers prior to award. Delayed awards (number of days past forecasted award date) and protests to awards are additional outputs that were not evaluated due to the limited scope of this pilot study.

4. Post-Award Outputs

Of the 28 contract files reviewed, 11 contracts met the threshold requiring CPARS assessments during the post-award phase of the contract life cycle. Despite the requirement to perform a CPARS assessment, 4 of those 11 contracts did not have an assessment entered in CPARS. Even though the remaining 17 contracts did not require CPARS because their total contract value was less than \$1 million, a contracting officer can still submit data into CPARS. Therefore, our team still evaluated those files to see if CPARS had been performed and confirmed that none of them had CPARS data. Other post-award outputs that include the application of award fees, contract modifications, termination due to default, and the exercising of options were not evaluated due to the limited scope of this pilot study.

B. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Our discussion of findings is categorized under documentation inputs, pre-award inputs, award outputs, and post-award outputs as discussed below.

1. Documentation Inputs

In several cases where MRRs were missing, justifications and solicitations suggested that market research was conducted but not documented properly. This lack of documentation inhibits the DoD's ability to document compliance with regulations and to leverage prior market research to inform future acquisitions. In the MRRs that were evaluated, we quantitatively assessed the presence of information that would better inform the contracting officer on acquisition history and key background information. In Section 3 of Appendix A (worth 10 points), we scored based on documentation of



whether the requirement was new or had been previously purchased by the agency. We evaluated the presence of prior award dates, contractors awarded, method of procurement, price, performance issues, and any lessons learned. Only 15 of 28 files reviewed scored 8 or higher on this section, suggesting that identifying and documenting prior awards for the same product or service was generally not conducted.

2. Pre-Award Inputs

Lower competition was observed in files that indicated little to no industry engagement such as industry days or pre-solicitation conferences. It is important to note that pre-proposal conferences were not evaluated as part of market research as they occur after solicitation release. In files with a larger volume of questions to the solicitation, the data suggests more ambiguity in solicitation requirements. We note a particular unusual datum identified for KT File# 13, in that the government posted a *Request for Information (RFI)* to industry and 32 companies responded. While we did not measure and record this for all files, the researchers' experience was that this was an extreme outlier on the high end with a broad interest from industry and potential for strong competition. However, the file showed that after the RFI the government solicited the requirement as a small business set aside for a particular group, effectively limiting the contract "competition" to only the incumbent contractor.

3. Award Outputs

A lack of explicit guidance on discussions in section M of solicitations inhibited the ability to fully evaluate awards made in accordance with the contracting officer's intent. The majority of the solicitations only included general language that the government reserves the right to have discussions but did not indicate whether the complexity of the requirement would likely result in conducting discussions. In the files that did include documented discussions, it appeared that the contracting officer executed awards in accordance with the intent in the solicitation in 7 of the 8 files where Section M indicated that the government did not intend to hold discussions. This suggests that unambiguous language in Section M may support more auditable and justifiable award decisions and may reduce the risk of future protests.



4. Post-Award Outputs

Regarding the 4 contract files that should have had a CPARS assessment but did not, this indicates a clear failure in 36% of the files (4 of 11) by the government to complete this requirement. The failure to perform the required assessments (vice missing documentation) is measurable because the assessment entry is completed directly within the web-based CPARS database and accessed by contract number. There is no opportunity to keep a local copy, or to misfile in the organization's online database. This contrasts with the ambiguity of interpreting when missing a MRR as to whether the market research requirement was accomplished but not uploaded, or filed in the incorrect location, or if it really was not accomplished.

Although there is not a requirement for the DoD to enter CPARS ratings for services contracts under \$1 million, there is no regulation or guidance specifying that it cannot be accomplished. In cases where a contractor is performing poorly, or exceptionally, it would be in the DoD's best interest to consider embracing CPARS. Contractors competing for awards that are based on FAR 15 negotiations will benefit from having recent and relevant CPARS data available to the respective source selection team.

C. IMPLICATIONS OF FINDINGS

The findings have several implications for DoD service acquisitions, particularly in risk management, auditability, and institutional learning. From a risk management standpoint, inadequate or missing market research documentation increases exposure to adverse selection by limiting the DoD's ability to ensure that requirements development, acquisition strategy, and source selection criteria were properly informed from understanding commercial markets.

The absence of market research documentation and assessment ratings constrains the ability of oversight authorities to audit acquisition programs and decisions in compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements. The Government Accountability Office states that market research documentation is a necessary condition for positive outcomes in government procurement (GAO 15-8, 2014). From an institutional



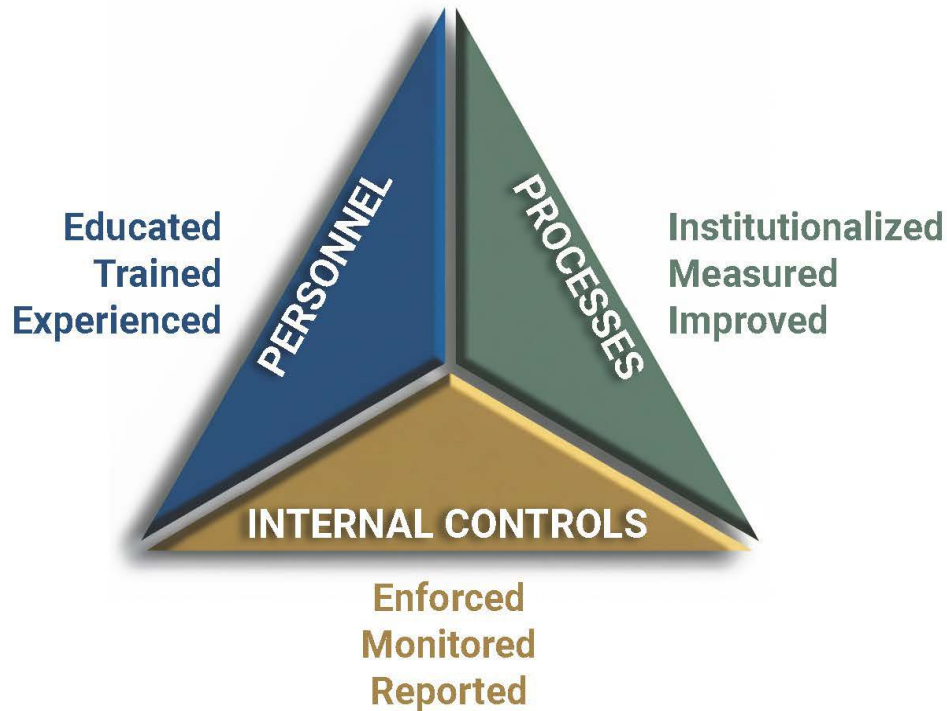
knowledge standpoint, lack of records on industry capabilities, acquisition decisions, and reasonable pricing, contracting offices are unable to leverage prior acquisition efforts to inform future service requirements. Ambiguity in Section M (Evaluation Criteria) may result in increased protests as award decisions are less auditable and more difficult to deduce contracting officer rationale.

Additionally, inadequate CPARS documentation during the post award phase potentially weakens accountability that is intended to prevent moral hazard by reducing transparency in contractor performance. We encountered zero evidence of any voluntary CPARS data being entered, but voluntary entry can add useful signals for recurring services or critical vendors even below the threshold, but it also adds workload. With fewer CPARS entries for past performance, the DoD has less quantifiable data to inform future source selection decisions while industry partners have less incentive to perform optimally.

Solicitation ambiguity in evaluation criteria, missing MRRs, and failing to document performance in CPARS could imply that contracting activities do not have enough competent personnel overseeing the outsourced load. The DoD may not have capable, measured processes or place value on process improvement at service contracting activities or at the enterprise level. Additionally, there is the implication that the contracting workforce does not have or does not adequately enforce internal controls. Figure 6 depicts personnel, processes, and internal controls as the “Auditability Triangle” (Rendon & Rendon, 2015).



AUDITABILITY TRIANGLE



(Rendon R. & Rendon, J., 2015)

Adapted from Rendon and Rendon (2015).

Figure 7. Auditability Triangle

D. RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON FINDINGS

Based on the findings and implications discussed, we present the following recommendations to improve service acquisition outcomes.

1. Enforce Market Research Documentation

DoD contracting activities should reinforce that market research conducted but not properly documented does not satisfy the intent of federal acquisition policy. The GAO has reported that failure to document basic elements of market research limits the federal government's ability to retain and leverage institutional knowledge necessary to inform future procurements (GAO 15–8, 2014). The existence and enforcement of effective internal agency controls are necessary to drive optimal service acquisition outcomes. Additional training for all levels of contracting professionals is recommended

to familiarize with statutory, regulatory and prescribed policy on how to properly conduct, document and interpret MRRs.

2. Update Current Guidance and Standardize Market Research Report Templates

DoD should update the 2017 *Market Research Report Guide for Improving Tradecraft in Services Acquisition*. The update should include a standardized MRR template that is as objective as possible and intuitive. Once the update is released, DoD contracting activities should standardize the use of MRR templates as an agency procedure. More standardization would yield a capable, proven, and institutionalized process over time and result in process familiarity for contracting professionals, regardless of contracting activity. This may lead to a reduction in the gaps in MRR documentation and improve consistency across agencies. A standardized template may improve familiarity with market research procedures and expectations and support future auditability.

3. Emphasize Pre-Solicitation Engagement with Industry

DoD contracting activities should encourage market engagement early during the pre-solicitation process by holding Industry Days and site visits, as well as releasing draft solicitations, particularly for service contracts with high risk, time sensitivity, or complex requirements. These activities prove to be valuable market research strategies. Networking with industry is less of a linear process and is requirement dependent. Defense Acquisition University should offer training on how and when to conduct pre-solicitation and pre-proposal conferences. This expertise will help DoD contracting professionals better manage complex networks rather than simply bureaucracy.

4. Improve Solicitation Clarity

DoD contracting activities should draft solicitations that clearly state whether discussions are necessary, expected, or acceptable, consistent with FAR Part 15. Unambiguous guidance in Section M supports clarity, reduces protest risks, and justifies award decisions. Acquisition Workforce professionals are required to receive 80 hours of



continuous learning every 2 years. Continuous learning modules should include and emphasize how to properly draft solicitations and their link to downstream effects.

5. Strengthen Controls for Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System Compliance

DoD contracting activities should strengthen internal controls to ensure CPARS evaluations are completed as required. Supervisory engagement is necessary and may better ensure post-award and close-out requirements are conducted. Enforcing the use of the CPARS database for required contracts and other recurring requirements is a valuable internal control that yields access to additional data. Availability of past performance data can and should be used to inform future source selections for similar requirements or from similar vendors to incentivize optimal performance and hold suboptimal performers accountable.

E. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON FINDINGS

The Findings and Analysis Chapter presented the analysis of the exploratory study examining the relationship between market research quality and acquisition outcomes in DoD service contracts. The findings presented indicate significant variations in market research documentation, solicitation clarity, and performance oversight. The study found that missing or incomplete market research remains a persistent issue, reducing auditability readiness and the DoD's ability to harvest and retain knowledge across the contract life cycle to better inform future procurement decisions. Based on the limited scope of this exploratory study, the data revealed that no discernable patterns or relationships were revealed between acquisition outcomes and robust market research and documentation. The research was inconclusive in establishing a causal relationship and would benefit from follow-on studies. An expanded scope may reveal improved outcomes based on quality, depth, and documentation of market research.

Chapter V addresses these findings, presents conclusions, and identifies areas for further research to expand the insights generated from this study.



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V. GENERAL SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This chapter concludes the study by summarizing the research, answering the research questions, and outlining opportunities for future research.

A. GENERAL SUMMARY

The DoD represents more than half of total federal contract spending and relies extensively on both defense-specific and commercial markets, making effective market research critical to achieving optimal acquisition outcomes. Despite statutory and regulatory requirements, prior GAO findings show that insufficient market research increases risk, reduces competition, and contributes to higher costs and poorer contractor performance across the contract life cycle.

Despite widespread consensus that market research is a critical enabler of successful acquisition outcomes, the DoD continues to suboptimal outcomes in competition, cost, schedule, and performance. Poor outcomes indicate persistent weakness in acquisition planning and execution. The lack of empirical research measuring the relationship between market research and subsequent outcomes constrains the DoD's ability to buy smarter and fully leverage private industry capabilities.

The purpose of this study was to serve as an exploratory examination of the influence of market research on contracting outcomes to improve the effectiveness of market research. Although limited in scope, this pilot study was intended to enable follow-on research with similar objectives. The study focused on pre-award, award, and post-award impacts within DoD service contract acquisitions, emphasizing the role of market research in informing decision-making, enhancing contractor selection, and supporting performance management.

Using principal-agent theory as the analytical framework, the study treated market research as a potential mechanism to reduce adverse selection and moral hazard across the contract life cycle. The study focused on how the quality and documentation of market research impact outcomes in the pre-award, award, and post-award phases. The



research employed an exploratory approach using 28 completed service contract files from two DoD contracting organizations. Using our MRR Rubric and MRR Template, this research developed insights and recommendations to inform future market research efforts during the pre-award phase of the contract life cycle.

B. CONCLUSION

Based on our analysis and findings from this exploratory examination of the influence of market research on contracting outcomes we conclude this research by answering the questions presented in Chapter I as follows:

1. How does the quality and depth of market research relate to pre-award outcomes such as the frequency of solicitation amendments and the number of proposals received?

Based on the contract files assessed, there is no discernible relationship between the quality and depth of market research and the frequency of solicitation amendments, and the number of proposals received. We suspect the lack of apparent relationship is due to an inadequate sample size of contract files and the very narrow and specific mission set of the services contracting performed by the two DoD contracting offices from which contract files were assessed.

2. How does the quality and depth of market research relate to award outcomes following the solicitation such as awarding without discussions and awarding with discussions?

Based on the contract files assessed, there is no discernible relationship between the quality and depth of market research and award outcomes following the solicitation such as awarding without discussions and awarding with discussions. We suspect the lack of apparent relationship is due to an inadequate sample size of contract files and the very narrow and specific mission set of the services contracting performed by the two DoD contracting offices from which contract files were assessed.

3. How does the quality and depth of market research relate to post-award outcomes such as contractor performance outcomes, as measured in the CPARS ratings?

Based on the contract files assessed, there is no discernible relationship between the quality and depth of market research and post-award outcomes such as contractor performance outcomes as measured using CPARS ratings. We suspect the lack of



apparent relationship is due to an inadequate sample size of contract files and the very narrow and specific mission set of the services contracting performed by the two DoD contracting offices from which contract files were assessed.

C. AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

While the questions researched in this pilot study did not reveal any discernible relationships in market research quality and contract life cycle impacts, this study established a structured methodology and rubric for evaluating the depth and quality of market research related to service contracts. Given that the exploratory examination was conducted using a small number of contracts from one Navy and one Army contracting office, with narrow mission sets, this section offers suggestions for expanding the research scope and application of the developed methodology.

1. Expand Research to Other Department of Defense and Civilian Agencies

Further research should expand the scope of the sample size as well as expand to multiple contracting activities across the Army and Navy. The scope can also be expanded to the Department of the Air Force and Space Force contracting activities. As machine learning and AI technology advance, these technologies may greatly facilitate the capability of data mining and research contract files at a larger scale. The fundamentals of this study can be applied across all Federal Agencies conducting market research in contracting. Expanding to the whole government may also allow for analyzing market research across different service categories, contract types, and various acquisition pathways to gain insight into where optimal market research is most impactful. Worthy of further examination is also why some organizations do not standardize the use of MRRs or document past performance in the CPARS database.

2. Apply and/or Adapt the Methodology to Other Areas

The template and assessment rubric from this study could be modified and adapted to examine the market research of other types of acquisition to include research and development, architect-engineer, environmental, construction, major weapon systems, and information technology. Additional research could examine qualitative



elements of market research, such as the content and utility of industry engagement events rather than primarily quantifying documentation presence and scoring. Observing the same contracting activity over multiple life cycles through a longitudinal study may also identify if sustained improvements to market research practices yield better acquisition outcomes over time.

Additionally, the methodology of developing a template and assessment rubric could be applied to examine other areas of contracting and the contracting life cycle such as to what extent the following meet the requirements that are found in a literature review: price negotiation memorandums (PNMs), justifications and agreements (J&As), commercial item determinations, etc.

3. Analyze Changes to Market Research under the Revolutionary Federal Acquisition Regulation Overhaul

As the federal government implements changes associated with the RFO, future research could assess how the use of contracting officer discretion and reduced prescriptive requirements affect market research quality, documentation practices, and acquisition outcomes. A new study may be able to examine whether the current issues are a result of policy being too prescriptive or if suboptimal outcomes are the result of poor internal controls and lack of enforcement. As the regulatory environment and statutory requirements continue to evolve over time, further research may be able to investigate compliance with future guidelines and the effects on acquisition outcomes.



APPENDIX A. MARKET RESEARCH REPORT TEMPLATE

For the method used to develop the Market Research Report (MRR) Template, including incorporation of guidance from DoD (2017) as a primary source, please see the methodology chapter, Chapter III, Section D.



[Company name]

[Document title]

[Document subtitle]

[Author]

[Date]



1. **General Information: (5 POINTS)**

- Product Service Code (PSC) and Object Class Code (OCC):
 - ✓ Codes identify whether requirement is a supply or service.
 - ✓ PSC and OCC link: <https://psctool.us/home>
 - ✓ If existing contract, contact Contracting Officer (CO/KO) for PSC and OCC.
- North American Industry Classification System (NAICS):
 - ✓ Code identifies size of business (small or large)
 - ✓ NAICS code link: <https://www.naics.com/search/for>

2. **Service Description: (10 POINTS)**

- What is the service?
- When is the service required?
- Where will the service be performed?
- Are there unique requirements?
- What other customers or agencies are buying the service?
- What current contract vehicles are available?
- Will this service affect other requirements?

3. **Acquisition History and Background Information: (10 POINTS)**

- Is this a new requirement?
 - ✓ If not, how long has the service been on contract?
- Identify previous procurements to include:
 - ✓ Previous Contractor(s), date(s) of award, method(s) of procurement, award prices, and any other important data points
- Were there problems with prior contract performance?
 - ✓ If yes, please describe:
- Are there any lessons learned and/or best practices to inform this acquisition?
 - ✓ If yes, please describe:

4. **Potential Suppliers: (10 POINTS)**

- Use the table below and identify two or more potential sources or state if this will be sole source.
- Cite existing contract number(s) when applicable.



Vendor Name	Vendor Location	Point of Contact Name & Email & Phone Number	Current Contract Number(s) if applicable

- If only one vendor is identified above, this will be a Sole Source award, please justify why only one source is available:

5. Market Research Strategies Used for this Procurement: (10 POINTS)

- Detail market research strategies used, or to be used, for this procurement and dates conducted, or to be conducted:
 - ✓ Examples may include:
 1. Issue Request for Information (RFI) and/or Draft Request for Proposal (RFP)
 2. Hold Industry Days or pre-solicitation conferences
 3. Offer site visits
 4. Conduct internet searches
 5. Attend trade shows, conferences, and symposia
 6. Read trade journals
 7. Query knowledgeable people in specific markets
 8. Employ and review market surveys to obtain information from potential sources

6. Research of Required Acquisition Strategies – Includes Small Businesses and Required Sources of Supply: (5 POINTS)

- Description of anticipated small business participation:
- Note any required sources of supply:
 - ✓ IAW Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Part 8 – required Sources of Supplies include:
 1. AbilityOne
 2. Federal Prison Industries

7. Performance Requirements: (5 POINTS)

- What are the performance requirements?



- What commercial solutions can address this requirement?
- If a commercial solution is not available, what are military-specific requirements that must be met?
- How does the industry sell the service?

8. Property and/or Logistical Considerations: (5 POINTS)

- Cite any Intellectual Property issues:
- Identify need(s) for Government Furnished Property (GFP) and/or any other resources to be provided by the government to the contractor:

9. Schedule: (5 POINTS)

- Identify the desired Period of Performance (PoP):
 - ✓ Most service contract PoPs = one-year Base Period + 4 one-year PoPs called Option Years (OYs).
 - ✓ For new requirements, contact program manager to navigate best schedule for requirement.

10. Market Analysis: (10 POINTS)

- What is the availability of the service?
- What is the demand for the service?
- How many suppliers are in the market?
- What is the market share (e.g., are the majority of the services provided by a small number of suppliers or is there a large/more diverse supplier pool)?
- What is the small business footprint?
- What, if any, are the environmental or safety regulations that affect the required service?
- Identify any customary market terms and conditions, or state “N/A” if there are not any:
 - ✓ Discounts, warranties, buyer financing, inspection, acceptance, and/or anything else that would apply to your requirement

11. Category Management: (5 POINTS)

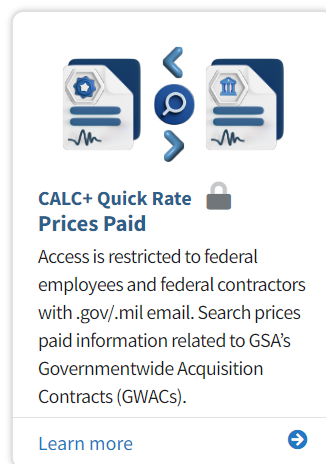
- Detail efforts to consider Category Management:
 - ✓ <https://www.acq.osd.mil/asda/dpc/cp/policy/category-management.html>
 - ✓ [Category Management considers pre-existing contracts to offer economies of scale and efficiencies including the following:](#)



- [Decreased chance of protests, faster ordering times, and prescribed ordering instructions and templates](#)

12. **Independent Government Cost Estimate (IGCE): (10 POINTS)**

- Identify cost elements, to include labor and other direct costs (ODCs):
 - ✓ Labor is based on the Work Year Equivalent (WYE)
 - Formula for WYE equals one year of full-time work to support requirement
 - EXAMPLE: Using hours that define an FTE at 2,080 man-hours per work year – estimate 3,020 work hours to accomplish your required service in a period of performance EQUALS 1.45 WYEs ($3020/2080=1.45$).
 - ✓ ODCs include all non-labor costs: materials, equipment, licensing, Contractor travel, fuel, insurance, certifications, training requirements of Contractors employees, and any other non-labor costs
- Is logistical support required?
 - ✓ On-site performance may require securing workspaces, computers, telephones, and other logistical support prior to contract start date
- Document fair and reasonable estimated costs (see table on page 6)
 - ✓ Include six-month extension as part of the total estimated cost for service contract requirements
 - ✓ IAW FAR 52.217-8 Option to Extend Services
- Access <https://buy.gsa.gov/pricing/> to obtain fully loaded labor rates and labor class descriptions
 - ✓ Helps to develop estimated labor costs for IGCEs
 - ✓ Useful tool for developing IGCE is this tool on the GSA site:



- Fill in table below with IGCE amounts per PoP and total column:



Funding (\$K)	FY2xx (\$K)	FYxx (\$K)	FYxx (\$K)	FYxx (\$K)	FYxx (\$K)	FYxx 6-mth Ext (\$K)	Total + all options (\$K)
Labor	\$XXXX	\$XXXX	\$XXXX	\$XXXX	\$XXXX	\$XXXX	\$XXXX
ODC	\$XX	\$XX	\$XX	\$XX	\$XX	\$XX	\$XX
Total	\$XXXX	\$XXXX	\$XXXX	\$XXXX	\$XXXX	\$XXXX	\$XXXX
Est WYE	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX

13. Key Conclusions & Recommendations: (10 POINTS)

- Acquisition strategies to pursue:
 - ✓ Can include commercial acquisition, 8(a) direct award, small business set-aside, sole source award, full and open competition, Native American Organization (NAO) or Native Hawaiian Organization (NHO) direct award, or HUBZone
- Cite potential existing contract vehicle(s) that may satisfy your requirement:
- List relevant risks to be considered as part of any source selection activities:
- Identify specific contract terms and conditions:
- Detail any Organizational Conflict of Interest (OCI) concerns:
- List any expected Government-furnished material / property / equipment / information / real property expectations:

PERFORMED BY:

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TYPED NAME AND RANK

TITLE

ORGANIZATION

DATE



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APPENDIX B. MARKET RESEARCH REPORT EVALUATION RUBRIC

Ratings are assigned according to completion percentage and overall quality using the MRR Scoring Sheet.

Rating	Score	Description
Excellent	80 – 100	All required sections completed with exceptional clarity, accuracy, and compliance. Minimal or no deficiencies found during review/evaluation of MRR.
Good	51 – 79	Majority of sections completed; some deficiencies or missing details, but MRR is generally complete.
Satisfactory	23 – 50	Several MRR sections incomplete, missing, or lacking detail; MRR meets minimum requirements but needs improvement.
Unsatisfactory	0 – 22	Either a MRR is missing entirely, or the MRR has significant gaps and fails to meet basic requirements, and thus not suitable for decision-making.

Instructions for evaluating an MRR for scoring:

1. Using the MRR Scoring Sheet, read through the respective MRR found in the contract file.
2. Score sections from 0 to 5 or 10 whichever is the max possible points for that specific section.
3. Assign rating based on the rubric table above.



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APPENDIX C. MARKET RESEARCH REPORT SCORES

Contract Identifier	Total Possible MRR Score	Total MRR Score	Assigned Rating
KT FILE #1	100	59	Good
KT FILE #2	100	74	Good
KT FILE #3	100	47	Satisfactory
KT FILE #4	100	41	Satisfactory
KT FILE #5	100	57	Good
KT FILE #6	100	57	Good
KT FILE #7	100	71	Good
KT FILE #8	100	67	Good
KT FILE #9	100	44	Satisfactory
KT FILE #10	100	55	Good
KT FILE #11	100	67	Good
KT FILE #12	100	61	Good
KT FILE #13	100	83	Excellent
KT FILE #14	100	60	Good
KT FILE #15	100	63	Good
KT FILE #16	100	71	Good
KT FILE #17	100	79	Good
KT FILE #18	100	83	Excellent
KT FILE #19	100	72	Good
KT FILE #20	100	62	Good
KT FILE #21	100	28	Satisfactory
KT FILE #22	100	79	Good
KT FILE #23	100	74	Good
KT FILE #24	100	73	Good
KT FILE #25	100	83	Excellent
KT FILE #26	100	0	Unsatisfactory
KT FILE #27	100	0	Unsatisfactory
KT FILE #28	100	0	Unsatisfactory
		Overall Score	RUBRIC RATINGS
		80 - 100	Excellent
		51 - 79	Good
		23 - 50	Satisfactory
		0 - 22	Unsatisfactory



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APPENDIX D. MARKET RESEARCH CONTRACT LIFE CYCLE IMPACTS

Contract Identifier	MRR Score	Assigned Rating	Total \$ of Period of Performance (PoP)	Pre-award: Were Industry Days Held?	Pre-award: # of Q&A	Pre-award: # of RFP Amendments	Pre-award: # of Offers Received	Award: Did RFP Cite Discussions or No Discussions?	Award: If Discussions or No Discussions were cited, did the KO comply during award?	Post-award: CPARS Average Rating
KT FILE #1	50	Good	\$2,042,740	No	0	2	4	Did not mention discussions in the RFP	No evidence to determine	no report found in CPARS
KT FILE #2	74	Good	\$6,925,253	No	43	5	4	Did not mention discussions in the RFP	No evidence to determine	Satisfactory
KT FILE #3	47	Satisfactory	\$330,000	No	4	1	2	Did not mention discussions in the RFP	No evidence to determine	CPARS not required (<\$1M)
KT FILE #4	41	Satisfactory	\$299,560	No	0	5	1	No Discussions	Yes	CPARS not required (<\$1M)
KT FILE #5	57	Good	\$534,437	No	0	3	4	No Discussions	Yes	CPARS not required (<\$1M)
KT FILE #6	57	Good	\$8,724,374	Yes	45	5	8	No Discussions	Yes	Satisfactory
KT FILE #7	72	Good	\$1,341,402	No	6	6	4	No Discussions	Yes	no report found in CPARS
KT FILE #8	68	Good	\$533,782	No	2	3	2	Did not mention discussions in the RFP	No evidence to determine	Very Good
KT FILE #9	44	Satisfactory	\$322,286	No	12	3	3	Did not mention discussions in the RFP	No evidence to determine	CPARS not required (<\$1M)
KT FILE #10	55	Good	\$360,349	No	0	1	2	Did not mention discussions in the RFP	No evidence to determine	CPARS not required (<\$1M)



Contract Identifier	MRR Score	Assigned Rating	Total \$ of Period of Performance (PoP)	Pre-award: Were Industry Days Held?	Pre-award: # of Q&A	Pre-award: # of RFP Amendments	Pre-award: # of Offers Received	Award: Did RFP Cite Discussions or No Discussions?	Award: If Discussions or No Discussions were cited, did the KO comply during award?	Post-award: CPARS Average Rating
KT FILE #11	68	Good	\$6,753,117	No	0	1	1	Did not mention discussions in the RFP	No evidence to determine	Exceptional
KT FILE #12	61	Good	\$396,949	No	0	2	1	Did not mention discussions in the RFP	No evidence to determine	Satisfactory
KT FILE #13	83	Excellent	\$7,057,097	No	0	1	1	No Discussions	No	no report found in CPARS
KT FILE #14	60	Good	\$389,840	No	6	1	2	No Discussions	No evidence to determine	CPARS not required (<\$1M)
KT FILE #15	63	Good	\$510,189	No	0	1	5	Did not mention discussions in the RFP	No evidence to determine	CPARS not required (<\$1M)
KT FILE #16	71	Good	\$301,489	No	0	1	1	Did not mention discussions in the RFP	No evidence to determine	Satisfactory
KT FILE #17	80	Good	\$198,000	No	0	1	3	Did not mention discussions in the RFP	No evidence to determine	CPARS not required (<\$1M)
KT FILE #18	83	Excellent	\$285,150	No	0	1	1	Did not mention discussions in the RFP	No evidence to determine	CPARS not required (<\$1M)
KT FILE #19	72	Good	\$347,092	No	24	1	22	Did not mention discussions in the RFP	No evidence to determine	CPARS not required (<\$1M)



Contract Identifier	MRR Score	Assigned Rating	Total \$ of Period of Performance (PoP)	Pre-award: Were Industry Days Held?	Pre-award: # of Q&A	Pre-award: # of RFP Amendments	Pre-award: # of Offers Received	Award: Did RFP Cite Discussions or No Discussions?	Award: If Discussions or No Discussions were cited, did the KO comply during award?	Post-award: CPARS Average Rating
KT FILE #20	62	Good	\$350,817	No	missing	missing	missing	RFP missing	RFP missing	CPARS not required (<\$1M)
KT FILE #21	28	Satisfactory	\$1,600,000	No	0	0	1	Did not mention discussions in the RFP	No evidence to determine	no report found in CPARS
KT FILE #22	79	Good	\$16,753,787	No	0	1	1	Did not mention discussions in the RFP	No evidence to determine	Satisfactory
KT FILE #23	74	Good	\$8,770,989	No	0	0	1	No Discussions	Yes	Exceptional
KT FILE #24	73	Good	\$20,665,000	No	0	0	1	Did not mention discussions in the RFP	No evidence to determine	Very Good
KT FILE #25	73	Excellent	\$5,719,965	No	0	0	1	No Discussions	Yes	Satisfactory
KT FILE #26	0	Unsatisfactory	\$282,606	RFP missing	RFP missing	RFP missing	Biz Clearance Memo missing	RFP missing	No evidence to determine	CPARS not required (<\$1M)
KT FILE #27	0	Unsatisfactory	\$304,350	No	0	0	1	Did not mention discussions in the RFP	No evidence to determine	CPARS not required (<\$1M)



Contract Identifier	MRR Score	Assigned Rating	Total \$ of Period of Performance (PoP)	Pre-award: Were Industry Days Held?	Pre-award: # of Q&A	Pre-award: # of RFP Amendments	Pre-award: # of Offers Received	Award: Did RFP Cite Discussions or No Discussions?	Award: If Discussions or No Discussions were cited, did the KO comply during award?	Post-award: CPARS Average Rating
KT FILE #28	0	Unsatisfactory	\$279,039	No	0	1	5	Did not mention discussions in the RFP	No evidence to determine	CPARS not required (<\$1M)



APPENDIX E. UNIFORM CONTRACT FORMAT

Section	Title
Part I - The Schedule	
A	Solicitation / contract form
B	Supplies or services and prices / costs
C	Description / specifications / statement of work
D	Packaging and marking
E	Inspection and acceptance
F	Deliveries or performance
G	Contract administration data
H	Special contract requirements
Part II - Contract Clauses	
I	Contract Clauses
Part III - List of Documents, Exhibits, and Other Attachments	
J	List of attachments
Part IV - Representations and Instructions	
K	Representations, certifications, and other statements of offerors or respondents
L	Instructions, conditions, and notices to offerors or respondents
M	Evaluation factors for award

Adapted from FAR 15.204-1 Table 15-1 (2025).



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APPENDIX F. CONTRACTOR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT RATING SYSTEM SCORES

Contract Identifier	Total \$ of Period of Performance (PoP)	CPARS Required	Quality	Schedule	Cost Control	Mgmt	SB Sub-Ktg	Reg Comp	Avg Score	Average Rating	CPARS Compliance
KT FILE #1	\$2,042,740.00	Yes	-	-	-	-	-	-	n/a	no report found in CPARS	CPARS required; not in compliance
KT FILE #2	\$6,925,253.00	Yes	4	3	3	4	n/a	3	3	Satisfactory	in compliance
KT FILE #3	\$330,000.00	No	-	-	-	-	-	-	n/a	no report found in CPARS	CPARS not required (<\$1M)
KT FILE #4	\$299,560.00	No	-	-	-	-	-	-	n/a	no report found in CPARS	CPARS not required (<\$1M)
KT FILE #5	\$534,437.00	No	-	-	-	-	-	-	n/a	no report found in CPARS	CPARS not required (<\$1M)
KT FILE #6	\$8,724,374.00	Yes	3	3	3	3	n/a	4	3	Satisfactory	in compliance
KT FILE #7	\$1,341,402.00	Yes	-	-	-	-	-	-	n/a	no report found in CPARS	CPARS required; not in compliance
KT FILE #8	\$533,782.00	No	5	4	n/a	4	n/a	5	4.5	Very Good	in compliance
KT FILE #9	\$322,286.00	No	-	-	-	-	-	-	n/a	no report found in CPARS	CPARS not required (<\$1M)
KT FILE #10	\$360,349.00	No	-	-	-	-	-	-	n/a	no report found in CPARS	CPARS not required (<\$1M)



Contract Identifier	Total \$ of Period of Performance (PoP)	CPARS Required	Quality	Schedule	Cost Control	Mgmt	SB Sub-Ktg	Reg Comp	Avg Score	Average Rating	CPARS Compliance
KT FILE #11	\$6,753,117.00	Yes	5	5	5	4	n/a	4	5	Exceptional	in compliance
KT FILE #12	\$396,949.00	No	3	3	n/a	3	n/a	n/a	3	no report found in CPARS	CPARS not required (<\$1M)
KT FILE #13	\$7,057,097.00	Yes	-	-	-	-	-	-	n/a	no report found in CPARS	CPARS required; not in compliance
KT FILE #14	\$389,840.00	No	-	-	-	-	-	-	n/a	no report found in CPARS	CPARS not required (<\$1M)
KT FILE #15	\$510,189.10	No	-	-	-	-	-	-	n/a	no report found in CPARS	CPARS not required (<\$1M)
KT FILE #16	\$301,489.36	No	3	3	n/a	3	n/a	n/a	3	no report found in CPARS	CPARS not required (<\$1M)
KT FILE #17	\$198,000.00	No	-	-	-	-	-	-	n/a	no report found in CPARS	CPARS not required (<\$1M)
KT FILE #18	\$285,150.00	No	-	-	-	-	-	-	n/a	no report found in CPARS	CPARS not required (<\$1M)
KT FILE #19	\$347,092.00	No	-	-	-	-	-	-	n/a	no report found in CPARS	CPARS not required (<\$1M)
KT FILE #20	\$350,817.00	No	-	-	-	-	-	-	n/a	no report found in CPARS	CPARS not required (<\$1M)
KT FILE #21	\$1,600,000.00	Yes	-	-	-	-	-	-	n/a	no report found in CPARS	CPARS required; not in compliance



Contract Identifier	Total \$ of Period of Performance (PoP)	CPARS Required	Quality	Schedule	Cost Control	Mgmt	SB Sub-Ktg	Reg Comp	Avg Score	Average Rating	CPARS Compliance
KT FILE #22	\$16,753,786.92	Yes	4	3	3	3	n/a	n/a	3	Satisfactory	in compliance
KT FILE #23	\$8,770,989.00	Yes	5	5	n/a	5	n/a	3	5	Exceptional	in compliance
KT FILE #24	\$20,665,000.00	Yes	3	3	n/a	4	n/a	4	4	Very Good	in compliance
KT FILE #25	\$5,719,964.83	Yes	3	3	n/a	3	n/a	3	3	Satisfactory	in compliance
KT FILE #26	\$282,606.00	No	-	-	-	-	-	-	n/a	no report found in CPARS	CPARS not required (<\$1M)
KT FILE #27	\$304,350.00	No	-	-	-	-	-	-	n/a	no report found in CPARS	CPARS not required (<\$1M)
KT FILE #28	\$279,039.00	No	-	-	-	-	-	-	n/a	no report found in CPARS	CPARS not required (<\$1M)



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