
GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR DOCUMENTING DCMA SURVEILLANCE

Background

Use these general guidelines for documenting your DCMA Surveillance activities. The guidelines include sample surveillance areas by function, documentation and writing tips, as well as a checklist of issues to consider during discussions with the contractor or for those that are related to a contract. You should follow any DCMA surveillance instruction required for your specific function. (E.g.: QAs should perform and document surveillance in accordance with (IAW) specific DCMA Instructions.) It is critically important to document your findings. As the saying goes, “If you don’t document it, it didn’t happen.”

DCMA functional specialists perform a thorough Contract Receipt and Review (CRR) in order to determine Key Contract Requirements (KCR’s) which drive the selection of surveillance events based on risk. Refer to the DCMA Policy page for details on the CRR process and specific functional surveillance policy and guidance. Some of the typical contractor areas surveilled by DCMA Functional Specialists include:

Function	Sample Surveillance Areas
Engineering	Systems Engineering, Configuration Management, Earned Value Management Systems, Engineering Change Proposals
Manufacturing	Delivery, Supply Chain Management, Surveillance Criticality Designator, Production Planning and Scheduling
Quality	Quality Management System, Product Examination, Risk Assessment, Critical Safety Items, Process Review
Contracting	Contract Deficiency Reports, Contract Modifications, Progress Payments

Writing Tips

- Write for non-technical audiences, but use technical information when applicable (e.g., requirement specifications)
- Make your point, completely, succinctly, and accurately
- Elaborate by explaining “why”
- Stay away from: words that a non-technical person may not know and long complicated sentences
- Spell out acronyms in the first use of the word

Documentation Tips

- Document actions, issues, and/or concerns that impact your work or the contract, such as contractor meetings and all aspects of surveillance. Include a general record of what was done and why actions were taken. Some examples include:
 - Actions—e.g., additional research and development (R & D), a modification(mod)
 - Findings
 - Issue Corrective Action Requests (CARs) IAW specific DCMA instructions
 - A documented valid contractual requirement and the cited noncompliance description must show a clear departure from the contractual requirement
 - Issues fixed on the spot
- Respond to the Five W’s:
 - **Who:** Who was there? Who did you talk to?
 - **What:** What did you talk about? What did you review? What were your findings? What were contractor and/or DCMA actions?
 - **When:** When did you meet? When do you plan to meet again?
 - **Where:** Where did you go?
 - **Why:** Why did you meet? Why did you conduct specific actions?
- Meet with the multifunctional team to discuss what you found during surveillance. Each function has a different perspective and goal during surveillance. Document in accordance with policy.

Documentation Checklist

Contract Information

- Outcomes / deliverables
- Date
- Attendees
- Contract name and number

Issues/Risks

- What issues or risks were identified during your surveillance activity?
- What was the root cause identified by the contractor?
- What was the contractor's corrective action included in their Corrective Action Plan (CAP)? How did you work together with the contractor, customer, and the multifunctional team to address these issues and mitigate risk?
- In what ways did the issue/risk impact the contract? Or other items in production? What effects can it have on the end user? (i.e., what might happen to the soldier if the bullet doesn't work when fired?)

DCMA Analysis and Insight

- What was involved in your analysis? Which areas/systems did you assess? What data was collected? Was the risk increased or decreased based on data collected? Does surveillance need to be increased or decreased?
- What insight was gained? What is your acquisition insight?

Are there Potential Contract Modifications?

- List the issue requiring the modification.
- Specify next steps.

What does FAR 46.104 say about:

- Maintaining suitable records reflecting...
- Observations and defects?