



**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
**HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY, EUROPE, AND SEVENTH ARMY**  
**HEAD OF CONTRACTING ACTIVITY**  
**UNIT 29351**  
**APO AE 09014-9351**

AEAPR-PA-PL

5 August 2003

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Prevention of Unauthorized Commitments

This memorandum expires in 1 year.

1. Unauthorized commitments are agreements made on behalf of the U.S. Government by unauthorized personnel or in an unauthorized manner. These commitments are not binding. U.S. Government funds may be committed only by properly appointed contracting officers and their designees, such as ordering officers and Government Purchase Card Program cardholders.
2. Unauthorized commitments occur most frequently with equipment rentals and information technology (IT) supplies and services. Unauthorized commitments involving—
  - a. The rental of equipment (for example, copiers) result when a unit fails to track equipment contract expiration or turn-in dates and keeps the equipment beyond these dates.
  - b. IT supplies and services are usually caused by poor planning, lack of coordination, or failure to understand proper acquisition procedures.
3. When an unauthorized commitment occurs, a lengthy ratification process is required to properly obligate funds and pay the vendor. Vendors affected by payment delays may be reluctant to conduct further business with the U.S. Government. In addition, the individual who made the unauthorized commitment could face disciplinary action and be held personally and financially liable.
4. Unauthorized commitments harm the U.S. Government's reputation and may adversely affect the ability of our units to obtain goods and services from local vendors. Commanders must ensure their personnel know that they have no authority to make commitments obligating U.S. Government funds without a specific designation by a contracting officer. Contracting officers are available to advise personnel on proper acquisition procedures and should be consulted for guidance when necessary.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael L. Dodson".

MICHAEL L. DODSON  
Lieutenant General, USA  
Head of Contracting Activity

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