

LEARNING the Federal Acquisition Regulations (FARs)

Let's start by listing relevant links:

- **Defense Acquisition University** home page:
<http://www.dau.mil/default.aspx>
- FAR Fundamentals Course (4 weeks, in person):
http://icatalog.dau.mil/onlinecatalog/courses.aspx?crs_id=1684
- Computer specifications for DAU online learning:
https://myclass.dau.mil/bbcswebdav/institution/Courses/Deployed/01_CurriculumDocumentation/Student%20Info%20and%20Policy/Technology%20Requirements%20for%20Online%20Coursework
- Online Training (in blocks of hours):
<http://icatalog.dau.mil/onlinecatalog/tabnavcl.aspx>

BACKGROUND

Several ATA members have inquired about FAR training. This is the first attempt to begin meeting that need.

FARs and acquisition in general are so complex that the DOD has established the **Defense Acquisition University** (DAU) to provide uniform instruction on the FAR labyrinth as well as the Defense Acquisition Regulations (DARs). DAU has hundreds of courses. Learning is either by classroom attendance or via online (distance learning). For us the distance learning online is the most practical.

Most classroom offerings are only for government employees. Of the few classroom offerings that are marginally publicly available, there is stiff competition for entrance. Government personnel are 99+% of attendees but a *very few* large contractor procurement professionals *may* be granted attendance. However, there are some online offerings that are 1-5 hours long that you – the public – can do online.

Educating the trucking industry on FARs is truly a huge undertaking. So for today, please consider this as a cross between a progress report and an inaugural installation with more resources to come.

HOW DO I START ?

1. Go to www.dau.mil and browse.
2. At the home page for www.dau.mil, look at the blue header across the top of the page; it horizontally displays the drop-down lists. The second one is “Training.” Click on “Training” and then select, “Training Courses.” Study this page.
 - a. The most basic course shown on this page is, “**CLC 090, Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Fundamentals.**”
 - b. This is a 4 week, in-person course. Each day involves 8 hours of classroom lectures and test. The commitment also involves up to 3 hours of homework every night.
 - c. Very few industry persons are admitted to this offering, and obviously it is a nonstarter for freight sales reps. What you need to understand is that this is the foundation for training for both DOD procurement professionals and a tiny number of major defense contractor personnel.
3. By default, this means we need to **focus on the online offerings** that are most germane to trucking.
 - a. Courses offered online are found here:
<http://icatalog.dau.mil/onlinecatalog/tabnavcl.aspx>
 - b. You can click on the link (at a. above) or navigate there from the www.dau.mil, by clicking on the “Training” dropdown menu, then select, “**Continuous Learning Modules.**”
 - c. Under “**Continuous Learning Modules,**” you will see a long list of offerings.
 - d. How do you know which ones are available to you, the public?
 - i. Answer: Under the “Training” dropdown menu, select, “**Training Courses and Schedules.**” Click on that.

- ii. At the top of your view you will see a table of categories with acronyms, e.g. “**CON Contracting**” or “**LOG Logistics.**”
- iii. Below that is a much larger table of courses for you to examine. In the first column of this table, acronyms like “CON” or “LOG” indicate the subject category.
- iv. A great deal of the FARs and FAR training is not relevant to freight contracts. However, one category in this table is Logistics. See **LOG 101 – LOG 365**. This is possibly as germane as it will get for trucking.
- v. Is this course available to me, the public? Look at the 4th column of the table entitled, “Access Public Course Material.” The box in this column will say either “yes” or “no.” There’s your answer! All but two of the logistics offerings are publically available.

CLOSING THOUGHTS & TENTATIVE CONCLUSION

I think the best way for us to get started is to print off the FARs from Parts 1-53 (that’s roughly 1,000 pages), insert this into 3-ring binders, and read the most relevant parts. You have to print this off one Part at a time. You can do that from this link to a PDF (recommended) copy:

<http://www.acquisition.gov/far/current/pdf/FAR.pdf> Alternatively, you can download the FARs in PDF for HTML formats onto your desktop, laptop or tablet; that may give you more flexibility.

Once you have the FARs in front of you, note that:

Part 47 is transportation.

Part 22 is the Service Contract Act.