



Contractor Arming Question and Answers

USCENTCOM/USFOR-A general policy is that DOD contractors and contractor employees should be unarmed. An arming authorization is an exception to policy. Contractor employees will not be authorized weapons unless required to be armed to perform contracted duties. All DOD contractors and contractor employees are prohibited from possessing weapons in Afghanistan except those:

- providing armed security services inside NATO/U.S. Agreed Facilities and Areas; AND
- who regularly (i.e., at least weekly) perform their contractual duties outside of Agreed Facilities in support of NATO/U.S. missions, including the provision of training, advice, and assistance to Afghan National Security Defense Forces.

1. **Why me, why now?** Per the BSA effective 1 January 2015, US contractors carrying weapons in Afghanistan are subject to all relevant requirements of Afghan laws and regulations. Per Presidential Decree #38, the Ministry of Interior shall accept group applications for weapons permits from BSA contractors whose contractor employees carry a weapon for self-protection in order to perform duties outside of Agreed Facilities and Areas, including the provision of training, advice and assistance to Afghan National Security and Defense Forces.
2. **Do I have to give up my weapon on the 1 Jan 15?** If you fall into one of the two narrow exceptions for contractor arming and you have an existing USFOR-A Arming Authorization Letter, then you have 90 days (until 31 Mar 2015) to have your Requesting Official (RO) submit an ETP Arming Request in CAAMS. If you are not going to fall into one of the exceptions, then yes – you need to turn in your weapon.
3. **If authorized to carry a weapon, what rules apply to contractor employees regarding the use of force?** United States contractors performing security services in Afghanistan are subject to all relevant requirements of Afghan laws and regulations. Afghanistan maintains the right to exercise jurisdiction over U.S. contractors and U.S. contractor employees. BSA contractor employees will receive appropriate guidance regarding the U.S. Rules for the Use of Force.
4. **If required to disarm, where will weapons be stored and how will they be sent back to the home nation of the contractor companies?** Weapons will be stored and transported in accordance with previously-established policy and procedures.
5. **How is the ETP Arming Request different from the old Arming Request?** The Exception to Policy Arming Request should look remarkably familiar. All the same documents are required as before with the exception of updates based on revised CENTCOM policy.
 - a. RO Memo (replacing the RAC memo) needs to be for each individual and specific to that individual. Group RO Memos are only authorized for Armed Security contracts in which every individual listed is performing at the same location and under the same contract number.
 - b. Biometric checks need to be verified and signed off by a military member or government civilian. Be advised that biometric checks are not required for US Citizens.



- c. Background Investigation summary needs to be included. Background Investigative Summary shall be a summary of the types of checks (local, state, federal, private) conducted on an individual. If an individual has an active security clearance, a memo verifying the type of clearance, who issued it and date of issuance, is sufficient.
 - d. The BIO and Background checks have always been required – we are requiring proof (Background Check Verification Letter). Also the RO needs to be an O-6/GS-15 or above and be appointed by a O-7/SES or above.
6. **Why new paperwork/LOA?** This is a new (ETP) request, so new documents are required. However, we are granting a practical waiver of new weapons qualifications and allowing you to update those qualifications when they come due.

Why new LOA? SPOT has updated the LOA format and we require this new format for current weapons status of the contract and authorized government services. It must have been issued after 01 DEC 2014.

7. **Why require a RO Memo for each person and what do you mean by ‘no boilerplate’ language?**
- a. Self-Defense/Personal Protection Arming: The RO must specify **who, what, where, when and why** each person needs a weapon. Each person’s requirement is unique and needs to be spelled out. We understand the ‘why’ for pilots or people with the same job might be similar and that is acceptable. “Boilerplate” is writing the same thing for everyone, copy and pasting it-regardless of job, or situation - that is a no-go. (As a suggestion, if a contractor [individual] wants to carry a weapon – they could write the reason why they need it and send that up the chain (like a request) to the RO. That way the RO has a better understanding of why that particular contractor needs to be armed.
 - b. Armed Security on base: ACOD has just been granted permission to allow large armed security contracts to submit on one letter for the same location. Job types including security guard or security manager have different reasoning and circumstances and would have to be broken out separately.
8. **Can I apply for Standard and Non-Standard weapons on the same RO Memo, and can I digitally sign documents?** Yes, we prefer that it is done this way, standard and non-standard together, with all supporting documents and justifications. Any non-standard, crew-served request must explain how the crew-served weapon(s) is/are being used by the guards. Do not give the impression that the guards are all individually walking around with a M240B. We prefer digital signatures (CAC) because they verify the date and user. Only authorized weapons can leave US/NATO installations.

Note a Standard Weapon includes: (pistol 9mm NATO), rifle (5.56mm NATO) or AK-47 (7.62mm NATO).

9. **What about the Afghan Weapons permit?** This process is managed by GIRoA subject to the relevant requirements established in the BSA and Presidential Decree (mentioned above). Per Presidential Decree #38, the Ministry of Interior shall accept group applications for weapons



permits from BSA contractors whose contractor employees carry a weapon for self-protection in order to perform duties outside of Agreed Facilities and Areas, including the provision of training, advice and assistance to Afghan National Security and Defense Forces. The group applications should contain the names of the contractors and their employees, type and serial number of the weapons, the time period present in Afghanistan, two photos of each employee and a certificate indicating that US Forces has authorized the contractor employees to carry weapons in furtherance of their contractual duties.

10. Once ACOD issues the Arming Authorization Letter (AAL), it will also issue a cover letter to MOI to request the contractors be armed and the contractor will then prepare a request memo and packet to submit.

Armed Security on base – The GIRoA weapons permit requirements do not apply to you. However, as part of the licensing process with private security companies, you may already have individual permits.

11. **Do we really need Afghan Weapons permits?** Yes, contractors armed for Self-Defense are subject to the criminal and civil jurisdiction of Afghanistan. Those operating outside of US/NATO facilities must obtain Afghan weapons permits. Those armed for the purposes of providing Armed Security on a US/NATO facility are not required to obtain Afghan weapons permits
12. **Who actually applies for the permit, is there a cost, is it reimbursable?** Once the paperwork is together, the contractor applies for the permit and pays a reasonable fee to begin the process. Your KO can tell you if the fees are a reimbursable claim.
13. **What is CAAMS?** The Civilian Arming Authorization Management System (CAAMS). On 05 JAN 2015, we released a web-version to assist with this update/ETP justification. Registration is somewhat bumpy, as each user needs to be tied to only their contract(s). We have incorporated up to date data (from your arming rosters) for the initial rollout. However, any recent changes in the personnel assigned to manage your contract (especially the KO and COR) must be reported to ACOD immediately. Otherwise, the new KO or COR will not be able to view their contracts in CAAMS.

Note: Vendors (contractors) can submit an arming packet up to the QC or BIO phase, then a KO/COR (military or government civilian) needs to push through the RO memo phase and on to ACOD.

14. **I cannot get into CAAMS. How do I start the ETP request process?** Provided you have all the correct documentation, you can submit under the current version of CAAMS on the USFOR-A network or via SAFE submission to the e-mail address highlighted below.

For further information please contact USFOR-A Armed Contractor Oversight Division at DSN 318-436-7367, or usfora.acod.org@afghan.swa.army.mil.