

Abstract

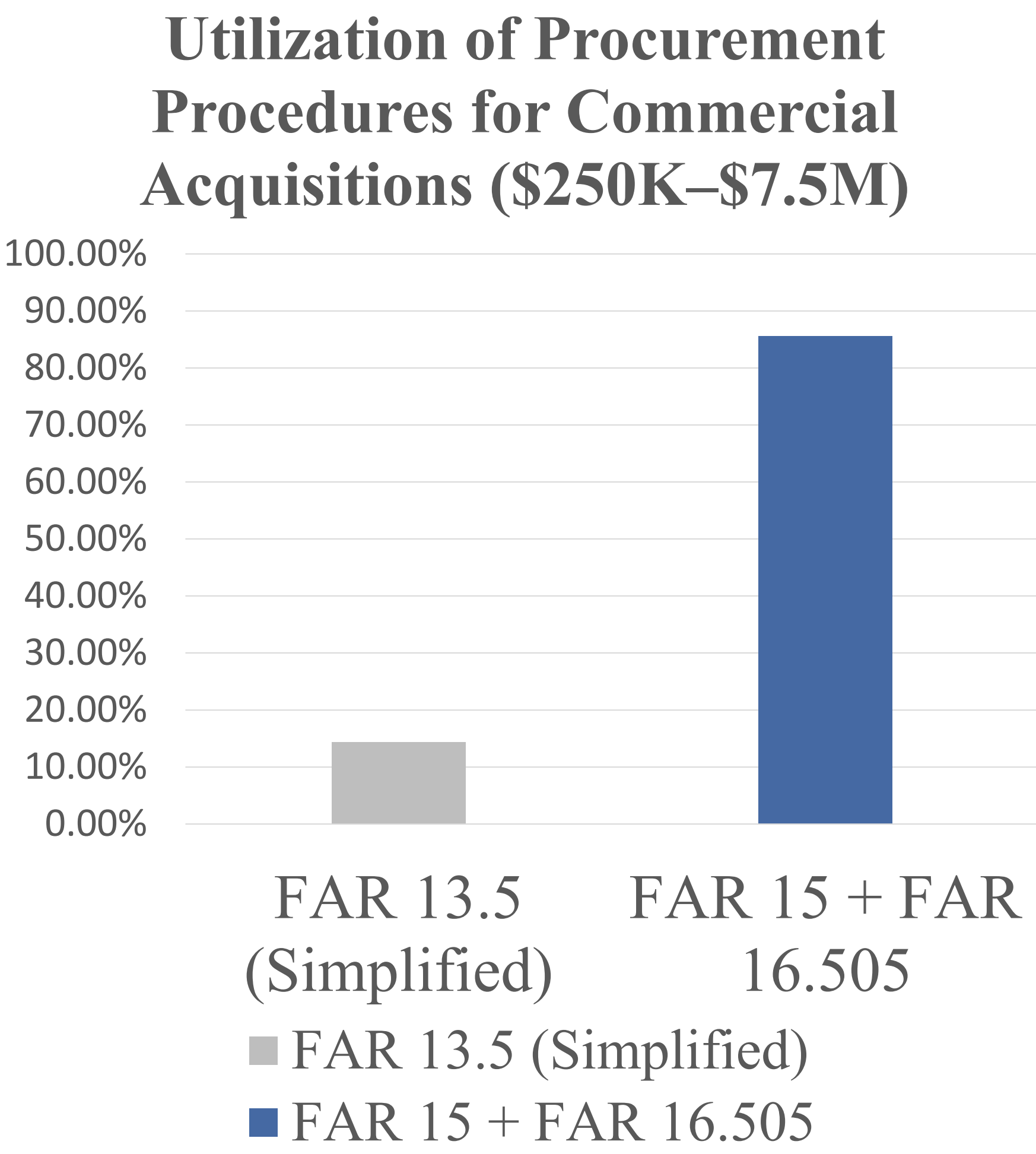
- Army contracting officers often default to FAR Part 15 procedures for commercial purchases that could be more efficiently handled under Simplified Acquisition Procedures (SAP) authorized in FAR 13.5. This research analyzes MICC procurement data and qualitative interviews with senior contracting officers to assess how procedural choices affect efficiency and compliance. Findings reveal that risk aversion, training gaps, and organizational culture, rather than policy limitations, drive overuse of FAR 15. Recommendations include reinforcing guidance on FAR 13.5, improving targeted training, and promoting leadership behaviors that balance oversight with flexibility.

Methods

- Quantitative analysis of MICC procurement data (FY2019–FY2023)
- Qualitative interviews with nine Army contracting officers (MICC & USACE)
- Thematic coding of interview responses
- Comparative assessment of FAR 13.5 vs FAR 15 procedures

Results & Impact

- Only 14.4% of eligible commercial acquisitions used FAR 13.5; 85% defaulted to FAR 15.
- Offices citing higher perceived risk relied more heavily on FAR 15.
- Leadership tone and training quality strongly influenced procedural choice.
- Greater SAP use could reduce procurement lead time by 30–40%.
- Offices with higher perceived oversight or protest risk correlated with greater reliance on FAR 15. This figure supports findings that risk culture, not regulation drives procedural conservatism.



Future Research

- Expand analysis to other DoD contracting commands.
- Examine the role of AI-based tools in acquisition decision support.
- Study leadership communication that encourages risk-tolerant compliance.



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