

## George Lucas Does DOD's Business System Rule

Written by Nick Sanders  
Friday, 30 March 2012 00:00

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Our readers know that Lockheed Martin was the [first company](#) to be hit with payment withholds under the new DFARS Business System rule. A professional colleague of ours (whom we shall call "Jay-P") was so moved by LockMart's plight that he created a little scene, set in the Star Trek universe, of how the payment withhold was implemented down at the company's Fort Worth site. It was great stuff—funny and sad and ironic, all at the same time. We liked it—only we thought Jay-P set his scene in the wrong science fiction universe. We thought he should have asked George Lucas to set the scene in the universe of Star Wars. And so we started dreaming of how George Lucas might have handled the new DFARS Business Systems rule ....

Princess Leia Contracta:                      Darth Fitzgerald. Only you could be so bold. The Senate will not sit still for this. When they hear you've disapproved –

Sith Lord, Darth Fitzgerald:                      Don't act surprised, Your Highness. You weren't on any mercy mission this time. We know you only want profit and more profit. Several billing errors were transmitted from this site to DFAS. That's a significant deficiency. I want to know how they happened.

Leia Contracta:                                      I don't know what you're talking about. Those "errors" were the result of delays by the Contracting Officer in reporting funding in MOCAS.

Darth Fitzgerald:                                      You are part of the defense industry and a crook! (*To the StormAuditors*  
) Issue that report! (*They do so.*  
)

StormAuditor Daine Jir

(*to Fitzgerald*):                                      Issuing that report is dangerous. If word of our methodology gets out, it could generate sympathy for her in the FAR Council.

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*Later, Old Ben-Kenobi and Luke Skywalker find an R2 unit and play a hologram message from Princess Leia Contracta.*

Leia Contracta: General Kenobi. Years ago, you served my father in the Acquisition Reform Wars. Now I beg you to help me in my struggle against the DCAA. I regret that I am unable to present my request to you in person, but my accounting system has fallen under attack and I'm afraid my mission to bring you to Washington has failed. I have placed information vital to the survival of the defense industrial base into the memory systems of this R2 unit. My attorney will know how to retrieve it. You must see this droid safely delivered to him at the Pentagon. This is our most desperate hour. Help me, Obi-Wan Kenobi. You're my only hope. *[looks to the side quickly, then crouches to end the message]*

Ben Kenobi: *[to Luke]* You must learn the ways of the FAR if you're to come with me to the Pentagon.

Skywalker: The Pentagon? I'm not going to the Pentagon. I've got to go home. It's late, I'm in for it as it is.

Ben Kenobi: I need your help, Luke. *She* needs your help. I'm getting too old for this sort of thing.

Skywalker: Listen, I can't get involved! I've got work to do! It's not that I like the Bureaucracy, I hate it, but there's nothing I can do about it right now. It's such a long way from here.

Kenobi: That's your uncle talking. *[pleading]* Learn about the FAR. Luke.

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Skywalker: Look, I can take you as far as Fort Worth. You can get a transport there to Bethesda or wherever you're going.

Kenobi: *[resigned]* You must do what you feel is right, of course.

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Later, in the DCAA Branch Office *Death Star*:

StormAuditor: And until this Branch Office is *fully* operational, *we are vulnerable*  
. The defense industry is too well equipped with lobbyists. They're more dangerous than you realize!

General Charlie Williams: Dangerous to your Audit Agency, Commander, *not* to this Branch Office.

StormAuditor: The contractors will continue to gain a support in the FAR Council, until...

Grand Moff Shay Assad

*[walking in with Fitzgerald: □ □ □ □ □ □ □]* The FAR Council will no longer be of any concern to us. I have just received word that the USD, AT&L has dissolved the Councils permanently. The last remnants of the Old Administration have been swept away.

StormAuditor: That's impossible! How will the Secretary of Defense maintain control without the bureaucracy?

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Assad: The Director of Pricing now has direct control over ACOs, DACOs, and CACOs. Fear will keep the local contractors in line. Fear of this Branch Office.

StormAuditor: And what of the industry associations? If the contractors have obtained a complete legal readout of the audit program, it is possible - however unlikely - that they might find a weakness and exploit it.

Darth Fitzgerald: The plans you refer to will soon be back in our hands.

Williams: Any legal attack made by the Contractors against this Branch Office would be a useless gesture, no matter what legal data they've obtained. This station is now the ultimate power in the universe! I suggest we use it.

Darth Fitzgerald: Don't be too proud of this Business Systems terror you've constructed. The ability to destroy a contractor, or even a whole industrial sector, is insignificant next to the power of the FAR.

Williams: Don't try to frighten us with your auditor's ways, Lord Fitzgerald. *[Fitzgerald walks toward Williams, then slowly raises his hand]* Your sad devotion to GAGAS has not helped you conjure up the stolen data tapes *[begins to sound strained]* or given you clairvoyance enough to find the Contractors' hidden fort- *[grasps his throat as if he is being choked]*

Darth Fitzgerald: I find your lack of faith disturbing.

Assad: Enough of this. Fitzgerald, release him!

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Fitzgerald: As you wish. *[drops his hand and Williams' head hits the table as he regains his breath]*

Assad: This bickering is pointless. Lord Fitzgerald will provide us with the location of the Contractors' fortress by the time this Branch Office is operational. We will then crush the Defense Industrial Base with one swift strike.

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Princess Leia Contracta: Director Assad. I should have expected to find you holding Fitzgerald's leash. I recognized your *foul stench* when I was brought onboard.

Assad: Charming to the last. You don't know how hard I found it, signing the order to terminate your contract.

Leia: *[sarcastically]* I'm surprised you had the courage to take the responsibility yourself.

Assad: Princess Leia, before your execution, I would like you to be my guest at a ceremony that will make this Branch Office operational. No contractor will dare oppose the Secretary now.

Leia: The more you tighten your grip, Assad, the more contractors will slip through your fingers.

Assad: Not after we demonstrate the power of this Branch Office. In a way, you have determined the choice of the weapon system that will be cancelled first. Since you are reluctant to provide us with the location of the Contractors' base, I have chosen to test this FAO's destructive power on your largest program.

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Leia: *[shocked]* No! Our program is within budget and on schedule. We have no outstanding CARs. You can't possibly—

Assad: You would prefer another target? A *military* target?!  
Then name the system!  
*[stepping closer to Leia and pinning her against Darth Fitzgerald]*  
I grow tired of asking this, so it will be the last time. Where is the Contractors' base?

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*Later, on the ice planet Hoth, Luke is stranded in a snowstorm.*

Obi-Wan Kenobi:

*[voice comes out of nowhere]* □ □ □ □ □ Luke. Luke!

Luke Skywalker: *[weakly]* Ben?

Obi-Wan Kenobi: You will go to the Federal Publication Seminars.

Luke Skywalker: Federal Publication Seminars?

Obi-Wan Kenobi: There you will learn from Manos, the Legal Master who instructed me.

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*Later, on the new Branch Office, still in construction.*

*[DarthFitzgerald steps out of his shuttle on the Death Star.]*

Branch Manager:                Lord Fitzgerald. This is an unexpected pleasure. We are honored by your presence.

Darth Fitzgerald:            You may dispense with the pleasantries, Manager. I am here to put you back on schedule.

Manager:                      I assure you, Lord Fitzgerald, my auditors are working as fast they can.

Fitzgerald:                  Perhaps / can find new ways to motivate them.

Manager:                      I tell you that the business system review will be completed as planned.

Fitzgerald:                  The Secretary does not share your optimistic appraisal of the situation.

Manager:                      But he asks the impossible! I need more auditors!

Fitzgerald:                  Then perhaps you can tell him yourself when he arrives.

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Manager:                                *[alarmed]* The Secretary's coming here?

Fitzgerald:                            That is correct, Manager, and he is most displeased with your  
apparent lack of progress.

Manager:                                We shall double our efforts.

Fitzgerald:                            I hope so, Manager, for your sake. The Secretary is not as  
forgiving as I am.

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*Will the story end happily? Only time—and George Lucas—will tell!*