

## Client Enrichment Series – Q & A



**Topic:** eRETA Boot Camp - Using GSA's New Electronic RWA Tools

**Date of Presentation:** January 9, 2018

**Link to Series Information:** [www.gsa.gov/ces](http://www.gsa.gov/ces)

**1. Does this take the place of VCSS RWAs? And does this have any connection with GSA Rent on the Web (ROW)?**

*Answer: No, this is not a billing module, which is the purpose and use of VCSS. It should become more clear as Steve goes through the demo how and when to use eRETA. There is currently no connection with ROW, as ROW provides information on Rent, while eRETA provides information on Reimbursable Work Authorizations (RWAs).*

**2. Where do we find our ABC when were requesting access?**

*Answer: We have a link at [www.gsa.gov/ereta](http://www.gsa.gov/ereta) in the 'How do I access eRETA' tab called 'eRETA Agency Bureau codes' where you can find your ABCs.*

**3. Is access restricted to Government employees only?**

*Answer: Yes, access is restricted to Federal Government Employees.*

**4. Can we save a new RWA in progress/not submitted yet?**

*Answer: Yes, you have the ability to save in eRETA before actually submitting to GSA.*

**5. Is it possible to get a download copy of this presentation?**

*Answer: Yes you should have received a PDF version of the slides. You can always find it at [www.gsa.gov/ces](http://www.gsa.gov/ces). Also feel free to email us at [eRETA@gsa.gov](mailto:eRETA@gsa.gov) and we'll be happy to send it over.*

**6. May I get the help desk phone number?**

*Answer: Please reach out to [eRETA@gsa.gov](mailto:eRETA@gsa.gov) and we can assist with your questions or direct you to the appropriate POC.*

**7. Can you download data sets with details collected on your agency's RWAs?**

*Answer: Yes, eRETA has the ability to export data to Excel, including dozens of different data fields. At the bottom of each 'Search' screen (standard Search, Documentation Search, Financial Review Search, and Estimates Search) there is a button that allows you to export to Excel.*

**8. Why doesn't my eRETA user ID have the data entry option?**

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*Answer: That's likely because you are a 'Read Only' user at the moment. Existing users can simply email us at [eRETA@gsa.gov](mailto:eRETA@gsa.gov) to request their account be upgraded to the Data Entry Role. If you do not have eRETA access yet, make sure to select 'Data Entry' as the user role requested when submitting your application.*

**9. If everyone starts using eRETA to send RWAs to GSA, will GSA allow multiple people to do so, or would GSA rather have a designated person from each area?**

*Answer: Your office can determine how many folks you want to enter the information, as it may make sense for multiple users to enter different parts of the information. There should not be any issue with multiple users entering the information.*

**10. Will I be able to find my Agency Location Code (ALC)?**

*Answer: Yes. If you are submitting an RWA work request in eRETA, you'll see in the 'Billing Information' tab a field that says 'Account Code/BOAC'. If you click the magnifying glass to the right of that field, you can search for your Agency Location Code (ALC). Moreover, by selecting the appropriate Billing Office Address Code (BOAC) in RETA, the corresponding ALC is automatically determined.*

**11. Is it possible to initiate a electronic space on any location on the RWA?**

*Answer: If you are manually filling out an RWA Form, you can only enter data in the designated fields on the RWA Form 2957. If you are submitting a request through eRETA, eRETA will automatically populate the entered data onto the corresponding fields of the RWA Form.*

**12. Is it possible to have read only access to eRETA without going through the whole access process?**

*Answer: The user role does not affect the clearance requirement to the application, so requesting read-only access versus data-entry access will have no impact on the application process.*

**13. Is the test environment available to customers?**

*Answer: No, the test environment is not available for customers, but we can work with you for a more hands on demo if you have concerns working in the actual environment directly.*

**14. Do GSA employees get regular emails about work requests or RWAs assigned to them? We are constantly sending emails to try to get these worked.**

*Answer: Yes, eRETA automatically sends emails to GSA employees associated with the RWA Work Request. This is a learning process for our customers and GSA alike, so there might be some communication issues as we transition to this new process. Always feel free to email us at [eRETA@gsa.gov](mailto:eRETA@gsa.gov) so we can tackle any process/communication issues that arise.*

**15. What if we do RWAs for agencies other than our own agency?**

*Answer: an eRETA User can only access AB Codes that belong to their respective Agency.*

**Follow-up Question: Then this system won't work for us since we service several agencies, as we do with our leasing.**

*Follow-up Answer: You can email [eRETA@gsa.gov](mailto:eRETA@gsa.gov) to discuss your specific situation, and we will work with you to hopefully find a solution.*

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**16. Does the eRETA system provide updates on the status of an RWA as it goes through GSA's processing and contracting so the customer knows where the RWA stands?**

*Answer: Customers receive automated email notifications as the status changes of an RWA changes, such as when an RWA work request is 'assigned' to a GSA PM, or when the customer sends an RWA or RWA Amendment to GSA. Also customers with eRETA access can always log into the system and use the RWA Summary Search, Financial Review Search, or Documentation Search to find updated statuses of their RWAs.*

**17. What is the latest version of the GSA form 2957 (REV 2/11)?**

*Answer: The latest version is dated September 2016 and can be found at [www.gsa.gov/rwa](http://www.gsa.gov/rwa).*

**18. Does the financial review capture the breakdown of how the dollars have been obligated between Construction, Design, etc.?**

*Answer: The Financial Review Search gives a lot of very useful data such as Authorized Amount, Obligations, Income, Expenses, Balance, and much more. It does not break these down into components of the RWA; it breaks them down from the RWA as a whole. As such, if an RWA has design and construction components, customers cannot locate the breakdown in obligations against construction versus design components.*

**19. Since we can access any in our area, how do we know who was the last person to make changes? Does this information show anywhere on the screens?**

*Answer: RETA and eRETA do capture who "last modified" a Work Request or RWA. The name and date of that individual can be found on the RWA Summary screen of any RWA (found by running the basic "Search" and then opening the RWA from those search results). The name of the person who last modified can be either a customer eRETA user or a GSA RETA user. If a customer agency user submitted an amendment request to GSA, and then GSA approved and accepted the amendment, the GSA's user would now display as the "Last Modified By" user. It would not display the customer eRETA user's name any longer.*

**20. Is this being recorded?**

*Answer: Yes, we recorded the session and will provide a closed-captioned video which will post on our Client Enrichment Series website - [www.gsa.gov/ces](http://www.gsa.gov/ces) several weeks following the presentation.*

**21. What happens to that "additional comments" box after you submit? GSA employees don't seem to be getting that information when I put stuff in there.**

*Answer: All data (including that provided in the 'additional comments' block) is saved in the system. Since the system updates are still new to customers and GSA alike, there might be a disconnect in processing at times. Feel free to reach out to us at [eRETA@gsa.gov](mailto:eRETA@gsa.gov) and we'll help tackle any process/communication issues you are experiencing.*

**22. What is the average turnaround time from GSA receipt to an acceptance letter?**

*Answer: Receipt of a fully executable RWA (meaning a work request that has already gone through requirements development and is ready for signature) is 15 business days.*

**23. How do we attach supporting documents - SOW, IGE etc.?**

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*Answer: On the 'Customer Approval Screen' there is an 'Upload New' button which allows you to upload documents into the system.*

### **24. If an RWA was provided to renovate a space, how can you tell how much was spent on Construction vs Design vs Furniture vs move, etc.?**

*Answer: The Summary Cost Estimate in the eRETA Documentation Tab (or by clicking on the "ETN" link (Estimate Tracking Number) on any RWA) breaks down the authorized amount based on expected spending on construction vs. design vs. furniture vs. move, etc. In terms of seeing how much was spent, customers can see a similar breakdown on the Financial Review screen for the RWA in question.*

### **25. Can you please explain the email notifications and who gets what when?**

*Answer: Customers can list a number of email addresses in the system, such as the Agency Point of Contact (POC) and Agency RWA Mailbox. These individuals, along with the 'Last Modified by' user and the 'Requested by' user receive automated email communications associated with certain trigger events such as when an Unassigned RWA Work Request is 'Assigned' to a GSA Project Manager, or when an RWA Work Request or RWA Amendment is submitted to GSA. Feel free to visit [www.gsa.gov/ereta](http://www.gsa.gov/ereta) and check out the User Guides and video demonstrations under the 'eRETA Training Materials' tab for more information!*

### **26. Can the accounting string generated by eRETA be edited?**

*Answer: Once the work request is submitted the accounting string cannot be changed until it has been submitted by GSA, at which time an amendment could be processed if necessary.*

### **27. Is that only if you submit the RWA to GSA? As far as adding additional information.**

*Answer: Data Entry users can amend any WR or RWA with the same Agency Bureau Code their user ID has access to. RWAs sent to GSA before these new features were available are editable for amendments by any eRETA user from that agency. Only RWAs that are financially closed out (aka a termination date exists) are not editable (unless the termination date is lifted by GSA Finance users).*

### **28. So we are sending RWAs to GSA PRIOR to getting signature from our Approval Personnel/? We usually have to have it signed before sending the GSA**

*Answer: The process Steve is showing is building the RWA together instead of the traditional way of undergoing requirements development outside of the system and then you (the customer) creating the RWA and signing it and sending it to GSA. This way you are building the RWA information as the requirements development is happening. Once you get to the point of signature, you can either download the pdf and have it signed or you can request a digital signature.*

### **29. Can you review charges on an RWA? Difference between "obligated" and "expensed".**

*Answer: While customers do not have access to individual invoices from vendors, they can go to the RWA's 'Financial Review' screen and view the 'Vendor Summary', which they can also export to Excel. The Vendor Summary breaks it down between Obligations and Expenses.*

### **30. Does GSA require official documentation to be attached to the RWA initially and if yes, what are they?**

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*Answer: Minimum documentation is the Scope of Work, GSA Estimate, and a Manual version of the RWA (if the customer submits the RWA manually, i.e. outside of eRETA).*

### **31. At what point can customers fill out the other tabs?**

*Answer: Once GSA assigns a GSA Project Manager to the project or service, customers have the ability to access the remaining customer tabs ('Billing Information', 'Accounting Details', and 'Customer Approval' tabs). Customers receive an automated email notification when GSA assigns a PM, so they will know when they are able to access the other tabs.*

### **32. Can GSA have a different charge line item for the same vendor? Because sometimes it's for different work not a progress payment.**

*Answer: This is a billing-related question, and we encourage you to visit [www.vcss.gsa.gov](http://www.vcss.gsa.gov) for assistance.*

### **33. Can you please also provide an overview of the Estimate tab to show what data is provided there?**

*Answer: We apologize for the limited time and inability to cover the Estimate tab in detail. Feel free to reach out to [eRETA@gsa.gov](mailto:eRETA@gsa.gov) and we'll be happy to assist and perhaps schedule a session geared towards the Estimate tab in eRETA.*

### **34. RETA generates an accounting string of "020 2018 2018 0919" but IRS wants "020 2018 2018 0919 DISB" in box 12D on the 2957**

*Answer: Block 12D is just for the Treasury Account Symbol. The "DISB" in your example is technically called the BETC Code, it is a different field independent from the TAS. GSA's billing system automatically applies the "DISB" BETC Code to all billing actions. Since the value is always "DISB" we did not create a unique field to capture it since it will never change.*

### **35. Can we run a report for all projects that have not been awarded?**

*Answer: Yes, using the Financial Review search there is a search field called "Percent Obligated". If you run a query searching for RWAs obligated from 0% to 0% (do not enter the % symbol though) it will return all RWAs with no contracts awarded (no obligations yet). We recommend using additional search criteria besides just 0% to 0% as this will also pull back cancelled RWAs which never had any work performed against them.*

### **36. Could you schedule another day to continue this training? We are not getting through the whole system.**

*Answer: Yes, sorry there is so much to cover! We plan to hold another demo on March 1st, 2018 ("eRETA eNCORE", which will likely be longer than an hour, and we'll make sure you are aware of course. Also we encourage you to visit [www.gsa.gov/ereta](http://www.gsa.gov/ereta) to find user guides and video demonstrations which should help you better understand the system in the meantime!*

### **37. Will the RWA inbox for a respective region not receive an email? I have noticed that if it doesn't make it to that email, there can be a bottleneck because it is outside of the generally known process for the region.**

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*Answer: Some regions have always used group RWA Mailboxes to receive RWA requests. The transition towards utilizing eRETA's RWA Work Request workflow has meant some process changes. There may be some communication issues as we become more familiar with this updated workflow process. Always feel free to email us at [eRETA@gsa.gov](mailto:eRETA@gsa.gov) so we can tackle any process/communication issues that arise!*

**38. Does the person have to have eRETA access to sign electronically - digital signature?**

*Answer: No, you do not need eRETA access to digitally sign the RWAs. An email is sent from eSignLive to the Customer Fund Certifying Official, who can sign from their laptop or even from their government approved mobile device.*

**39. Does the GSA owner assigned receive notification if a customer makes a change after it has been assigned?**

*Answer: The GSA owner receives automated notifications when a customer cancels the WR/RWA or if a customer submits the WR/RWA or RWA Amendment to GSA for acceptance.*