

Client Enrichment Series – Q & A



Topic: Reimbursable Work Authorizations (RWAs)

Date of Presentation: July 18, 2013

Link to Series Information: [CES Historical Topics](#)

Access Additional RWA Information at <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/104847>

Question #1: With the year end cut off established, will there be an opportunity for emergency RWAs and/or cases where funding becomes available after this date?

Answer: Yes, RWAs may be considered for acceptance after this date. However, they are subject to increased scrutiny to ensure that there is a valid bona fide need, reasonable estimate in place and that there are sufficient resources to execute the project timely within PBS.

Question #2: Will the GSA Project Manager support the scheduling on the RWA process?

Answer: Customers should have an expectation of the GSA Project Manager to include the RWA as part of the project schedule. Please be sure to ask questions of your PMs to ensure agreement of the schedule understanding.

Question #3: Will the map of the regions and managers be posted too?

Answer: Yes, the Regional Core Team Map can be found [by clicking here](#).

Question #4: Are there projected suspense times for the RWA process?

Answer: Your Project Manager should provide you with a project schedule so that you are aware of the timeline at the beginning of your project. This will help ensure that your expectations are met as the project is executed.

Question #5: What if an agency receives a completion letter before the project is complete? If they still have funding obligated, could they have the project/RWA reopened? When can you not reopen an RWA?

Answer: If an agency receives a completion letter and is not in agreement that the requested work has been substantially complete; they should respond to the letter within 30 days of receiving the letter. If it is determined that the work has not been completed, the completion date can be removed.

Client Enrichment Series – Q & A

Question #6: Are the letters generated and sent by an automated system or does a GSA person manually create the Letters and mail out?

Answer: The letters are sent through eRETA, but only after a GSA person initiates the task of the system.

Question #7: Why are there two fees? Can they not be combined into one simple flat fee?

Answer: GSA is currently reviewing our fee structure and may propose a change to OMB. This is not an easy process to vet through but we are aware that there is some frustration regarding our fee structure and we are hoping to make improvements in the future.

Question #8: Must the person authorized to sign the RWA be the same person that is authorized to use the credit card?

Answer: It really depends on your internal control process. The person who is authorized to certify the RWAs may, or may not, be the cardholder.

Question #9: Why does the completion letter state that it will take 30 days but the close out letter takes 60 days?

Answer: The completion letter asks that customers respond to GSA within 30 days if they would like the RWA to remain open based on the fact that the customer does not believe the work is substantially complete. It then, generally takes 60 days to move to financial close-out. During this time frame we may be closing out contracts, paying vendors and ensuring that we have collected all RWA funds from our customer.

Question #10: Why does GSA charge the 4% fee on amended RWAs, especially when we add money because your initial estimate comes up short?

Answer: Estimates are not considered firm fixed estimates and should reflect the range of accuracy when presented to you by the Project Manager. GSA is required, by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to recoup all indirect and direct costs associated with reimbursable projects. If the final cost of the project is higher than originally estimated; PBS must collect fees based on the actual cost of the project.

Question #11: How can an agency determine if RWA payments are partial or final so that the agency can determine remaining balances or balances that need to be de-obligated?

Answer: The agency will receive a financial close out letter for the amount to be de-obligated. Funds should not be de-obligated until the agency receives this letter.

Client Enrichment Series – Q & A

Question #12: What happens to the 10% contingency fees if not used? Why wouldn't GSA automatically return unused funds?

Answer: If funds have been provided by an agency as a contingency and those funds are not used; they should be returned to the customer when the RWA project is closed out.

Question #13: Do the GSA fees get adjusted when the completed project ends up costing less than the estimate?

Answer: The fees are assessed based on actual expenses. So, yes, if the project costs are less than anticipated, the fees will be less as well.

Question #14: Regarding RWAs, what happens when after the work is completed the cost estimate was not enough? How firm is that estimate once the RWA is accepted?

Answer: Estimates are not considered firm-fixed estimates. The level of accuracy will be identified on the Summary Cost Estimate. The range of accuracy will vary based on what type of estimate is being provided by PBS. The different estimate types are; order of magnitude, budgetary, conceptual design, construction estimate and change order estimate. The more defined the scope of work is at initial estimating the more accurate the estimate is likely to be.

Question #15: What is the difference and/or relationship between eRETA and VSCC?

Answer: While eRETA is the system used to access real-time RWA information and Documentation, VCSS is the web-based application that will allow vendors to create and process their invoices electronically (paperless) and track the status of payments made by GSA, and will allow customers to view billing and payment information.

Question #16: Is VCSS replacing bill view?

Answer: Yes, VCSS is replacing BillView as the site for RWA and HOTD Billing information. However, Billview will still be available to access billing information from before July 2013, as this information was not converted to be available in VCSS.

Question #17: What is the minimum fee?

Answer: The fee is assessed based on project costs. There is not a minimum however; there is a maximum sliding scale overhead fee that can be charged which is \$30,000.

Question #18: Why does GSA send RWA s back using Signature on File, when our finance people do not accept that and require real signatures?

Answer: Customers should receive the signed RWA back with the Acceptance Letter from PBS. If you are not, please be sure to ask your PBS contact for a copy.

Client Enrichment Series – Q & A

Question #19: As the end of the fiscal year approaches is there a date that all RWAs need to be rec'd for this FY?

Answer: DOD is 6/15 and Civilian is 9/1.

Question #20: If you're not the person to sign the digital signature, how do we change the name on the digital signature?

Answer: We ask that if you're not the person with authority to sign the RWA then you shouldn't sign it, pen and ink or digitally. Rather, you should forward it to the person who can sign it, pen, ink or digitally.

Question #21: Is there a procedure or form I would submit to my GSA Project Manager to initiate or speed up receipt of the Project Close Out Letter?

Answer: There is not a standardized form to facilitate this process. However, please feel free to send an email to your Project Manager requesting early Close-out. If early close-out can occur, the Project Manager will work with the PBS Budget Staff to move forward with the request. Generally, however, it will take approximately 60 days for close-out to occur after substantial completion.

Question #22: Is there/was there previously a \$2500 threshold for the 4% overhead fee?

Answer: The 4% project management fee was automated on August 1, 2009 and was made applicable to all space alteration RWAs. Prior to this automation, the 4% project management fee was only applicable to space alteration RWAs exceeding \$2,500.