



PBS Client Enrichment Series – Q & A



Topic: RWA Policy Manual Highlights

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Link to Client Enrichment Series Information: www.gsa.gov/ces

Additional RWA Policy Information:

[RWA National Policy Manual - August 1, 2020](#)

www.gsa.gov/rwa

www.gsa.gov/ereta

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Scope of Work and Bona Fide Need

Question- Can the scope be changed to reduce the project?

Answer: Yes, the scope can be reduced at any time, but once it is reduced then it can only be added back if you are still in the same fiscal year as when the original RWA was accepted. If the scope needs to be added back in a later fiscal year, then a new RWA would then be required.

Question- What happens in the case of an RWA for preventative maintenance when the technician comes to perform the preventative maintenance and it appears the equipment needs minor repair. Do we now have to create a separate RWA for repairs?

Answer: If repair is required beyond the scope for preventative maintenance, then yes, a new RWA for this new scope would be required.

Question - Could uploaded documents include the Statement of Work (SOW)? Also how do we upload documents in eRETA and where are they held?

Answer - Yes anything related to the project could be uploaded into eRETA. You can upload documents in one of two ways: 1) Click the Documentation yellow hyperlink on a WR/RWA to go to the Documents Detail screen, scroll down and click the “Upload New” button and upload the document, or 2) when in edit mode on the Customer Approval tab, click the “Upload New” button and upload the document. Uploaded documents are held on the Documents Detail screen which you can get to by clicking the Documentation yellow hyperlink on a WR/RWA.

Question- If the RWA is for a location different from where you are submitting it from, how should this be handled in eRETA?

Answer: eRETA routes to the appropriate region based on the work location, not the location of the eRETA user submitting the Work Request.

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Question- Are Miscellaneous RWAs a thing of the past?

Answer: *F-Type RWAs for miscellaneous services (e.g. changing key locks, replacing carpet tiles, etc.) are still available, but if you have an actual project identified, this should be on a different RWA type.*

Question - For the “bona fide” need, does GSA validate the need, and what is their basis for evaluation?

Answer - *Yes. GSA has many internal processes in place to review/validate the bona fide need. Also you, the customer, establish and define the bona fide need when you enter the Work Request. For specific questions relating to this review, please email askrwa@gsa.gov.*

Amendments

Question - Can you apply prior year funds to amendments (i.e. no year funds)?

Answer - *Funding on an amendment must follow certain rules, but generally the funds must have been available when the original RWA was accepted. Any no year funds may also be used.*

Question - Can you amend an RWA if scope increases due to unforeseen requirements?

Answer - *It depends. Unforeseen conditions would be considered antecedent liabilities and would require additional funds to still accomplish that same scope of work. Forgotten or overlooked requirements would require a new RWA.*

Question - Would an example of an “antecedent liability” be the cost increase due to Covid-19 labor shortages and material cost increases?

Answer - *Yes, since the labor shortages and material cost increases could not have been foreseen at the time of RWA Acceptance.*

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RWA Review and Acceptance

Question - It seems like it always takes longer than 3-4 weeks to get the RWA accepted. It seems more like 2+ months.

Answer - The process is dependent upon hand-offs between the customer and GSA. Requirements development can take longer when there are more variables and larger projects for example. The Work Request-RWA process is intended to be used to communicate the need and then start the process to build and understand the need and associated estimate. It is feasible that some things could take that long, but the majority will work through the process in less time.

Question - Why do severable RWAs have more scrutiny than nonseverable RWAs.

Answer - Actually nonseverable RWAs typically have more scrutiny surrounding them. It all depends upon what the scope of work identifies and the level of detail included.

Overtime Utilities

Question - What are some key differences between R- and C- types of RWAs?

Answer - They are both for recurring overtime utilities and are the same with one small exception - C types are for non-Federal entities and R types are for Federal Agencies and the Judiciary.

Question - How do you link an Overtime Utility RWA in eRETA?

Answer - For Overtime Utility RWAs, GSA usually provides you the estimate before you send in a Work Request, so you (the customer) would link the two together by entering the Estimate Tracking Number (ETN) as you create the Work Request.

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Keep in mind that for project-based RWAs, the GSA PM on your project will link the Summary Cost Estimate (SCE) estimate to your WR after you have sent the WR and after we have developed requirements enough to be able to create/link an SCE to it. For more information and training on the WR-RWA process, you can visit www.gsa.gov/ereta and go to the eRETA Training Materials page where you'll find a Quick Tip titled "Work Request-RWA Workflow and Status Labels" among many other Quick Tips and detailed user guides.

Fees, Billing, & Funding

Question- Can Work Requests be used for Tenant Improvement (TI) Projects? Or can TI projects not be funded via RWA?

Answer: While RWAs can be used to fund above standard TIs, general TIs are typically paid for in the rent, so an RWA would not be applicable.

Question- For project-based RWAs (e.g. nonseverable RWAs) that exceed 5 years, what are the options?

Answer: If the project will go beyond 5 fiscal years after the fund's expiration date of obligational authority, funds will need to be replaced after that occurs OR the project must be de-scoped or cancelled.

Question- What is the fee charged for annual overtime utilities invoices?

Answer: If the overtime utility is in GSA owned space where the utility is not separately metered or billed (e.g. recurring RWA), then it would be charged a flat \$500 fee. If it is in GSA leased space where the utility IS separately metered or billed (e.g. nonrecurring RWA), then it would be charged according to the stepped fee structure. You can find more details on RWA fees at www.gsa.gov/rwa on the "Policy and Guidance" page.

Question- What happens when an RWA has annual funds in FY21 but the project is not completed until FY22?

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Answer: FY21 annual funds have an expiration date of obligational authority of 9/30/2021. GSA's authority allows us to execute the work for another 5 fiscal years (through 9/30/2026). So as the customer, you simply need to obligate the full authorized amount of the RWA by 9/30/2021 and GSA must execute it no later than 9/30/2026. As we bill you along the way, you are merely liquidating that obligation you made back in 2021. Importantly, completing a project the following year after it was accepted is within the authority granted to GSA and passed on to you as an RWA customer.

Question- How does a multiple year RWA work if you do not know if the funding will be available the following year?

Answer: RWAs must be fully funded at RWA Acceptance. Multiple year funding does NOT mean the funding is potentially available. It is how the funding is provided to the customer agency. While the most common fund type is annual funds, some agencies receive multiple or no-year funds. Multiple year funds are typically 2-3 year funds, unlike annual funds which require customer obligation in that same year. Importantly, GSA has five full fiscal years after the fund's expiration date of obligational authority to execute the work.

Question - How do we get our Billing Office Address Code (BOAC) ?

Answer - The BOAC you should be citing on your RWAs is something you would confirm with your accounting/finance department. BOACs are unique to an Agency Bureau (AB) code. In other words, if your Work Request/RWA is for AB code 01513 (FBI), you may not cite a BOAC associated with AB code 01525 (US Marshals Service). Also BOACs are not specific to eRETA, they are used by all GSA systems. There is a magnifying glass feature in eRETA (next to the Account Code/BOAC) field which allows you to search for BOACs by different criteria. If you cannot find the BOAC you are looking for, or if you need a BOAC added to GSA systems, email eRETA@gsa.gov and we will be happy to help.

Question - How are the costs calculated? What is GSA basing their pricing cost against?

Answer - GSA creates an Independent Government Estimate (IGE) for all RWAs based on the costs associated with the Scope of Work. We have cost estimators and cost management software and practices that typically assist with this.

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Question - I have budget officials asking about function codes added to an Amended RWA - they want a list of what that means. Where can I obtain that?

Answer - Function codes are used in GSA's systems only. We do not require customers to provide that information on new or amended RWAs. That information is added to each RWA by GSA OCFO staff to break out the authorized amount by function code for our internal financial reporting.

Question - Are the contractors' invoices uploaded for customers to review?

Answer - Contractor invoices are not typically uploaded for review in eRETA, but the project team should provide support for each bill at an appropriate level of detail.

Signatures

Question- When is the latest an RWA can be signed? For the past decade the annual budget has not been signed by October 1st and we have been operating under Continuing Resolutions (CRs) until the budget is passed. In the past GSA has pressured us to sign but we do not have to sign until the budget or CR is signed by the president, correct?

Answer: With eRETA, the customer controls when RWAs are sent to GSA for action. So on 10/1, at a minimum a CR should be in place (otherwise the government would be shut down). If the CR allows you to fund the RWA or a partial amount of the RWA (i.e. 25% of utilities instead of 100%) you can either 1) click "Send to GSA" in eRETA when you're ready for GSA to move forward and route for digital signatures, OR 2) if the funding isn't available for a specific project because of the CR, you can choose to NOT click "Send to GSA" and GSA will take no action on moving the RWA towards acceptance until you DO click "Send to GSA". Keep in mind that while you can partially fund overtime utility RWAs during a CR, you cannot partially fund non severable RWAs (e.g. projects) for any reason. These must be fully funded at RWA Acceptance.

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eRETA Access

Question - eRETA has been very difficult to access over the past week. Are they working on a more seamless way to get into the system?

Answer - Access to eRETA is actually handled by GSA's Portal team. Once you log into the Portal you then have access to some/all of the external applications that GSA makes available to customers (eRETA is one of those). Unfortunately the Portal is not something our eRETA team controls. However, in the last two months, the Portal team has allowed receiving your one time passcode by text message or voicemail. Users have reported that getting their passcode by that method - instead of receiving it by email - has resulted in a much higher success rate when logging in. If you don't see your phone number listed as an option to receive your passcode, please email the helpdesk at COPBSApp@gsa.gov and ask them to add your cell phone or home phone to your user ID so it appears as an option moving forward. If you need more information, feel free to visit www.gsa.gov/ereta where we recently (in February 2021) released a Quick Tip titled "Tricks for Easier Login to eRETA".

Resources

Question - Does GSA re-score the leases according to Circular OMB A-11 each time there is a supplemental agreement executed with Lessor?

Answer - This course is focused on RWA Policy and Process and not Leasing Policy. We can connect you with the appropriate folks if you'd like, just email askrwa@gsa.gov.

Question- Where is the YouTube link located?

Answer: Our [CES playlist](#) can be found on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLvdwyPgXnxxXtIR2I3cSAtkf9h32UI3r5>