

Client Enrichment Series



Topic: *Introduction to PBS Project Management*

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[CES session video](#)

Related PBS Project Management Process Resources:

Cost Management Principles - [CES session video](#)

PBS Customer Dashboard - [CES session video](#)

Planning and Requirements - Processes and Protocols - [CES session video](#)

GSA's Capital Investment Program and the Prospectus Process - [CES session video](#)

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Q1. What general timelines do you seek to achieve for each of the phases?

- A.** The answer to this question depends on the complexity and dollar value of the project. There are different considerations and levels-of-effort that occur in each of the phases depending on the dollar value and type of procurement. As not every project is the same, it is difficult to assign time durations for each of the phases.

Q2. Which project phase does environmental review (NEPA, NHPA, etc) occur in?

- A.** Those types of studies are usually in the project initiation or planning phases.

Q3. What are and who sits on the Regional Resource Boards?

- A.** PBS utilizes Project Resource Boards (PRB) to coordinate and assign project managers, project sponsors, and core team members for projects. A PRB will typically focus on resource assignments for medium and high risk projects. They are composed of various PBS Service Center/Field Office managers and can also include managers from other PBS regional divisions.

Q4. Can you explain PBS's Work Breakdown Structure?

- A.** A work-breakdown structure (WBS) is an industry project management tool for scheduling and resource planning. It is a deliverable-oriented breakdown of a project into smaller components. The project

team creates the project work breakdown structure by identifying the major functional deliverables and subdividing those deliverables into smaller systems and sub-deliverables.

Q5. Can I find the 18 schedule milestones posted on the GSA website?

- A. In PBS's Electronic Project Management system (ePM), schedule milestones are displayed in the Key Properties Fact Sheet of the project record. You can go to [ePM Quick Reference Guides Page on gsa.gov](#) and click on Key Properties Fact Sheet. Also on this page are a number of quick reference guides available for your information. But note that there may be many milestones in the system and that are possible in a project, but the number that are actually used depends on the size and the complexity of the project.

Q6. Can delegated agencies utilize GSA's cost estimators?

- A. Our cost estimators are available to advise customers and help develop estimates. Please contact your regional PBS contacts to see what resources and services are available.

Q7. What cost estimating tools do you use? RS Means as a base with local / Regional Adjustment factors?

- A. Generally we have been using RS Means with a locality adjustment factor. A new cost estimating tool is being developed now for internal use to help our PMs and cost estimators. Cost estimating is a team effort, and is grounded in our ability to work together to develop solid requirements.

Q8. Will that new estimating tool be shared with GSA customers?

- A. The new estimating tool is for internal use, but the output of the tool (i.e. the estimate) will of course be shared with the customer.

Q9. If a customer's cost exceeds GSA cost estimate, how is the delta reconciled?

- A. We provide an estimate with a range of accuracy based on how much information we have. The estimate should also indicate items that may be funded by GSA such as shell costs. Once actual costs are received through the bidding process, the customer is still responsible for their costs and GSA would still be responsible for shell costs.

Q9. What PM software package do you use? Is it off the shelf or proprietary to PBS?

- A. At PBS, we use ePM. It was a commercial off-the-shelf product that we modified - Proliance. We use it for managing and tracking projects internally with limited access to customers. We are in the process of procuring a new system to better meet our internal needs and increase collaboration with our customers as well.

Q10. Can ePM work with MS Project? Can an updated ePM schedule then be imported into MS Project?

- A. Yes, MS Project schedules can be uploaded into ePM, and vice versa.

Q11. Is ePM available to those of us working outside GSA?

- A. Yes, Customers are able to use ePM.

Q12. Who pays for Project Management services?

- A. Our project management resources are covered in the RWA fee structure depending on how much overall effort is needed for project oversight.

Q13. What is the difference between ePM and gPM?

- A. ePM is GSA's Project Management Tool to help maintain and track the project status, schedule, budget, etc. gPM is a philosophy - a way of doing work. They are the principles that a project manager should follow to support the project "triangle" of scope, schedule and budget, and how to partner with customers throughout that project lifecycle.

Q14. Is there a project management certification program for GSA? Is it open to everyone or just the GSA team?

- A. GSA PMs received certification through the government-wide FAC-P/PM. Some of our project managers achieve both the government FAC-P/PM and the construction industry PMP/PgMP designation for the sake of personal development or because they have come to GSA from private industry, but all GSA PMs are required to hold the FAC-P/PM certification. The Federal Acquisition Certification for Program and Project Managers (FAC-P/PM) program is for acquisition professionals in the Federal Government performing program and project management activities and functions. You can learn more about FAC-P/PM from the Federal Acquisition Institute - FAI on their [website](#).

Q15. Are GSA cost estimating services paid for by the customer, and how many estimates will we receive?

- A. Estimates provided to the customer initially before we accept an RWA are free (or part of the initial understanding of your requirements). Once we have a funded RWA, estimates received as part of the planning or design phases of the project are included in the fees.. Over the lifecycle of your project, you will receive different types of cost estimates - depending on the phase of the project. There was a CES session that addresses the different ranges of accuracy of the estimate - depending on the level of specificity of the requirements. As your project moves through its phases, the estimates become more and more refined. See our [Principles of Cost Management session recording](#), and links to slide deck and Q&A on www.gsa.gov/ces

Q16. What are the requirements for access to the PBS Customer Dashboard?

- A. You will need a MAX.gov log-in. If you do not have you, you can apply for one on the MAX.gov [website](#). Customer access to the Dashboard is explained [in this protocol](#), and a past CES session covered the [PBS Customer Dashboard](#) and all its useful, filterable and exportable data, available by Bureau Code, in categories of: My Projects, My RWAs, My Occupancies, and My Rent.

Q17. Can you expand on Prospectus projects further?

- A. CES just featured a class on the prospectus projects this past March - view our session recording on the [Capital Prospectus Project development process](#) on YouTube. You can also find the Prospectus Limitations on [GSA's Website](#).