



Management Services Center News You Can Use

January 2011

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Quick Schedule Links:

<http://gsa.gov/mgmtservices>

<http://gsa.gov/language>

<http://gsa.gov/consolidated>

<http://gsa.gov/environmental>

<http://gsa.gov/MOBIS>

<http://gsa.gov/engineering>

<http://gsa.gov/logworld>

A Multiple Award Schedule (MAS) Refresh Will Occur this Month

The next version of your Schedule solicitation is due to be refreshed on or about 18 January 2011 for all the Management Services Center (MSC) Schedules: MOBIS, PES, LogWorld, Language, Environmental and Consolidated. Approximately 30 days after the solicitations are refreshed the GSA will issue all contract holders a modification which will reflect the changes that occurred in the solicitation refresh.

This MAS modification is unique to each Schedule, but all of the modifications will include a requirement to use the eMod system to request any future change to your contract. This is one of the basic changes that will be made in preparation for the conversion of GSA contracts to a digital format.

An email notice will be sent to the contract's contact for Contract Administration to get the MAS modification signed by an authorized negotiator. Please review and accept this modification as soon as possible to facilitate an accurate and functional contract.

The Point of Contact for this MAS modification is Barry Nelson (253) 931-7268 or barry.nelson@gsa.gov.

All Modification Requests Will Need to be Initiated in the eMod System

As mentioned above, the MOBIS, Environmental, Language, Consolidated and PES Schedules will require that modifications be initiated with the eMod system. The LogWorld Schedule has included this requirement for the past year, and the remaining schedules are now included.

It is critical that you are prepared for this new requirement by obtaining a digital certificate, if you don't already have one. See the next section for details on digital certificates. Paper or email modifications will no longer be accepted.

Past Articles for Review

Past editions are available at the Management Services Center website: www.gsa.gov/mgmtservices

Here is a list of articles in past editions:

January 2007

- ❖ *Why an Agency should use GSA Schedules!*
- ❖ *Disaster Recovery Purchasing by State and Local Governments*
- ❖ *Hands-on Program Management Training*

January 2008

- ❖ *Changes to the LogWorld Contract*
- ❖ *MOBIS News*
- ❖ *Some Ins and Outs of the Schedule Input Program (SIP)*
- ❖ *Marketing Tips and Tricks Corner*

April 2008

- ❖ *GSA is too expensive?*
- ❖ *Government Information*
- ❖ *Women-Owned Small Businesses*
- ❖ *Repair and Alterations added to LogWorld*

October 2008

- ❖ *Do you have questions about GSA?*

GSA is in the planning phase of converting all MAS to electronic documents. The MSC is working with other MAS centers to identify the best scanning and digitization processes for the conversion. In the meantime, GSA is preparing the modification process, so that your modification request blends seamlessly into the new electronic files.

All information and training related to the eMod system is located at the GSA Vendor Support Center (<http://vsc.gsa.gov>) and eOffer/eMod website (<http://eoffer.gsa.gov>). Modification requests initiated via the eMod process must be submitted by an authorized contract representative. The authorized contract representative must obtain a digital certificate, before initiating an eMod. A digital certificate is an electronic credential that identifies the individual, the organization and the web browser.

Please ensure that your authorized negotiators list is up to date. Otherwise, you will have issues using the eMod application. Also, be sure that the exact name on your digital certificate and email address matches the name and email address in your contract file. When there is not an exact match, the digital certificate will fail to be recognized by the eMod system. You may need to contact your GSA Contracting Officer to assist in making the contract and the digital certificate match.

Before submitting a new modification, contractors should refer to the modification instructions found at the websites listed below. In order to avoid a modification rejection, contractors need to provide all the requirements found under the appropriate modification instruction.

www.gsa.gov/mobis

www.gsa.gov/logworld

www.gsa.gov/engineering

www.gsa.gov/language

www.gsa.gov/environmental

www.gsa.gov/consolidated

GSA is going Paperless



The Digital Age is Here! Do you have your

Digital Certificate?

- ❖ *Repair and Alteration under LogWorld*
- ❖ *Government Information*

January 2009

- ❖ *Think Simplified (Not FAR Part 15)*
- ❖ *Delex Case Won't Hurt Schedules!*

October 2009

- ❖ *Management Services Center Reorganization*
- ❖ *Government Information*
- ❖ *LogWorld Update*
- ❖ *Language Update*
- ❖ *Eligibility to Use GSA Sources of Supply*
- ❖ *Marketing to the Federal Government*
- ❖ *Information on Service Contract Act (SCA)*

A digital certificate is required to access the eMod system. GSA has provided free digital certificates for the last year, but this offer will soon expire. Free digital certificates are available through the <http://eoffer.gsa.gov> website. It is expected, that free digital certificates will no longer be available after the end of January 2011. **NOTE:** A digital certificate issued by another agency will not work with the GSA's eOffer or eMod process.

Currently, two digital certificates may be issued per contractor DUNS. Any number beyond two will cost approximately \$120 per digital certificate. It is important that two individuals per company have a digital certificate, in case one person is unavailable.

Once you complete your application, it will take between 2-3 weeks for a digital certificate to be issued. Please keep this in mind, so that your company is not caught without a digital certificate.

It is imperative that contractors keep their digital certificates current. Digital certificates must be updated every two years. An expired digital certificate cannot be used to complete an electronic modification request.

Digital Certificate Facts:

- You only need one certificate for all schedules you hold.
- Digital certificates are not required for responding to RFQ's.
- Other issued digital certificates from DoD, The State Department, or any other source will not work for your GSA Schedule(s).
- It usually takes 2-3 weeks to receive a free digital certificate and about 1 week for a paid digital cert.
- Digital certificates are issued to an individual and must stay with the individual.
- Digital certificates can be transferred to other computers. Ensure you save it on a disk.

To check to see if you have digital certificates do the following:

If you are using Internet Explorer go to:

Tools=>Internet Options=>Content=>Certificates

If you are using Mozilla Fire Fox, go to:

Tools=>Options=>Advanced=>Encryption=>View Certificates

For Mac on Firefox, the path is Preferences>Advances>Encryption>View Certificates

If you have a valid certificate it should indicate "Your certificates Valid Cert: ACES Business Representative"

The Point of Contact for questions on Digital Certificates is Barry Nelson

Do you need Government Information?

Here is a great place to start!



USA.gov is the website for access to government agencies. Some of the categories you will find are:

- *Benefits and Grants*
- *Consumer Guides*
- *Defense and International*
- *Environment, Energy and Agriculture*
- *Family, Home and Community*
- *Health and Nutrition*
- *History and Arts*
- *Jobs and Education*
- *Money and Taxes*
- *Public Safety and Law*
- *Reference and General Government*
- *Science and Technology*
- *Voting and Elections*

Users are encouraged to use the search engine for everything from taxes, passports, federal benefits and countless other topics from multiple federal, state, local, territorial and tribal government sources. This website used to be FirstGov.gov but is improved with greater search capacity.

(253) 931-7268 or barry.nelson@gsa.gov.

Ideas for Successfully Obtaining Federal Business

As many of you know by now, just having a GSA Schedule contract does not automatically bring new federal business. In fact, we have noticed over the years that up to 40% of our contractors have no sales after two or more years. While obtaining federal business is a company's responsibility, we would like to see you be a successful contractor given the time invested in obtaining and maintaining a GSA Schedule Contract. Therefore, we hope the suggestions listed below are helpful. Your comments regarding the suggestions are also welcome.

- You should have a sensing of which government agencies might use your services. If not, we have extracted information from the Federal Procurement Data System (FPDS) on each of the MSC's assigned Schedules and can share it with you. While it is broad in nature, it does provide insights down to the Contracting Offices that used one or more of our six schedules. The Excel files contain a number of tabs with cascading levels of detail. The information is also broken out by State, City and Purchasing offices. To obtain this information, send an email to the business manager for your schedule, or email mgmt.services@gsa.gov, and let us know which schedule you possess. After reviewing the information, we also offer a follow-on telecon where we answer your questions and show you how to find contact information on the offices of interest.
- With the above knowledge, you need to develop a plan of who to visit in an agency. While many think of visiting the contracting officers, often the program managers are also worth visiting. It pays to do a little research on what issues the agency is facing and how your services can be utilized to help solve their challenges. An old adage is agencies buy what they need, and not what you sell, so it's best to understand their needs and the unique qualities of your services.
- Agencies are generally risk adverse, so it's important to develop a relationship with them, and typically that will take more than one or two visits. Agencies tend to work with companies they trust, based on past experience. You may even explore what professional service organizations their leadership belong to and consider membership in one of those organizations. Another option is to use the FPDS data we provide to see what other contractors are also working with an agency of interest. Consider teaming arrangements with them on future acquisitions. Consider contacting large companies where



your services might provide a needed niche. When approaching a large company, they generally want to know what you can do for them. If you're a small company, teaming with a large company, then the agency could get credit toward their small business goals, if the task orders awarded to you have your GSA Schedule contract number on it. If teaming is not an option, consider being a subcontractor. The only issue here is that you do not get credit toward your annual GSA Schedule sales requirement, nor can the agency get credit toward their small business goals. However, it does provide the agency an opportunity to see the quality of your work, and it is a step toward the trust /credibility factor they desire. Here are some specific things that companies tell us they expect from you as a potential subcontractor:

- Give examples of what you accomplished
 - More than 2-3 "core" strengths are suspect
 - Tell large business why they should hire you
 - Financial Commitments – show that you will meet pricing requirements
 - Key Personnel – identify who you will bring to the table
 - Maximize evaluation factors (do your research)
- Most successful companies in federal business have someone who is dedicated to working the federal sector. Other options may be hiring other companies to help uncover opportunities or coach you in how to market to the federal sector. Some of these companies also have insights into opportunities, before they hit the street. Some opportunities have long lead times, which provide needed time to assess your chances of winning the opportunity and developing your strategy of how to approach the agency. Some of these companies provide ways for contractors to more easily find each other for purposes of teaming. Only you can determine if the subscription price to some of these services is worth your investment.
 - Research websites that provide agency acquisition forecasts. Here are some suggested sites:
 - [EPA Forecast Data Base](#)
 - [Federal Acquisition Jump Station](#)
 - [Louisiana State University Libraries - Federal Acquisition Index](#)
 - [USA.gov](#)
 - [USA Spending](#)
 - As we work with companies, we realize that there are some very basic marketing efforts that are not being executed. Consider the following quick tips:

What is a Mass Modification (MOD)?

The Government initiates Mass Mods when uniform changes to large numbers of Federal Acquisition Service contracts are required. Examples include clause updates, Schedule changes and the addition of contract requirements. Mass Mods are identical for all recipients.

How does a contractor know a Mass Mod is available?

When a modification becomes available for contractor review, the Contractor point of contact is sent an email with a direct hyperlink to a portion of the FSS Vendor Support Center (VSC) website that contains the modification process. The email also contains a Personal Identification Number (PIN) associated with the contract number and specific modification for security and verification purpose.

- Put your GSA Contract Number on your business card.
- Make sure your business card is a material that can be easily written on. Customer agencies will take your card for their market research and they need to be able to write notes and memory joggers.
- Your GSA Schedule information should be prominent on your webpage. Within 1-2 clicks, a federal contracting officer should be able to get to all the information they need concerning your contract.
- Is your Point of Contact information on www.gsaelibrary.gsa.gov current? If it's not, your potential customers can't communicate with you and neither can GSA. This is the information we use to correspond with you.
- If you have success stories regarding federal work you've done – post that on your web page. This is one of the best ways to sell your services.
- Are you trying to decide if you should attend a trade show or event? If you don't know if your target customers will be there, you need to stay home and do some homework first.
- Trade Shows and events not only provide a means to dialogue with potential customers, but with potential teaming partners and prime contractors. To find out who is doing business on the schedule, go to the Vendor Support Center Webpage at <https://vsc.gsa.gov>. Once there, look under Business Opportunities and Schedule Sales Queries.

Doing Your Part to Help Green the Government

Advances in science and technology, the application of diverse government regulations and policies, and green business practices are all needed to advance sustainability.

In 2009, federal agencies were mandated to increase environmental performance by Executive Order (EO) 13514 on Federal Sustainability. The order expanded previous energy reduction and environmental performance requirements and requires that 95 percent of new contract actions including task and delivery orders, for products and services, are energy-efficient, water-efficient, biobased, non-ozone depleting, contain recycled content, or are non-toxic or less-toxic alternatives, where such products and services meet agency performance requirements.

This means that federal agencies must now make additional efforts to construct and maintain green buildings, reduce greenhouse gases, increase water-efficiency, reduce pollution and waste, and procure primarily green services. While, in general, it is easy to estimate the "green" content of a product, it is more of a challenge for an agency to identify and purchase



green services. But it can be done.

GSA offers the following advice to customers seeking to “green” their service requirements:

Assess Direct Environmental Impact: It is important to assess the environmental sustainability of contractors’ *direct* activities over the lifespan of a project. As a rule, contracting officers should assess how the proposed operation may impact the environment and how to mitigate any damage.

Assess Indirect Environmental Impact: Procurement officials should evaluate potential contractors on their ability to provide green services. The following list can help assess the ‘greenness’ of *indirect* activities performed by contractors.

- Do you have a recycling program?
- Do you have an energy-efficiency program?
- Do you have a water-conservation program?
- Does your facility use environmentally-friendly products?
- Does the company use environmentally-preferable products to provide its services?
- Do you have a corporate green citizenship policy such as:
 - Telework
 - Public transit subsidy
 - Do you provide training to your employees on corporate green initiatives?
- What other environmental initiatives have you undertaken, including:
 - Environment-related certifications
 - EPA voluntary partnerships
 - Support of a green suppliers network
 - Digitized practices
 - Other initiatives

As you develop your strategic plan for 2011 and beyond, take into consideration the importance of sustainable procurement and look at how your solutions are helping our federal customers meet the challenges ahead of them. If you are providing green services, or have best practices on operating in a green and environmentally manner – don’t be shy about it. Make sure you’re telling your story. It’s up to you to get the word out about your company’s contribution to sustainability – websites, your Advantage text files, business cards, and advertising – any way you communicate with customers.

MSC Organizational Update

Moving into the second year of separate pre-award and post-award functions, the MSC has recently combined the modification and option processing functions. The Modification Branch and Option Branch no longer exist. Now there are two post-award branches performing both modifications and option renewals. The two branches are organized by the last digit of the contract number. Kathy Jocoy leads the Post-award Branch 0-4 and Dave Lowry leads the Post-award Branch 5-9. This change is expected to increase contract continuity and contract officer/specialist responsibility for individual contracts. Four graduating interns have been



added to the post-award teams, greatly increasing the number of people working post award issues. The MSC expects to increase the number of options that are renewed 30 days prior to expiration and turn around modifications more quickly as the new year progresses.

The Intern Branch, now led by Kim McFall, continues to train new contract specialists. The first year interns focus on learning federal contracting and the Schedules post-award evaluation and award process. The second year interns learn the post-award functions. Both groups learn by working on select new offers, modifications and options.

The Pre-award Branch, led by Kris Montague, has expanded with the hiring of several new direct hire employees. These new employees are learning to evaluate and award schedules contracts, but will soon be expanding the capabilities of the Pre-award Branch. It is expected that changes to the evaluation process and addition of new employees will soon begin to make a dent in the huge backlog of offers.

The Business and Administrative Branch, led by Geri Haworth, continues to play a key role in working with contractors and customers to improve schedules usage and resultant sales. In addition, one branch is focused on process improvement actions, some of which will have a Schedules wide impact.

Brad Powers leads the Acquisition Solutions Branch, addressing regional networks contracting requirements and training customers in addressing complex solutions with Schedules.

Margaret Geer now leads the Acquisition Support Branch. She has responsibility for supporting the other acquisition branches and interfacing with the electronic systems at the front and back end of most contract actions.

The MSC continues to have the responsibility for six Schedules. Schedules “champions” are responsible for each Schedule. The Schedule champions are Kris Montague (for MOBIS and Language), Dave Lowry (for PES and LOGWORLD), and Kathy Jocoy (for Environmental and Consolidated).

With the addition of new contract specialists and the help of a few contract employees, the MSC is poised to make considerable progress toward reducing workload backlog and decreasing contract action cycle time, in 2011.

Marketing Tips, Tricks and Ideas

The purpose of this section is to provide, through a question (Q:) and answer (A:) format, answers to common questions we often receive, as well as to help you understand more about e-Tools that will benefit you and your potential customers! The nice things about GSA e-Tools are that they

are available 24/7.

Q: How do I know who my assigned GSA Contracting Officer is?

A: Go to the eLibrary website; search by contract number or by company name to get to the eLibrary webpage for your contract information. The assigned GSA Contracting Officer will be listed on the upper right corner of the webpage. www.gsaelibrary.gsa.gov

Q: If my contact information is not correct on eLibrary, how do I update it?

A: GSA eLibrary displays the current information GSA has recorded for your company. Changes in eLibrary need to be coordinated both in Central Contractor Registration (CCR) and other GSA data bases. A modification must be submitted for all contractual changes. "How to change your company information" is available at <http://www.region10.us/elibrarychanges> .

GSA Advantage! is the online shopping and ordering system that provides access to thousands of contractors and supplies (products) and services. Anyone can browse and compare products and services on *GSA Advantage!* Federal agencies can make purchases for products on *GSA Advantage!* Task Orders can be awarded for services on the eBuy on-line program. ***GSA Advantage! was recently updated. You can now search for services as well as products.*** www.gsaadvantage.gsa.gov

eBuy - This is where you as a schedule contractor can see opportunities that federal agencies post as Request for Quotes (RFQ) or Request for Information (RFI). GSA eBuy is a great acquisition management tool for federal agencies and a great tool for you to see posted opportunities and respond to agency requirements. Federal agencies can award Task Orders through eBuy to acquire services.

eBuy Tutorial – the eBuy website has links to "All about eBuy" and "eBuy Training" eBuy, www.gsa.gov/ebuy

Advantage Custom Search Engine (CSE) If you have ever had trouble finding if a certain service or labor category has been awarded on the GSA MAS Program, a custom search engine can help you narrow your search down. The Advantage Custom Search Engine is a Google Custom Search Engine that searches through thousands of GSA MAS contractor pricelists on the service schedules. <http://www.region10.us>

Basic Schedule Topics

SIP (Schedule Input Program) –

Q: What information do I include in the catalog that posts on GSA Advantage! and eLibrary Contract Terms and Conditions?

A: The MSC also created SIP Instructions especially for service contractors. There is a section for Text File content to see what information



Points of Contact

Professional Engineering
Services (PES) &

Language Services

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(253)931-7627

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Environmental Services

Staci Oetting

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Helen Jay

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LOGWORLD Services &
Consolidated Services

Maureen Duckworth

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to include in your SIP Text file document that turns into the “catalog” on Advantage! and the “Contract Terms and Conditions” on eLibrary.

Q: How do I post contract award information?

A: First, you will need to register your contract on the Vendor Support Center website, <http://vsc.gsa.gov>, to create a password that will recognize the person entering contract data in the program. Then follow SIP Instructions to upload contract information.

Q: How do I change on-line contract information in the Advantage “catalog” and the eLibrary “contract terms and conditions”?

A: First, you will need to follow modification instructions available on each schedule website to initiate request to modify contract. **After** approved Request for Modification to change/update any contract information, you will need to update SIP Text File and upload through SIP. Approved information uploaded through SIP replaces on-line contract information in both Advantage catalog and eLibrary contract terms and conditions.

Reference Links:

SIP Instructions – www.gsa.gov/mgmtservices

Above is the link to the SIP Instructions developed by the MSC, especially for our service contractors. Coming soon is a link to the MSC SIP Instructions on each of our respective schedule web pages.

The Vendor Support Center (VSC), <http://vsc.gsa.gov>, also, has SIP Instructions available for both service providers as well as product providers. Visit the VSC website for more vendor information and the SIP Instructions they provide under the link “Getting on Advantage”.

GSA Multiple Award Schedules Desk Reference/Guide,
<http://go.usa.gov/rZQ>

A handy reference guide on how federal agencies would go about using schedules for their acquisition needs. The guide includes information on ordering procedures, Contract Teaming Arrangements (CTAs), Blanket Purchase Agreements and applicable Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) clauses.

For more information, please visit: <http://eoffer.gsa.gov/> or call the e-Tools Help Desk: 866-472-9114.