Email as a Service (EaaS) Blanket Purchase Agreement (BPA) Frequently Asked Questions

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Overview

This Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document is meant to be a supplementary guide to the Email as a Service (EaaS) Blanket Purchase Agreement (BPA) Ordering Guide and other overview materials. This document will be periodically updated and published on www.gsa.gov/eaas based on additional FAQs that are received. These questions come from government organizations that have questions about the BPA.

Points of Contact

Inbox for General Cloud BPA Questions
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FAQs

EaaS Services

1   *Q: What the does the offering look like and what are the service options?*
   A: There are five service offerings (EaaS, Office Automation, Records Management, Migration Services, Integration Services), available under four delivery models (Government Community Cloud, Private Cloud, Secret Enclave, and Public Cloud). There are two pricing options, US and Non-US based pricing. Visit gsa.gov to view what combinations of offerings are available under the 16 industry partners: http://www.gsa.gov/portal/getMediaData?mediaId=148879

2   *What are the general benefits of using the EaaS BPA vs. an open market procurement?*
   A: The EaaS BPA offers pre-competed pricing and potential for additional competitive discounts at the Task Order level; these represent further discounts from Schedule 70 and EaaS BPA pricing. This is a primary benefit of using a pre-competed BPA instead of an open market procurement. The BPA offers vetted cloud solutions, since the essential characteristics of cloud computing were used in the evaluation of awards. There are a variety of Contract Line Item Numbers (CLINs) available for Email as a Service and related services, based on tiered

pricing options based on number of mailboxes. The task order competition timeframe is significantly less than conducting a full and open competition. Additionally, the way the pricing is established, ordering organizations are only billed by the mailbox - meaning that costs are incurred only for what is used. Other benefits include:

a) Reduced costs through pre-competed solutions and defined requirements
b) Cloud emails solutions are estimated to provide up to $1 million in annual savings for every 7,500 users, based on GSA's migration of enterprise email to the cloud
c) Helps to avoid large up-front capital investment costs
d) EaaS task orders can be issued right after award
e) Shortened acquisition lifecycle – full and open competition can take 8-14 months, awarding on the EaaS BPA can take just weeks
f) Reduced likelihood of protests

3 *Q: Are Lots 2 (Office Automation) and 3 (Records Management) mutually exclusive of Lot 1 (EaaS) but inclusive of lots 4 & 5 (Migration and Integration)?*
A: In order for a vendor to be considered eligible to offer Lots 2 and 3, they needed to be awarded Lots 1, 4, and 5 which were mandatory offerings. Lots 2 and 3 were optional offerings, meaning that the vendors could choose to include or exclude Lots 2 and 3 are part of their offering.

4 *Q: What if my agency has legacy software that needs to be integrated with the new EaaS solution? How do I obtain services to integrate applications?*
A: There are development and technical maintenance services associated with extending the Email solution, available under the Integration Services offering, including services across eleven (11) labor categories to assist your agency.

Pre-Acquisition Assistance

5 *Q: What documents and other forms of assistance are available to help me learn more about the EaaS BPA Offering, help me with acquisition, and estimate the cost and level of effort for implementing a cloud email solution?*
A: The EaaS Service Line Manager will support customers throughout the ordering process. Documents and templates will be available for the GSA EaaS BPA including an ordering guide with step-by-step instructions for orders using the BPA, business plan templates, cost estimator, and other useful templates

that will be available on the [EaaS BPA webpage](#). [Assisted Acquisition Services (AAS)](#) are also available for more customized, acquisition, project management, and financial management services for large and/or complex Information Technology and Professional Services solutions. If you do not see any of the documents that you want, please contact the Points of Contact listed at the beginning of this document.

Ordering and Pricing

6   *Q: What is the overall ordering process?*
A: Please refer to the EaaS Ordering guide for more in depth information on how to order with the EaaS BPA. The first general step is to determine the scope of services. Second, develop documentation in preparation for a Task Order. After soliciting BPA holders by issuing a Task Order, the next step is to conduct a Task Order evaluation and award the Task Order.

7   *Q: What is the expected turnaround time from the time the procurement request is released to award?*
A: The time frame depends on a couple of factors, but primarily depends on the speed with which the ordering agency can complete the Task Order process. A rule of thumb could be 60-90 days, shorter if a Task Order can be issued, evaluated, and awarded more quickly by the ordering agency. Below are factors that influence the Task Order timeline:
   a   Complexity of government requirements
   b   Time period given for Task Order responses (e.g. 2 weeks to 30 days)
   c   Timeline for government ordering activity to award based on responses (evaluation)
   d   Complexity of evaluation
Awards can be made prior to granting an ATO so there is no waiting period prior to granting an ATO for this process.

8   *Q: What kind of fee is there to use the EaaS BPA?*
A: Government organizations ordering using the BPA do not owe a fee to GSA for using the BPA. All fees, including the Schedule 70 fee, have already been built in the EaaS BPA prices, and the industry partner is responsible for making all fee payments to GSA.

9   *Q: What kinds of discounts can I expect to see?*
 A: Since this BPA was built on Schedule 70 - which offers pricing that is discounted from commercial offerings - the pre-competed prices available on the

EaaS BPA are even further discounted from the Schedule 70 prices. At the task order level, government organizations can (and are encouraged to) negotiate additional pricing discounts with industry partners. This pricing will be the "third bite out of the apple" and could be very competitive. For EaaS, pricing is tiered based on mailbox size (<10K, 10K-50K, >50K).

10 *When does the clock start on the pricing? For example, if an order is placed in 2014, will we pay Base Year pricing, or Option Year 1 pricing?*
A: The Base Period (2 years) for the EaaS BPA began on 9/1/2012. For 2 (two) years following, pricing proposed by industry partners cannot exceed the base year pricing ceiling. Likewise, if a Task Order is issued between 9/1/12 through 8/31/ 14, prices proposed cannot exceed the Option Year 1 ceiling prices. The prices proposed by industry partners can always be lower than the ceiling prices.

11 *What is the cost structure and billing schedule for the BPA?*
A: Costs are billed monthly for provisioned mailboxes. Mailboxes that are de-provisioned are not included in the monthly billed price.

12 *How would we structure an award that would allow a federated environment with multiple organizations to engage different lots according to different time frame?*
A: This can be done at the Task Order level by establishing different timeframes for different components in the Task Order documentation (for example, a Statement of Work (SOW)). Identifying these timeframes up front provide the industry partners information about the scope and length of the tasks to be completed, and will allow you to compete all of the work up front, without having to issue multiple Task Orders. Assistance is available from the EaaS Service Line Manager and Cloud Program Management Office (PMO) to help you outline your SOW.

13 *Q: What is the difference between Executive and Standard migrations?*
A: The main differences between Executive and Standard migrations are the level and type of training and support required.

Executive Support includes:
- Dedicated one-on-one Executive Training on target system
- Dedicated one-on-one mobile device transition (except for sub-lot 1c)
- Follow Up Training session
- Guaranteed incident response within 30 minutes

Standard transition support includes:
- Training by webinar on target system

- Follow up training sessions
- Collaboration site for training, FAQs, timelines
- Guaranteed incident response within 1 business day

Requirements - General

14 *How would we customize our requirements outside of those listed in the BPA?*
A: You can provide additional details and scope in a SOO/SOW when soliciting vendors at the Task Order level. If additional services are needed for integration and map to the existing labor categories, there is a Lot for Integration Services. If needed, you can remove requirements at the Task Order level that your organization does not require. If you are indicating how you are configuring the solution, this can be done within the scope of the BPA. If you are asking for services/technical requirements outside of scope, this cannot be done under the EaaS BPA and may require an additional Task Order on a different acquisition vehicle (such as IT Schedule 70 or GSA GWACs).

Competition

15 *Q: Are there any cases in groups where there is not competition for the offerings?*
A: The EaaS BPA offers a wide variety of services with competitive offerings through 16 industry partners. All of the seven (7) awardee groups have multiple awards, ranging from 2-16 awards per group. Most solutions are offered by multiple industry partners: Microsoft Exchange (offered by 4 industry partners), Office 365 (offered by 5 industry partners), Google (offered by 7 industry partners), and Zimbra (offered by 4 industry partners). Thirteen (13) solutions offer Office Automation, and six (6) solutions offer Records Management.

16 *Q: Is there a requirement to specify which solution you would prefer?*
A: No, there is no requirement to indicate a preferred solution (e.g. Google, Zimbra) in the Task Order. All of the offered solutions have been vetted for the five (5) essential cloud computing characteristics as well as the technical requirements in the BPA. Users are required to issue RFQs to all BPA holders within an awardee group unless the user completes a brand name Justification and Approval (J&A). Please note that identifying a preferred solution and completing a brand name J&A may slow the process and expose the user to the risk of protests.

17 *Q: What happens after the 5 years of the EaaS BPA Period of Performance? What if we want to move out of the cloud or move to another provider?*
A: There is a requirement to transition/export data from the cloud solution in the case of termination or agency need - "The Quoter shall transfer data either on demand or in case of BPA or order termination for any reason." (Data Management, BPA pg. 38).

18 *Q: How are migration costs calculated?*
A: There is a one-time price per mailbox to be migrated to the target email solution; there are two (2) options - standard migration, or executive migration. There are three (3) tiers of pricing based on the number of mailboxes migrated (<10K, 10K-50K, >50K).

Technical Requirements
19 *Q: What are the network requirements?*
A: GSA worked with DHS to vet multiple internet connections that the providers could support for agencies to work through the network to get access to cloud services. For example, one option is to route traffic back through the agency network. Each provider had to provide at least one DHS-acceptable method of network routing. The BPA outlines all of the options available.

Security

20 *Q: Does my agency need an Authority to Operate (ATO) for the EaaS BPA before awarding a task order? Or before completing an order?*
A: As the BPA is written, an agency can award a task order before an ATO is granted, however, a provisional Authority to Operate (ATO) is required before fulfilling an order (e.g. provisioning mailboxes). If desired, an agency could identify in the Task Order that an ATO is required prior to Task Order Award.

21 *Q: Who is responsible for paying for the Security A&A documentation and activities?*
A: The provider has to pay for implementing the security controls, documenting the security controls, assessing the security controls and completing the package for everything offered within the provider's solution. If an Agency chooses to do so, they can pay for any of these functions; however, the provider should have accounted for those costs as part of the overall solution pricing.

22 *Q: What are the security and A&A requirements? How does this fit in with FedRAMP?*

A: The security and A&A requirements for the EaaS BPA are outlined in sections C.5.2 and D.8 of the Conformed BPA document. All awardees are required to submit FedRAMP documentation 180 days after the BPA award. The use of FedRAMP templates and security control baselines is required, but the JAB process is not mandatory as there are multiple ways for vendors to be listed in the FedRAMP repository. The JAB-approved FedRAMP baseline included controls that went above and beyond NIST Moderate (298 controls vs. 250 for NIST) in order to be FedRAMP compliant. If the JAB process is followed, a provisional ATO can be granted so the agency can grant their own ATO. An agency can use a provisional ATO to start provisioning mailboxes. Agencies can also add their own additional controls on top of the baseline FedRAMP controls to provide more stringent A&A requirements to fit agency needs. Please visit http://www.fedramp.gov for more information on FedRAMP.

23 *Q: My agency has unique security requirements in addition to the baseline requirements in the BPA and in the FedRAMP baseline controls. Can I provide additional controls?*

A: Yes, you can add additional controls at the Task Order level.