

Client Enrichment Series – Reimbursable Work Authorizations (RWAs) Q & As



Question #1: On the cost estimates, it doesn't seem that GSA has any incentive to give agencies the best price since their fee is based upon the amount of the estimate. A higher estimate generates a higher return for GSA. What recourse do agencies have?

Answer:

Agencies have the option to fund or not fund any project according to the Independent Government Estimate. GSA is obligated to provide a fair and reasonable cost estimate for proposed projects. Through the course of project planning, the customer has the opportunity to sit down and review the cost estimate with the person who created it so that everyone can mutually understand how each part of the estimate relates to the project goals.

Question #2: Can we combine for multiple buildings for overtime utilities?

Answer:

At this time, this option is limited to a few agencies under a pilot program. GSA is looking into this opportunity for more agencies in the future. However, nothing has been expanded at this time.

Question #3: Is CM mandatory for projects or can local GSA PM's handle this role?

Answer:

GSA normally contracts out construction management services. If a GSA PM is providing a CM service in lieu of it being contracted, the relevant labor for this service is directly chargeable to the RWA and the project.

Question #4: So GSA puts together their own RWA estimate, which they provide to the requesting agency for obligation purposes. Then, GSA goes out and gets the actual bids/quotes from contractors for the project?

Answer:

In general terms, our process is: (1) customer articulates a requirement; (2) GSA PM works to understand requirement and provide a relevant Independent Government Estimate; (3) customer provides RWA for the estimated cost; (4) GSA executes a

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procurement action.

This procurement action might be a negotiated award, where an RFP is released to multiple potential bidders. It also might be issuing a task order to a pre-defined IDIQ contractor. It could also be any of a number of different types of actions (i.e., negotiated with an 8(a) company, solicited among all comers (full and open), solicited among schedule holders, etc.

Question #5: Are you saying the only place to get copies of invoices is <http://finance.gsa.gov/billview>? I was of the understanding this was closed and the information would be on eRETA? eRETA provides just the original obligation that is of little use. Please clarify.

Answer:

Billview is still the active customer-facing application to provide copies of RWA bills. In July 2013, Phase II of the new Billing and Accounts Receivable (BAAR) system will be implemented which will replace Billview and include more robust information about all customer billings (not just RWA bills). The eRETA business line is in discussions with the BAAR team to identify how best to also make some billing information readily available in eRETA, in addition to BAAR, to allow eRETA to be a one-stop shop.

Question #6: How do we get our GSA representatives to respond in 5 business days? It takes sometimes months to get signatures.

Answer:

GSA representatives are required to input the RWA into pending status in RETA and to submit a receipt letter to the client agency within 5 business days of receipt of the RWA. This requirement has nothing to do with GSA representatives signing to accept the RWA.

Question #7: I understand that the 60 day close-out process can be circumvented if the GSA representative creates a manual close out letter. Can you please make this known to all of the GSA representatives?

Answer:

Thank you for the suggestion.

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Question #8: What should be done after the project is fully closed out and the local GSA representative asks you to submit a new RWA for additional expenses that a vendor submitted, even though this project was closed out?

Answer:

For annual appropriations from a client agency, the fiscal year identity of the funding remains available to adjust obligations and pay invoices or expenses, for a period of 5 fiscal years after the end of the fiscal year in which the funds were appropriated. GSA normally does not close out a project if there are unpaid invoices. However, in the event the project funding has expired and the RWA is closed out, a new RWA may be required to pay for such an expense. The only exception is in cases of antecedent liability wherein the additional costs were the result of unforeseen circumstances arising under the contract.