

GSA Quality Partnership Council (QPC)

Q&A Sheet

Meeting Date (virtual) : June 10, 2021

(This sheet excludes some questions that were answered live by our speakers. See [recording](#) for all live Q&A.

WORKPLACE 2030

Jane Schuster, Workplace Strategist, GSA Public Buildings Service

Question: Can we receive the listing of IDIQ design firms for each region? If not, how can we receive this information?

You can find a list of the PBS Regional Workplace executive teams on gsa.gov. Here is a link to the [PBS Regional Workplace Executive Network](#). Each regional point of contact should be able to provide their respective design IDIQ information.

Question: How does one get furniture (in particular seating) approved and into the Showcase on 18th and F streets? If you are interested in potentially providing furniture using a bailment agreement for a one-year period with GSA, you can reach out to the Public Buildings Service Workplace Team at workplace@gsa.gov.

Question: We would like to engage with Jane Schulster on the workplace & technology showcase. Can you provide her contact details? You can reach Jane directly at jane.schuster@gsa.gov or reach the larger Center for Workplace Strategy Team at workplace@gsa.gov.

MULTIPLE AWARD SCHEDULES (MAS)

Meg Sutliff and Shaun Kelly, MAS Branch Chiefs

Question: With the trend for contracting officers to meet small business goals by purchasing from dealers with their own packaged office schedules, the smallest of small dealers in markets with minimum federal market potential are being left out who previously got business as a subcontractor under their large business manufacturer's multiple award schedule. The business does not justify the great investment in resources for them to get a multiple award schedule. Therefore CO's reach out to dealers with GSA schedules many states away who do have packaged office schedules. Will you consider this problem and develop programs to assist these smallest of small business dealers get their own multiple award schedules? Please offer your feedback related to the Packaged Office Furniture SIN in the [Packaged Furniture Audit Survey](#)

Question: Will there be more automation to make mods instant? Other contract organizations process in 24 hours. Curious of the long-term goal. That's the hope. The [Contract Acquisition Life-cycle Management System \(CALM\)](#) initiative is exploring the possibility of automated modifications for RAM type mods.

Question: What is "traditional furniture"? Does IT Furniture or LAN/Server Racks fit into this category?

Yes, IT Furniture and LAN/Server Racks could fit under the Furniture & Furnishings Category. Please reach out to your Contracting Officer to determine the best SIN for your products.

ECONOMIC PRICE ADJUSTMENTS

Meg Sutliff and Shaun Kelly, MAS Branch Chiefs

Question: For a "Products with Discount" EPA submittal - On TAB A of the PPT, should the Commercial Pricing that is placed in Column O be the currently awarded Commercial Pricing, or should it be the new/proposed Commercial Pricing? Tab A should include the data for ALL of your GSA offerings as though your modification request was already approved so the new/proposed Commercial Pricing.

Question: Alternatively to an EPA, my organization is contemplating a "temporary" order surcharge based on unexpected commodity/raw material costs. Is there an eMod request type for a temporary surcharge? Are we able to apply a surcharge to GSA Schedule contract orders? The modification type would be "Terms & Conditions". A surcharge can be considered as long as you are also applying that surcharge commercially. The best thing to do is to discuss with your Contracting Officer.

Question: What is the difference between clause I-FSS-969 and the economic price adjustment (EPA) clause 552.216-70? I-FSS-969 is based on either an agreed upon escalation rate, ie. an annual % increase or market indicator, ie. Employment Cost Index that was agreed upon at contract award or the time these products/services were added to the contract. The EPA clause 552.216-70 allows price increases for your product and/or services already on your MAS contract. 552.216-70 is applicable when the vendor has a published commercial price list. Price Increases can be requested when a change to the commercial price list is made, provided all other requirements of 552.216-70 are met.

Question: I am not able to get an EPA in the first 12 months of each option. Is that correct? That is correct, on or after the first 12 months of the contract period (5-years).

Question: If the first 5-year option period is accepted by the contractor and GSA, then does the contractor have to wait a full 12 month period before submitting an EPA just like the base period? Yes. Each option period is considered to be a separate "Contract Period". However, if a contractor is expecting an EPA to be required within that first 12 months of the new contract period, the contractor would be required to notify the Contracting Officer 60 days prior to the expiration of the current contract period.

Question: With the interpretation that the 5-year option is a separate contract period, does this mean that no EPA's will be allowed in the 12-month period following the exercise of the option? Correct, you cannot request an EPA in the first 12 months (1st year of the new option period). You can request on or after the first 12 months of the contract period.

Question: If our contract was approved for another 5 years and the contract start date was March 4 of this year, we are not able to submit an EPA Modification until March of 2022 - the 12 month period that was mentioned? Assuming you requested an EPA adjustment of 10% for all products, you will not be able to submit your next EPA until March, 2022.

INTEGRATED WORKPLACE ACQUISITION CENTER (IWAC) PROJECTS

John Breen, Branch Chief IWAC Projects Team

Question: How do you confirm you are comparing apples to apples on furniture quotes? The furniture industry has several grade levels.

We evaluate all quotes per the instructions contained in the Request for Quote. We generally provide a Question and Answer period so vendors can seek clarification of the RFQ prior to its closing.

Question: Is there a National Stock Number planned for DLA for seating.

DLA and GSA co-manage the NSN program, GSA has management authority over commercial items vs DLA for more military specific items. We, in IWAC, manage the 71 Federal Supply Group.

Question: Will IWAC have a process to accept product recommendations for furnishings that lend themselves to "Office In a Box" consideration? Will there be technical requirements that are developed for the different categories of products that might apply - e.g. office chair, work surface/desk, office tables, file etc?

This is a Public Buildings Service-led emerging service, but we will partner with IWAC on this, along with Legal, HR, and other GSA business lines. At this point, it is too early to answer the technical requirements for the furniture portion of your question.

Question: Manufacturers typically incur additional costs to deliver products direct to a residential address as opposed to a commercial office location. Where manufacturers are not currently charging additional freight charges on their contracts, will there be the ability to charge additional freight for residential drops? We are in the early stages of exploration regarding home delivery. This is valuable insight that we appreciate. We will be certain to continue to gather and consider industry expertise in this area.

Question: As data/analytics is a focus, is there a want for furniture that has anonymized utilization technology as a capability? That is certainly on the table. We are interested in new technologies and learning more about what we don't know and what capabilities exist.

Question: Do you have any plans for installing furniture for Office in a Box? We are still in the early stages of exploration, but at this point, we are not planning to provide installation of Home Office in a Box furniture. That is subject to change, but currently the thought would be that any sort of installation/assembly would be the responsibility of the individual receiving the product. (Realizing there may be some reasonable accommodations made.)

AIR FORCE ENTERPRISE-WIDE FURNITURE

Mark Voorhis, Contracting Officer

Question: I thought the Air Force was going to start buying off the schedules - are they only using BPAs?

The USAF has not committed to a single buying method, but rather evaluates all possible courses of action before developing our acquisition strategy.

Question: Are the Air Force BPAs direct with small business manufacturers or did it include the Packaged office contract holders from Dealers? The Air Force seating program has a mix of manufactures and dealers providing small business manufactured products.

Question: Can we get Mr. Voorhis contact information? mark.voorhis.2@us.af.mil

Question: Would the Air Force consider piggybacking or emulating the Navy BPA furniture program?

The Air Force did piggyback on the NAVY BPAs for the Air Force Executive Office and Conference Furniture II (EOFC II) Program. We try to look at all options when developing our programs.

CATALOG MANAGEMENT

Mike Shepherd, Director, Catalog Management Office (CMO), Josh Royko, Data Branch Chief, CMO, and Peter Han, Business Requirements Branch Chief, CMO

Question: Are you looking for early adopters for the new Common Catalog Platform (CCP) ? My company is willing to volunteer or provide manufacturer feedback as a MAS Contractor. We're not quite there yet but when we are we will definitely be reaching out to our industry partners for manufacturer feedback.

Question: Does GSA plan to conduct outreach with industry to increase the number of original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) participating in the Verified Products Portal (VPP)? What has been the reaction to VPP from OEM's outside the toner/copier industry? We are working to increase the number and have a few in the queue for onboarding! Overall the reaction has been very positive and we have a lot of interest as we get the word out more.

Question: In talking about the VPP, when you say "Wholesaler" is that the same as "Dealer?" When we use the term "wholesaler" we're referring to major national wholesalers/distributors with a physical distribution center/network, such as Essendant, SP Richards, Grainger, MSC and is not the same as a Dealer.

Question: How are we able to be a part of the working group with the CCP? We will be working with the GSA IWAC Business Development Team to establish the working group. Look for an email from IWAC or QPC regarding this. You can also send us an email at CatalogManagement@gsa.gov

Question: Did I understand correctly that in relation to the CCP, manufacturers will be required to provide an Excel spreadsheet source document for each of their price lists? The CCP will be for both MAS Offerors and MAS Contractors, as well as the GSA Acquisition Workforce. So if you are a manufacturer who holds a MAS contract, and you want to take advantage of the CCP capabilities/you will be required to provide your pricelist as a detailed catalog file (spreadsheet). If you are a manufacturer and do NOT hold a MAS contract, nothing is required of you in the CCP. Manufacturers who produce COTS products are encouraged to participate in the VPP, which is voluntary."

Question: Is there a spreadsheet we can fill out to upload to the VPP or do we have to type in all information one product at a time? After creating a VPP account for your company, you will be able to load your product data manually via comma-separated values (CSV) file or automatically via an application program interface (API) connection from your system to VPP. If you're interested in participating, please email VPP@gsa.gov.

Question: Are the CCP postings going to be similar to the VPP postings on GSA Advantage? In the short term, the VPP data collected from manufacturers and wholesalers will be used to augment COTS products displayed in vendor-provided catalogs on GSA Advantage. In the long term, vendors will manage their catalog details via the CCP, where we will also make VPP data available (as applicable) for populating vendor-provided catalogs prior to posting on GSA Advantage."

SMALL BUSINESS COMPLIANCE AND GOALING

Deborah Eble, CFCM, Procurement Analyst, GSA Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization

Question: Can a Small Business use a Large Business as a subcontractor in any way for a 100% Small Business Set Aside? i.e. a relocation vendor (75%) needs a move manager (25%) for a specific project. The small business would have to comply with FAR Clause 52.219-14, Limitations on Subcontracting. This clause is included in all contracts set-aside for small business and identifies the percentage limits based upon what the acquisition is for (services, supplies, construction).

Question: How do you assess consistent efficient contract performance in the context of small business goals? When referencing FAR 52.219-8 which states “the contractor hereby agrees to carry out this policy to the fullest extent consistent with efficient contract performance”, efficient contract performance relates to what the acquisition is for and what you are subcontracting for to meet the needs of the government. For example, the government’s requirement could require a certain top level security clearance and your market research reveals there are no HUBZone small businesses who meet the security clearance requirement.”

If this question is referring to how performance is evaluated after award, contract performance assessment is outlined in FAR 19.706. The standard is demonstrating that your company has made a “good faith effort” to maximize opportunities. In other words, did you do what you said you were going to do in the subcontracting plan? Were there extenuating circumstances outside of your control? “Good faith effort” as well as “failure to make a good faith effort” are outlined in the SBA regulations at 13 CFR 125.3(d).

Question: We see many RFQ that come out that indicate 100% small business set aside with large business MFRs product specified. While we try to clarify if the Non-Manufacturing Rule applies to allow SB bidders to bid on projects utilizing large business product solutions, many customers are not clear on requirements or don't respond to requests for clarifications. How should we respond to bids that are Small Business Set Aside? When an industry partner references specific FAR citations, contracting officers are typically appreciative. We recommend citing the FAR and the references to the non-manufacturer rule when responding to a contracting officer.