

Client Enrichment Series – Q & A



Topic: eRETA Overview (Basics)

Presenters: Steve Sacco and Jeffrey Franz

Dates of Presentations: May 2019 - August 2019

Additional eRETA Resources:

For a host of eRETA resources - see our website - www.gsa.gov/ereta

For specific process questions/matters, please send your queries to eRETA@gsa.gov

For upcoming eRETA classes, see the Client Enrichment Series website - www.gsa.gov/ces

For a closed-caption video of our eRETA Overview session, see our [YouTube video](#)

Jump to a Topic Section:

[Applying For Access, Access Roles and Logging In to the System](#)

[Timelines, Timing and Expectation Setting](#)

[Training, Resources and Support](#)

[Routing, Collaboration Notification and RWA Letter Communication](#)

[Work Requests, Estimates, and Conversion \(or Not\) to RWAs](#)

[RWA Types and Terminology](#)

[Digital Signatures](#)

[eRETA and Overtime Utilities](#)

[What You Can View in the eRETA Application / What Can You Upload To It Or Export Out of It?](#)

[Financial Data, Allocation of Funding and Invoicing](#)

[Modifications, Changes, Amendments and Other Tweaks...](#)

[Codes and Fields](#)

[Templates and Clones](#)

[Miscellaneous](#)

[Applying For Access, Access Roles and Logging In to the System](#)

Client Enrichment Series – Q & A

Q1. Is my eReta user name my government email address?

- A. Yes. eRETA uses your government email address as your User ID. Should your email address ever change, then send an email to eRETA@gsa.gov so we can update your ID.

Q2. When I try to log in (I have already received my password), I receive a message that says I have an invalid user name (even when I try to change my password). Who do I call to get this fixed?

- A. For log-in or password issues please contact COPBSApp@gsa.gov or (866) 367-7878.

Q3. For a manager with multiple employees seeking eRETA access - Can a higher level manager submit a consolidated request for many employees or do they need to each submit an individual request?

- A. eRETA applications cannot be consolidated. Each application must be reviewed by the applicant's supervisor and the supervisor must send each application separately with a note that they reviewed and affirm the applicant's need for access.

Q4. Will people without eRETA access be able to input funding information in eRETA to complete the equivalent of page 1 of the RWA form?

- A. No, only someone with Data Entry access in eRETA would be able to input data on the Work Request (equivalent of page 1 of the RWA Form) and send to GSA for acceptance into an RWA.

Q5. It looks like we need to get our budget office access to eRETA, and not just the project managers?

- A. That's often a good way to break it up, and mirrors how agencies typically completed the manual form in the past. For example your project managers could complete the first tab of the Work Request (titled "Customer Information") and your Budget office could enter data on the "Billing Information", "Accounting Details" and "Customer Approval" tabs. It depends how you want to divvy things up internally.

Q6. Can you have access to more than one agency?

- A. You may only have eRETA access to one Agency (DHS, DOJ, etc.), but if you need access to multiple bureaus *within* an agency (FBI, DEA, ATF, etc.) you can request access to multiple Agency Bureau (AB) codes in your eRETA application.

Q7. What about access within eRETA? People initiating work requests may not have financial authority to sign an RWA or enter financial billing information.

- A. We allow flexibility in terms of who enters data on the Work Request. If your project folks should not be filling out financial information, then your project folks could fill out the first tab ("Customer Information") and your financial folks would fill out the remaining tabs which are more financial in nature.

Q8. Does the person who enters the work request have to be same person that enters the RWA request? or can multiple users work on a specific RWA?

- A. Multiple users can edit the same Work Request or RWA if their user IDs each have access to the same Agency Bureau Code. The only limitation is the multiple users can't edit the same WR/RWA simultaneously, the system will inform the second user that the WR/RWA is currently locked by another user.

Client Enrichment Series – Q & A

Q9. How do I get access to eRETA? Is access granted thru email with a link to register?

A. You can visit www.gsa.gov/ereta and navigate to the “How Do I Access eRETA” page for instructions on how to gain access.

Q10. Whom can I contact regarding login in to eRETA? I am now listed as an invalid user.

A. If you already have eRETA access and are having issues logging in, contact COPBSApp@gsa.gov or 866-367-7878.

Q11. Can we request data entry access when we register for eRETA?

A. Yes, you have a choice between requesting Read Only for “Viewing and Reporting” or Data Entry, which adds the ability to “Create and Amend” WRs/RWAs.

Q12. In order to get Data Entry access to eRETA, we just email eRETA@gsa.gov and CC our manager?

A. Visit www.gsa.gov/ereta for information on gaining eRETA access or switching access roles within eRETA (from Read Only to Data Entry or vice versa).

Q13. I am a federal employee and my email is in the “.org” format so the online application won’t accept it. What should I do?

A. If you are a federal employee and your government email uses the “.org” format, send us the Excel version of the application (found at www.gsa.gov/ereta on the “How Do I access eRETA” page under Step 1, Option 2).

Q14. I created an eReta account a few weeks ago with my government email address, however, when I tried to reset my password, I keep getting “Invalid User Error”.

A. If you have eRETA access and are having login issues, contact COPBSApp@gsa.gov or 866-367-7878.

Q15. When filling out my eRETA application it stated my phone numbers were incorrect. Whom should I contact?

A. Send an email to eRETA@gsa.gov and we will assist.

Q16. I would like to upgrade my access from Read Only to Data Entry so I can enter/submit Work Requests and RWAs to GSA. What should I do?

A. To upgrade your access simply send an email to eRETA@gsa.gov requesting to change roles, and make sure to copy your supervisor on the email so we know they approve your role change.

Q17. I registered for eRETA last year and have access to the system but I have not entered any RWAs. What is the web address to log into the system?

A. The URL to bookmark for logging into the PBS External Portal (where the eRETA application is located) is <https://extportal.pbs.gsa.gov>.

Q18. Do we have to request a password every time we need to access eReta?

Client Enrichment Series – Q & A

- A. The log in process to GSA's external Portal is a two-factor authentication log-in, meaning you'll have a permanent password you use every time and then a secondary password is emailed to you each day to finish the second log-in. We are finalizing an app where the second password can be sent to your phone instantly instead of waiting for an email.

Q19. We have multiple PMs on our Facilities Team. That said, should we have multiple data entry users? Or just have 1?

- A. That is a program requirement decision based on your business line's workload. We do not recommend any minimal capacity as all agencies operate based on their specific needs.

Q20. Is the Agency POC, the data entry person, the person that has to sign the RWA, or the person involved in project development?

- A. The Agency POC is the individual who will be helping develop the requirements with GSA, so likely your local Project Manager associated with the project or service.

Q21. Can you enter more than one Agency POC email address in eRETA?

- A. Yes there are three different fields you can use to enter an email address which will receive automated communications regarding the progress of the WR/RWA: 1) The Agency POC field, 2) the Agency RWA Mailbox field, and 3) The Agency Billing Contact field.
- B. Additionally you will enter the email of the Funds Certifying Official. While this email address will receive an email to apply digital signature to an RWA / amendment, it will not receive automated communications regarding the progress of the WR/RWA.

Q22. Does my Fund Certifying Official need access to eRETA to digitally sign RWAs?

- A. Your Fund Certifying Official does not need eRETA access to digitally sign the RWA. They simply need a valid government email address and can digitally sign RWAs from their government laptop, tablet or smartphone.

Q23. Will my Funds Certifying Official sign the paper form and then someone uploads a copy of the signed form into eRETA?

- A. Effective 10/1/2019, PBS will no longer accepted uploaded forms (whether manually or electronically signed using your own digital signature software), and you must utilize eRETA's digital signature solution. Your Fund Certifying Official will receive an email to digitally sign the RWA. Importantly they do not need eRETA access to sign, only a valid government email, and they can sign from their laptop, tablet or smartphone.

Q24. Can we save a Work Request and come back to submit later?

- A. Yes, you can enter part of the Work Request and click Save. Once you click Save, eRETA will auto-generate a tracking number (e.g. W1234567) which you can use to easily search for the Work Request going forward.

Client Enrichment Series – Q & A

Timelines, Timing and Expectations

Q1. How long does it take from customer submission of a work request to GSA assigning a PM/POC for the request?

- A. The timeframe for GSA to assign a GSA PM/POC to the Work Request is five business days.

Q2. How long is the estimated timeframe for this whole process?

- A. The timeframe varies depending on the complexity of the scope of work and how long the requirements take to finalize. Typically it takes no more than 5 business days for GSA to assign a PM to your Work Request. After requirements are developed (which will vary depending on the type of project), input funding information, and send to GSA for potential acceptance, GSA should take no more than 15 business days to accept the RWA.

Q3. Will eRETA be required in Lease Procurement if an RWA is required for the amount above the Tenant Improvement Allowance (TIA)?

- A. Yes, eRETA will be required for all RWAs starting 10/1/19, even lease procurements that require RWA funds.

Q4. What is the deadline this FY for RWA submission?

- A. You can always find the Year End Guidance at www.gsa.gov/rwa.

Q5. Does eRETA replace the RWA form that we currently complete?

- A. Yes all federal customers are required to send all RWA and Work Request information via eRETA and the manual form is no longer accepted.

Q6. Can an RWA be in a pending mode until the cost estimate is received, or should the customer just wait?

- A. The WR will stay in Planning/Estimate status while we are developing requirements. After GSA completes the Summary Cost Estimate (SCE) and links it to your WR, then you can fill out the remaining required information on the WR (if you hadn't done so already) and send to GSA for potential acceptance into an RWA.

Routing, Notification Collaboration and RWA Letter Communication

Q1. Is a GSA PM automatically assigned once we submit a project in eRETA?

- A. It does not happen automatically. The GSA region will assign a particular PM based on workload and available resources, and should take no longer than five business days.

Q2. Will GSA continue to send the signed/accepted RWA to our financial POCs?

- A. Yes, the signed/accepted RWA will be emailed to all POCs identified on the RWA, which should include your finance/billing office.

Client Enrichment Series – Q & A

Q3. Are we going to continue to receive cost estimate from GSA by email before submitting an RWA?

- A. Yes, and starting in mid-October you will be automatically notified when an estimate is linked to your Work Request, at which point you would be able to enter any remaining information on the Work Request and send for potential acceptance into an RWA. Also starting in mid-October, you will not be able to send WRs for potential acceptance if an estimate is not linked.

Q4. We have components that manage their own funding and the internal process will require to get RWA approval internally before the RWA can be submitted through eRETA to GSA. How can we get this to work smoothly in the new environment?

- A. Many customers have internal review and approval processes already established, so some tweaks to overlay them with this new process will likely result. You can download the information using the "Print" feature on the Customer Approval tab and then circulate that by email and then upload an internal approval routing that your data entry users know is required prior to "sending to GSA for acceptance". That is just one example; feel free to email eRETA@gsa.gov if you need help troubleshooting.

Q5. Can any of the names be removed?

- A. Yes, you have the ability to remove names and add different ones, in which case those new individuals listed will receive any subsequent automated notifications.

Q6. Can you have more than one Agency POC?

- A. There is only one email address field available to be entered for the Agency POC. However you have the option to enter another email address in the Agency RWA Mailbox and/or the Agency Billing Contact fields.

Q7. Do we get an email that our RWA has been received after we submit it?

- A. You will get a series of communications along the way:
- 1) After you submit a WR and GSA assigns you a GSA PM, you get an email about who your PM is
 - 2) After GSA links an estimate to your WR
 - 3) After you fill out the rest of your RWA information because you plan to fund it, after GSA receives your info and then enters all of our info too, we route it for signatures – your signatory authority gets a notice to sign
 - 4) After all signatures are captured, you and several other POCs listed on the RWA will get an email with the Acceptance Letter (this is a pre-existing communication even before eRETA)

Q8. How do I know as a preparer that the document is waiting for signature and no longer with GSA?

- A. Once you as the customer have entered all of your data in eRETA and sent it to us, we (GSA) then enter all of our GSA specific data. The last piece is for GSA to route the RWA for digital signature. The person/email entered by you in eRETA as the "Fund Certifying Official" will receive an email to apply their digital

Client Enrichment Series – Q & A

signature. Also, the status of the RWA in eRETA changes from "Pending-New" to "Signatures Requested"

Q9. How do we change our funds certifying official when there is a personnel change?

- A. You enter a "Funds Certifying Official" on each individual RWA you send in to us. So if someone retires, you would simply stop entering their name in eRETA as the Funds Certifying Official.

Q10. Is there a notice that comes confirming agreement and acceptance of changes I make to an RWA?

- A. Only the Customer can initiate a change/amendment to the RWA with any required cost change(s), and only GSA can "accept" the proposed change/amendment. The customer receives a notification when they have sent an RWA or RWA amendment to GSA for acceptance, and they receive notice when the RWA or RWA amendment has been accepted.

Q11. Will GSA send out a de-obligation letter for any unused funds for overtime utilities?

- A. Yes. Once the RWA closes and all obligations are met, and the project is closed out, GSA will send the customer a notice to de-obligate any remaining funds.

Q12. Will closeout letters still be sent separately, or will these be distributed within the eRETA system now?

- A. Once the RWA status changes to "Terminated", GSA sends the "Financial Closeout" letter via the RETA/eRETA documentation tool. All customer contacts are included on the Closeout Letter/Email and are able to access it at any time in the RETA/eRETA documentation tool.

Q13. You mentioned that the customer initiates the RWA. Does GSA initiate RWA's involving Tenant Improvements?

- A. No, the customer will still initiate those, but they will likely need to be coordinated with GSA ahead of time.

Q14. Will the acceptance letter be auto-generated for the approved RWAs?

- A. Yes. The RWA Acceptance Letter is issued after all digital signatures have been captured and the RWA has been officially processed in our financial system.

Q15. How will the closing out of projects work?

- A. The completion and close-out process remains unchanged. GSA will issue you the "Substantial Completion" letter at substantial completion and then send the "Financial Closeout" letter when all billing is complete. The closeout letter indicates how much you can de-obligate.

Q16. Are the notifications in eRETA or via email?

Client Enrichment Series – Q & A

- A. All automated notifications are sent to the government emails listed on the WR/RWA, and are also auto-uploaded to the eRETA documentation tool to view/download at anytime.
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RWA Types and Terminology

Q1. Does “Purged” mean the money that had been allocated/obligated has already been turned back to treasury?

- A. No, since it is on the customer to return the funds that are not obligated back to Treasury, GSA cannot make that assumption. An RWA in Purged status means there are no more financials associated with the RWA and it is removed from GSA's RWA Database (though you will still see it in eRETA in “Purged” status). You can click on any of the blue hyperlinks in eRETA to bring up the eRETA glossary which provides definition of terms like “Purged”.

Q2. Is an F-Type RWA still an option for miscellaneous projects?

- A. Yes, we still have F-types for "miscellaneous" projects/services.

Q3. How would you attach a work request to a standing F-type RWA?

- A. A work request (WR) eventually evolves into an RWA. If you already have an F-type (i.e. an FY2020 F-type you already had accepted earlier in the year) you would not submit a new WR, but instead you would submit an amendment request for the existing F-type.

Q4. What is an N-type RWA?

- A. An N-type RWA indicates a "stand alone", nonrecurring RWA project or service. This is the most common type of RWA. In eRETA, if you click on the "RWA Type" hyperlink on the Search screen, the eRETA Glossary will define all of the RWA types. You can also find a wealth of FAQs on www.gsa.gov/rwa.
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Work Requests and Conversion (or Not) to RWAs

Q1. For new space acquisitions, we submit an SF81 package. Do we also have to do a work request in order to start the RWA process? or does the SF81 package replace the work request?

- A. The SF81 will not replace the work request, but as you know much of the same information can be used to start the work request process.

Q2. Does this mean GSA looks for a contractor to perform the work being requested? What costs are associated with GSA performing this service?

Client Enrichment Series – Q & A

- A. An obvious advantage of this work request model is more visibility on what resources we have assigned to which work and more importantly, what work we can and cannot take on. However, we cannot do any solicitation before accepting funds for the work.

Q3. Do you always have to submit a work request in order to submit an RWA?

- A. Beginning October 1, 2019, yes you HAVE to submit a Work Request first. You will submit the WR, we will assign a PM to the WR and develop requirements, link an estimate to your WR, and then you will enter the remaining required information (equivalent of page 1 of the RWA Form) and then send to GSA for potential acceptance into an RWA.

Q4. What about work requests that are simple tasks that need immediate attention like workstation light replacement etc? They will not become full blown RWAs they are part of / billed from the master RWA. When will this function be up and running?

- A. A work request will eventually turn into an RWA. As such, a Work Request should not be entered in eRETA if the goal is to request a task on an already established RWA (likely an F-type RWA). If you are requesting a small task be executed using funding from an already accepted F-type RWA, please work with the regional project manager identified on that RWA. If you were to input a second Work Request, GSA may mistake it as a need for another RWA.

Q5. Is the Summary Cost Estimate filled out in eRETA or is it uploaded to eRETA?

- A. After requirements development has finished, the SCE is created by GSA and entered in RETA/eRETA by GSA. Starting in mid-October 2019, customers will receive an automated notification when an estimate has been linked to their WR, and they will not be able to submit a WR for potential acceptance into an RWA *without* an estimate linked.

Q6. Do all Work Requests eventually become formal RWAs?

- A. No. A Work Request only becomes an accepted RWA if the customer determines they can fund the project and continues to enter and submit the RWA information to GSA via eRETA. The Work Request/RWA is not officially accepted until both the customer and GSA sign the RWA and the RWA Acceptance Letter is issued - which has been the official notification of RWA acceptance even before eRETA.

Q7. What is the difference between a Work Request and RWA?

- A. A Work Request (WR) is a customer request for a project/service and is not a valid obligation, but rather an expression of a need from which GSA and the customer can develop requirements. As requirements are developed, the customer can enter the remaining required info and send to GSA for potential acceptance into an RWA. Technically the WR does not become an RWA until both the customer and GSA sign the RWA, thus making it a valid obligation. Visit www.gsa.gov/ereta to find an eRETA Quick Tip which gives more detailed information on the difference between a WR and an RWA.

Q8. Is the work request the same as the project intake form?

- A. No, a variation of project intake forms have been used by certain GSA regions. Starting October 1, 2019, eRETA will be the only means by which customers send Work Requests to GSA. As such any project intake forms used by the regions will be retired.

Client Enrichment Series – Q & A

Q9. When you enter the work request does eRETA generate the RWA?

- A. No. First the customer sends the initial work request which serves as an identification of a need and GSA assigns a PM to develop requirements. Once requirements are developed, the customer may fill out the remaining required information on the WR and send to GSA for potential acceptance into an RWA. GSA will assign an RWA "Type", which replaces the "W" in front of the document number with the appropriate RWA Type (e.g, A, B, C, D, F, N or R)

Q10. When a work request is created, how does the IGE associated with the work request get attached to the RWA in eRETA?

- A. You can upload documentation such as an IGE in support of the specific WR/RWA you have open.

Q11. Can you enter the work request and then never get an agreement or get funding? What happens to that request? Does it just sit in the system?

- A. Yes. However you can save, modify, and even delete a WR as necessary.

Q12. Who submits the work request; my agency as the customer, or the Project Manager at GSA?

- A. You as the customer should be submitting the WR in the system, and will be required to do so starting October 1, 2019. GSA will not be able to enter the WR for you starting October 1, 2019.

Q13. Does all of GSA know that we should enter the project even if it's just a "glimmer"? We've been discouraged to submit unless it's a verifiable project and will be completed.

- A. Yes, that was discouraged in the past due to resource constraints, but now that everything is submitted electronically we can handle the intake better since you are inputting your potential needs.

Q14. I just want to be clear...I will need to submit a WR, and after the signatures, I will then start my RWA?

- A. No, submitting a WR does not require signatures or funding. It is an identification of a need from which we can develop requirements and eventually might become an accepted RWA. Signatures are not captured until after the customer fills out all required fields on the WR (equivalent of page 1 of the RWA Form) and sends to GSA. GSA fills out GSA-specific data on the WR (equivalent of page 2 of the RWA Form) and then routes for signatures. The WR is the start of the RWA. The WR Number becomes the RWA Number.

Q15. Can you create an RWA without a work request?

Client Enrichment Series – Q & A

- A. No, starting October 1, 2019 all RWAs must be initiated by the customer as a Work Request.

Q16. When our GSA PMs create a cost estimate for a project, does the Summary Cost Estimate (SCE) template automatically calculate the fees based on the estimated costs of the project or service?

- A. Yes, the SCE template automatically calculates the fees based on the estimated costs of the project or service.

Q17. If a Summary Cost Estimate (SCE) has been provided by our GSA point of contact, can it be uploaded as support documentation for the RWA submitted?

- A. The SCE is the one document you should NOT have to upload. Since the SCE is created in RETA/eRETA, a copy is automatically uploaded to the RETA/eRETA documentation tool to view/download at any time. Any other supporting documents that are not created in RETA/eRETA though are valuable for you to upload.

Q18. What if a work request is submitted, and when the cost estimate comes back, it is determined that we aren't able to fund it? Does that create any issues within the system?

- A. No, it does not cause any issues in the system. If you determine you cannot fund the Work Request, you can easily cancel it in the system.

Q19. So for existing SCEs that I have already received from GSA but I haven't funded yet, should I assume those figures will be transferred over to the eRETA system by my GSA point of contact? This is a situation where we are rolling out millions of dollars and have already received figures from GSA. How do I handle that?

- A. Yes, please work with the assigned GSA POC/PM to ensure you have the correct estimate tracking numbers, as you will not be able to submit a WR for acceptance without an estimate linked to the WR.

Q20. We have current projects with GSA that require us to submit the RWAs. Because we started these projects some time ago, how do we just submit the RWA, assuming the work request has already been done manually?

- A. If these are RWAs GSA has already accepted, you will be able to pull them up in eRETA by the RWA number and then you can submit an amendment for them directly in eRETA (it doesn't matter that the RWA was originally provided by paper/PDF). You can amend any existing RWA in eRETA, even if it wasn't originally input electronically by you (since GSA has been entering your paper/PDF RWAs into RETA for the last 15+ years).

Q21. Understanding the response to Q20 above, but we have not done any of the RWAs. For example, the building 48 projects just got approved, we have been working on it for a few years with GSA, and it is getting close for us to submit the RWA. Are the agencies to assume GSA has already started the work request in eRETA?

Client Enrichment Series – Q & A

- A. No GSA would not have started the Work Request for you so you would need to create the WR in eRETA. Importantly you can indicate in the Description of Requirements on the WR that you've been working with GSA on these potential projects and include the name of the GSA employee you have been working with in the GSA PM/POC field.

Q22. How do we work with a GSA PM/POC to develop requirements? email, phone? Do they contact us?

- A. After GSA receives your Work Request and the regional office assigns a PM, you and the GSA PM will be on the same email introducing you to each other and encouraging you to reach out to each other to begin requirements development.

Q23. What if there are multiple estimates assigned to the same WR? We have to separate our funding strings at times, do we have to enter two separate WRs even if just one RWA? What happens if there is a co-location of two agencies, and two estimates are required under one RWA?

- A. In RETA/eRETA, we only have a one-to-one relationship between the RWA and the estimate. So you would use only one RWA and can add up to 99 accounting strings on that RWA in eRETA.

Q24. Who is the best GSA POC for assistance needed when creating WR / RWAs? Is there a help desk number or a specific POC?

- A. If you are having issues creating a WR, please visit www.gsa.gov/ereta for a wealth of training materials. If you cannot find what you need, you can email eRETA@gsa.gov and we will assist.

Q25. Will we get the cost estimates the same way as we do now, prior to submitting the RWA?

- A. If you have recurring overtime utility RWAs with GSA, then for those you will likely receive the Overtime Utility Estimate (OUE) prior to entering your Work Request / RWA. For more information visit www.gsa.gov/ereta and find the eRETA Quick Tip on Submitting Overtime Utility Work Requests to GSA.

If your RWA will be something other than overtime utilities, then the Work Request should always come first. You submit the WR to GSA, GSA assigns a PM to the WR, we develop requirements, link an estimate to your WR, and when ready to fund the RWA you fill out any remaining information on the WR/RWA (equivalent of page 1 of the RWA Form) and send to GSA for potential acceptance.

Q26. How does this work for Tenant Improvements? We don't initiate the RWA in that process?

- A. This will still apply for above standard TI RWAs. There are options to denote "planning" and other status labels that should actually make this a more efficient process than the frantic rush to get an RWA over to avoid delaying the lease award. Although the customer can submit pricing data, GSA's POC will also ensure GSA's estimate for the customer's review and comparison (if any).

Client Enrichment Series – Q & A

Q27. Can I get a copy of the workflow?

- A. Email askrwa@gsa.gov and we should be able to provide some additional process mapping resources.

Q28. Does a work request initiate/generate the cost estimation process, or is that done outside the system?

- A. eRETA must be used to receive an estimate from GSA starting 10/1. You submit a request for work, we develop requirements together, link an estimate to your WR, and then if you want to fund the project you enter funding information and send it to GSA for potential acceptance into an RWA.
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Training, Resources and Support

Q1. Where can we find additional CES sessions on eRETA?

- A. Visit www.gsa.gov/ces for a complete listing of upcoming classes plus slide decks, session recordings and Q&A documents from our previous offerings.

Q2. Do we still have to use the 866 number when our passwords expire?

- A. Yes, if your portal password expires, you will contact the PBS National Application Helpdesk at (866) 367-7878.

Q3. Where can I get a copy of this presentation?

- A. Copies are emailed to session registrants from the clientenrichmentseries@gsa.gov mailbox the day before each session, and are posted on the Series website - www.gsa.gov/ces.

Q4. Are there any options for onsite eRETA training for agencies located in the National Capital Region?

- A. We offer two training sessions per month: one eRETA Basics - Overview session and an eRETA Advanced - Feature Focus session. Since we have a very small team and over 500 unique customers, we cannot offer onsite training and agencies must leverage our virtual platform as much as possible. We would strongly encourage all of your folks to attend these training sessions, and even if they can't make ANY of them, they can watch video recordings of past demonstrations, as well as read all kinds of user guides, on our national website www.gsa.gov/ereta under the "eRETA Training Materials" tab.

We attend on-site annual PBS Customer Forums and typically host session on eRETA. You can find future forums at www.gsa.gov/pbsforums.

Q5. Is there a recording of this presentation that we can view?

- A. Yes, you can access video recordings of these presentations by going to www.gsa.gov/ces or www.gsa.gov/ereta on the "eRETA Training Materials" page.

Q6. Is there a test database to practice in?

Client Enrichment Series – Q & A

- A. There is no test environment for customers. However, you can always create a Work Request in eRETA without sending it to GSA, which would help you get a better feel for how to input data in the system.

Q7. Is there a POC that we can pick up the phone and call if we need assistance right away?

- A. If you need assistance on eRETA functionality, please email eRETA@gsa.gov and we'll get back to you as soon as we can (typically within a business day). If you have a question on a specific project or service, you should reach out to the number associated with the GSA PM/POC on your Work Request / RWA, and/or reach out to the PBS Regional RWA Manager, whose contact information can be found on www.gsa.gov/rwa.

Q8. I am unable to access to your Google form from my government issued computer, do you have anything on the GSA web site itself for Q & A?

- A. If you are applying for eRETA access and cannot access the Google form, we provide a manual Excel form (Step 1, Option 2 on the "How do I access eRETA" page) that you can use instead. Regarding Q&As, we have several sub-pages on our www.gsa.gov/ereta site dedicated to FAQs related to RWAs and RETA/eRETA.

Q9. How do we get on the ongoing email notification list?

- A. When you register for this/another session, your name is added to the distribution list. If you haven't been added, please send an email to eRETA@gsa.gov and we will add you to it.

Q10. Is there going to be a "user manual" for this?

- A. Yes. The www.gsa.gov/ereta site has two major sections. 1) How do I gain Access? and 2) eRETA Training Materials. We have lots of user guides, quick tips, and other FAQs listed there. The "User Guides" are most helpful for having step by step directions for processing Work Requests.

Digital Signatures

Q1. What controls are in place so that only the correct RWA official for the agency can sign RWAs in eRETA?

- A. GSA does not play "police" when it comes to Customer Funds Certifying Officials. Submitting the WR/RWA in eRETA has not changed that. In other words, if you send us a manual RWA form in the past with the wrong signatory authority, we (GSA) would have no way of knowing. That does not change with eRETA and anyone with a valid government email address can apply their digital signature from any government approved device.

Q2. To sign the documents do the firewall issues cause problems?

- A. There are no issues with firewalls in terms of signing documents. The only issue with firewalls is with the online application to get eRETA access. In that case you would just

Client Enrichment Series – Q & A

go send a manual (Excel) form . All of this info is found on www.gsa.gov/ereta under the "How Do I Access eRETA" section.

Q3. Is there a way to limit access in eRETA between individuals initiating a work request and the financial approvals?

- A. All signatures are "Digital" and handled outside of eRETA through automated email routing. Your Funds Certifying Official does not need eRETA access to digitally sign RWAs.

Q5. So how do you obtain agency authorized signatures if one component is creating the RWA, but the funding is approved by another component of our agency?

- A. Anyone in your agency bureau with Data Entry access can enter data on the various tabs. As such you could have certain folks entering the project information and others entering the financial information. With regards to digital signatures, your Fund Certifying Official listed (who doesn't need eRETA access to sign) will receive an email to digitally sign the RWA. Once he/she signs, then the RWA is automatically routed to the GSA signatory authority.

Q6. Will there be an option to have more than one signatory in eRETA in the future?

- A. Probably. We have requested FY2020 funding to develop this enhancement in the future.

Q7. If my Funds Certifying official has not received the email to digitally sign the RWA, what should he/she do?

- A. First, make sure they check their spam folder as we've seen cases where those emails are going to spam. If that's the case then make sure they add that email to their list of contacts so it doesn't go to spam again. If that's not the case and they truly did not receive the email to digitally sign, email eRETA@gsa.gov and we will assist.

Q8. Are agencies allowed to change the signature preference after the RWA has been routed and the initial signature request has been sent?

- A. No. Once the signature request is sent out the RWA is locked. GSA would have to abandon the signature request to change it.

eRETA and Overtime Utilities

Q1. Do customers need to create Work Requests for Overtime Utilities too?

- A. Yes. Overtime Utility RWAs must still start as a Work Request in eRETA. Typically you receive the estimate before you send an RWA for the overtime utility. So with eRETA, you'll simply link the Overtime Utility Estimate Number on the Work Request and Send to GSA. Visit www.gsa.gov/ereta where we have user guides on submitting overtime utility requests in eRETA.

Q2. For Overtime Utilities, do we wait for the cost estimate which is usually sent to us via email, then we put it in to eRETA?

Client Enrichment Series – Q & A

- A. For your annual overtime utilities you should be receiving the estimate (called an OUE) and then you put in the WR and link the two. For ad-hoc and last minute OU needs you would create a WR before you get an estimate.

Q3. Will we still receive the letter we usually get that lists the Overtime Utility amount that we will need to enter into the RWA?

- A. Yes, all the letters you used to get will continue to be distributed. You now have transparent access to view some of that data, perhaps even before we send you the letter.

What You Can View in the eRETA Application / What You Can Upload To It Or Export Out of It?

Q1. Is there an area to add an attachment to the Work Request?

- A. Yes, you can upload supporting documentation to eRETA via the Documentation tool and via the Customer Approval tab. Visit www.gsa.gov/ereta where you'll find an eRETA Quick Tip on how to upload documents.

Q2. Can you search for open RWAs for just your office so there's not so many returned?

- A. You can search for WRs/RWAs by their associated Agency Bureau (AB) code, as well as several other parameters (city, state, acceptance/start date, among many others). eRETA can only query data that has been input in the system. As such you could enter your office number in the Customer Order Number field (an optional field for customers) on the Billing Information tab, and then search for associated RWAs using the Customer ID field on the WR/RWA Search screen. For reference, text entered in the Customer ID field looks for the requested information in four different fields: the requisition ID field, the customer order number field, the agency accounting data field, and the brief project description field.

Q3. Can you pull reports of RWAs in Excel format?

- A. Yes. At the bottom of all Search screens there is a button to "Export to Excel File" which will download an Excel file of the WR/RWA Search Results.

Q4. Should pending RWA/WR actions be searched under Agency Bureau or your name?

- A. If you ONLY search for Pending Actions = customer by itself, it will pull back all Work Requests or RWAs that are pending your agency's actions across the country. However, if you make that selection AND you also enter your eRETA user ID (email address) in the "User ID" field, the search will return RWAs pending action tied to your name only.

Client Enrichment Series – Q & A

Q5. On the live site, how do we know if the RWA is “clickable”?

- A. Any WR/RWA you can see in the Search Results is clickable. Simply click the desired WR/RWA which will bring you to the Summary Page. You will not be able to edit the WR/RWA unless you have the data entry role in eRETA. If you have that role and need to edit the WR/RWA you'll click the Edit (pencil) icon in the top right of the screen.

Q6. How far back are RWAs available?

- A. Records in RETA/eRETA are not removed.

Q7. Can you enter a Work Request now for a future fiscal year?

- A. Yes, you can submit a Work Request to GSA for a future fiscal year need so we can start develop requirements. However you cannot fund and send for acceptance into an RWA until the fiscal year in which the bona fide need is established.

Q8. Will we be able to see the actual invoice or bill submitted from the vendor?

- A. While we do pull in financial info from GSA's financial management system (Pegasys), we do not pull in individual transactions such as invoices or bills from the vendor. The VCSS system offered by GSA's OCFO is where you can download your monthly billing statements which lists the vendors who were paid on that bill.

Q9. What if the requirement is already defined and a written SOW is completed by the customer. Can we upload it after a PM is assigned or does that get issued with the work request?

- A. Ideally you've sent the Work Request prior to developing any requirements. However if you have been working with GSA prior to submitting your WR, then yes we would encourage you to upload to the WR any "pre-work" you've done. The PM can review that documentation and this will certainly help us get a head start on finalizing everything.

Financial Data, Accounting, Allocation of Funding, Invoicing and Fees

Q1. Will G Invoicing replace eRETA when it becomes mandatory?

- A. G-invoicing will NOT replace eRETA. G Invoicing will interface with the financial system GSA uses (Pegasys).

Q2. I understand solicitation cannot be done before funds are received. What is the reimbursable rate/fee charged by GSA to assist the agency?

- A. Our fee structure is built to recover the costs of delivering the reimbursable services program. We do not charge for estimates, so to speak.

Q3. Is the GSA fee structure available online or is that not releasable?

Client Enrichment Series – Q & A

- A. It is currently detailed in our National Policy Document which is available at www.gsa.gov/rwa.

Q4. Should we include the fees in the cost estimate or will that be added once the RWA is accepted by GSA?

- A. GSA will create and link a summary cost estimate (SCE) or an overtime utility estimate (OUE) to your Work Request, which will summarize the costs of the scope of work and also include the appropriate fees.

Q5. What if the project is for TI overage and is funded with a prior fiscal year funds (based on when the lease was signed?)

- A. Select "Current" for Estimated FY Needed. These can be handled on a case by case basis.

Q6. How do you handle continuing resolutions, when we haven't received full funding?

- A: You would still enter a WR, but you should indicate in the description block that due to the CR you are funding \$x or y% of the original estimate. We would then go through the rest of the steps and accept the partially funded RWA. When the CR turns into a full year budget, you would then amend that RWA to add the remaining funds.

Q7. Can only one line item at a time can be submitted for billing?

- A. You can enter multiple funding sources in eRETA at one time. However GSA's billing system can only handle one line to bill at any given time, hence the "Line to Bill" radio button in eRETA. You select which funding stream you want billed first and that funding source gets exhausted several months/years later, you can return to eRETA and do an administrative amendment to now select a different line in the "Line to Bill" column and eRETA will instruct our billing system to start billing the new line from that point forward.

Q8. Is accounting and billing information entered only after a GSA PM is assigned?

- A. Yes, accounting and billing info should be entered after the GSA PM is assigned and ideally after GSA and the customer have developed requirements (schedules, estimates, etc.).

Q9. If we have a project and we add funding that uses a different FY, does it keep the prior year funding on the RWA? It makes it seem like you could change it, but does it keep the original Accounting Info?

- A. You would add an additional accounting string in that case, and the original one would still stay on the RWA.

Q10. How are modifications that exceed the authorized funding routed back for additional review and approval by the Agency?

Client Enrichment Series – Q & A

- A. Internal controls in GSA systems do not allow RWAs to be over-obligated by more than a small variance (\$500). However, if the RWA must be amended up, either GSA can initiate the amendment, or you as the customer can initiate the amendment in eRETA. A dollar change automatically requires new signatures to accept the amendment. Visit www.gsa.gov/ereta to find a user guide on submitting RWA Amendments in eRETA.

Q11. *Where in the workflow process does the budget shop certify funds?*

- A. Your own budget office approval is part of your internal agency workflow. That would happen sometime after you finished requirements and cost development with the GSA Project Manager, and before you click the "Send to GSA" button in eRETA to send in your completed RWA.

Modifications, Changes, Amendments and Other Tweaks...

Q1. *Can you amend description of requirements after it is initially submitted?*

- A. Yes, you can update the description of requirements until you send the RWA to GSA for acceptance.

Q2. *How do I amend an RWA in eRETA?*

- A. Visit www.gsa.gov/ereta and navigate to the "eRETA Training Materials" page where you'll find a user guide on how to Submit RWA Amendments in eRETA.

Q3. *Is there a point in the process beyond which an RWA cannot be amended?*

- A. An active RWA may be amended for any and all agreed upon changes. Amendments will not always be accepted. GSA must review/approve certain types of amendments (e.g. billing changes, amount/scope changes, etc.). An RWA that is financially closed cannot be amended.

Q4. *If an RWA was submitted on hard copy prior to 1 Oct, will an amendment after 1 Oct still be in hard copy, as well, or will it need to go in to eRETA?*

- A. Everything will need to be in eRETA after 10/01/2019. As an added piece of information, every RWA accepted is available in eRETA today, meaning you can provide an amendment in eRETA for any RWA accepted prior to 10/01/2019. Any paper versions of the RWA that are not accepted prior to 10/01/2019 will need to be entered into eRETA starting 10/01/2019.

Q5. *Can RWAs that have already been submitted manually be amended?*

- A. Yes. An eRETA User with Data Entry can amend any open RWA under their AB Code.

Q6. *Where does the "Amendment Summary" Tab appear? Is it under the Summary section?*

Client Enrichment Series – Q & A

- A. The "Amendment Summary" tab only shows up on RWAs that have one or more amendment over its lifetime.

Q7. Who enters the amendment information in to eRETA? GSA or the customer?

- A. The customer must initiate all amendments in eRETA.
-

Codes and Fields

Q1. If I put an amount in the agency certified amount, will that change to a different amount once an estimate is completed?

- A. No, you will manually enter an amount there. However if the amount does not match with the amount on the linked Summary Cost Estimate, eRETA will not allow you to send to GSA for acceptance.

Q2. Are the RWA numbers generated randomly?

- A. WR/RWA numbers are unique 7-digit numbers for which there are no duplicates. In other words, one WR/RWA will never have the same 7-digit number as another WR/RWA.

Q3. Where can we find the Account Codes/BOAC?

- A. Any concerns regarding the accuracy of BOAC codes should be emailed to eRETA@gsa.gov.

Q4. How do I request to change the bureau code or add another bureau code to my existing eRETA access?

- A. Send your request to eRETA@gsa.gov and copy your supervisor on the request so we know they approve the request to change/add AB codes to your account.
-

Templates and Clones

Q1. Can you pull past RWAs and copy into next Fiscal Year as the data is nearly the same.

- A. We are looking at a potential enhancement to allow this but as of right now we don't have that functionality available.
-

Miscellaneous

Q1. Will the Estimated FY Needed field be available for only three years or for more?

- A. In the "Estimated FY Needed" dropdown you will have the ability to choose the Current FY and then the next four fiscal years.

Q2. Do we still have to submit the Interagency Agreement (IAA) FMS Form 7600A & 7600B and attach the document?

Client Enrichment Series – Q & A

A. GSA uses the RWA in lieu of those other forms.

Q3. Is Rent on the Web (ROW) integrated with eRETA?

A. No, eRETA and ROW are separate applications.

Q4. Is there any way to list the search results in eRETA from newest to oldest? Rather than having to click the filter every time?

A. In the basic Search option, you can only toggle the sort order by any of the column headings that show on the screen. One of those fields is the "Start Date/Request Date", so you could sort search results by that field to display them in ascending or descending order.

Q5. Is this training being recorded?

A. Yes. We have a selection of recorded sessions on www.gsa.gov/ereta and www.gsa.gov/ces.

Q6. Do the searches accept wild cards?

A. By only entering partial information, wild cards are automatically assumed. E.g. If you just typed in "CA" in the Building Number Field, it would search for all building numbers that start with CA.

Q7. How often do passwords have to be changed and is there a time period that you have to log in or your access gets locked?

A. Our PBS Portal Team is currently reconfiguring how often passwords must be reset and if there is a lock-out period for lack of use. Right now, there is neither, so technically you don't have to change your password and access won't be removed if no log-ins after X days. We will of course communicate any changes once the Portal Team identifies and sets them.

Q8. Will this program be required when using Security Work Authorizations?

A. SWAs are used by DHS-Federal Protective Service (FPS). eRETA is a GSA-PBS system and therefore only applies to RWAs.

Q9. If our office is a new user to eRETA, will our info be found via the magnifying glass search?

A. It should be. GSA has been entering RWA information for you since 2006 so everything we have entered on your behalf before is already in the system.

Q10. Do we request estimates for guard service in eRETA? Would this be for guard service for special projects or for weekend service in support of increased disaster activity?

A. It depends if the guard service is included in your rental agreement. If yes, then no RWA is needed so you would not submit a WR in eRETA. However if the guard service is not

Client Enrichment Series – Q & A

included in your rental agreement, then GSA would require an RWA which must be initiated as a WR in eRETA.

Q11. Can we save default information for our particularly agency? So we don't have to complete all fields everytime?

- A. Right now, we have a few fields designated with the "My favorites" feature (star icon) which allows you to save your commonly used data element for a few fields (BOAC and Treasury Symbol).

Original Chat Transcript - July 9 Session - [found in this doc](#)

Original Chat Transcript - August 6 Session - [found in this doc](#)

Original Chat Transcript - September 10 Session - [found in this doc](#)