

From the Editor

Warm weather is around the corner and GSA is revving up for a busy Spring! In this issue of *GSA Steps* you will find articles about the GSA Training Conference and Expo in May, requirements for scheduling deliveries to Distribution Centers, the new Vendor Toolbox coming soon to the Vendor Support Center website, the latest changes to EPEAT product registration, as well as news on Universal Product Codes. Inside you will also see information on Cooperative Purchasing and Disaster Recovery sales reporting and the recently added Greenhouse Gas question found on your MAS Report Card.

If you would like to provide feedback and/or have suggestions for subjects to cover in future newsletters, please feel free to contact contract.relations@gsa.gov. Enjoy the Spring weather and this issue of *GSA Steps*! ■

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Got Training?

Yes we do! Attend the GSA Training Conference and Expo in 2012! *Save the Dates: May 15-17, 2012*
More information on page 2.



GSA creates a Vendor Toolbox to help offerors prepare to get on Schedule

GSA is committed to providing industry partners with the tools to enable them to be successful as Schedule contract holders. Research has shown that a key indicator for success is ensuring that companies that apply for Schedule contracts are well educated about the process, and benefits and challenges of being on Schedule. In order to help industry partners be successful, GSA is launching a new resource called the Vendor Toolbox in the Vendor Support Center website at <http://vsc.gsa.gov>.

The Vendor Toolbox contains online education, links to vital acquisition portals and sites, and tips for success in the federal market. A key component of the Vendor Toolbox, is the new Readiness Assessment which will help walk potential offerors through the process of deciding whether a Schedule contract is the right decision for them. The Readiness Assessment is now a mandatory part of the process to submit an offer. ■

For additional information, you can contact us at vendortoolbox@gsa.gov.



"FAS is committed to providing our industry partners with the tools they need to succeed. The Readiness Assessment will help you research, analyze and decide if getting on Schedule is the best business decision for your company."

Steven J. Kempf
FAS Commissioner

Plan now to attend GSA Training Conference and Expo 2012!

The GSA Training Conference and Expo 2012 will take place May 15-17, 2012, at the Henry B. Gonzales Convention Center in San Antonio, Texas. The Expo provides great educational opportunities for suppliers, including the following courses:

COURSE	DESCRIPTION
Making the Most of the Vendor Support Center (VSC) (QV)	GSA's Vendor Support Center (VSC) website contains a wealth of information and tools related to Multiple Award Schedule (MAS) contracts. This course will highlight the many resources available to contractors, including eTools, <i>GSA Steps</i> newsletters and other publications and training opportunities. In addition to navigating through the VSC, we'll also cover various contract management topics and explore why this information is valuable to all Schedule contract holders. Bring your questions and prepare for an interactive conversation.
Packaging, Packing and Markings... Oh My!	This course will focus on proper packaging, packing, and marking of orders to avoid issues leading to supply chain breakdown, frustrated freight, dissatisfied customers, and lost taxpayer dollars. The course will highlight the various military and federal standards, explain their differences, and offer compliance tips to ensure timely delivery.
Marketing Your Multiple Award Schedule Contract	After being a Schedules contractor for a short while, it becomes clear that orders don't come rolling in just by obtaining a Multiple Award Schedule (MAS) contract. Marketing by contractors is vital to ensuring success with the Schedule MAS contract. This course will provide contractors the necessary tools, resources, and knowledge to market your products and services to the federal government, such as creating a Business Development Plan.
Ensuring an "Exceptional" Multiple Award Schedule Report Card	Does your company strive to receive "Exceptional" ratings on its Multiple Award Schedule Report Cards? This course will provide an overview (particularly geared for those who have held a contract for awhile) on how to ensure such a rating. This course will specifically focus on those topics covered in Category 1 of the Report Card. Topics will include: Scope, Trade Agreements Act, Sales Tracking System, Basis of Award, Minimum Contract Sales Criteria, Pricing and Pricelist, Change of Name/Novation, Subcontract Plans and Environmental Attributes.
An Introduction to the Multiple Award Schedule Program for Suppliers	Are you a new Multiple Award Schedule (MAS) contract holder or want to be one? This introductory course is geared to you, the prospective and/or new MAS contract holder. The course will provide an overview of the MAS program and define those federal government individuals with whom you will come in contact. In addition to discussion of contract requirements, the course will also include an interactive Question and Answer session.

Check out these classes and others offered this year at www.expo.gsa.gov/training/matrix. For more information about the conference please visit www.expo.gsa.gov. We look forward to seeing you in San Antonio!



**RIGHT SOLUTIONS.
RIGHT NOW.**

GSA TRAINING CONFERENCE & EXPO
MAY 15 - 17, 2012 | SAN ANTONIO, TX



GREEN CORNER

New Option to Register Manufacturer Parts Numbers in the EPEAT Registry

When federal agencies purchase computers, laptops, and monitors, they are required to purchase Electronic Product Environmental Assessment Tool (EPEAT)-registered products. These are products that manufacturers or vendors certify meet the IEEE 1680.1 standard for environmental and energy attributes.

EPEAT has been providing registry information to GSA for inclusion in *GSA Advantage!*[®], but we are having problems matching up the EPEAT information with the *GSA Advantage!*[®] product information. Now, in response to requests from GSA, major retailers, and other organizations to more clearly communicate which specific configurations of products registered in EPEAT conform to the IEEE 1680.1 standard, the managers of the EPEAT database have added three optional fields in which manufacturers can enter the manufacturer part number or UPC or EAN numbers of conforming configurations.

With individual product ID, manufacturers can precisely identify, and purchasers can easily see, whether specific configurations are conformant with a given model's EPEAT product declaration. Also, individual product ID enables end users of all types to automate processes to easily match products to their appropriate EPEAT tier in catalogs and upon delivery.

Providing this data is voluntary, since it is not required by the IEEE 1680.1 standard that governs EPEAT — and manufacturers may choose how much data they wish to enter (i.e., only the top selling product SKUs vs. all SKUs vs. some other approach). However, GSA encourages all GSA suppliers to enter the information or ask manufacturers to enter the information. This will enable GSA to correctly identify EPEAT-registered products using the EPEAT icon in *GSA Advantage!*[®] and make it easier for federal agencies to purchase these products.

Cooperative Purchasing & Disaster Recovery Sales Reporting Streamlined at the VSC!

All state and local sales utilizing the Cooperative Purchasing and Disaster Recovery Special Item Numbers (SINs) can now be reported on the same screen as your other GSA Schedule sales in the Vendor Support Center (VSC). This VSC system enhancement will be visible to only those contractors with Cooperative Purchasing SINs (marked with an "STLOC") and/or Disaster Recovery SINs (marked with an "RC") on their GSA Schedule contracts. To report GSA Schedule sales, including Cooperative Purchasing and Disaster Recovery sales, please visit the VSC's 72A Quarter Reporting System at <https://72a.gsa.gov/>.

Cooperative Purchasing sales are sales made to state and local governments, authorized by the

e-Government Act of 2002 and the Local Preparedness Acquisition Act. For more information about Cooperative Purchasing, please visit www.gsa.gov/cooperativepurchasing.



Disaster Recovery sales are sales made to state and local governments, authorized by Section 833 of the 2007 Defense Authorization Act. For more information about the Disaster Recovery Purchasing Program, please visit www.gsa.gov/disasterrecovery.

Always remember that sales must be reported separately by the unique Special Item Numbers (SINs).

New Greenhouse Gas Question on the MAS Report Card

In 2010 GSA introduced a new question to the Administrative Report Card related to Greenhouse Gases (GHG): “Has the contractor conducted a GHG emissions inventory and established a GHG reduction goal(s)?” This question is in response to Executive Order 13514, which requires federal agencies to reduce their GHG emissions.

The intent of this initiative is to encourage contractors to conduct GHG emissions inventories of their businesses in preparation for possible inclusion as future requirements on federal contracts. Currently, there is no contractual requirement for Schedule suppliers to inventory and reduce their GHG emissions. Therefore, all of this information would be provided on a voluntary basis by contractors.

So why, if there is no contractual requirement, is there a question on the MAS Administrative Report Card? By utilizing Category 3 in the report card, GSA can start to inventory which contractors are going above and beyond with their contract and their company as related to GHG emissions. Category 3 questions allow contractors the opportunity to enhance their report card rating, while not having any negative impact on the report card overall. Thus, the intent is to encourage and bring awareness to the MAS contractors of the focus by the government on industry inventory of GHG emissions.

For more information regarding GHG, contractors may visit the training tab on the vendor support center (VSC) at <http://vsc.gsa.gov> and the EPA website at www.epa.gov/partners/programs/index.htm#global.

Delivering to a GSA Distribution Center?

Have you scheduled a delivery appointment?

Did you know that clause F-FSS-300 states that the consignee (Distribution Center) has up to five (5) workdays from the day they are contacted to receive the shipment? So, make sure you give ample time for this process.

Do you have the right information to set up the appointment?

You will need to know the following information: The weight, pallet count, purchase order number, carrier name and the bill of lading or proof of delivery number.

Which Distribution Center are you delivering to?

	Eastern Distribution Center	Western Distribution Center
Location	Burlington, NJ	French Camp, CA
Hours of Operation	Monday – Friday 7:30 a.m. – 10:00 p.m. (except federal holidays)	Monday – Friday 7:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. (except federal holidays)
Summer Hours	None	(July 10 – Sept 30) 6:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Scheduling Numbers	(609) 499-7025 or 609-499-7026	(209) 547-8700 or (209) 547-8720 Delivery Info: (209) 547-8669
Scheduling Hours	7:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.	7:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Delivery Appointments	Large load shipments require appointments. Shipments less than 10 palletized unit loads, or shipments not palletized and less than 10,000lbs, from a single conveyance do not require an appointment.	Most deliveries require appointments due to Defense Logistics Agency security clearance. Small package carriers (UPS and FedEx) do not require a delivery appointment.
Additional Appointment information	None	Whether the shipment is a less than truckload (LTL) or a full truck load (FTL)



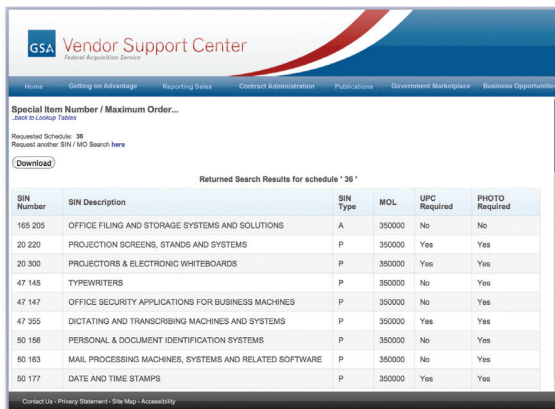
UPC & Y-O-U

To improve data quality, system usefulness, and general user experience, GSA has initiated a new requirement for the declaration of Universal Product Codes (UPC). Certain qualifying SINs will now require all products included under to identify their UPC.

How can I find out if my contract includes a qualifying SIN?

You can utilize the “SIN/Maximum Order/Photo/UPC...” section of the Vendor Support Center (VSC) at http://vsc.gsa.gov/lookup/sin_mol.cfm.

After selecting your Schedule and clicking “Search” you will be taken to a screen such as this one:



SIN Number	SIN Description	SIN Type	MOL	UPC Required	PHOTO Required
165 205	OFFICE FILING AND STORAGE SYSTEMS AND SOLUTIONS	A	350000	No	No
20 220	PROJECTION SCREENS, STANDS AND SYSTEMS	P	350000	Yes	Yes
20 300	PROJECTORS & ELECTRONIC WHITEBOARDS	P	350000	Yes	Yes
47 145	TYPEWRITERS	P	350000	No	Yes
47 147	OFFICE SECURITY APPLICATIONS FOR BUSINESS MACHINES	P	350000	No	Yes
47 355	DICTATING AND TRANSCRIBING MACHINES AND SYSTEMS	P	350000	Yes	Yes
50 158	PERSONAL & DOCUMENT IDENTIFICATION SYSTEMS	P	350000	No	Yes
50 163	MAIL PROCESSING MACHINES, SYSTEMS AND RELATED SOFTWARE	P	350000	No	Yes
50 177	DATE AND TIME STAMPS	P	350000	Yes	Yes

On this screen you can find your SIN and under the “UPC Required” column you can see if your SIN requires a UPC.

What if my manufacturer doesn't provide me a UPC?

GSA is very much aware that these new requirements will be challenging for some partners to meet. For example, frustration at the difficulty of obtaining data from manufacturers has been expressed. In such cases, partners are encouraged to avail themselves of other Web-based resources for locating UPCs. If the manufacturer is not providing the UPC, searches can be done on other eCommerce sites, on the Web in general, or by reading the UPC off the bar code.



What if this product does not have a UPC?

GSA acknowledges that some products do not currently use UPC at all. If a UPC needs to be purchased, manufacturers should visit The Uniform Code Council (www.gs1us.org) website as this is an excellent resource for information on understanding and purchasing UPCs. There are also several third party companies that sell UPCs. Remember that only the manufacturer is eligible to purchase the UPC for its own products. Resellers would not be the ones shouldering this cost.

If you have other questions please contact the Vendor Support Center (VSC) at vendor.support@gsa.gov or call (877) 495-4849.

Digital Certificate Reminder!

Now that eOffer and eMod are mandatory for all Schedules, remember to keep your digital certificate active and registered with your Authorized Negotiator so you can utilize eMod and eOffer. It is important to note that IdenTrust and Operational Research Consultants (ORC) are currently the only providers of digital certificates which are compatible with GSA systems. For additional information on digital certificates, visit the Vendor Support Center at www.eoffer.gsa.gov/eoffer_docs/DigitalCert.html.