GSA

GSA Federal Acquisition Service

Vol. 7 Iss. 3
Fall 2024

MASQUARTERLY

From the MAS PMO

Hello Industry Partners! We hope that 2024 is ending on a good note, and everyone is ready for a fantastic new year. This newsletter closes out the 2024 calendar year, providing a summary of Interact updates from October through December. If you aren't already a subscriber, we encourage you to join the MAS Interact group to get news straight to your inbox. Many notifications are time sensitive, so receiving emails directly is the best way to stay updated.

As a MAS contractor, you have probably visited (or frequently visit!) our Vendor Support Center (VSC.GSA.GOV). The MAS PMO recently launched an evaluation survey on the site, and we hope you'll take a moment to provide feedback on your experience. Your responses are confidential and will be used to help us understand how we can better support and improve your GSA experience. Look for the "Give Feedback" button on the right side of each page.

Finally, we always welcome feedback or topics for future MAS newsletters and encourage you to send suggestions to maspmo@gsa.gov.

Thank you for your ongoing partnership, and we look forward to continuing our work together in the coming year.

What's New

MAS Refresh 23 Published

Attention all current MAS Contractors! General Services Administration (GSA) Federal Acquisition Service (FAS) -- Multiple Award Schedule (MAS) Solicitation 47QSMD20R0001 Refresh 23 has been issued and published on SAM.

Detailed changes are outlined in the Dec 11, 2024 Interact post which updates the original November 21 notice with changes to the upcoming Refresh and adding the presentation and Q&A from a recent webinar. The post includes overall changes to the MAS solicitation and specific changes to eight Large Category, Subcategory, or SINs. You can also visit the Vendor Support Center (VSC) for information specific to MAS Solicitation Refreshes, including solicitation-level SF30 attachments for all MAS solicitation refreshes.

Update on MAS Pricing RFI and Next Steps

You may recall that, as part of an effort to streamline how we determine "fair and reasonable" pricing on MAS contracts, FAS issued a Request for Information (RFI) last spring to get industry feedback on aligning MAS pricing guidance with commercial practices. The RFI generated 507 responses from industry -- thank you to everyone who submitted comments. Check out this Nov 19, 2024 post on GSA Interact to learn more about the key takeaways and FAS' next steps to make improvements to the MAS solicitation based on industry feedback.

Joint Ventures Can Now See Socio-Economic Set-Aside Opportunities in eBuy!

Attention customer agencies and industry partners! A November 15, 2024 Interact post announced that Joint Ventures (JVs) are now able to see four socio-economic set-aside opportunities in eBuy. The set-aside opportunities include:

- Service Disabled Veteran Owned Joint Venture Eligible
- HUBZone Joint Venture Eligible
- Women Owned Joint Venture Eligible
- 8(a) Joint Venture Eligible

For JVs to qualify for a set-aside opportunity, one of the partners must qualify for one of the socio-economic business classifications. The Interact post also provides responses to several of the most frequently asked questions, and links to additional information on Joint Ventures. Please email maspmo@gsa.gov with any questions.

FAS Sales Reporting Portal Enhancement: Update to New Template v3.0 to Report Transactional Data

TDR Reporters -- Please note that as of October 31, 2024, only submissions using SRP upload template v3.0 are accepted, any other template will be rejected. Notice of this change appeared on Interact on October 25. You can download the new template on the SRP homepage.

> **If you currently participate in TDR and report MAS Data**, nothing changed.. Please continue to report your data using the MAS Data tab.

> **If you are a new participant and reporting GWAC-MAS Data**, please read the information listed on the GWAC-MAS instructions tab, then report your data using the GWAC-MAS Data tab.

Questions about the new SRP Upload Template V3.0? Contact vendor.support@gsa.gov or call (877) 495-4849.

Contractor Performance Information for GSA eCommerce and Digital Platforms (updated 11/4/24)

FAS is exploring potential rulemaking around the possibility of GSA publicly posting certain contractor performance metrics on GSA eCommerce and Digital platforms (e.g., GSA Advantage). The goal of any such potential rulemaking would be to improve contractor performance, increase competition at the order level, increase transparency, and increase customer satisfaction.

To understand the impacts of publishing facets of contractor performance information, FAS gathered information from stakeholders in the form of comments and feedback to questions posted on Interact on October 15, 2024 and updated November 4, 2024. Comments were accepted through December 5, and we thank everyone who submitted a response. If you missed that deadline, FAS anticipates that a draft rule may be issued for public comment in the second or third quarter of FY25.

After Receipt of Order (ARO) Terms Review & Vendor Action Required

Attention MAS product contractors! On May 24, 2024 GSA began sending MAS refresh notices asking that product contractors review and validate their contract and also catalog FOB and ARO terms. However, hundreds of contractors have still not taken appropriate action to ensure they are meeting requirements of GSAR 552.238-86 Delivery Schedule.

If you have not taken action, please visit the October 3, 2024 Interact post for detailed information on how to ensure your products have ARO terms which correctly correlate with product FOB terms and actions. After reading the post, please contact supplieraccountability@gsa.gov with questions about this requirement.

MAS Program Updates

FAR Rule Updating Sustainable Acquisition Requirements is Finalized

The Biden-Harris Administration recently finalized a rule that modernizes existing Federal sustainable purchasing standards. The Federal Acquisition Regulatory Council issued this rule to strengthen existing sustainable products requirements by directing federal buyers to purchase sustainable products and services to the maximum extent practicable. Sustainable products and services are products and services that meet statutory purchasing programs (see FAR 23.107) and required EPA purchasing programs (see FAR 23.108).

A new omnibus clause, [FAR 52.223-23, Sustainable Products and Services](#), was added to MAS contracts through Refresh 21. This clause flows down to orders and requires contractors to ensure the sustainable products and services identified in the contract are delivered or furnished to the government.

How can contractors prepare for sustainable product and service requirements? Contractors can use the [Green Procurement Compilation](#) to learn if the products or services your company is offering have purchasing programs applicable to federal procurement.

New Reduction of Single Use Plastic Packaging Rule: The MAS Refresh #23 incorporates the [Reduction of Single-use Plastic (SUP) Packaging](#) rule. The new rule aims to reduce plastic waste by encouraging contractors to state whether they offer SUP-free packaging with a new icon on GSA Advantage!. The SUP-free icons are featured on the [Strategies to Reduce Plastic in Packaging](#) page on GSA's Sustainable Facilities Tool. The MAS Refresh:

- Updates GSAR 552.238-88, [GSA Advantage](#)
- Adds GSAR 552.238-118, [Single-use Plastic (SUP) Free Packaging Identification](#) and GSAR 552.238-119, [Single-use Plastic (SUP) Free Packaging Availability](#)
- Provides instructions to new offerors and existing MAS contractors on how to complete the provision and update their products to identify SUP-free packaging.

Completing the provision and offering SUP-free packaging is voluntary; however, the new clause urges contractors to adopt SUP-free packaging to the maximum extent practicable. The new rule updated the GSAM to clarify that contracting officers can use the SUP-free packaging icons as part of the best value decision ([508.405(c)(2)](#)). For additional information, refer to the Interact Post to [Help Agencies Meet Plastic Waste Reduction Goals](#).

New Clause Prohibiting Drones

FAR Interim Rule 2024-002 adds a new clause FAR 52.240-1 *Prohibition on Unmanned Aircraft Systems Manufactured or Assembled by American Security Drone Act - Covered Foreign Entities*. The clause prohibits "FASC-prohibited unmanned aircraft systems", which are the drones themselves and "associated elements" (e.g., associated elements include the equipment required for control and operation, such as communication links and the software or systems necessary for their safe and effective functioning).

Currently under the MAS program, only drones approved by the Defense Innovation Unit's Blue UAS program are permitted. This is more restrictive than the new FAR prohibition. However, the FAS Memo is silent on "associated elements" - this means the FAR prohibitions apply for those products and services.

Making Market Research Easy - Enhancing Industry Partnerships

Discover how Requests for Information (RFIs) can boost your business! Join the Market Research as a Service (MRAS) team on January 28, 2025, at 12 p.m. ET for a webinar titled "Making Market Research Easy - Enhancing Industry Partnerships." Register here.

This informative session will provide expert tips on responding to GSA's RFIs, including innovative strategies for completing these crucial surveys. You'll gain a deeper understanding of why GSA collects industry responses and how this data shapes future purchasing decisions. Don't miss this opportunity to enhance your business practices and make your voice heard in government procurement.

Join us and unlock the potential of market research to grow your business and hear directly from GSA experts!

Hold The Date -- FAST2025 Slated for March

Make plans now to attend FAST2025 -- slated for March 2025. Hosted by FAS' Customer Accounts and Stakeholder Engagement (CASE) division, this event will be tailored to government and industry, and will focus on FAS' General Supplies & Services. FAST2025 will be followed by an Industry Symposium in June 2025. We encourage industry partners to stay engaged with future FAS training and events by joining our GSA Events & Training Interact Community and exploring the full list of upcoming opportunities on GSA's website.

Catalog Management Updates

FAS Catalog Platform Updates

The onboarding of product contracts into the FAS Catalog Platform (FCP) is targeted to resume in early calendar year 2025. Contractors will be notified in advance of their contract's identified transition date.

- **Vendors not yet in FCP with product catalogs** can [learn about eligibility here](#).
- **Vendors not yet in FCP with service catalogs** can expect to learn more about FCP in the coming months. A small group of MAS services vendors with the Professional Engineering Special Item Number (SIN) are currently participating in a pilot of the FCP which began in July/August. The FCP will begin to onboard services vendors in early calendar year 2025.
- **(Vendors already in FCP with product catalogs that need to add service catalogs in FCP** can learn more by reading *FCP MAS Service Updates* in this newsletter)

New FCP Help Resource Updates can be found on [Catalog.gsa.gov/help](#)

- New Getting Started Vendor User Guide describes steps for how to access, navigate, and complete the First Steps process (including *Seller Profile and Baseline* catalog actions). It includes guidelines for both products and services baselines.
- Updated *Managing a Products Catalog in FCP Vendor User Guide* describes how to complete all Product actions in FCP (including *Add, Change, Delete, Temporary Price Reductions and Upload Photo* catalog actions)
- Coming Soon: Managing a Catalog in FCP *Vendor User Guide* will include product and service catalog management guidance.

Things vendors can do now to prepare for transition:

- **Ensure Authorized Negotiators are kept up to date.** Communications about moving to the FCP **are only sent to Authorized Negotiators**. Additionally, only Authorized Negotiators can access FCP.
- **Ensure GSA Advantage information is accurate and reflects what has been awarded to the contract.** Once a contract is moved to FCP, vendors must complete a *First Steps* onboarding process, which will be easier to complete if current GSA Advantage information is up to date.

Vendors will have to complete three steps to begin managing their catalogs in FCP:

1. **Register in the FCP:** Authorized Negotiators must register at https://catalog.gsa.gov/register.
2. **Verify Seller Profile in FCP:** Vendors must verify the Seller Profile information published to GSA Advantage such as Minimum Order Requirement and Order Department information.
3. **Baseline GSA Advantage Product Catalog**: Vendors must complete a baseline process within eMod and FCP to establish an authoritative representation of the awarded catalog. *Note: Once service catalog management functionality is rolled out, there will be a similar baseline process for services.*

Vendors can learn more about the process for [moving to the FCP here](#).

FCP MAS Services Updates

The FAS Catalog Platform (FCP) launched an ongoing pilot for MAS Services in July/August. The pilot participants are benefiting from a new feature specific to MAS services, which includes the auto-publication of a Price List to GSA Advantage, eLibrary and eBuy.

The introduction of services catalog functionality to existing FCP users and the use of the Services Plus File (SPF), originally scheduled for mid-November, is being rescheduled to early calendar year 2025.

When a vendor with services offerings starts using the FCP they will indicate its *Catalog Offerings in the Seller Profile* and then Baseline its catalog using the Services Plus File (SPF). The services workflow will be standard for new FCP vendors onboarded in calendar year 2025.

The SPF is designed to replace the Services and Training PPT and the 541930 Translation and Interpretation Services and 611630 Linguistic Training and Education PPT. Vendors will find the SPF accepts labor categories, fixed price services and solutions, courses and training, ODCs, ancillary items and products not sold on GSA Advantage. The products not sold on GSA Advantage are what gives the Services *Plus* File its Plus in its name.

The FCP auto-publishes a Price List based on catalog specific fields in the Services Plus File (SPF) to GSA Advantage, eLibrary, and eBuy whenever the catalog is updated. The Price List is a consistently formatted spreadsheet that will function as a separate file from the Terms & Conditions (T&C) file. Currently, MAS services vendors who publish a Price List will not have to repeat that information within the T&C File.

(Note: this does not apply to FCP actions using the Product File; Product File actions publish automatically to Advantage product pages, not as a Price List.)

What does this mean for vendors?

- A vendor will always have a Price List that reflects what is on contract from their last catalog update to the Services Plus File; and have their pricing available in a consistent format that allows for an improved customer experience when comparing pricing and easier management of the contract Price List.
- A simplified Terms and Conditions file will only need to be updated when contractual information changes such as the exercise of an option period.

The FCP Help Resources have been updated to include services content. The new updates to the FAQs and guides can be found on Catalog.gsa.gov/help.

- The Frequently Asked Questions section has been extensively updated to include services guidance..

Now Live: Standalone Purchase of Product Accessories on GSA Advantage

As of October 17, 2024, Product Accessories have been rebranded as "Related Products," and are now fully searchable and purchasable as standalone items on GSA Advantage.

Key Updates

- Rebranding as Related Products
- Searchable & Purchasable as Independent Items
- Comparison Feature Now Available
- Increased Visibility for Vendors

No immediate action is required from vendors. However, if you would prefer that your accessories are not available as standalone items, please ensure they are **removed** from your Product File (**FCP users**) or SIP/EDI (**Legacy users**). Additionally, vendors should verify their Accessories function as true standalone items. If they do not, consider converting them to Product Options where appropriate.

For additional information on Product Options and Related Products, vendors can visit this Interact post and the FCP Help Page.

To learn more about the FCP, visit catalog.gsa.gov/help and watch our Vendor Training Playlist.

- Vendors can attend Weekly Office Hours every Thursday at 1 p.m. ET hosted by the Vendor Support Center (VSC). Information about joining Vendor Office Hours can be found on catalog.gsa.gov/help (You must be logged into FCP to see Office Hours information).
- After reviewing existing guidance and materials, any additional questions can be sent to CatalogManagement@gsa.gov or vendor.support@gsa.gov.

MAS OFFICE HOURS

Every third Thursday of the month, the MAS PMO hosts a webinar dedicated to a specific topic of interest for our MAS Industry Partners. This month, the session on December 19, 2024 at 2 p.m. ET will provide an overview of GSA's MAS Contractor Team Arrangements (CTAs). Contractors are encouraged to register for the series here. If you miss a session, recordings can be accessed at the MAS Office Hours Playlist on YouTube. If you'd like to know more about CTAs, GSA.gov provides detailed information and resources on partnering with other MAS contractors.

QUICK LINKS
Register for MAS Office Hours

MAS Interact group

Helpful MAS Resources

GSA and Multiple Award Schedule:

GSA Schedule

Schedule Customer Training

Electronic Subcontracting Reporting System (eSRS)

MAS on GSA Interact

MAS Desk Reference

GSA's Blog

GSA's Vendor Support Center

GSA Small Business Assistance

Finding Your IOA and ACO

GSA's Office of the Procurement Ombudsman

Preparing and Submitting a MAS Offer:

Roadmap to Preparing a MAS Offer

GSA's Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU)

Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (Free Assistance)

Marketing:

Contract Opportunities

eLibrary - Contract Award Information

eBuy - Electronic Request for Quote (RFQ) / Request for Proposal (RFP) System

Schedules Sales Query Plus (SSQ+)

Small Business Forecasting Tool

GSA Advantage! - Online shopping

Contact Us
Questions and feedback may be submitted to maspmo@gsa.gov.