

## GSA ORDER

Subject: General Services Administration Acquisition Manual; GSAM Case 2023-G511, HCA Acquisition Subject Matter Expert Support

1. Purpose. This order transmits a revision to the General Services Administration Acquisition Manual (GSAM) to identify Acquisition Subject Matter Experts (A-SMEs) who serve as advisors to Heads of Contracting Activities (HCAs) and to make this information widely known across GSA to enable acquisition teams to access those resources.

Background. The acquisition system works best when it's able to deliver, on a timely basis, the best value product or service to the customer. Participants in this system must balance various priorities and be open to the subject matter expertise of each acquisition team member. Having this subject matter expertise is especially important in areas with complex and/or frequently changing policy.

A-SMEs, appointed in areas<sup>1</sup> like small business, labor, sustainability, and cybersecurity to advise HCAs, will enhance an HCAs ability to support, promote, and manage acquisition team needs while supporting public policy objectives and local, Service-level, and GSA-wide policy goals.

These A-SMEs will also provide HCAs with advisors who can serve as primary points of contact for relevant inquiries.

2. Effective date. March 20, 2024
3. Explanation of changes. This amendment includes non-regulatory changes. For full text changes of the amendment see Attachment A, GSAM Text Line-In/Line-Out.

This amendment revises the language of the following GSAM subparts, changes summarized below:

### 501.601 General

- Amended (b)(1) by adding A-SMEs in small business, labor, sustainability, and cybersecurity to the list of additional roles for which appointments can be made to support the HCA.
- Further amended (b)(1) to inform readers that additional resources regarding A-SMEs can be found on the Contracting Officials topic page on the Acquisition Portal.
- Amended (b)(2)(i)(D) by adding Contracting Directors, Contracting Executives, Advocates for Competition, ACNs, and A-SMEs to the list of example acquisition

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<sup>1</sup> A-SMEs may be appointed in other areas as necessary.

- workforce positions the HCA is responsible for managing, overseeing, and integrating to ensure an effective and efficient team.
- Added (b)(7) “Acquisition Subject Matter Expert (A-SME)” which outlines the responsibilities of the A-SMEs identified in (b)(1), and the requirement that appointments of A-SMEs be done in writing and submitted to the SPE.

#### 502.101 Definitions

- Added the definition of an “Acquisition Subject Matter Expert (A-SME),” including how expertise is demonstrated.
4. Point of contact. For clarification of content, contact Daniel Frias, GSA Acquisition Policy Division, at [gsarpolicy@gsa.gov](mailto:gsarpolicy@gsa.gov).

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## GSAM Case 2023-G511

### GSAM Text, Line-In/Line-Out

#### GSAM Baseline: Change 175 effective 02/15/2024

- Additions to baseline made by rule are indicated by **[bold text in brackets]**
- Deletions to baseline made by rule are indicated by ~~strikethroughs~~
- Five asterisks (\*\*\*\*\* ) indicate that there are no revisions between the preceding and following sections
- Three asterisks (\*\*\*) indicate that there are no revisions between the material shown within a subsection

#### Part 501 - General Services Administration Acquisition Regulation System

##### Subpart 501.6 - Career Development, Contracting Authority, and Responsibilities

###### 501.601 General

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###### (b) *Contracting Officials.*

(1) The Head of the Contracting Activity (HCA) is ultimately responsible for managing all aspects of their respective contracting activity. Additional roles are identified throughout the FAR and GSAM to support HCAs in their responsibilities, including the Contracting Director, Contracting Activity Advocate for Competition, and Acquisition Career Navigator (ACN)[, and **Acquisition Subject Matter Experts (A-SMEs) in key acquisition areas such as small business, labor, sustainability, and cybersecurity**]. The HCA may also designate a Contracting Executive by making the appointment in writing and transmitting a copy to the Senior Procurement Executive. Additional resources for HCAs, Contracting Executives, Contracting Directors, Advocates for Competition[, and ACNs[, and **A-SMEs**] can be found on the Acquisition Contacts and Offices page on the GSA Acquisition Portal at <https://insite.gsa.gov/acquisitionportal>.

(2) HCA. A summary of HCA responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

(i) *Executive oversight.* \*\*\*

(C) Establishing infrastructure, as necessary, to support acquisition management and oversight for their workforce members, including systems required to effectively manage contract and workforce data;

(D) Managing, overseeing and integrating all members of the acquisition workforce (e.g., Leasing Specialists, Contract Specialists, Lease Contracting Officers, Contracting Officers, Contracting Officer's Representatives, Program Managers, **[Contracting Directors, Contracting Executives,**

**Advocates for Competition, ACNs, A-SMEs,]** and other applicable positions) to ensure members are working effectively and efficiently as a productive team.

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**[(7) Acquisition Subject Matter Expert (A-SME).**

**(i) A summary of A-SME responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following and may vary by Service:**

**(A) Support the HCA by serving as advisors on matters related to their respective area of expertise; and**

**(B) Serve as the primary point of contact for inquiries from or to the acquisition workforce on matters related to their respective expertise in key acquisition areas within the contracting activity.**

**(ii) Key acquisition areas include small business, labor, sustainability, and cybersecurity. HCAs may appoint A-SMEs in other areas as necessary.**

**(iii) Appointments of A-SMEs must be in writing with a copy sent to the SPE at [spe.request@gsa.gov](mailto:spe.request@gsa.gov). ]**

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**Part 502 - Definitions of Words and Terms**

**Subpart 502.1 - Definitions**

502.101 Definitions.

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**[“Acquisition Subject Matter Expert (A-SME)” means a member of the acquisition workforce designated in writing by the Head of the Contracting Activity who is knowledgeable in one or more key acquisition areas, including small business, labor, sustainability, and cybersecurity, as described in 501.601(b)(7). The A-SME should have expertise demonstrated by years of experience focused on the subject matter, a credential or other specialized training. A-SMEs are identified on the GSA Acquisition Portal at <https://insite.gsa.gov/acquisitionportal>.]**

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“Acquisition Workforce (AWF)” means individuals who perform various acquisition-related functions to support the accomplishment of an agency’s mission. Acquisition, pursuant to 41 U.S.C. 403, includes, among traditional contracting functions, requirements definition, measurement of contract

performance, and technical and management direction. Membership in the AWF may be on a full-time, part-time, or occasional basis.

(a) \* \* \*

(6) Individuals who support the business processes of the activities listed in this paragraph (e.g., subject matter experts[ **and A-SMEs**])

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