

## GSA Requisitioning and Solving Order Problems

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There are various methods by which requisitions may be submitted to GSA and their status determined. Regardless of the method, the basic requisition forms and coding structures are found in the Federal and Military Standard Requisitioning and Issue Procedures (FEDSTRIP/MILSTRIP). These procedures allow for automated processing by the supply systems not only of GSA, but also of the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs—the three principal supply sources for both civilian and military agencies.

Customer agencies can help FSS meet its customer service goals by referring to the FEDSTRIP Operating Guide when submitting requisitions. You can get a copy of the guide (order code OFOG-0008) from:

General Services Administration  
Centralized Mailing List Service  
Box 6477  
Ft. Worth, TX 76115

Phone: (817) 334-5215  
E-mail: [cmls.gsa@gas.gov](mailto:cmls.gsa@gas.gov)  
Fax: (817) 334-5227

The key to using the FEDSTRIP system is your agency's Activity Address Code (AAC). Civilian agencies are responsible for requesting an AAC, which is assigned by the GSA Central Office in Washington, DC. An explanation of how codes are assigned and used is contained in the FEDSTRIP Operating Guide. If you are unfamiliar with your code or need to have one assigned, contact your Customer Service Director for an explanation of the procedure or contact:

Supply Management Division (FCSD)  
Washington, DC 20406

Phone: (703) 305-7977  
Fax: (703) 305-7083  
CommRI: RUSAPUA

Department of Defense Activity Address Codes are assigned by each service; see the DoD Activity Address Directory, DoD 4000.25.6M.

### Selecting a Submission Method

Unless otherwise advised by the ordering agency or FSS, customer agencies may send single or multi-line requisitions to GSA by any of the following methods:

- Automated Digital Information Network (AUTODIN).
- Defense Automatic Addressing System (DAAS) through the DAAS Asynchronous Message Entry System (DAMES).
- Multi-Use File for Interagency News (MUFFIN). Accessed by personal computer and modem, this system offers rapid entry and transmission advantages to requisitioning agencies (see page 36).
- Other electrical media such as administrative message, TWX, fax, dispatch, and teletypewriter.

- Telephone (when time, distance, or economy are considerations).
- Airmail, regular mail, or courier.
- GSA *Advantage!*<sup>™</sup> on-line shopping service (see next page).

Information about choosing a requisitioning method can be obtained by contacting your local GSA Customer Service Director.

## Hard-Copy Requisitions

The addresses and telephone numbers for the FSS Acquisition Centers responsible for processing hard-copy FEDSTRIP requisitions and related documents are listed in Appendix A. Customers should submit hard-copy requisitions for Wholesale Stock Items (identified in the GSA Supply Catalog) to the proper FSS Acquisition Centers. Requisitions for Special Order Program (SOP) items should also be submitted to the FSS Acquisition Centers. SOP items normally are not included in the GSA Supply Catalog.

Customer agencies can help FSS meet its customer service goals by remembering the following when submitting requisitions:

- Fill in the requisition form legibly and include your name and phone number. Contact your regional Customer Service Director if you need help in filling out FEDSTRIP orders.
- Request and use computer-generated requisition status. Contact your CSD if you wish to explore using computers to submit requisitions.

Contact the appropriate Acquisition Center to check the status of your requisitions.

## Emergency Requisitions

Customers needing emergency support should contact the order processing activities listed in Appendix B, which includes both commercial and DSN telephone numbers. Emergency requisitions may be placed by voice message, fax, telephone, or courier. Complete requisitioning data must be provided to avoid delays.

Emergency requisitions require special pricing for priority and expedited service. Depot stock requisitions will be given priority handling and assessed a 10 percent special handling charge as follows:

- An emergency requisition is one shipped from the depot before being put into the automated supply system—usually it is telephoned to an FSS Acquisition Center.
- A civilian priority requisition is one carrying priority designator code 01, 02, or 03.
- A military priority requisition is one carrying priority designator codes 01 through 08 plus a required delivery date within 30 days of the requisition, or priority designator codes 01 through 08 plus a required delivery date marked “555,” “777,” “999,” “E\_\_\_\_\_,” or “N\_\_\_\_\_,” or with a project code “9\_\_\_\_\_” (Joint Chiefs of Staff).

The 10 percent surcharge will be included in the selling price reflected on billing and shipping documents. The special handling charge will not be applied to direct deliveries or shipments of back-ordered items.

Local agreements, such as Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) disaster relief operations, include special ordering procedures that must be followed. National Wildfire Protection Program items are provided through the GSA Wildfire Protection Equipment and Supplies catalog produced by the General Products Center (7FX) in Fort Worth, TX. Copies of the catalog are available from:

GSA Centralized Mailing List Service  
P.O. Box 6477  
Fort Worth, TX 76115

Phone: (817) 334-5215  
Fax: (817) 334-5227

Emergency fire orders may be transmitted by telephone or fax as follows:

Monday through Friday  
7:45 am to 4:15 pm (Central Standard Time)  
General Products Center, Fort Worth, TX

Phone: (817) 978-2051  
Fax: (817) 978-2605

Monday through Friday  
7:00 am to 4:30 pm (Pacific Standard Time)  
GSA Western Distribution Center, Stockton, CA

Phone: (209) 946-6382 or 6383  
 Fax: (209) 946-6076

After-hours, weekend, and holiday calls should be placed to (209) 942-6935, which is an answering service. Leave your name and telephone number with the answering service, and someone will return your call as soon as possible.

Whenever an emergency order requires vendor direct delivery, paperless ordering through Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) can eliminate many days of lead time for a growing number of GSA contractors. Electronic ordering helps these contractors deliver faster and with fewer discrepancies. For more information on EDI call (703) 305-7741.

## Customer Supply Center Ordering

The CSCs carry a wide selection of items (including many brand names) at the best value to you, with convenient ordering options. In addition, the CSCs deliver straight to your desk top and offer the option in payment services that allow you to either use your IMPAC credit card or AAC billing. Look on page 18 for more information about CSCs.

## GSA Advantage!™

GSA Advantage!™ on-line shopping service is an electronic ordering system designed to put the world of products and services offered through GSA just a “point and click” away. The goal of the system is to bring together all GSA products, along with their descriptions, current prices, and delivery options to provide a simplified method of ordering. The system will offer all products supplied through:

- FSS Stock and Special Order Programs (7–14 day delivery);
- FSS Customer Supply Centers (1–3 day delivery); and
- Federal Supply Schedule Programs.

GSA Advantage!™ allows users to browse, perform keyword searches on product-specific information, review delivery options, and assemble and place an order. If preferred, users may “park” their electronic shopping carts and finish the order at a later time. The system also

enables you to download information to your own system and to create your own Electronic Data Interchange purchase orders.

Products are being added to GSA Advantage!™ on a daily basis. As of January 1, 1998, over 350,000 products were available.

Browsing will always be open to everyone, but only authorized users can place orders through GSA Advantage!™. An authorized user is one who has a GSA-assigned account number (Activity Address Code) and password or is the holder of a Governmentwide Commercial Credit Card.

For more information on the Government Purchase Card, call (703) 305-6658 or write GSA/FSS (FCX), Washington, DC 20406.

Both customers and vendors can currently browse GSA Advantage!™ through the Internet’s World Wide Web by using an Internet browser such as Netscape Navigator or Microsoft Explorer. Our Internet address is <http://www.fss.gsa.gov>. Customers without World Wide Web access can request a copy of GSA Advantage!™ Access, which will allow direct access to the system with only a PC and modem.

### GSA Advantage!™ for Customers

- Customers may no longer need to maintain paper copies of supply Schedules and vendor catalogs
- Instant electronic access to thousands and eventually millions of commercial brand name items
- GSA can provide agencies with ordering and billing history data
- Real-time pricing
- Improved access to mandatory Javits-Wagner-O’Day products
- Customers can access system at various agency levels
- Reduced time required to find needed products, resulting in faster order placement
- Knowledge of GSA internal buying practices no longer needed
- All GSA products available on one system

### GSA Advantage!<sup>™</sup> for Vendors

- Quick and easy access of items increases potential for strong sales
- Potential reduction of catalog printing and mailing costs

If you have more questions, call our voice mail hotline at (703) 305-7359, e-mail [GSA.Advantage@gsa.gov](mailto:GSA.Advantage@gsa.gov), or write:

GSA/FSS  
Acquisition Operations & Electronic Commerce Center  
Washington, DC 20406

## Multi-Use File for Interagency News (MUFFIN)

MUFFIN was created to provide our customers with up-to-date facts and requisitioning support 24 hours a day.

No special software is required—just generic communications software such as ProComm, CrossTalk, or PFS First Choice. (Many others will work just as well.) No user fees are charged, but you may incur long distance telephone charges depending on how your agency enables you to connect.

The MUFFIN System User Manual (order code OMUF 0001) is available from the CMLS at (817) 334-5215 or by fax at (817) 334-5227.

If additional assistance is required, call the MUFFIN HELP Line at (703) 305-7200.

### MUFFIN Features

- **Source of Supply.** Provides information on GSA stock, direct delivery, and Federal Supply Schedule programs. Inquire by vendor name, National Stock Number, or special item number, commodity name, schedule number, or contract number.
- **Environmental Products Guide.** (Formerly *Recycled Products Guide*.) Lists all of the environmentally oriented products and services available in the GSA supply system.
- **Customer Service Information.** Provides names, locations, telephone numbers, and areas of responsibility for GSA Customer Service Directors nationwide and overseas.

- **Customer Comments and Suggestions.** We want your feedback, not only about the MUFFIN system, but about any issue involving the business you conduct with GSA. Your comments are received at GSA headquarters (Customer Services Division) the next business day; we will respond or forward your feedback to the appropriate program office within two business days.
- **FEDSTRIP Requisitioning.** Requisitions normally mailed to GSA can be input for direct entry into the GSA system. Customers requiring delivery of GSA stock items on a regularly scheduled basis may elect to use the MUFFIN phased delivery system. Use of this requisitioning feature requires assignment of a password. To obtain a password, call (703) 305-7977.
- **Requisition Status.** MUFFIN users have on-line access to the status of requisitions submitted to GSA. This feature is available for all requisitions and is not limited to requisitions submitted through MUFFIN.

### How To Access MUFFIN

MUFFIN is accessible via telephone connection (modem to modem) as well as through several data networks. How you connect will depend on your own agency's communications capabilities. Please consult your own local computer or telecommunications staff to help you connect to MUFFIN.

MUFFIN's modem number is (202) 205-3890 or 3930.

Communications parameters appropriate for electronic bulletin boards will work with MUFFIN. Some experimentation may be necessary; we suggest starting with 7 data bits, 1 stop bit, even parity, full duplex. The system supports up to 9600-baud communications.

MUFFIN's network addresses are:

- FTS2000 System A (AT&T) data network—9246028
- FTS2000 System B (Sprint) data network—20256600
- Telnet/TCPIP/Defense Data Network—159.142.118.004
- Internet—[MUFFIN.gsa.gov](http://MUFFIN.gsa.gov)

After establishing a connection, depress the (enter) key to bring up MUFFIN's colon prompt (:). At the prompt type

HELLO (space) GSA.MUFFIN (enter). Remember the period between “GSA” and “MUFFIN.” Your USER ID is your FEDSTRIP activity address code (if known) or other agency abbreviation. Once you’ve signed on, simply follow the instructions on the screen.

Because it is a generic system, MUFFIN does not drive any print functions. Printing your MUFFIN sessions is controlled by your own communications software or network capabilities. Your local computer support staff should be able to assist you in printing your MUFFIN work.

## Special Notes on MUFFIN Requisitioning

You should already be familiar with the FEDSTRIP requisition system before using MUFFIN’s requisition-entry program. The MUFFIN capability is simply an electronic means of submitting the same information you would include on the SF 344 hard-copy requisition. The first time you use your requisition password MUFFIN will prompt you to enter “constant” data. These are the data that appear across the top of SF 344 and remain the same for most of your requisitions. MUFFIN stores these data along with your password; in subsequent sessions, you will only have to enter “constant” data if your needs change.

MUFFIN will accept various FEDSTRIP transactions in addition to ordinary AOA or A01 requisitions. Simply change the DOC ID (constant #1) to reflect the transaction you need (e.g., AC1 cancellation, AF1 follow-up, AOE/A05 exception data requisition requires mark for ship to or descriptive data to process). Remember to adjust the Julian date (constant #5) for cancellations and follow-ups.

At the end of your requisitioning session, MUFFIN will generate a list of all your requisitions along with the total dollar value. *BE SURE TO PRINT THIS LISTING FOR YOUR RECORDS.* (Printing is driven by your own communications software; please consult with your local computer support staff for assistance in printing your MUFFIN session.)

Prices displayed in MUFFIN are current for GSA stock items only. If your order includes nonstock items, the “wrap-up” list of requisitions MUFFIN generates

includes a warning that prices may vary for other than GSA stock items.

When checking status, remember that your requisition number is 14 digits long. It consists of your Activity Address Code (six digits) followed by the requisition Julian date (four digits) followed by the serial number you assign each line item (four digits).

## MUFFIN Phased Ordering

Phased ordering permits the user to create a series of up to 99 identical requisitions at one sitting. MUFFIN will prompt the user for the quantity per delivery, interval between deliveries (in weeks), and the number of deliveries required. Based on the information given, MUFFIN will assign future Julian dates along with unique serial numbers, keeping the series of requisitions on file and passing each into the supply system as the appropriate date occurs. MUFFIN will display the current price for your NSN at the time the order is placed; however, each requisition is officially priced at the time it enters the supply system.

MUFFIN phased ordering cannot guarantee delivery of merchandise on an exact schedule, but by automatically placing priority code “04” on these requisitions and feeding them into the supply system on an exact schedule, deliveries will occur on a regular basis.

For additional information on MUFFIN’s phased ordering, call (703) 305-7977.

## Requisitioning Information

### Prices

**Depot Stock Program.** GSA stock item (AAC G) selling prices are shown in the GSA Supply Catalog, GSA *Advantage!*<sup>™</sup>, and in the Federal Logistics Information System maintained by the Defense Logistics Services Center in Battle Creek, MI. Prices include all costs associated with supplying items, including contracting, order processing, cataloging, quality assurance, storage, distribution, transportation, customer information, customer service, and overhead. GSA adjusts stock item prices twice a year, on October 1 and April 1, to reflect any changes in the cost of the material or supplying the items. GSA occasionally

changes individual item prices at other times to meet rapid changes in item costs.

Customers are billed at the selling price in effect when the requisition is accepted into the GSA system. For requisitions coded for future delivery by means of a required delivery date beginning with S (as described in the FED-STRIP Operating Guide), customers are billed the price in effect when the requisition is released for shipment.

**Export Orders.** A special handling charge of 6 percent is added to export orders for stock and special order items. This charge covers GSA's added costs for preparing and packing material for export, preparing export documentation, etc.

**FOB Origin Shipments.** Transportation costs for direct vendor deliveries that are shipped FOB Origin are billed separately. FOB Origin shipments are, for the most part, limited to those made by the NIB, NISH, and UNICOR.

**Priority and Expedited Service.** A 10 percent special handling charge is added to GSA stock item selling prices for emergency shipments and requisitions meeting the criteria for priority and expedited service. The 10 percent is included in the selling price reflected on billing and shipping documents. It is not applied to direct deliveries or shipments of back-ordered items.

**Special Order Program.** Selling prices for material supplied directly from vendors through the GSA Special Order and FSS Programs (AACs H, I, J, and L) are determined by applying a markup to the contractor price to cover GSA's costs. Prices and markups vary depending on the type of contract, customer location, quantity, and commodity. Therefore, for Special Order items customers should use the prices published by GSA and DLSC only as a guide. For FSS items, vendor catalogs should be used as the source for prices. Published prices for Special Order items are updated quarterly based on prices actually charged for recent customer orders.

**Stock Direct Delivery.** In most cases, GSA reduces stock item selling prices by 10 percent when direct vendor delivery is more economical for the Government. The 10 percent discount does not apply when the cost of the item to GSA is greater than the discounted price. In this situation, the customer will be billed the GSA cost price, with the maximum price charged being the current GSA selling price.

## Shelf-Life Control

A shelf-life item is one that has such inherently deteriorative or unstable characteristics that it must have an assigned storage or shelf-life period to ensure that the material will perform its intended function (Management of Shelf-Life Material, FPMR 101-27.2). Shelf-life items are classified as Type I, nonextendable, and Type II, extendable. The former are assigned alphabetic codes and the latter numeric codes.

Type I nonextendable materials have a specific storage life that is conservatively estimated for safety. While Type I (alpha code) items may be usable after the shelf-life expiration date, they are used only at the customer's risk.

Type II (numeric code) shelf-life items may be extended repetitively by qualified technicians for 50 percent of the original shelf-life period, provided the materials meet established extension criteria, or until stock is exhausted. Shelf life of certain critical end-use sealants and adhesives is extended fewer times and for shorter periods.

Customer agencies are responsible for monitoring shelf life once they have accepted usable material from GSA. GSA publishes shelf-life extension criteria in Federal Standard No. 793, Storage Standards.

To prevent issuance of outdated Type II material, bulk-pack quantities are examined by Quality Assurance personnel prior to their expiration date. When bulk material qualifies for extension of the shelf-life period, bulk-pack containers are updated with shelf-life labels that indicate the date to which the shelf life has been extended.

The end-using agency is responsible for updating the shelf life of individual units received within a bulk pack. The shelf life of each unit of issue is updated by GSA only when the unit of issue is the shipping container or GSA has broken the bulk packs for shipment.

Shelf-life codes, types, and applicable storage periods are as follows:

<i>Shelf-Life Period</i>	<i>Type I</i>	<i>Type II</i>
Nondeteriorative	0	0
1 month	A	
2 months	B	
3 months	C	1
4 months	D	
5 months	E	

6 months	F	2
9 months	G	3
12 months	H	4
15 months	J	
18 months	K	5
21 months	L	
24 months	M	6
27 months	N	
30 months	P	
36 months	Q	7
48 months	R	8
60 months	S	9
Military Essential and medical items with shelf life greater than 60 months	X	X

Internal controls have been established to ensure that no item is shipped from GSA facilities if less than the minimum time indicated below remains until the date of reinspection (original or extended).

<i>Shelf-Life Period</i>	<i>CONUS</i>	<i>Destination Overseas Surface</i>	<i>Overseas Air</i>
1 year or more		1/2 original shelf life	
9 months	4 months	4 months	4 months
6 months	2 months	3 months	2 months
3 months	1 month	N/A*	45 days

\*Items with a three-month shelf life must be shipped overseas only by air transportation.

A shelf-life hotline is available for all agencies to report receipt of material with an expired shelf life or other shelf-life complaints. The number is (209) 946-6333.

## Requisition Status

GSA provides automatic requisition status information to customers using FEDSTRIP and MILSTRIP procedures. The requisitioner determines the type of status desired through the Media and Status Code entered in card column 7 of the requisition. Based on that code, GSA transmits status transactions by data pattern message to the Defense Automatic Addressing System, which distributes the supply and/or shipment status to the designated recipient by appropriate media.

In addition, customers may contact specific FSS Acquisition Centers to clarify status, expedite requisitions, and to obtain general information on any requisition in the FSS system. These contacts may be made through the National Customer Service Center at (800) 488-3111.

To provide immediate on-line requisition inquiry capability, a Requisition Status option has been added to MUFFIN (see the section of this guide titled MUFFIN, beginning on page 36).

<i>Unit of Issue</i>		<i>Unit of Issue</i>	
BT	Bottle	PM	Plate
BX	Box	PR	Pair
CA	Cartridge	PT	Pint
CB	Carboy	PZ	Packet
CD	Cubic yard	QT	Quart
CE	Cone	RA	Ration
CF	Cubic foot	RL	Reel
CK	Cake	RM	Ream
CL	Coil	RO	Roll
CN	Can	SD	Skid
CO	Container	SE	Set
CT	Carton	SF	Square foot
CY	Cylinder	SH	Sheet
CZ	Cubic meter	SK	Skein
DR	Drum	SL	Spool
DZ	Dozen	SO	Shot
EA	Each	SP	Strip
FT	Foot	SX	Stick
GL	Gallon	SY	Square yard
GP	Group	TN	Ton
GR	Gross	TO	Troy ounce
HD	Hundred	TU	Tube
HK	Hank	VI	Vial
JR	Jar	YD	Yard
KT	Kit		

## Delivery Options

GSA selects the mode of transportation and ships to the location specified in an agency's order on a first-destination basis. First-destination terms include payment for line haul transportation charges but *DO NOT* include payment for detention, redelivery, storage, reassignment, extra labor for unloading, or any other charges caused by the first-destination consignee and not authorized by GSA.

## Direct From Vendor

GSA's Stock Direct Delivery (SDD) program can result in significant savings for both GSA and our customers. Under SDD, large-volume orders for stock items are shipped directly from the vendor to the customer. Because GSA does not incur the storage and redistribution costs associated with depot shipments, in most cases

the customer receives a discount (usually 10 percent) off the current selling price of the item.

SDD can be accomplished via the following methods:

- GSA, upon receipt of a large-volume order, may arrange for SDD when it is determined to be more economical to the Government, or to ensure maximum remaining shelf life.
- Customers may arrange for preplanned SDD by contacting their local Customer Service Director (see the section of this guide titled Customer Service Directors by Region, page 8) or the appropriate Acquisition Center (listed in Appendix A).
- Customers may submit routine FEDSTRIP/MIL-STRIP requisitions citing Advice Code 7D, which identifies the requisition as a “request for vendor direct delivery with price discount, and possible longer delivery time. Delivery from stock acceptable if contract minimum order limitation is not met.” The requisition must cite Advice Code 7D, meet the minimum order quantity established for the item by GSA, and have an order value of at least \$300.

SDD will be applied under this method if it is cost-effective for the Government; otherwise, the material will be supplied from depot stock.

- Customers may select direct delivery through *GSA Advantage!*<sup>™</sup> by choosing the appropriate delivery time option. The required quantity level and the discounted price are displayed on the screen.

When an SDD requisition is being processed and its Media and Status Code requests supply status, the designated recipient will receive:

- Delayed status (Status Code BZ) pending issuance of the delivery order to the vendor, and
- Direct delivery status (Status Code BV) when GSA issues the delivery order to the vendor.

The Estimated Ship Date (ESD) for Status Code BZ is based on the procurement lead-time table published in the FEDSTRIP Operating Guide. The ESD with Status Code BV is the vendor’s ESD under the terms of the delivery order. The consignee is furnished a copy of the direct delivery order when GSA issues it to the vendor.

Customers are encouraged to evaluate whether SDD would suit their needs, either on a regular basis or in specific circumstances. Those who normally order large quantities (\$300 or more) are excellent candidates for preplanned SDD. Customers who generally order retail-size quantities may not benefit from SDD, as ordering large quantities may generate excess and cause storage problems.

**Not Delivered—Out of Stock.** When an item being requisitioned is out of stock, GSA will back-order the merchandise and, if requested in the requisition, will so notify designated status recipients. Customers notified of back-order status may ask GSA to cancel their requisitions by submitting appropriately coded cancellation documents.

## Inside Delivery

Customers specify inside delivery when they need delivery beyond the loading dock area and into the building itself. Variations in how GSA and its contractors provide this service can cause confusion for some customers. Below are answers to common questions about non-CSC shipments.

**What if I need inside delivery on ALL shipments?** First, consider the cost of the service and be sure it is necessary for all shipments. If it is, you should request that the inside delivery code be indicated on your record in our Customer Address File. Each agency has a contact who is responsible for coordinating such data. For shipments from GSA stock, this will result in the message “Inside Delivery Required” being printed on the Government Bill of Lading (GBL) and manifest. The carrier will then be aware of the requirement. (If the requisition is filled by direct delivery from the contractor, you will receive “BV” status and the following constraints apply.)

**Does this mean the carrier *HAS* to provide inside delivery?** No. Inside delivery is an extra service available from carriers and paid for by GSA only if all of the following conditions are met:

- A request for inside delivery is on the GBL (or purchase order, in the case of direct deliveries). The notation provides means for the carrier to collect inside delivery charges from GSA.



- No single item in the shipment exceeds 500 pounds.
- The length, width, and height are each less than 8 feet.
- The items can be handled by a single person. If conditions prohibit one person from performing inside delivery, you must contact the carrier to request assistance when you receive the advance copy of the GBL or purchase order. You must also advise the carrier that you will pay for the extra labor. GSA will not pay for extra labor, and the statement “Inside Delivery” on a GBL or purchase order does not obligate GSA.
- If delivery is required to other than the level where the delivery vehicle must park, the delivery facility must have been so informed on the GBL or purchase order. If there is no such notation and you require inside delivery, you must contact the vendor and arrange for the service and payment on your own. Small purchase procedures may be used as applicable.

**What if I only need inside delivery on *CERTAIN* shipments?** Shipments needing inside delivery should be identified on your requisition by the use of exception “Mark For” data, using Document Identifier “AOE” and citing “Inside Delivery Required” in the “Mark for or Remark” section. In GSA *Advantage!*<sup>™</sup> customers choose to submit exception data on the order screen. This request will be printed on the manifest and the depot personnel will ensure the carrier is made aware of the requirement. Again, direct delivery shipments have additional constraints identified below.

Following verification of a shipment, the merchandise should be checked for damage, shortage, or overage, and to ensure that correct item was received. If any of these problems exist, SF 361, for transportation discrepancies, or SF 364 for shipping (item) discrepancies should be prepared by civilian agency activities and submitted in accordance with the instructions contained in the GSA publication *National Customer Service Center Reporting Guide*.

#### **What about Direct Delivery shipments from vendors?**

The situation is a little more complex here. If the following provisions are met, you should receive inside delivery under the same conditions outlined above.

- You have Inside Delivery Required for ALL shipments indicated on your address file record, OR
- You have indicated Inside Delivery Required in the Remarks or Mark For section for that particular AOE requisition, or on GSA *Advantage!*<sup>™</sup>, AND
- The contract has inside delivery provisions with set fees. While some of the most popular contracts for bulky items, such as some furniture, copier paper, etc., have such provisions, it is not a standard feature. If the contract contains this provision, you will see a notation and the fee on your copy of the purchase order in Block 12 of the GSA Form 3186 or 3186A.
- If there is no such notation on your purchase order and you require inside delivery, you must contact the vendor and arrange for the service and payment on your own. Small purchase procedures may be used as applicable.

**What about Federal Supply Schedule items?** The Schedule document or contractor price list should indicate whether the contract contains provisions or fees for inside delivery. If there is no indication, arrangements should be made separately with the vendor as described above.

## **Inspecting Shipments**

Upon delivery from the carrier, shipments should be carefully inspected to determine the number of packages and condition of the merchandise received. An accurate record must be made of any discrepancies or variations between the data shown on the bill of lading (or other transportation document) and the quantity and condition of the merchandise actually received.

Following verification of a shipment, the merchandise should be checked for damage, shortage, or overage, and to ensure that the correct items were received. If any of these problems exist, civilian agencies should submit SF 361 for transportation discrepancies or SF 364 for shipping (item) discrepancies as described in GSA’s *National Customer Service Center Reporting Guide*. Military activities should follow the instructions contained in their military service regulations. (See the section of this guide titled Solving an Order Problem, page 42.)

For assistance or further information, contact the National Customer Service Center (800-488-3111).

## FEDSTRIP Billing Procedures

GSA bills are sent from accounting centers to the “bill to address” identified in each requisition.

## Hazardous Materials (HAZMAT)/ Material Safety Data Sheets

Certain items acquired for storage, distribution, and use by our customers require special transportation, handling, and disposal due to hazardous materials being used in their manufacture. Special instructions for handling these items are contained on Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs).

The Federal Supply Service provides MSDSs with all shipments of hazardous material if such material is a GSA stock item. In addition to stock items, FSS requires contractors to include an MSDS with all shipments of hazardous products delivered directly from the contractor to the customer (this requirement is stated in GSA 3186C, Purchase Order Notice).

MSDSs are specific for each manufacturer and product. Therefore, a specific MSDS is provided with each shipment of the product. The return of HAZMAT under the Material Return Authorization Program is discussed in the section of this guide titled Solving an Order Problem.

To request an MSDS that you cannot locate, provide the following information by mail or fax to the address that follows (allow a three-day turnaround time):

- National Stock Number (13 digits)
- Manufacturer Name
- Batch or Product Code Number
- Military Specification Number
- Your Name and Title
- Agency/Address
- Telephone Number - Commercial
- Fax Number - Commercial

Send your MSDS request to:

GSA, Federal Supply Service  
Paints and Chemicals Center (10FTE)  
Attn: MSDS Coordinator  
400 15th Street, SW  
Auburn, WA 98001-7778

Phone: (253) 804-4880  
Toll Free: 1-800-241-7246  
Fax: (253) 931-7778  
E-mail: carol.rose@gsa.gov  
or verala.lacoss@gsa.gov

When you leave a message, please be sure to include your name and commercial phone number along with a brief description of your request.

If you would like detailed instructions on how to use the FAST MSDS data base, send a self-addressed envelope to the address above.

## Solving an Ordering Problem

### GSA's National Customer Service Center (NCSC) and National HELP Line

GSA's National Customer Service Center in Kansas City, MO, is the place to go if you ever have a problem with an order from us. Whether or not you want replacement or credit for materials, the NCSC lets you choose the method of reporting problems that is most convenient for you: Internet, E-mail, fax, telephone, or mail. You can transmit discrepancy or deficiency reports electronically via MUFFIN, or you can call the toll-free NCSC National HELP Line, 24 hours a day, at 1-800-488-3111.

### Ways to Report a Problem

- **Internet.** GSA *Advantage!*<sup>™</sup> lets you report discrepancies. Point your browser to <http://www.fss.gsa.gov>, click on *Advantage!*<sup>™</sup>, and then select “Report Order Problems.” GSA *Advantage!*<sup>™</sup> will take you from there.
- **E-mail.** You may report discrepancies and other problems to the NCSC by E-mail to the following addresses:  
rodsn.ncsc@gsa.gov
- **Fax.** You may fax problem reports to the NCSC at (816) 926-1572 or 926-6952.
- **Telephone.** All problem with orders, or questions about FSS supplies or services may be directed by telephone to the NCSC National HELP Line, 24 hours a day. The HELP Line is handled by NCSC Representatives ready to assist you.

Representatives are available between 7:00 am and 5:30 pm Central Time, Monday through Friday. After hours calls will be recorded and answered the next business day. When leaving a message be sure to include your name, commercial phone number and a brief description of the problem.

Call the NCSC National HELP Line:

Toll-Free: 1-800-488-3111 or  
DSN 465-1416

- Mail. Reports of problems may be mailed to NCSC headquarters at the following address:

General Services Administration  
National Customer Service Center  
1500 East Bannister Road - Bldg 4  
Kansas City, Missouri 64131-3088  
Communication Routing Indicator:  
Unclassified: RUSAPUI  
Classified: RULSADP  
Plain Language Address:  
GSA FSS NATIONAL CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTER,  
KANSAS CITY MO

**Types of Orders You Can Report.** GSA customers can report problems with the following types of orders:

- Orders shipped from GSA facility. This includes direct shipments as well as indirect shipments, those with intermediate stops between the GSA facility and the ultimate user.
- Orders shipped from a DoD depot or other Government facility as directed by GSA.
- Orders purchased and inspected for the customer by GSA.
- Orders under GSA Federal Supply Schedule contracts that specify source inspection by GSA.

**Discrepancy and Deficiency Reports.** To report a problem call 1-800-488-3111. Your NCSC representative will ask you for your requisition number, if you placed your order FEDSTRIP or MILSTRIP, or your GSA *Advantage!*<sup>™</sup> order number if you placed your order through GSA *Advantage!*<sup>™</sup>. If you prefer to report using standard forms the basic forms are:

- Transportation Discrepancy Report (TDR), SF361, for problems in transportation.
- Shipping Discrepancy Report (SDR), SF364 for shipping errors.

- Product Quality Deficiency Report (PQDR), SF368, for product quality deficiencies.

**Merchandise Return Authorization (MRA).** If you receive the wrong merchandise due to an ordering error by your agency, GSA may authorize you to return the merchandise for credit. Do not, however, return the merchandise to GSA until your agency receives documents authorizing such action from the NCSC. Transportation costs to return erroneously ordered merchandise will be paid by the customer agency; if the MRA results from a GSA error, GSA will be responsible for return transportation costs.

The policy on MRA's for ordering errors is in accordance with Federal Property Management Regulations (FPMR) 101-26.310.

**Product Quality Deficiency Report (PQDR). SF368.** Use GSA Product Quality Deficiency Reports to file reports about deficiencies in product designs, specifications, materials, manufacture, or workmanship. Any PQDR reporting a problem that could cause death or injury, or severe occupational illness, or that could directly impede the customer agency's work is a Category I report and must be reported to GSA within 72 hours of discovery. All other PQDRs are Category II and should be reported within 15 days of discovery.

When reporting a Category I problem to the National Customer Service Center, (see previous page for "Ways to Report a Problem"), in addition send an information copy of the PQDR to:

GSA, FSS (FQA)  
Washington, DC 20406  
Communications Routing Indicator  
Unclassified: RUSAPUA  
Classified: RULSADP  
FAX: (703) 305-6718

**Shipping Discrepancy Report (SDR).** SF364's may be used to let GSA know about problems with Federal and Military Standard Requisitioning and Issue Procedures (FEDSTRIP & MILSTRIP) requisitions. Problems to report on

SF364's include item overages and shortages, wrong items shipped, expired shelf life of items shipped, and packaging problems.

**Transportation Discrepancy Report (TDR). SF361.** Use SF361's to inform GSA of any problems caused in the transportation of an order to your facility. Always make note of any package shortage, overage, or damage visible at the time of delivery. These conditions should be noted on the carrier delivery receipt before you sign for the material. Accept all cartons marked for you unless they are damaged beyond repair, hazardous, or leaking. It is important to inspect your freight within 15 days. If you discover concealed damage during the inspection, call the carrier and request an inspection. This request must be made within 15 days of the delivery. Retain all packaging materials until after the carriers inspection.

**Other Concerns.** You should report problems and try to resolve them directly with the contractor in the following cases:

- When the item was ordered from a GSA Federal Supply Schedule and GSA did not perform the inspection.
- When items were purchased for your agency by GSA but not inspected by GSA.

If any contractor refuses to correct a problem on an order or fails to replace a defective item, forward a copy of the PQDR, SF368, along with all pertinent correspondence to the GSA office executing the contract. (The address will be on the contract or purchase order.) You should send an informational copy of the PQDR, SF368 to the NCSC.

All information submitted to the NCSC regarding defective items will be maintained in a reference file for use in future procurement decisions.

If you need customer service on a GSA vehicle contract call (703) 308-CARS.

**Manufacturers' Commercial Warranties.** If your agency receives a defective item covered by a manufacturer's commercial warranty (i.e. vehicles, major appliances such as ranges, washing machines, and refrigerators), you should report the problem directly with the manufacturer.

If the manufacturer refuses to replace a defective item or correct a deficiency covered under warranty, contact the NCSC at 1-800-488-3111 or submit a PQDR, SF368, with copies of all pertinent correspondence, to the GSA office executing the contract. The address will be on the contract or purchase order.

An information copy should be directed to the NCSC. This data will be maintained in a reference file for use in further decisions regarding procurement from commercial manufacturers.

## CSC Ordering Problems

If you should have any problem with a CSC order, please notify your local CSC. The telephone number is located on the ticket of your order. They will be happy to help you correct the situation. If the situation is not resolved to your satisfaction, contact our National HELP Line, 1-800-865-4CSC or E-mail ([csc.desk@gsa.gov](mailto:csc.desk@gsa.gov)).

## Material Returns Program (MRP)

If your agency finds itself with excess GSA stocked items the Material Returns Program (MRP) may be able to help. Do not however confuse MRP with the NCSC Merchandise Return Authorization (MRA) discussed earlier.

Federal Property Management Regulation (FPMR) 101-27.5 provides guidance for the Material Returns Program.

Excess GSA stock items for which your agency has no current or foreseeable use may be eligible for return to GSA, provided the following conditions are met:

1. The minimum dollar value per line item based on current GSA price is \$450 for all Federal Supply Groups (FSGs) or Classes (FSCs) except:
  - FSGs 51 and 52—minimum \$130.
  - FSG 89 and FSCs 2610, 5180, 6630, 6640, 7540, 8010, 8030, 8040, and 8115, which are not authorized for return and will be considered "excess" and processed in accordance with FPMR 101-43.
2. Items must have at least 12 months of shelf life left when received by GSA.
3. Items offered for return are not coded "terminal" or "discontinued."

4. Items to be returned are in one of two acceptable conditions:

- Condition A—New, or
- Condition E—Requires limited expense to restore to serviceable condition, such as repackaging.

Material received in any other condition is handled as an unauthorized receipt and is usually discarded. GSA does not accept material under the MRP that has been inscribed or defaced in any manner.

**How To Return Unneeded Items to GSA.** You should prepare offers to return excess material in accordance with chapter 4 of the FEDSTRIP Operating Guide or chapter 9 of the MILSTRIP 4000.25-1M.

Offers to return unused stock must contain Routing Identifier Code GGO and GSA Document Identifier Code FTE. Direct return offers to GSA through the Defense Automatic Addressing System (DAAS), Dayton, OH, using the Communications Routing Identifier Code published in Allied Communications pamphlet (ACP) 117.

Return offers may also be mailed to the inventory management department of the GSA Acquisition Center that supports your agency (see Appendix A). For additional information contact FCSI at (703) 305-7550.

GSA replies to every return offer, but will give credit only for material authorized for return. Do *NOT* ship returns to Routing Identifier Code GGO. Once your return is authorized, your agency will be furnished the Routing Identifier Code for the GSA facility that can accept the material you're returning, which must be shipped *only* to the appropriate facility as listed below:

**GSA Material Return Facility**

Fort Worth Federal Center  
Warehouse 3, South End  
501 West Felix Street  
Fort Worth, TX 76115  
Routing Identifier: GF8  
DoD Activity Address Code: GF0008

**GSA Material Return Facility**

1900 River Road  
Burlington, NJ 08016-2100  
Routing Identifier: GN8  
DoD Activity Address Code: GN0008

**GSA Material Return Facility**

8400 Tatum Road  
Palmetto, GA 30268  
Routing Identifier Code: GA8  
DoD Activity Address Code: GA0008

**GSA Material Return Facility**

FAC Building 312  
Rough and Ready Island  
Stockton, CA 95203  
Routing Identifier Code: GS8  
DoD Activity Address Code: GS0008

## For More Information

For more details on solving problems with GSA, refer to the publications *National Customer Service Center Reporting Guide* (mailing list code ODRC-0001) and *Joint Regulations on the Product Quality Deficiency Report Program* (DLAR 4155.24, AR 702-7, SECNAVINST 4855.5A, AFR 74-6) as well as the implementing instructions for the service you're dealing with. Copies of GSA publications can be obtained by submitting their mailing list codes on GSA Form 457, FSS Publication Mailing List Application, to:

Centralized Mailing List Service  
P.O. Box 6477  
Fort Worth, TX 76115  
Fax: (817) 334-5227  
E-mail: [cmls.gsa@gsa.gov](mailto:cmls.gsa@gsa.gov)

To obtain a GSA Form 457, call the CMLS at (817) 334-5215.