



## Chapter 12— Commenting on Reports

*How to Comment During Recipient Review*

*How to Find Reports with Comments*

*How to Comment During Agency Review*

*How to Comment during the Continuous Review Period*

*Bulk Commenting*

### When can comments be made?

Report status determines when a report is available for commenting. Only “Submitted” reports can be commented on. Recipients can comment during the Recipient Review phase; federal awarding agencies can comment during the Agency Review phase. At the end of the reporting cycle, a Continuous Quality Assurance period starts. During this time, recipients and federal awarding agencies can continue to comment on reports, and recipients can make changes and corrections in response to the comments. The following details each phase of commenting.

1. **Initial Submission**—commenting is not available.
2. **Recipient Review**
  - o **Who can Comment on Reports**
    - Prime recipients can comment on delegated sub-recipient reports (grant and loan sub-recipients only). A sub-recipient may respond to these comments. Reports have a review status of “No Comments by Prime” or “Comments by Prime.”
    - A prime recipient organization cannot comment on reports submitted by another prime, and a sub-recipient organization cannot comment on reports submitted by another sub-recipient.
    - All comments added by the prime and any responses from the sub-recipient can be viewed by everyone who has access to that report. The comments and responses can also be viewed by the federal agency that has access to review that report.
    - Sub-recipients can use Search Filters in My Reports to quickly identify whether the prime has added comments to the report.
    - At the end of the Recipient Review phase, all reports are locked so recipients can no longer make changes or modifications.
  - o **How to Comment**

Comments are made at the report level, not on individual data element fields and should be specific so that the viewer of the comments—and, specifically, the recipient that submitted the report—can understand the intent. Recipients and federal awarding



agencies may provide guidance as to the type and nature of comments to be added to reports. Multiple comments can be added to prime recipient and sub-recipient reports.

- Prime recipients commenting on a sub-recipient's report:
  - Click on the “Prime Recipient” link in the My Reports box in the left sidebar.
  - Click on the “Sub Recipients” tab to see the sub-recipients associated with the prime award.
  - Click on the DUNS number of the report you wish to comment on
  - Click on “View or Add Report Comments” in the upper right-hand corner
  - Add the comment in the “Add New Comment” box
  - Click “Submit”
  - Click “Close Comments Window”

An email notification is sent to the sub-recipient that a comment has been made to their report. A new item also appears in My Work Queue.

**When a comment is added to a report for a DUNS, recipients that are members of the DUNS organization receive a work request item in My Work Queue. The submitter of the report also receives an email notification.**

**Recipients from that DUNS organization can view and respond to the comment. Recipients with the FRPIN for that DUNS number can submit an updated report in response to a comment.**

- For sub-recipients responding to a prime recipient's comment:



- Click on “My Work Queue” to see the report(s) with comments
- Click on the Award #
- Click on “View or Add Report Comment” in the upper right-hand corner
- Respond to the comment in the “Add New Comment” window
- Click “Submit”
- Click “Close Comments Window”

**FederalReporting.gov**

Close Comments Window

**Report Information**

| Award Type | Award Number | Prime DUNS |
|------------|--------------|------------|
| Grant      | VA0004-K     | 002512481  |

**Report Comments**

- Please check the sub award date on your award. Your report status is as award date.
- Regis Jennings - Sep 19, 2009 5:15:13 PM
- Reply: Yes, that is in error. I will change award date to June 8th
- Marcia Wallace - Sep 20, 2009 5:29:56 PM

**Add New Comment**

Comment

Submit

Close Comments Window

Click the “Submit” and then “Close Comments Window” buttons after entering comments.

The prime recipient will receive an email notification that a reply has been added to a report.

If necessary, the sub-recipient will make changes and submit an updated report in which the item is removed from his/her My Work Queue. If no changes are made to the report, the item will remain in the My Work Queue.

**Comments added to a report are sustained across all versions of the report. If a new version of the report is submitted, the comments and responses added to prior reports will be viewable.**



o **How to Find Reports with Comments**

- **My Work Queue** - accessed from the Quick Links box on the home page
- **Red Comments Flags** - viewable on the Sub Recipients tab in a prime recipient report
- **Search Filters** - accessed from My Reports. Search by “Comments by Prime” and “No Comments by Prime” during the Recipient Review phase. Search by review status, mentioned above during the Agency Review phase.

The screenshot shows the 'Sub Recipient Reporting' page. At the top, there are tabs for 'Prime Recipient', 'Sub Recipients', and 'Vendors'. The main content area is titled 'Sub Recipient Reporting' and includes a 'Report Information' section with a table of award details. Below this is a 'System Message' section. A table lists 4 reports found, with columns for DUNS #, Subaward #, Amount of Award, and Comments. A blue callout box labeled 'Red Comments Flag' points to a red flag icon in the 'Comments' column of the first row. The sidebar on the left contains sections for 'Hello, Joe Prime (Recipient User)', 'Current Reporting Cycle', 'Upload ARRA Reports', and 'Quick Links'.

3. **Agency Review** – Federal awarding agencies can comment on recipients’ reports. The report is then unlocked so the recipient can respond with changes and modifications. Reports have a review status of:

- “Not Reviewed”
- “Reviewed-Comments”
- “Reviewed – No Comments”
- “Reviewed & Resubmitted” – changes were made to the report as a result of comments and the report was resubmitted

o **How to Comment on a Report**

- Click “My Reports” in the Quick Links box on the home page to go to the Prime Recipient View.
- Click the Award # to see the Prime Recipient Reporting.
- Scroll through the report



- For each report, click “View or Add Report Comments” to see the comments or to add a comment in the Comments Field. After reviewing, if the federal agency does not wish to comment, select “Mark As Reviewed With No Comments.”

| Award Type | Award Number             | Calendar Year / Quarter | Final Report |
|------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|--------------|
| Grant      | primegrant01242010-1201p | 2009 / 4                | No           |

- Click “Submit.”
- Click “Close Comments Window.”

After the federal awarding agency makes the comment, the prime recipient who submitted the report will receive an email notification.

#### 4. Continuous Quality Assurance

- Reports are unlocked so prime recipients and federal awarding agencies can continue to review and comment on reports.
- The sub-recipient Report Comments Flag -- appears only for prime recipients reviewing sub-recipient reports from the Sub Recipient tab. The appearance of the sub-recipient Report Comments Flag indicates that a comment or comments have been added to that version of the sub-recipient report.
- The View or Add Report Comments -- appears on submitted reports. Clicking the Comment icon opens a new window for viewing comments and adding new comments to a report.



## How to Bulk Comment

During the Agency Review and Continuous QA phases, federal agencies can comment on reports offline and upload a bulk comments file to FederalReporting.gov, which offers an efficient, time-saving alternative for those federal agencies with large numbers of reports. Agency Extract Users can use the existing Agency Extract files to support bulk commenting.

- **How to prepare the bulk comment file**
  - Log in to FederalReporting.gov and click “My Agency Extract” in the Administration section on the home page.
  - Save the Zip file and extract the delimited Prime Reports Extract file

The screenshot shows the FederalReporting.gov homepage. The navigation bar includes Home, About, Downloads, FAQ, and Help. The main content area is divided into several sections:

- Messages:** Alerts for federal agencies regarding reporting periods.
- Current Reporting Cycle:** Information about the Agency Review phase.
- Quick Links:** A list of links including 'My Reports' and 'Administration'. The 'Upload Comments' link under 'My Reports' and the 'My Agency Extract' link under 'Administration' are highlighted with blue boxes and arrows pointing to a callout box.
- FederalReporting.gov Reporting:** A welcome message and reporting instructions.

## How to Prepare the Bulk Comments file for upload

- Log in to federalreporting.gov
- Click on the “My Agency Extract” link in the left column under the Administration section
- Save the extract to your local computer
- Open a blank Microsoft Excel workbook
- In the Data menu, hover over “Import External Data,” and click “Import Data...”
- Locate your recently saved extract and select the Delimited Prime Recipient Reports file
- Select “Delimited”
- Click Next



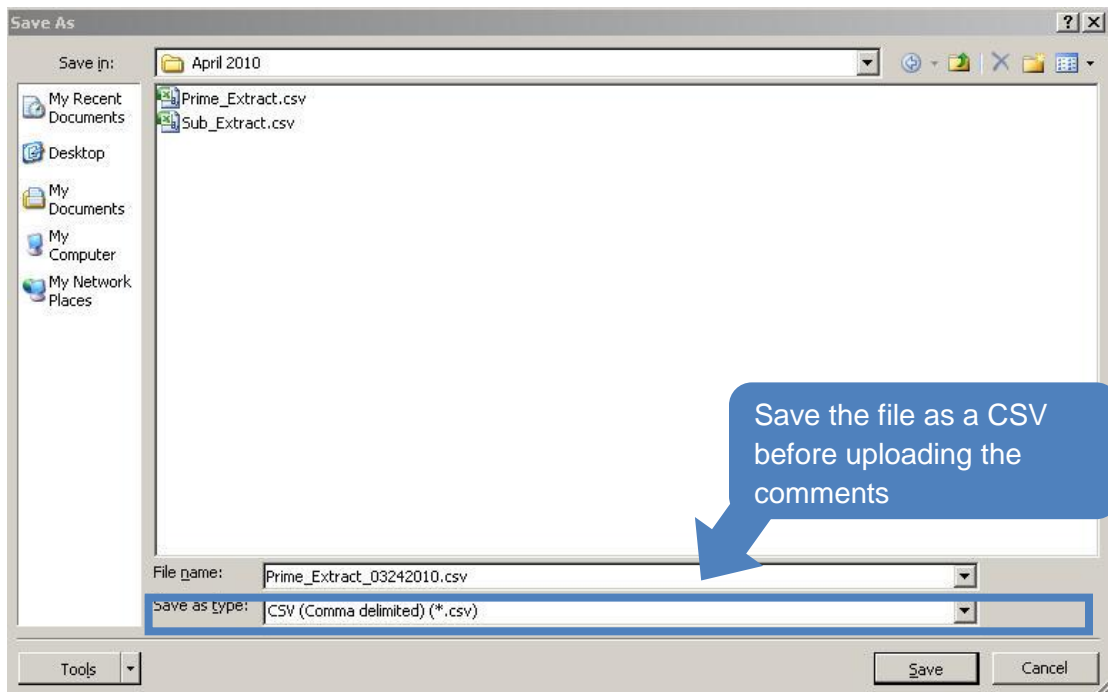
- o Select the “Other” checkbox and enter the pipe symbol (|) – press the Shift key and click the key above Enter on the keyboard
- o Click Next
- o Click “Finish”
- o Click “OK”
- o In the “Report Comment” column to the right, assign a review status by:
  - Entering a comment
  - Leaving the field blank, or
  - Deleting the entire row from the file

|   | CD                  | CE               | CF | CG         | CH             |
|---|---------------------|------------------|----|------------|----------------|
| 1 | TIME_STAMP_OF_LAST  | LAST_UPDATED_NAM |    | ATED_PHONE | REPORT_COMMENT |
| 2 | 2010-02-23 14:22:12 | Joe Prime 1      |    |            |                |
| 3 | 2010-03-11 15:42:57 | Joe Prime 2      |    |            |                |
| 4 | 2010-01-29 16:40:28 | Joe Prime 3      |    |            |                |
| 5 |                     |                  |    |            |                |
| 6 |                     |                  |    |            |                |
| 7 |                     |                  |    |            |                |

Report comment field is the last column of the extract.

See Bulk Commenting Actions section below for further details.

- o Add comments in the “Report Comment” field.
- o In the File menu, click “Save As...” Add the name you want to save the file as. In the “Save as type” field, change the file from an Excel document to a Comma Delimited (\*.csv) file. Save the file.



**NOTE:** You will only be able to upload a .csv file. If you save the file with any other extension, you will be prevented from uploading.



- **How to upload the bulk comment file**

- Login to FederalReporting.gov
- Click “Upload Comments” under the “My Reports” section on the home page.
- Browse for the \*.csv file and click “Upload Comments.”
- You will receive a confirmation message that you uploaded the file successfully. A copy of this message will also appear in your system inbox. The recipient will also receive an email that a federal agency has commented on the report.

NOTE: System inbox messages will be archived at the end of each reporting cycle. See Chapter 4 for more details.

The screenshot shows the 'Upload Comments' page. On the left, there is a user greeting 'Hello, Joe Agency (Agency Reviewer)' and a 'Logoff' button. Below that is a 'Current Reporting Cycle' section with the text 'Agency Review - Agencies review reports and Recipients make necessary corrections.' The main content area is titled 'Upload Comments' and contains a 'File' selection box. A blue callout box with an arrow points to the 'File' selection area, containing the text 'Select the file and upload the comments.' Below the file selection box are 'Upload Comments' and 'Cancel' buttons.

The screenshot shows the 'Comments Uploaded Successfully' confirmation page. At the top, there is a navigation menu with 'Home', 'About', 'Downloads', 'FAQ', and 'Help'. On the left, there is a user greeting 'Hello, Joe Agency (Agency Reviewer)' and a 'Logoff' button. The main content area is titled 'Comments Uploaded Successfully' and contains a message box with the text: 'Comments from Prime\_Extract.csv were successfully uploaded on Thu Mar 25 17:27:06 EDT 2010. Reports Commented On: 1 Reports Marked As Reviewed With No Comments: 8'. A blue callout box with an arrow points to the message box, containing the text 'Submission information also appears in agency's system inbox.'





- **How to Verify Comments**

- Click “Prime Recipients” in the My Reports section on the home page.
- In the “Review Status” drop down, select:
  - All
  - Not Reviewed
  - Reviewed—Comments
  - Reviewed—No Comments, or
  - Reviewed and Resubmitted

**My Reports - Prime Recipient View**

**Search Filters**

Award Type:  Award Number:  S Number:

Calendar Year:  Quarter:  Report Status:  Review Status:   
All  
Not Reviewed  
Reviewed - Comments  
Reviewed - No Comments  
Reviewed & Resubmitted

Awarding Agency Code:  CFDA Number:  de:

[Search Tips](#)

- Click the Prime Award number to open the report.
- Click “View or Add Report Comments” located at the top right-hand corner of the report. If comments exist on the current report, they will display in this window.



- **Bulk Commenting Actions**

The table below displays commenting actions and their results.

| Action  | Result  |
|---|---|
| <b>Comments added to “Report Comment” field</b>     | Report is marked as “Reviewed – Comments.” Comments appear on report. |
| <b>“Report Comment” field is left blank</b>         | Report is marked as “Reviewed— No Comments.”                          |
| <b>Record is removed from spreadsheet/.csv file</b> | Report remains marked as “Not Reviewed.”                              |

An agency’s commenting on a report unlocks the report during the Agency Review phase. To re-lock a report, re-upload the file with no comments in the “Report Comment” field.

If an award exists twice in the \*.csv file, the reports will be processed sequentially. That is, if two comments exist for the same award, the latter comment will append to the former, and both will appear on the report.

- **Errors**

There are two types of errors that can occur during Bulk Commenting. Both will prevent successful file submission.

- o File structure
  - The file will be rejected if structural modifications are made to a file -- a column is added or removed.
- o File content or user access errors
  - The file will be rejected if it contains content errors such as:
    - Modification of key information (Prime DUNS, Prime Award, Order Number)
    - A report has been deactivated
    - Report is not for current reporting cycle
    - A comment has been entered into a blank row
    - Presence of a return character
  - The file will be rejected if the submitter does not have access to the file. The system checks the agency’s Awarding Agency code against the code associated with the award listed in the report. If a match is not found, the file will be rejected.



The tables below display a list of acceptable Excel functions; in addition to characters that are allowed and characters that alter the comment text when entered into the “Report Comments” field. The text-altering characters will take effect upon submission of comment.

- **Acceptable Excel Functions**

| Syntax                        | Example   | Result  |
|-------------------------------|---|---|
| CONCATENATE (text1,text2,...) | CONCATENATE("Please change the Award ID ",I2, " by removing the H9-prefix") | Please change the Award ID H9-ABC by removing the prefix 'H9-'. |
| &" "&                         | I2&" "&J2   | ABC-952599G   |

- **Allowable Characters**

| Character   | Example  | Result   |
|---|--|--|
| Single quotes / Apostrophe (')                      | Please change the Award ID H9-ABC by removing the prefix 'H9-'.        | Please change the Award ID H9-ABC by removing the prefix 'H9-'.        |
| Comma (,)   | Hello, please change the Award ID H9-ABC by removing the prefix 'H9-'. | Hello, please change the Award ID H9-ABC by removing the prefix 'H9-'. |
| All ASII characters (~!@#\$\$%^&*()_+{ }[];:;?><=,) |  |  |

- **Text-Altering Characters**

| Character                                     | Example  | Result   |
|---|--|--|
| Double quotes (")                             | Please change the "Award Date" field to be 01/12/2010.   | Please change the                                      |
| Double hyphen copied from Microsoft Word (--) | Please change the Award Date field to be -- 01/12/2010.  | Please change the Award Date field to be ? 01/12/2010. |
| Ellipse copied from Microsoft Word (...)      | Please change the Award Date field to be ... 01/12/2010. | Please change the Award Date field to be ? 01/12/2010. |