Recipient Process Overview
Forum 3 Q&As

1. How do we ensure only authorized individuals register during the registration process?

   Ok. We did hit on that a little bit in the presentation but to give a little bit more discussion on this is warranted. The overall sensitivity of the information contained within the federal reporting.gov's system is considered fairly low. The information is ultimately public and will be public in a matter of days after. In the event somebody puts in information that is erroneous, this information will also be transparent. If somebody puts something up there that's inappropriate, or that shouldn't be in there that's probably going to be realized either through one of the review processes or through public review. So, it's fairly low in terms of sensitivity. However, there are some safeguards to mitigate that. For instance, the use of the DUNS number and the award registration, although not absolute, does help identify the registrant in affiliated with the organization that gave the award. Additionally, the agency is going to have to have agency DUNS numbers and agency email addresses. So there is some check there. There are also some internal controls in the system that are going to help mitigate that.

2. What if a registrant's organization does not have a CCR or DUNS number?

   Yeah, on that one you definitely have to get those in advance of registration. CCR registration is mandated, is a mandatory element for primes and all registrants have to be registered for DUNS.

3. This afternoon's webinar, from an agency's perspective, we assume that means the federal agency. Please confirm.

   I'm a federal employee so I cut out the federal because I assume it's an agency. Yes it is federal agency. Pretty much any time I use the term agency in this presentation, it means federal agency. I recognize there are state agencies and primarily state agencies for this would be part of prime recipients.

4. With regard to reporting itself will the report submission, will there be confirmation of the report's submissions?

   Yeah, the system will confirm that. The first step in the report submission is when a recipient clicks submit they will get a confirmation that the report is submitted. They will get a confirmation email back that the information was in valid form. So essentially it's a 2 step process. You get an immediately submission that the report was submitted then you get a confirmation that the structure of the data was valid, was able to be consumed by the data system, that it was able to be consumed by system. If it doesn't, it will return an error message that we are working on some plain language, error descriptions of where the problem is for the information submitted. That's because the error messages system tend to kick out, it would be pretty technical and pretty tough to track down.

5. In registration on federalreporting.gov can reports be submitted under a centralized state office under one DUNS number for multiple reports for multiple programs?

   Yeah, I believe so. If the question is asking if the state office is the prime they can submit multiple reports for multiple programs. They are essentially multiple reports so you can't have a prime with multiple awards, so I think, if I'm reading that accurately, yeah.

6. When reviewing the information submitted via federalreporting.gov how will the data from the prime be compared to subrecipients data, are you looking for prime disbursements to the sub to be equal sub expenses when aggregated? If so, what happens to the grant if it looses funding?

   Great question. The review information, the reviewing capability in federalreporting.gov is going to be pretty basic. The primes will, the information will be available for them. In terms of the prime reviews, it's going to be up to the prime recipients to look at that and do their own evaluation. There won't be any specific review capability at that level of sophistication. With that said each agency has a separate, in fact they will have, separate data quality review criteria that they run the data through. So we're going to make the raw extracts from the data that's submitted, the reports for view, those are going to be grouped by agency and by program and then they can run the appropriate data quality reviews based on whatever kinds of criteria the individual agencies apply. That could look at those kinds of comparisons, the comparisons about, it could be the expenses, match the gross value, those kinds of things. It's possible the agencies may view that as a criteria for evaluation. The OMB M-09-01 does include guidance relative to a quality review. The quality presentation later this week will probably talk a little bit more about how agencies are going to do that evaluation.

7. Can you talk about how the process will work in states that choose a central system with XML upload. How will the process be different and how will error handling be performed?

   The process is very similar in the XML abstract as it is for the excel spreadsheet. The excel spreadsheet solution is essentially a single report, whereas the XML extraction can be multiple. The XML extract is intended to be for sophisticated recipients who have both systems capability and internal technical capability to produce an extract from the solution that uses excel. It's formatted consistent with the XML schema of the recipient reporting solution. We're going to include in the updated data model that information and also valid data fields. So the web solution and the excel solution, there will be dropdown menus that identify valid data fields and they identify that. In the XML piece it will be technically specific and will identify the specifics associated with doing that. But the configuration in the system will be a lot different. Now error handling is key. The information needs to conform with the XML standard. We are developing a validation system so all the reports that are submitted will go through this validation service. That's that separate email confirmation that I was mentioning earlier. We're also developing this validation service that operates separately from the formal submission, so people who choose this option can generate their XML extracts from their system. Then come to federalreporting.gov and run it through this validation service and identify any potential errors ahead of time. So that you can essentially reconfigure for your system's reports so that you have a high degree of confidence that they will validate when the final report is submitted. So that's what we're looking at for error handling. In terms of the messages, we're looking at not going with the heavily technically oriented errors. But something a bit more language and user friendly and is easier to troubleshoot. Where there may be issues within the report service.

8. Can we correct data on line if we use XML to submit data?

   No. If you have an issue with your XML extract then you get an error back. It doesn't validate. You'll get the error message that identifies where the problem was and then you correct that and then resubmit it and it will in days 1 through 10 it will update that particular file. After day 10 if you do an update after day 10, what will happen it will be logged as a conversion.

9. Who can access the information once its posted to recovery.gov?

   Once its posted to recovery.gov its pretty much public information so anybody can get that information and download it and use it for whatever purposes they need. That's part of the basis for that is the separated inbound and outbound reporting architecture design, philosophically speaking. The key take on that question also is that the information will be, may be publicly available for public review prior to public review cycle. So after day 10 there has been interest expressed in making that available as soon as its been submitted. So it could be available ahead of the review site, but once it's on recovery.gov that's the public view. Of course, within the system itself the prime recipients will be able to see their subrecipient data information; the agencies will be able to see the agency award specific information. There is some bounding in the system prior to it going forward into the public.

10. If we will be receiving more than one grant award, will we need to register more than once?

No, you won’t. The registration process is solely for getting access to the system. That aligns you as somebody who is associated with that particular organization for reporting purposes. Once you register with the system, you are registered for the system and can submit reports as you need to. Of course you will want to coordinate that with the rest of the people.

11. Is there any reason to register prior to receiving an award?

    It’s very proactive. If you think the award is imminent and you want to be proactive on it, you could. No, if you don’t have an award in hand you don’t need to be registered.

12. Can you report data earlier than the 10 day period in the quarter?

    No. The reporting won’t be available until Oct 1st, the first day of the reporting period and part of that is technical. The timeline is very, very tight on all of this. But also because the reporting needs to cover the preceding quarter. So the quarter has ended, the reporting necessarily wouldn’t be valid. It would predate the entire reporting period.

13. When you register, is your registration immediate, or do you have to wait until the next day when the system updates? Basically, is it real time?

    I believe its real time. When you register, it validates and it will send you the --- I should say, it’s not exactly real time. It’s effective when you receive a confirmation.

14. Where will questions, both technical and programmatic be posted?

    The help desk may be good, but he’s asking about where can those questions be posted in advance of that. There is a contact desk at the recovery.gov website. The email address escapes me off the top of my head. There is an email address for questions and issues.

    Kim – is it recovery@omb.gov?

    Yeah, we could go with that. There are still another one that has a GSA address. There’s a couple of places where you could send them. Most of the OMB inquiries have been finding their way to me, so that would be fine.

15. What is the different between award description and project description?

    When you look at the data model the way its currently described, they are in fact very similar. The award description is asking for the purpose of each funding action, the title of the project. It’s essentially a summary of what the award is for. The project description is a very similar piece. Honestly on that particular item we'll have to talk to the program people who are familiar with those particular fields. We'll have to get a better example of what goes into each of those. I know that we have some samples descriptions for each of those. I think that the award description tends to be more open ended. The project description tends to be more tied more specifically with elements associated with the award. There's a description within the pieces of the award that describes what's going on with that. But that's not a fully satisfying answer.

16. On Slide 18, what is the subaward number, can you clarify?

    The subaward number is a number that is established by the prime recipient to uniquely identify the subaward. If a prime recipient gives an award to a subrecipient, it's their number for indicating that. It's essentially a unique identifier for the subaward. Now, that in conjunction with the prime recipient's award number can uniquely identify that particular report.