2003 GPEA Data Collection
Frequently Asked Questions

This list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) has been generated to address potential questions that may arise throughout the completion of the 2003 GPEA data collection. Please use this guidance in conjunction with the User Guide to assist in your population of the 2003 GPEA Data Collection Tool and submission to OMB.

GENERAL PROCESS QUESTIONS

- **My Agency is submitting data for the first time – where can I get the database template from?**
- **My Agency submitted data previously – what do I do next?**
- **My Agency submitted the GPEA Database last year, but did not receive the pre-populated Database this year. What should I do?**
- **How is the 2003 GPEA Data Collection Tool *different* from the 2002 Data Collection Tool?**
- **Can I make copies of the database and give it to my colleagues to work on?**
- **Why does the database not show up when I try and email it to other people within my organization?**
- **If there is an error in any information in the pre-populated databases we received, what should I do?**
- **What can I do to keep the file size of my database down?**

REPORTING / UPDATING TRANSACTIONS

- **What is a Transaction? And what are the Transactions that I should report?**
- **Which fields in the Database are definitely required fields and which fields can be left blank?**
- **If a transaction I want to report is not actually aligned to an E-Gov Initiative, but could be potentially aligned in the future, should I still report it as aligned?**
- **If a collection has been merged and is now electronic or is expired or a PRA has expired, should I delete the transaction in my new reporting?**
- **Should all Transactions have a Unique Project ID?**
- **There is a new guidance for Unique Project Ids. So which ID should I use the 17 digit Unique ID or 23 digit Unique ID?**
- **What should I do if a transaction does not have a PRA number?**
- **If my Agency plans to complete GPEA requirements after the Deadline of Oct 2003, should I still report it?**
- **Where can I get OMB's list of approved collections for my agency for the ICR Report?**

USING THE 2003 GPEA DATA COLLECTION TOOL FEATURES

- **Why does the database not save my selection for some of the fields – like "Respondent description"/ "PRA Numbers" and "E-Gov Initiatives" even though I selected it from the drop down list?**
- **How can I display transactions in alphabetical order?**
- **Can I sort transactions by Bureau Name?**

SUBMISSIONS AND DEADLINES

- **How do I submit my Agency's final Database and Memo?**
- **What is the Deadline for submission? Can we get an extension?**

FOR FURTHER QUESTIONS CONTACT THE GPEA TOOL HELP DESK:
Phone: (202) 208-3638 or Email to GPEA2003@gsa.gov.

GENERAL PROCESS QUESTIONS

- **My Agency is submitting data for the first time – where can I get the database template from?**

  - The template and user guide can be downloaded from the CIO.Gov web site.

→Back

- **My Agency submitted data previously – what do I do next?**

  - You should have already received a pre-populated database by now. Complete updates, additions, and changes to this database.

→Back

- **My Agency submitted the GPEA Database last year, but did not receive the pre-populated Database this year. What should I do?**

  - Contact The Help Desk for assistance (Help Desk contact details provided below). They will provide assistance in determining the status of your Agency's pre-populated Database.

→Back

- **How is the 2003 GPEA Data Collection Tool *different* from the 2002 Data Collection Tool?**

  - The 2003 Data Collection Tool was enhanced based on feedback received from the 2002 collection. The new features include:
    - Ability to search on multiple criteria
    - Ability to sort on multiple criteria
    - Ability to print complete Transactions based on given search set
    - Improved navigation facilities – by Record no./ Transaction name
    - Changes in Transaction Manager usage features
    - Additional reports

Note: The **2003 Tool is** the **same** as the 2002 version **in the following respects:**
- There are no additional required data fields in the 2003 Database
- The back end data structure remains the same.

→Back

- **Can I make copies of the database and give it to my colleagues to work on?**

  - Please do not make multiple copies of the Database and allow different people to work on the different copies. This will cause version control problems. Agencies ***do not*** have the ability to merge multiple databases and must submit a single database only back to OMB.

    You may however have several people work on it sequentially either using a shared drive or by sending it by email.

If there are several agencies reporting to you, you may make multiple copies and send it to the different agencies. But have them send back changes/ updates offline (for example as an MS Excel sheet) to one central contact point, who will then compile and input the Database for all. That is, do not allow each agency to modify the original database.

Note: You can also make copies for backups.

→Back

- **Why does the database not show up when I try and email it to other people within my organization?**

  - Many email programs (including MS Outlook) will strip out any attachment with a .mdb suffix due to virus safeguards within the software security settings. Using winzip or other compression software to "zip" the database prior to sending will get around the problem.

→Back

- **If there is an error in any information in the pre-populated databases we received, what should I do?**

  - Contact the Help Desk and inform them of the error. The error will be corrected in the master Database.

→Back

- **What can I do to keep the file size of my database down?**

  - To maintain file size and system speed, please do the following every two to three weeks: Go to "Tools" on the menu bar, then to "Database Utilities." Click on "Compact and Repair Database."

→Back

REPORTING / UPDATING TRANSACTIONS

- **What is a Transaction? And what are the Transactions that I should report?**

  - Under the Act, agencies must offer, when practicable, an option for the maintenance, submission, or disclosure of information by electronic means by October 2003. In this regard, and to help implement electronic government more broadly, your plan must address how your agency will rely on information technology to carry out the following types of transactions:

    - Information collections under the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA). This is important because providing for optional electronic reporting, recordkeeping, and disclosure, and related processing of that information can decrease the public's paperwork burden and can increase the practical utility of the information.

    - Non-PRA covered transactions. This includes:

- Interagency reporting requirements. This is important because electronic reporting between Federal agencies can reduce costs and increase information's practical utility.

- Information products that agencies disseminate to the public. This is important because agencies can distribute information more widely, more efficiently, and at a lower cost by making it available electronically.

- Other transactions. If your agency identifies any other transactions important in implementing electronic government it may report them here.

Note: **Submit all relevant Transactions except transactions that are of a one-time nature. For example, do not include one-time surveys or one-time data collections.**

→Back

- **Which fields in the Database are definitely required fields and which fields can be left blank?**

  - **All fields** are required except for the following three as described below.

  - Fields which may be left blank are described below–:
    1."Unique Project ID" – if a transaction does not have a Unique Project ID, leave this field blank.
    2."PRA Number" - this may be left blank for Non-PRA transactions
    3."Uses Electronic Signature" – if the Agency does not plan to use electronic signatures for a transaction, you may leave this check box blank.

  Note: "Respondent Description" and "E-Gov Initiatives" field – if none of the drop down menu selection choices are applicable, then select "Other" or "None" respectively to the selected list. **Do not leave the field blank**

→Back

- **If a transaction I want to report is not actually aligned to an E-Gov Initiative, but could be potentially aligned in the future, should I still report it as aligned**?

  - Yes, you should report such a transaction as aligned to an E-Gov Initiative.

→Back

- **If a collection has been merged and is now electronic or is expired or a PRA has expired, should I delete the transaction in my new reporting?**

  - No, please do not delete this collection. You can show it as follows:
    a) If the collection was made electronic and it expired–

Show the transaction as complete with the appropriate “Transformation Status” (i.e. “Electronic Forms”). Provide the appropriate completion date in the “Date of Completion” field and show “Number of Respondents” as “0”.

b) If the collection was not made into an Electronic Form and it expired– Show the transaction as complete with the appropriate “Transformation Status” (i.e. “none”). Leave the “Date of Completion” field blank and show “Number of Respondents” as “0”. Provide an appropriate explanation in the explanation boxes.

→Back

- **Should all Transactions have a Unique Project ID?**

  - Some Transactions may not have a Unique ID. In this case, leave the field blank.

→Back

- **There is a new guidance for Unique Project Ids. So which ID should I use the 17 digit Unique ID or 23 digit Unique ID?**

  - Continue to use the 17 digit Unique Project ID. **Do not** use the 23 digit ID. The 17-digit ID you use, will be cross-walked with the new 23-digit Unique ID in the future.

    The new 23-digit ID will be effective only at the time of the Budget submissions in Sept 2003. Given the timing of the data call (July 2003), we will continue to use the 17 digit Unique ID.

    Note: If certain digits do not apply, please fill in with “0s”.

→Back

- **What should I do if a transaction does not have a PRA number?**

  - If a transaction does not have a PRA Number, leave this field blank. GPEA collects both PRA and non-PRA transactions, so it is alright to include non-PRA transactions and leave the “PRA Number” field blank.

→Back

- **If my Agency plans to complete GPEA requirements after the Deadline of Oct 2003, should I still report it?**

  - Yes, please report such transactions with date and provide an explanation for the completion date.

→Back

- **Where can I get OMB’s list of approved collections for my agency for the ICR Report?**

  - Click on the following URL to get the information: http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/library/OMBINV.LIST.OF.AGENCIES.html

→Back

USING THE 2003 GPEA DATA COLLECTION TOOL FEATURES

- **Why does the database not save my selection for some of the fields – like "Respondent description"/ "PRA Numbers" and "E-Gov Initiatives" even though I selected it from the drop down list?**

  - First, please ensure that you select the correct entry from the drop down list for each of these data fields. Then ***you must*** click on "Select to Respondent List"/ "Select to PRA List"/ "Select to E-Gov Initiative List" buttons as the case may be. The entry will appear in the relevant box and it will now be saved.

→Back

- **How can I display transactions in alphabetical order?**

  - Click on "Transaction Manager" on "Main Menu". In the "Transaction View Search Manager", click on 'Transaction Name' in "Sorting Options" and click 'Asc (or Desc)' under "Sort Order". You will now be able to show the transactions in alphabetical order.

→Back

- **Can I sort transactions by Bureau Name?**

  - While you cannot sort all transactions by Bureau Name, you can, however, search transactions by Bureau name (using the Search option) and thereby view the records for a particular Bureau.

→Back

SUBMISSIONS AND DEADLINES

- **How do I submit my Agency's final Database and Memo?**

  - After you complete updating / modifying your Agency's GPEA transaction data, submit a single, CIO approved Database (refer "Tool User Guide" for naming convention for your Agency's Database) and Memo by email to GPEA2003@gsa.gov

→Back

- **What is the Deadline for submission? Can we get an extension?**

  - Due Date for Submission: July 1, 2003.

  - No, it is not possible to get an extension, since the data has to be collected and prepared prior to the Congressional Analysis.

→Back

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