GSA®

Office of Telecommunications Services

Conexus & EIS Tools Quarterly Updates

GSA's Office of Telecommunications COVID-19 Response

During the unprecedented global challenge of the COVID-19 outbreak, GSA has flexed the Network Hosting Center (NHC) to support the government-wide response effort. We have implemented new features for flagging and tracking Networx and EIS modification submissions associated with COVID-19 response, allowing vendors to communicate agency need and GSA to prioritize modification review, discussion, and approval. This assures GSA responsiveness and attention to the most critical needs for all federal agencies.

Conexus and NHC Individual Agency Meetings

In lieu of planned Conexus and NHC individual agency sessions at GSA's cancelled FAST2020 conference, the Conexus and NHC team offered agencies the ability to meet virtually one-on-one. During the month of April, many agencies signed up for individual sessions to ask any clarifying questions regarding the Conexus application and the Network Hosting Center. Some agencies requested multiple sessions, as well.

The Conexus and NHC team found that, while many agencies attend the monthly Conexus working group calls, agencies also found the individual sessions to be of value to them.

Going forward, if your agency would like to schedule an one-on-one session with Conexus and the NHC, please coordinate through you GSA Agency Account Manager (AM). Not sure who your GSA AM is? Click gsa.gov/nspsupport.

Conexus Security

The Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) is a United States federal law that defines a comprehensive framework to protect government information, operations and assets against natural and manmade threats including cyber attacks. FISMA requires each federal government agency, state agencies with federal programs and private-sector firms that support, sell to or receive services from the government to develop, document and implement risk-based information security controls based on the controls outlined in NIST SP 800-53. Once organizations are able to demonstrate an effective information security program with established security and privacy controls they are awarded an Authority to Operate (ATO).[1]

An information system must be granted an Authority to Operate (ATO) before it first becomes operational. After the GSA Authorizing Official (AO) signed a formal statement of risk acceptance, accepting the system's security risk, Conexus received its initial ATO in January 2017. Every three years after receiving an initial ATO, a system has to be re-authorized as well as whenever changes are made which affect the potential risk level of operating the system. Therefore, GSA Conexus had to go through an arduous undertaking in FY20 called an Assessment and Authorization (A&A) security authorization for re-accreditation and was issued a new ATO valid until March 2023.

As an iterative process, continuous monitoring must be implemented in order to maintain the system's compliance and to identify any new threats to the system.

1. https://www.upguard.com/blog/nist-sp-

New Task Order Modification Tracker

GSA recently added a Modification Submission Tracker to the NHC EIS Agency Pricer! This new tool allows users to query all vendor modification submissions to the EIS contract *in real time* based on the submission number of the applicable item. The tool returns vital status information in the review, award/rejection, and integration processes. Users can query pending AND completed modification submissions for a complete picture of status.

To request access to the NHC EIS Agency Pricer, email nhc@gsa.gov today!

Enterprise Infrastructure Solutions (EIS): Path to the Future
Registration Now Open!

GSA is hosting six virtual sessions, beginning June 10 through July 22, to assist agencies with their acquisition and implementation activities as they transition to EIS.

Who should attend? CIO/IT Staff, Telecom Staff, Transition Executives & Managers, Contracting Officers & Specialists, Program/Project Managers and Financial Staff.

Receive one CLP credit for each session you attend. You can sign up to attend one or all of the sessions at the same link. Your GSA support team will be available to answer your questions during the event.

The sessions:

Tips for Proposal Evaluation
Wednesday, June 10
2 to 3 p.m. (ET)
Join us to hear from DOI about how they sustained their EIS task-order award after a GAO protest and the lessons they learned that will benefit all agencies.

Trusted Internet Connection (TIC) 3
Wednesday, June 17
3 to 4 p.m. (ET)
In this session, you'll learn from GSA and DHS/CISA what's expected of agencies to protect their networks. Discover what is available to help your agency meet security requirements using EIS. We will discuss how solutions can be packaged to provide the security you need now and will need later.

Transition Close Out
Thursday, June 18
2 to 3 p.m. (ET)
As government agencies move to the EIS acquisition vehicle, legacy telecommunications contracts will expire. GSA will limit the use of its legacy telecommunications contracts and freeze all future growth on those vehicles. Extended use of these contracts is limited to agencies who are making sufficient transition progress to be 100% off the expiring contracts by September 30, 2022. The Networks Authorized User List (NAUL) will be updated to remove users in phases, which is expected to begin in summer 2020. In addition, GSA will stop processing any new Networx/WITS contract modifications and any new LSA implementation orders on October 1, 2020. Join us for this session to ensure that your agency is positioned well for the future and will avoid disruptions in service.

EIS Ordering
Wednesday, June 24
2:30 to 3:30 p.m. (ET)
After your task order is awarded and you've developed your implementation plan with your EIS supplier, it'll be time to begin the ordering process. This interactive discussion will review who should be involved, what information needs to be conveyed, and how an agency begins the process. GSA will share all of this – and more – to help you expedite your ordering process.

Rules and Tips for Awarding EIS Contract Modifications Prior to Awarding Task Orders
Wednesday, July 15
2 to 3 p.m. (ET)
This session will cover the authorization of orders, Network Site Codes (NSCs) not in the traffic model, requesting status of vendor submissions (modifications) that affect your task-order award(s), and modification priority.

Solutions to Modernize your Enterprise Network
Wednesday, July 22
2 to 3 p.m. (ET)
During this session, we'll discuss advancements in network technologies – such as software-defined networking and managed security services – and how your agency can leverage these technologies as part of your EIS modernization plan. We will also explore the as-a-service model common with cloud computing and its applicability to network services.

Information to join sessions virtually is found on the registration link: https://gsasolutionssecure.gsa.gov/LP=2197.