

**INFORMATION COLLECTION  
SUPPORTING JUSTIFICATION  
Grant Management Requirements for  
Federal Railroad Administration  
Grant Awards and Cooperative Agreements (“Awards”)  
OMB Control Number 2130-0615**

**Summary of Submission:**

- This is a revision to a currently approved collection.
- This collection includes burden hours and costs for collecting documentation for new and existing awards on an annualized basis.
- The total number of burden hours requested for the submission is 87,529 hours.
- This collection represents an increase of 48,008 burden hours based on the revised number of expected new grant applications to be received/current number of existing grants being managed and/or expected to be closed out; and the incorporation of FRA Form 217 and the environmental documentation process being transferred from OMB Control No. 2130-0548 to this collection. (see question #15 for details).
- The total cost to the government for this collection is \$1,130,931.50, which represents an increase of \$181,022.50. The increase is due to an update to the estimated hourly rate of staff performing grant review and management functions and the incorporation of FRA Form 217 and the environmental documentation process being transferred from OMB Control No. 2130-0548 to this collection. (see question #15 for details)
- FRA published the required 60-day Federal Register Notice on July 3, 2018. See 83FR 31030; no comments were received in response to this Notice. FRA published the required 30-day Federal Register Notice on August 31, 2018. See 83 FR 44692; no comments were received in response to this Notice.

**1. EXPLAIN THE CIRCUMSTANCES THAT MAKE THE COLLECTION OF INFORMATION NECESSARY. IDENTIFY ANY LEGAL OR ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS THAT NECESSITATE THE COLLECTION. ATTACH A COPY OF THE APPROPRIATE SECTION OF EACH STATUTE AND REGULATION MANDATING OR AUTHORIZING THE COLLECTION OF INFORMATION.**

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) is an Operating Administration of the Department of Transportation (DOT). FRA solicits grant applications for viable projects including, but not limited to, preconstruction planning activities, safety improvements, congestion relief, improvement of grade crossings, rail line relocation, as well as projects that encourage development, expansion, and upgrades to passenger and freight rail infrastructure and services. Funded projects are those that meet FRA and government wide evaluation standards and align with DOT’s strategic goals:

- *Safety*: Reduce Transportation-Related Fatalities and Serious Injuries Across the Transportation System.
- *Infrastructure*: Invest in Infrastructure to Ensure Mobility and Accessibility and to Stimulate Economic Growth, Productivity and Competitiveness for American Workers and Businesses.
- *Innovation*: Lead in the Development and Deployment of Innovative Practices and Technologies that Improve the Safety and Performance of the Nation's Transportation System.
- *Accountability*: Serve the Nation with Reduced Regulatory Burden and Greater Efficiency, Effectiveness and Accountability.

FRA administers award agreements for both construction and non-construction projects that will result in service benefits or other tangible improvements in rail corridors. These projects include completion of planning, preliminary engineering, environmental research and development, final design, and construction.

To ensure accountability of Federal award recipients through performance and results, including expenditures in support of agreed-upon activities and allowable costs outlined in a FRA Notice of Grant Award (NGA), FRA requires systematic and uniform collection and submission of information, as approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Included in this information collection are reports and documentation mandated by OMB for completion, as well as additional resources to compile evidence relevant to addressing FRA's important policy challenges, promoting cost-effectiveness in FRA programs, and providing effective oversight of programmatic and financial performance. This justification draws on innovative FRA program designs to use sophisticated practices in delivering Federal financial assistance and encourage continuous improvements in service delivery.

FRA issues and manages awards in compliance with Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR): Grants and Agreements. This justification includes one document package for collection over the entire lifecycle of the award process, in adherence to the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (78 FR 78589, December 26, 2013; 79 FR 75871, December 19, 2014). All non-research awards are subject to the application, reporting, closeout, and other processes described in this justification.

In 2015, OMB approved of FRA combining four (4) existing information collections into this a single collection for efficiency purposes. However, the collection and use of FRA Form 217 and the environmental collection documentation process remained under a separate information collection called the Railroad Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing (RRIF) Loan program (OMB Control No. 2130-0548). In 2017, the RRIF program transferred from under FRA authority to the newly established DOT American Bureau. Therefore, the use of FRA Form 217 and the environmental collection documentation process has been incorporated into this information collection to accurately account for the total burden hours under FRA's responsibility and authority.

A description of the documentation collected follows.

## **APPLICATION DOCUMENTATION**

### FRA Grant Application (FRA Form 35)

FRA requires applicants for Federal awards to complete standard applications that elicit point-of-contact information; a detailed Statement of Work (SOW); and a detailed Project Narrative including a complete response to the project evaluation criteria, as stated in a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) published in the Federal Register announcing the funding opportunity. FRA instructs applicants to prepare separate documents for responses that require detailed explanations, including Statements of Work (SOWs) and Project Narratives, as described below.

FRA collects SOWs, as allowed under Appendix I to 2 CFR 200 Part D (2). An SOW provides a high-level overview of the project and the applicant. It also contains sufficient detail so that FRA and the grantee can track progress towards completing key project milestones. The SOW describes the overall approach to and expectations for project/activity completion.

The SOW is a key part of a grantee's application and upon which FRA bases its funding evaluation and decision. The SOW is essential for outlining the: project background, performance objectives, location, description of work, schedule and associated deliverables, project estimate/budget, project coordination, and project management. It serves as a record of the project scope, tasks, and deliverables, and, as such, enables the awardee to clearly document programmatic or financial changes and provides a resource for FRA to identify any project deviation. The awardee and FRA should track progress towards deliverables, as detailed in required reports, in comparison with the SOW. FRA incorporates the SOW into the NGA and utilizes the SOW when monitoring projects or tracking program progress against milestones and outcomes, as agreed-upon in the NGA. Thus, the SOW is a key resource for FRA oversight of awardees and award funding.

The SOW allows for variation to how project objectives will be accomplished, and grantees may revise, with FRA approval, the SOW to indicate quantitative changes to public benefit indicators. Deviations from the SOW generally require a grant adjustment; supported by a thorough an FRA review process that ensures the grant remains compliant with FRA program provisions.

As allowed by Appendix I to 2 CFR 200 Part D(2), FRA issues NOFOs, which specifically request a project narrative. Project narratives detail an applicant's project, and budgetary information, including budgetary limitations and dependencies. The applicant describes and quantifies how it meets project eligibility and evaluation criteria for the type of funding requested and details both the transportation challenges that the project will address and the intended outcomes, anticipated benefits, and beneficiaries of the project.

The applicant also describes project implementation and project management arrangements, including plans for contracting oversight, risk management, and compliance with federal reporting requirements. The project narrative includes details on planning, land acquisition, build-out, testing, and project implementation, specifying long-term financial plans to own, operate, and maintain property and equipment. The application should also include any environmental or historic preservation impacts anticipated from the project, as well as any environmental/historic preservation analyses that have been prepared.

FRA generally limits the project narrative to a length of 25 pages, plus any supporting spreadsheet documents, tables, maps, drawings, and other materials, as appropriate, and in direct support of the project narrative's content. Grantees may revise the project narrative at one or more points during the grant lifecycle, as the scope of the project changes, though the burden of this revision is very minimal. FRA requires project narrative revisions only to the aspects of the project that have changed, including project objectives, anticipated inputs, outputs, and outcomes.

The project narrative enables FRA to evaluate award applicants for eligibility, merit, and risk, and this represents a critical aspect of exercising oversight of Federal program appropriations. 2 CFR 200.205 emphasizes risk review in the pre-award process, and the project narrative elicits information sufficient for FRA to initiate oversight of potential awardees.

#### Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)

Also required for the application are OMB-cataloged forms that elicit program and applicant identification information necessary to summarize proposed project activities and budget and certify adherence to government wide mandates for Federal funding recipients. The Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424) is an OMB standard form that requests applicant information including: Employer Identification Number; DUNS number; Applicant Type; the program's Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number; Funding Opportunity Number; applicant's congressional district(s), and other information that assists with cataloging the application. The information contained in the form is submitted once, as required by OMB as part of the application process and entered data auto-populates to other forms in grants.gov to reduce the time and expense burdens for applicants.

FRA also requires from the grantee, for both construction and non-construction projects, budget information and assurances that the grantee will comply with government wide policies and regulations. These forms are cataloged as SF-424A, SF-424B, SF-424C, and SF-424D, and it is estimated that approximately one-half of the applicants will apply for non-construction projects and one-half for construction projects.

#### Additional Application Documentation (SF-LLL and FRA F 30)

The Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL) form ensures grantees' compliance with 31 U.S.C. 1352, which requires funding recipients to apprise FRA of lobbying activities.

The FRA Assurances and Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements form (FRA F 30) ensures grantees' compliance with: 2 CFR 180 to outline suspension and debarment for primary covered transactions; 49 CFR 32, which requires FRA grantees to maintain a drug free workplace; and 49 CFR 20, which specifies DOT's anti-lobbying policy as an agency-specific implementation of 31 U.S.C.

## **AWARD MAINTENANCE DOCUMENTATION**

### Buy American Act and Buy America (PRIIA) Documentation, including NIST Manufacturing Extension Partnership Supplier Scouting – Federal Railroad Administration – Item Opportunity Synopsis (FRA F 229)

The information related to certification of compliance is used by FRA to verify compliance with the Buy America provisions: Buy American Act, 41 U.S.C. § 8302 et seq. and PRIIA Buy America, 49 U.S.C. § 24405. The information related to waivers of the Buy America provisions is used by FRA to grant or deny a waiver and by the public to comment on the waiver. The information related to the Awards is used by FRA and the awardee to verify compliance with the Buy America provisions. The information related to any investigation of compliance is used by FRA to investigate and make findings with respect to compliance with the Buy America provisions. The information related to the pre-award audit is used by FRA and the awardee to verify compliance with Buy America provisions. The information related to the domestic content improvement plans is used by FRA and the awardee to guide the awardee's increased use of domestic material.

Projects that have a legislative or other statutory requirement to follow Buy America provisions must adhere to Buy America provisions. The Secretary of Transportation may obligate funds for a project only if the steel, iron, and manufactured goods used in the project are produced in the United States. The Secretary of Transportation may waive the PRIIA Buy America requirement if the Secretary finds that:

- (1) Adhering to this policy would be inconsistent with the public interest;
- (2) Steel, iron, and goods produced in the United States are not produced in a sufficient and reasonably available amount or are not of a satisfactory quality;
- (3) Rolling stock or power train equipment cannot be bought and delivered in the United States within a reasonable time; or
- (4) Including domestic material will increase the cost of the overall project by more than 25 percent.

The Buy American Act also allows for similar waivers. Awardees request waivers, if needed, in writing to FRA, citing one or more of the above criteria.

### Request for Advance or Reimbursement (SF-270)

FRA utilizes the SF-270 to manage awardees' requests for payment over a defined period through a calculation of total outlays; total income; federal/non-federal share of net outlays; federal payments requested previously; federal payment currently requested; and amount of advance payment for anticipated outlays in the period defined by the awardee. This fillable OMB form is an efficient way of disbursing payments and maintaining effective accounting and controls with regard to FRA awards and in compliance with 2 CFR 200.305(b). Specially formatted versions of the form auto-populates data based on the amounts entered by the awardee.

### Quarterly Progress Report (QPR) (FRA Form 34)

In compliance with 2 CFR 200.301, FRA requires its awardees to submit a QPR, which enables the agency's understanding of awardees' progress towards completion of project activities, relates project performance to financial expenditures, and identifies best practices among recipients, as well as areas for improvement.

The QPR is a fillable Portable Document Format (PDF) form that minimizes the awardee burden by auto-populating static project data, such as awardee profile information and SOW tasks. FRA uses QPRs to monitor and assess awardees' progress against project goals within agreed-upon parameters, as documented in the signed NGA. Using a standard QPR form allows FRA to quickly gather, consolidate and analyze report data to determine trends and identify grantees needing special attention or assistance. Grantees must submit QPRs, using the FRA-provided form, for all calendar quarters during the grant period of performance (PoP), as indicated on the NGA cover sheet.

FRA reminds awardees that reports must be complete, thorough, accurate, and certified by a representative who is authorized to verify and submit data on behalf of the awardee.

#### Federal Financial Report (SF-425)

On a quarterly basis through the entire period of performance, FRA requires awardees to report expenditures, comparing actual project expenditures with anticipated amounts outlined in the approved project budget. FRA adheres to the requirements for financial reporting outlined in 2 CFR 200.327 and collects SF-425s as frequently as allowed by OMB to oversee awardees' management of Federal funds optimally.

#### Grant Adjustment Request Form (FRA Form 31)

FRA utilizes the Grant Adjustment Request Form (GARF) to efficiently initiate adjustments or amendments to the NGA required to enable successful completion of the FRA-awarded project. In compliance with 2 CFR 200.308, which outlines government wide requirements for making grant adjustments, FRA requires awardees to report deviations from the project's budget, scope, or objective and request prior approval from Federal awarding agencies for planned budgetary and programmatic revisions. FRA maintains the authority to approve or disapprove any adjustment request.

Awardees complete the GARF by indicating the type of adjustment requested:

- Minor administrative change(s) to the NGA;
- A no-cost extension of 12 months or less to the award;
- Minor modification to any component of the SOW, as previously approved by FRA; or
- Significant changes to the NGA, including requests for additional federal funding and other significant budgetary changes; no-cost extension for a period exceeding 12 months; and significant amendments to the SOW.

Awardees must also include a justification for the requested adjustment. The GARF enables FRA to manage any changes to the agreed-upon project SOW and budget and maintain stewardship of the overall program appropriation. Standardization of the amendment process increases operational efficiency and the speed with which changes are reviewed and enacted, thus benefiting the grantee and their time-sensitive projects.

#### Service Outcome Agreement (SOA) Annual Reporting (FRA Form 32)

FRA requires recipients of service project awards to provide annual updates on progress towards meeting the outcomes of FRA's investment, including commencement of service and any amendments since submission of the previous SOA. Service project awardees submit SOAs before and after commencement of service, which specifically asks awardees when service

began, if applicable. The SOA also requires awardees to verify that the parties to the service project are in compliance with the most recent SOA. Upon completion of the activities set forth in the SOA, the awardee verifies whether it has met all SOA activities and metrics.

Compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA; Form FRA 217)  
NEPA requires the preparation of the proper environmental analysis prior to the award of a grant. For the majority of grants awarded through FRA, this compliance is performed by completing FRA Form 217 – the Categorical Exclusion Worksheet as most grant projects fall under the Categorical Exclusion provisions of NEPA. Some projects may require an Environmental Assessment (EA) and even a smaller number will require the most extensive Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) review. Both the EA and the EIS do not have specific forms but do require analysis and information gathering in a recognized format.

## **CLOSEOUT DOCUMENTATION**

### Final Performance Report (FRA Form 33)

2 CFR 200.343 requires that awardees submit all financial, performance, and other closeout documentation as required by the terms and conditions of the award no later than 90 calendar days after the end date of the period of performance. The final performance report provides a full accounting of project performance upon completion of the period of performance, with a description of the activities, outputs, outcomes, performance measures, status of completed or continuing construction activities, lessons learned, leveraging, budgetary narrative, and feedback from the grantee.

The final performance report allows FRA grant managers to assess the project against the requirements outlined in the NGA and provides grantees with the opportunity to showcase the successes and lessons learned from the project. As such, the final performance report is a critical document that can help to inform future awarding decisions by FRA and other federal agencies. Additionally, patent disclosure (if applicable) and a federally-owned property report (if applicable) provide a more complete picture of the project performance and potential for leveraging federal investments. Content from the final performance report, including public benefits and photos, may be used in FRA materials to illustrate the value and impact of our programs.

FRA provides a final report template and instructions to assist awardees with report completion. The report template and prescribed content makes writing the Final Performance Report easier for the grantee than if there were no guidance. Awardees must submit reports that are complete, thorough, accurate, and certified by a representative who is authorized to verify and submit data on behalf of the organization. After an authorized representative of the awardee certifies the final performance report, awardees submit the report via email.

**2. INDICATE HOW, BY WHOM, AND FOR WHAT PURPOSE THE INFORMATION IS TO BE USED. EXCEPT FOR A NEW COLLECTION, INDICATE THE ACTUAL USE THE AGENCY HAS MADE OF THE INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM THE CURRENT COLLECTION.**

FRA collects reports, documents, and other information throughout the grant lifecycle as a primary means of practicing effective oversight of Federal investments in railroad equipment and infrastructure to enable the safe, reliable, and efficient movement of people and goods for a strong America, now and in the future.

FRA issues NOFOs that provide detailed descriptions of forms and documents required of applicants to be considered eligible for Federal awards. Required documentation includes OMB forms and written narrative information regarding the project scope, description of activities, and utilization of potential Federal funding.

FRA extends award agreements to applicants that respond favorably to NOFOs and indicate a strong commitment to high performance standards and a cost-effective approach, at low risk to the Federal government. Notices of Grant Agreement (NGAs) include clear and detailed requirements for applications, award maintenance, and closeout procedures.

FRA reviews the environmental assessment and historic preservation documentation required to be submitted by grantees under § 262.15 to ensure compliance with all relevant Federal statutes. FRA also uses this additional information to determine whether it is safe and in the public interest to approve a proposed project for rail line relocation or rail improvement. Moreover, FRA uses the information submitted under this section to fulfill its legal obligations under NEPA and other statutes so that it can evaluate the effects on the local environment of the proposed project. FRA carefully scrutinizes environmental review because the agency needs to be certain that serious environmental harm will not result if a proposed project is given a green light to begin construction.

State and local government applicants for grants must consult with FRA before they begin any environmental or historic preservation analysis. These consultations enable States and local governments applying for grants to fully explain to FRA officials how they plan on proceeding with the required environmental and historic preservation reviews on potentially eligible projects and helps them to clarify any issues regarding legal requirements in this area.

FRA will use the information collected to ensure that all applicable Federal statutes, such as NEPA, the National Historic Preservation Act, and the Endangered Species Act are complied with by eligible States seeking Railroad Rehabilitation and Repair funds. Additionally, FRA will use the information collected to monitor various aspects of agency approved projects, including: the progress, completion, and performance of individual projects; the financial status of projects that detail outlays and requests for reimbursement for physical construction; final requests for payment; patent disclosure (if applicable); and condition of Federally-owned property (if applicable) that are included in required close-out reports by State governments. This monitoring and follow-up information is essential if FRA is to carry-out the Congressional mandate and ensure that Federal grant money is used appropriately and effectively.



Awardees of FRA awards submit performance and financial reports on an interim basis, including quarterly OMB Federal Financial Reports and quarterly progress reports. Quarterly reporting is critical for exercising stewardship of FRA programs and Federal funding at regular intervals. FRA can address awardees' programmatic and financial challenges, as well as potential non-compliance issues more efficiently through quarterly reporting. Quarterly reports provide an opportunity for FRA to highlight awardees' strengths and areas for improvement, and it is a key resource for monitoring planning and execution. FRA works with awardees to expeditiously resolve scheduling delays, slower rates of budgetary drawdown, areas of non-compliance, and other factors that pose potentially adverse consequences and risks to Federally-funded programs that are identified in quarterly reports. Quarterly reporting continues through the completion of the PoP.

FRA utilizes SOWs and quarterly reports when the agency conducts on-site and remote monitoring of awardees. Through monitoring activities, FRA inspects project performance and certifies progress towards project completion. As with quarterly reporting, monitoring avails FRA the means to oversee project progress during the PoP, and meet risk management responsibilities. Specifically, monitoring enables FRA to more closely review awardees' use of award funding and relate it to project activities and progress. FRA evaluates awardees' execution of the tasks identified in the SOW, and issues detailed findings in monitoring reports, summarizing the project scope and history, progress, corrective actions to be undertaken by the awardee, and other items relevant to the project's effectiveness as it relates to the associated Federal appropriation. If FRA identifies areas requiring corrective action, the awardee drafts and submits a follow-up report to FRA. This corrective action report ensures that the awardee will resolve any circumstances affecting performance or progress towards programmatic or financial deliverables as outlined in the NGA.

Awardees must comply with the provisions of Buy America, and, in instances where a compelling reason exists, awardees may request a waiver. Waiver requests may entail a significant additional effort, due to the standard of proof required for a grantee to demonstrate the inability to comply with the Buy America provisions.

FRA requires awardees on service projects to submit SOAs on an annual basis. These are collected annually by FRA for the purpose of updating awardees' progress towards commencing service, and once service has commenced, towards meeting all commitments and milestones. Typically, SOAs are required before and after service commencement. Because service outcome agreements cover a longer period of time than the PoP, FRA utilizes SOAs to track program deliverables during the award PoP and after closeout. This is necessary for evaluating longer-term projects, and FRA utilizes information from SOAs to determine awardees' eligibility for future awards.

At the close of the award-funded PoP, FRA collects final reports to enable efficient refund of de-obligated funds, disposal of property, and proper archiving procedures, as required under 2 CFR. Specifically, FRA collects a final SF-425, a final performance report, and, if applicable, a final SF-270 and a narrative final property accounting. Upon collection, review, and approval of these forms by FRA, the agency closes the awards. DOT and FRA utilize findings from final reports to facilitate mandated agency and legislative reporting.

The tables below describe each FRA document collection conducted throughout the grant lifecycle, including the purpose and means of collection for each document.

## APPLICATION

### Application - OMB Standard Forms

<b>Documentation</b>	<b>Format</b>	<b>Issuing Agency</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Means of Collection</b>	<b>Number of Collections Annually</b>
<b>SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance</b>	Form	OMB	Collect applicant and proposed project data, including descriptive title of project, location of proposed activity, and budget summary. Auto-populates data to other OMB forms and templates to minimize burden.	Fillable PDF to be uploaded to Grants.gov	1
<b>SF-424 A Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs</b>	Form	OMB	Summarize project budgetary information, detailing Federal and non-Federal funding sources, costs by object class categories, or forecasted cash needs by year.	Fillable PDF to be uploaded to Grants.gov	1
<b>SF-424 B Assurances - Non-Construction Programs</b>	Form	OMB	Assure that applicant will comply with all applicable federal regulations and statutes, including property disposal provisions, allow federal agency access to Federally-funded project records and documentation, and deliver project activities within a timeframe specified in an award agreement. Assure that applicant will exercise effective oversight of construction and engineering activities.	Print, scan, and upload to Grants.gov	1
<b>SF-424 C Budget Information - Construction Programs</b>	Form	OMB	List project budget by cost classification items, including both allowable and non-allowable costs under a Federal award.	Fillable PDF to be uploaded to Grants.gov	1
<b>SF-424 D Assurances - Construction Programs</b>	Form	OMB	Assure that applicant will comply with all applicable federal regulations and statutes, allow federal agency access to Federally-funded project records and documentation, and deliver project activities within a timeframe specified in an award agreement.	Print, scan, and upload to Grants.gov	1
<b>Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL)</b>	Form	OMB	Disclosure of applicant's lobbying activities, affecting initial or continued Federal funding of awardee project.	Print, scan, and upload to Grants.gov	1

### Application - FRA Forms

<b>Documentation</b>	<b>Format</b>	<b>Issuing Agency</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Means of Collection</b>	<b>Number of Collections Annually</b>
<b>FRA F 35 Application Form</b>	Narrative	FRA	Discuss and quantify how the applicant meets all requirements as outlined in NOFO. Outline transportation challenges the applicant seeks to address w/federal funding. Describe project scope, overall approach to and expectations for project/activity completion, and deliverables. Provide project background, performance objectives, location, description of work, schedule and associated deliverables, project estimate/budget, project coordination, and project management. Describe project implementation, management, engineering, and environmental impact of project. Serve as a baseline document for performance tracking and monitoring.	Document attachment in Grants.gov	1
<b>FRA F 30 FRA Assurances &amp; Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements</b>	Form	FRA	Certify that applicant has not committed actions which may result in suspension or debarment and upholds the requirements for maintaining a drug-free workplace. Record applicant's lobbying activities.	Print, scan, and upload to Grants.gov	1

### **AWARD MAINTENANCE**

#### **Award Maintenance - OMB Standard Forms**

<b>Documentation</b>	<b>Format</b>	<b>Issuing Agency</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Means of Collection</b>	<b>Number of Collections Annually</b>
<b>SF-270 Request for Advance or Reimbursement</b>	Form	OMB	Collect advance payment or reimbursement request from awardee by program/function/activity, including payee information, program outlays to date, program income, and proposed estimated outlays. Specify outlays by Federal and non-Federal shares, and amount requested for advance or reimbursement.	Delphi eInvoicing	4

<b>SF 425 Federal Financial Report</b>	Form	OMB	Record cumulative Federal cash received, disbursed, and on hand; expenditures and unliquidated obligations against available budget; cumulative expenditures under the grant to date; recipient share of expenditures against total recipient share of budget; program income; and indirect costs.	Submitted through GrantSolutions.gov	4
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### **Award Maintenance - FRA Forms**

<b>Documentation</b>	<b>Format</b>	<b>Issuing Agency</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Means of Collection</b>	<b>Number of Collections Annually</b>
<b>FRA F 229 NIST Manufacturing Extension Partnership Supplier Scouting – Federal Railroad Administration – Item Opportunity Synopsis</b>	Form	FRA	Provide technical and business descriptions of supplies and equipment required by awardee, as well as efforts to secure domestic sources, in compliance with Buy America provisions.	Fillable PDF to be collected by FRA via email.	1
<b>Additional Required Buy America Documentation</b>	Narrative Request	N/A	Certify compliance with or seek an exemption from the provisions of Buy America as allowed by the Secretary of Transportation; petition FRA to Investigate Compliance of Successful Bidder/ Offeror with Bidder’s/Offeror’s Certification; pre- and post-award audit.	Various	1
<b>FRA F 34 Quarterly Progress Report</b>	Form	FRA	Track progress of awardee programmatic and financial performance for the reported quarter and proposed activities for the following quarter	Fillable PDF to be emailed to FRA	4
<b>FRA F 31 Grant Adjustment Request Form (GARF)</b>	Form	FRA	Request amendment of the NGA terms and conditions, and record the nature and rationale for the requested adjustment, as well as risk factors and risk mitigation, as recommended by FRA, of approving the adjustment.	Fillable PDF to be emailed to FRA	1

<b>Documentation</b>	<b>Format</b>	<b>Issuing Agency</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Means of Collection</b>	<b>Number of Collections Annually</b>
<b>FRA F 32 Service Outcome Agreement Annual Reporting</b>	Form	FRA	Provide an annual update on the status of current and past FRA-funded awards towards commencement of service and for a period of 20 years after service initiation.	Email	1
<b>FRA Form 217 Categorical Exclusion Worksheet</b>	Form	FRA	Compliance with NEPA and associated laws is required prior to the award of a grant. This documentation allows the applicant to avoid a lengthier Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement.	Print, scan, and upload to Grants.gov	1
<b>Environmental Assessment for compliance with NEPA</b>	Narrative in EA format	FRA	To comply with the requirements of NEPA, the Environmental Assessment determines if more extensive review is required or if the Agency can issue a decision document of a Finding of No Significant Impact	Submitted electronically to FRA	1
<b>Environmental Impact Statement</b>	Narrative document in EIS format	FRA	To comply with the requirements of NEPA, the Environmental Impact Statement involves coordination with other Agencies, public outreach and input, consideration of alternatives and mitigation measures	Submitted electronically to FRA	1

## CLOSEOUT

### Closeout - OMB Standard Forms

Awardees do not complete any OMB forms *exclusively* for award closeout. However, awardees are required to submit a final SF-425, and a final SF-270 (if necessary) before FRA closes out the award. For details related to both SF-425 and SF-270 forms, please see the Award Maintenance section above.

### Closeout - FRA Forms

Documentation	Format	Issuing Agency	Purpose	Means of Collection	Number of Collections Annually
<b>FRA F 33 Final Performance Report</b>	Form	FRA	Provide a full accounting of project performance upon completion of the period of performance, summarizing project objectives, activities, outputs, outcomes, performance measures, lessons learned, leveraging, budgetary narrative, and feedback from the grantee.	Fillable PDF to be emailed to FRA	1

**3. DESCRIBE WHETHER, AND TO WHAT EXTENT, THE COLLECTION OF INFORMATION INVOLVES THE USE OF AUTOMATED, ELECTRONIC, MECHANICAL, OR OTHER TECHNOLOGICAL COLLECTION TECHNIQUES OR OTHER FORMS OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, E.G. PERMITTING ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION OF RESPONSES, AND THE BASIS FOR THE DECISION FOR ADOPTING THIS MEANS OF COLLECTION. ALSO DESCRIBE ANY CONSIDERATION OF USING INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY TO REDUCE BURDEN.**

FRA utilizes, to the extent possible for collecting all information necessary in compliance with Title 2 of CFR, automated systems and formats, including auto-population of fields that do not require duplicate data entry. FRA instructs applicants to upload required documents to Grants.gov, which minimizes time and cost burdens for applicants and FRA.

Recently, the agency implemented streamlined reporting formats, such as fillable PDF forms with drop-down field, that reduce the time required for awardees to complete and submit required reports. FRA adopted these revised reporting formats and procedures to introduce uniform and clearly presented reporting requirements. The revised formats also enable FRA to review awardee reports more efficiently, and this facilitates less burdensome oversight and identification of any necessary SOW and/or NGA amendments.

Moreover, when completing SF-425s, SF-270s, revised project narratives, and revised SOWs, awardees typically revise only the information that has changed from previous reports.

**4. DESCRIBE EFFORTS TO IDENTIFY DUPLICATION. SHOW SPECIFICALLY WHY ANY SIMILAR INFORMATION ALREADY AVAILABLE CANNOT BE USED OR MODIFIED FOR USE FOR THE PURPOSES DESCRIBED IN ITEM 2 ABOVE.**

In order to identify duplication, FRA maintains a program management database with unique elements that are used to compare and cross-walk against new or existing applications and all other data elements—internal or external—to minimize the amount of information requested from the grantee.

Project narratives and statements of work are generally project specific, and the information provided in a statement of work is unique and not available elsewhere.

When appropriate, to reduce duplication, relevant materials previously provided to FRA may be referenced and described as unchanged. To the extent referenced, this information need not be resubmitted. This procedure is expected to continue to be followed by grantees in the future.

**5. IF THE COLLECTION OF INFORMATION IMPACTS SMALL BUSINESSES OR OTHER SMALL ENTITIES (ITEM 5 OF OMB FORM 83-I), DESCRIBE ANY METHODS USED TO MINIMIZE BURDEN.**

N/A. While States likely collect this information, the federal government has not participated in information collection from small businesses to date. Participation by small businesses is limited to contracting and subcontracting work as requisitioned by grantees. Small businesses are not required to complete any of the documentation described in this justification, and they do not assume any burden from the described information collection.

**6. DESCRIBE THE CONSEQUENCE TO FEDERAL PROGRAM OR POLICY ACTIVITIES IF THE COLLECTION IS NOT CONDUCTED OR IS CONDUCTED LESS FREQUENTLY, AS WELL AS ANY TECHNICAL OR LEGAL OBSTACLES TO REDUCING BURDEN.**

FRA implements information collection policies and procedures with consideration of efficient Federal funding oversight, compliance with government wide standards and regulations, and minimization of time and cost burdens. Information collection policies and procedures result from careful consideration of the data necessary for stewardship of Federal funds and cost-efficient project execution. At each phase of the award lifecycle, FRA mandates collection only of information that meets these criteria.

**Application**

Application Form (FRA F 35)

The FRA application form solicits a project narrative and SOW from the applicant. The project narrative serves as the description of an award applicant's goals and objectives for a proposed grant-funded project. This document is a critical aspect of the grant application, and FRA places

significant emphasis on the project narrative when conducting merit review of applications. Without this document, FRA would lack a full understanding of the applicant's qualifications and would be unable to make informed funding decisions.

The SOW establishes the main project-related deliverables, by which the grantee's performance is measured throughout the period of performance. Without this document, both FRA and grantees would face formidable challenges and inefficiencies in tracking grant activities and progress. Specifically, monitoring would be more difficult without the SOW to guide FRA's on-site or remote evaluation of awardees' progress towards project deliverables. As a baseline project document, grantees may revise SOWs one or more times during the award lifecycle, as the project scope changes.

#### Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424) and Associated Documentation

The SF-424, along with required budget information, assurances, disclosure of anti-lobbying activities enable FRA to determine applicant eligibility and risk, which, along with the merit review that results from the project narrative, are the critical factors in making funding decisions. OMB requires this documentation of all Federal funding applicants for general management of Federal assistance awards programs. Without collection of these forms, FRA's evaluation of applications would be incomplete and the agency is placed at significantly higher risk of awarding federal funding to entities that are out of compliance with policy and ethics standards.

#### **Award Maintenance Requirements**

FRA must collect reports and technical deliverables to ensure progress and performance and meet the FRA's fiduciary responsibility. Without interim reports, FRA would not be able to: monitor and assess the progress of selected awards; verify projects are on track for scope, schedule, and budget; or identify projects needing additional FRA assistance or support. Furthermore, without this collection of information, FRA would not be able to accurately provide current or future budget estimates or respond to agency or Congressional inquiries related to the status of selected projects.

FRA collects SF-424s with the maximum frequency allowed by OMB, that is, on a quarterly basis and simultaneously with QPR submission. The collection of quarterly and financial reports enables FRA to fulfill statutory and regulatory requirements, contribute to the economic development of States and the District of Columbia, and promote and enhance safe rail transportation throughout the United States.

Awardees utilize SF-270s to request advance payment or reimbursement for project-related expenditures. These OMB-approved forms offer an efficient and uniform system for processing award disbursements. Without such systemization for payment processing, FRA's time burden for reviewing payment requests would likely increase.

To further reduce awardees' burden, FRA may in the future allow grantees to upload QPRs and final performance reports to a secure web portal, instead of via email. In this way, information transmission would be more direct, and FRA's burden would be further reduced.

FRA and awardees utilize the GARF to review and approve minor amendments, no-cost extensions, SOW revisions, and any significant changes to NGAs efficiently. FRA reviews input



from awardees regarding the need for grant adjustments, which include minor administrative amendments, no-cost extensions, revisions to SOWs, and significant changes to the NGA. In the GARF, awardees justify the need for an adjustment, and FRA reviews the grantees input to make a decision that balances program goals with awardees' progress and performance. FRA implements a thorough, multi-level review process that assesses awardees' requests from programmatic, financial, and compliance-related perspectives. Without the GARF, FRA would be at a disadvantage in efficiently collecting data from awardees in requesting and justifying their requests for adjustments to the NGA. Additionally, FRA's process for reviewing adjustment requests would require additional time and effort, leading to higher costs. Using the GARF also ensures FRA collects the information it needs from the grantees the first time, thereby reducing the need for follow-up questions and additional work on the part of grantees.

FRA collects Buy America waivers from awardees that are unable to fulfill the Buy America requirements. Waivers must clearly state the reasons for the inability to meet Buy America requirements, citing one of the four main criteria in Section 1 above for PRIIA Buy America or one of the exceptions found in the Buy American Act and its implementing regulations. In reviewing Buy America waivers, FRA and DOT weigh the awardee's ability to meet project deliverables and support economic opportunity for American companies and workers. To maximize opportunities for American businesses to fill the needs of FRA awardees, all waiver requests must be published in the Federal Register before they are granted, and DOT posts waiver requests on its website. Waiver requests serve as the justification for awardees to proceed with project activities, including procurement, by transacting with non-American companies and businesses on an exceptional basis only. Without the information collection described in this submission, the FRA Administrator could not fulfill the Administrator's duties under DOT's Buy America policy. Specifically, the Administrator could not (1) be reasonably certain that the FRA is complying with the Buy America policy of only obligating an amount to carry out an FRA funded project if the steel, iron, and manufactured goods used in the project are produced in the United States, (2) perform the fact-finding necessary to grant or deny a waiver, (3) justify the Administrator's grants of any waivers, (4) communicate to awardees through the application and Awards negotiation process to verify compliance with the Buy America, (5) investigate and document any reported or discovered non-compliance with the Buy America, (6) audit awardees pre-award to verify compliance with the Buy America, and (7) encourage domestic production of rolling stock by requesting borrowers submit plans to improve domestic rolling stock to assist awardees in complying with the Buy America.

The SOA provides an annual assessment of current and past awardees' progress towards commencing service and compliance with SOA provisions towards meeting milestones and commitments. Without this annual update, FRA would face challenges in evaluating the long-term outcomes, benefits, and cost-effectiveness of service projects. The SOA also gives FRA the ability to determine eligibility of past awardees for future funding, based on awardees' long-term performance.

The Categorical Exclusion Worksheet is used to meet the statutory requirements of NEPA and related laws and regulations. The information collected through this form is used to confirm that the project scope being funded through the grant meets FRA categorical exclusions, which allows for the completion of this form instead of a lengthier EA or EIS. In the event of the development of an EA or EIS, FRA utilizes decades of streamlining and efficiency initiatives

including incorporating materials by reference, using errata sheets for Final EISs, limiting overall page length and avoiding duplicative processes with related laws and requirements.

### **Closeout**

Similar to the QPR, the final performance report enables project-level assessment as a fundamental component of an overall evaluation of FRA programs. DOT utilizes final reporting data from FRA and other agency operating administrations in its reports to Congress. Without final reports, FRA would face serious challenges in recording and analyzing the completeness and lasting impact of award-funded projects, including monitoring patent disclosure (if applicable), status of construction and inspection activities at the close of the project, and condition of Federally-owned property (if applicable) that are included in required close-out reports by State governments. Such data inform and possibly direct future funding decisions.

### **7. EXPLAIN ANY SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES THAT WOULD CAUSE AN INFORMATION COLLECTION TO BE CONDUCTED IN A MANNER CONSISTENT WITH 5 CFR 1320.6:**

All information collection requirements are in compliance with this section.

### **8. DESCRIBE EFFORTS TO CONSULT WITH PERSONS OUTSIDE THE AGENCY TO OBTAIN THEIR VIEWS ON THE AVAILABILITY OF DATA, FREQUENCY OF COLLECTION, THE CLARITY OF INSTRUCTIONS AND RECORDKEEPING, DISCLOSURE, OR REPORTING FORMAT (IF ANY), AND ON THE DATA ELEMENTS TO BE RECORDED, DISCLOSED, OR REPORTED.**

Through calls with stakeholders, frequent contact with regional teams and the delivery of technical assistance, FRA meets with States to ensure that requested information is both useful to FRA and to the recipient, and that FRA is not causing undue burden on the recipient.

### **9. EXPLAIN ANY DECISION TO PROVIDE ANY PAYMENT OR GIFT TO RESPONDENTS, OTHER THAN REMUNERATION OF CONTRACTORS OR GRANTEES.**

FRA has not and will not provide any payment or gifts to respondents, including remuneration of contractors or grantees.

### **10. DESCRIBE ANY ASSURANCE OF CONFIDENTIALITY PROVIDED RESPONDENTS.**

All material provided by grantees is proprietary and is subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

Statements of work and project reports submitted by grantees pursuant to an NGA become agency records and thus subject to the FOIA and to public release through individual FOIA

requests. FRA also recognizes that certain information submitted by awardees could be exempt from public release under FOIA as a result of the application of one of the FOIA exemptions which protect trade secrets and commercial or financial information obtained from a person that is privileged or confidential.

Entities seeking exempt treatment must provide a detailed statement supporting and justifying their request and should follow FRA's existing procedures for requesting confidential treatment in the railroad safety context found at 49 CFR 209.11.

As noted in the DOT's FOIA implementing regulation (49 CFR Part 7), the burden is on the entity requesting confidential treatment to identify all information for which exempt treatment is sought and to persuade the agency that the information should not be disclosed (see 49 CFR 7.17). The final decision as to whether the information meets the standards of exemption rests with FRA.

#### **11. ADDITIONAL JUSTIFICATION FOR QUESTIONS OF A SENSITIVE NATURE.**

FRA's information collection practice does not request any sensitive or private information and such requests are not expected in the future.

#### **12. ESTIMATE OF THE HOUR BURDEN OF THE COLLECTION AND ANNUALIZED COST TO RESPONDENTS.**

Through application solicitation and awards management, FRA has calculated a burden associated with applications, deliverables and reports. The average hourly salary rate for a respondent is \$25, based on an estimated average annual salary of \$50,000.

#### **APPLICATION DOCUMENTATION**

FRA estimates receiving 250 grant applications per year. The majority of project narratives submitted are well developed. Therefore, FRA estimates that it will not generally take each applicant more than 42 burden hours to assemble individual applications and revised application documents. The estimated application annual hour burden for 250 applications is estimated at 9,693 hours.

#### **FRA Grant Application (FRA F 35)**

The Statement of Work (SOW) and Project Narrative comprise a significant portion of the FRA Grant Application, and the main body of the application solicits basic applicant and program information. It is estimated that it will take approximately 34 hours total to complete the FRA Application Form, including the Project Narrative and Statement of Work. FRA estimates that the number of total burden hours required for completing a Project Narrative is 8,500 hours, calculated as such:

$$250 \text{ applicants} \times 34 \text{ burden hours per FRA Application Form} \times 1 \text{ time} = 8,500 \text{ hours}$$

Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)

The number of applicants completing an SF-424 is equal to the number of applicants identified in Project Narrative (250 applicants). It is estimated that it will take approximately 1.1 hours total to complete the form, per OMB's burden statement for SF-424. An estimated 250 applicants are expected to submit this form one time during the application process. FRA estimates that the number of total burden hours required for completing an SF-424 is 1.1, calculated as such:

$$250 \text{ applicants} \times 1.1 \text{ burden hours per SF-424} \times 1 \text{ time} = 275 \text{ hours}$$

Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)

It is estimated that it will take approximately 3.0 hours total to complete the form, per OMB's burden statement for SF-424A. An estimated 75 applicants are expected to submit this form one time during the application process. FRA estimates that the number of total burden hours required for completing an SF-424A is 225, calculated as such:

$$75 \text{ applicants} \times 3.0 \text{ burden hours per SF-424A} \times 1 \text{ time} = 225 \text{ hours}$$

Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B)

It is estimated that it will take approximately 0.25 hours total to complete the form, per OMB's burden statement for SF-424B. An estimated 75 applicants are expected to submit this form one time during the application process. FRA estimates that the number of total burden hours required for completing an SF-424B is 18.75, calculated as such:

$$75 \text{ applicants} \times 0.25 \text{ burden hours per SF-424B} \times 1 \text{ time} = 18.75 \text{ hours}$$

Budget Information for Construction Programs (SF-424C)

It is estimated that it will take approximately 3.0 hours total to complete the form, per OMB's burden statement for SF-424C. An estimated 175 applicants are expected to submit this form one time during the application process. FRA estimates that the number of total burden hours required for completing an SF-424C is 525, calculated as such:

$$175 \text{ applicants} \times 3.0 \text{ burden hours per SF-424C} \times 1 \text{ time} = 525 \text{ hours}$$

Assurances for Construction Programs (SF-424D)

It is estimated that it will take approximately 0.25 hours total to complete the form, per OMB's burden statement for SF-424B. An estimated 175 applicants are expected to submit this form one time during the application process. FRA estimates that the number of total burden hours required for completing an SF-424B is 43.75, calculated as such:

$$175 \text{ applicants} \times 0.25 \text{ burden hours per SF-424B} \times 1 \text{ time} = 43.75 \text{ hours}$$

Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL)

It is estimated that it will take approximately 0.17 hours total to complete the form, per OMB's burden statement for SF-LLL. An estimated 250 applicants are expected to submit this form one time during the application process. FRA estimates that the number of total burden hours

required for completing an SF-LLL is 42.5 calculated as such:

$$250 \text{ applicants} \times 0.17 \text{ burden hours per SF-424D} \times 1 \text{ time} = 42.5 \text{ hours}$$

FRA Assurances and Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements (FRA F 30)

It is estimated that it will take approximately 0.25 hours total to complete the FRA Assurances and Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements confirmation. An estimated 250 applicants are expected to submit this document one time during the application process. FRA estimates that the number of total burden hours required for completing an FRA Assurances and Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements is 62.5, calculated as such:

$$250 \text{ applicants} \times 0.25 \text{ burden hours per FRA Assurances and Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension and Other} \times 1 \text{ time} = 62.5 \text{ hours}$$

## **AWARD MAINTENANCE**

From an estimated 250 applications, it is estimated that FRA will finalize 125 award agreements, and provide continued maintenance to 216 existing grants.

Award maintenance requirements for selected awards may vary based on funding source, project type, and project duration. However, all projects are required to submit a Quarterly Progress Report (FRA F 34) and Federal Financial Report (SF-425) on a quarterly basis.

Awardees also submit Requests for Advance or Reimbursement (SF-270), which is the document of record for initiating FRA funding disbursements. At the completion of the period of performance, awardees are required to submit a final SF-425 and a Final Performance Report. An estimated 125 new awardees will submit quarterly reporting documentation along with the 216 existing FRA awardees, for total of 1,364 total quarterly reports submitted on an annual basis. Not all awardees will be required to complete NEPA reviews as some grants either fund the NEPA review process or is otherwise covered by a review process that does not require the applicant to complete a review.

Awardees wishing to obtain a waiver from the obligations under the Buy America requirements are required to submit a request for doing so. Also, awardees wishing to amend the terms of their award are required to submit a Grant Adjustment Request Form (GARF) (FRA F 31).

The total award maintenance annual hour burden is estimated at 77,203.44 hours based on the below:

- Form SF 425 = 2,046 hours
- Form SF 270 = 860 hours
- Form FRA F 34 = 2,728 hours
- Form FRA F 31 = 212 hours
- Form FRA F 32 = 24 hours

- Form FRA 229 & Buy America Process: 19,949.44 hours
- Environmental Process = 57,254 hours
  - FRA F 217: 7,800 hours
  - Environmental Assessment: 12, 480 hours
  - Environmental Impact Analysis: 31, 104 hours

**Federal Financial Report (SF-425)**

All awardees must submit the Federal Financial Report for each quarter during which the project is active. It is estimated to take approximately 1.5 hours total to complete the report, per OMB’s burden statement for the SF-425. An estimated 125 new awardees are expected to submit these reports four times a year, for a subtotal of 500 reports. Another 216 existing awardees are estimated to submit these as well for a total of 864 reports. The total estimated number of reports submitted annually is 1,364. The total annual burden for this requirement is estimated at 2,046 hours.

Respondent Universe:	All New and Existing Awardees
Burden time per response:	1.5 hours
Frequency of Response:	4 times a year
Total estimated number of Responses:	1,364 reports
Total Estimated Burden:	2,046 hours

**Calculation:**  $((125 \text{ awards} \times 1.5 \text{ hrs.} \times 4 \text{ times a year}) + (216 \text{ existing awardees} \times 1.5 \text{ hrs.} \times 4 \text{ times a year})) = 2,046 \text{ hours}$

**Request for Advance or Reimbursement (SF-270)**

All awardees must submit Requests for Advance or Reimbursement each time they request disbursement of funds from FRA for proposed or actual expenditures. It is estimated to take approximately 1 hour to complete the form, per OMB’s burden statement for the SF-270. Awardees are expected to submit an estimated 860 reports annually. The total annual burden for this requirement is estimated at 864 hours.

Respondent Universe:	All New and Existing Awardees
Burden time per response:	1.0 hour
Frequency of Response:	Variable
Total estimated number of Responses:	860 Requests
Total Estimated Burden:	860 hours

**Calculation:**  $860 \text{ requests} \times 1.0 \text{ hrs.} = 860 \text{ hours}$

**Quarterly Progress Report (FRA F 34)**

All awardees must submit the FRA Quarterly Progress Report once every quarter for the entire period of performance under the award. It is estimated that it will take approximately 2 hours to complete each report. An estimated 125 awardees are expected to submit these reports four times a year for a subtotal of 500 reports. Another 216 existing awardees are projected to submit these reports at the same frequency, for a subtotal of 864 reports. Total number of reports submitted annually is 1,364. The total estimated annual burden for this requirement is 2,728 hours.

Respondent Universe:	341 Awardees
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Burden time per report:	2 hours
Frequency of submission:	4 times a year
Total estimated number of Responses:	1,364 reports
Total Estimated Burden:	2,728 hours

**Calculation:**  $((125 \text{ new awards} \times 2 \text{ hrs.} \times 4 \text{ times per year}) + (216 \text{ existing awards} \times 2 \text{ hrs.} \times 4 \text{ times per year})) = 2,728 \text{ hours}$

Grant Adjustment Request Form (GARF) (FRA F 31)

Awardees wishing to amend the terms of their grant agreement must submit the GARF on an as-needed basis. This report is submitted once. It is estimated that it will take approximately 1 hour to complete each report. An estimated 212 awardees are expected to submit this report annually. Total estimated annual burden for this requirement is 115 hours:

Respondent Universe:	Select New and Existing Awardees
Burden time per response:	1 hour
Frequency of Response:	Once Annually
Total estimated number of Responses:	212 Awards
Total Estimated Burden:	212 hours

**Calculation:**  $212 \text{ awardees} \times 1 \text{ hour} \times 1 \text{ time} = 212 \text{ hours}$

Service Outcome Agreement (SOA) Annual Reporting (FRA F 32)

Select awardees must submit the SOA on an annual basis. This report is submitted once annually under awardees' operating arrangements. It is estimated that it will take approximately 1 hour to complete each report. An estimated 24 awards are expected to submit this report annually. Total estimated annual burden for this requirement is 24 hours:

Respondent Universe:	Select Awardees
Burden time per response:	1 hour
Frequency of Response:	Once Annually
Total estimated number of Responses:	24 Awards
Total Estimated Burden:	24 hours

**Calculation:**  $24 \text{ awardees} \times 1 \text{ hours} \times 1 \text{ time} = 24 \text{ hours}$

Buy America and Buy America (PRIIA) Documentation, including FRA F 229 NIST Manufacturing Extension Partnership Supplier Scouting – Federal Railroad Administration – Item Opportunity Synopsis

FRA estimates that a varying number of awardees will submit the Buy America waiver and associated documentation one time, as shown below:

Process	Estimated Number of respondents	Non-federal unit hours	Estimated Non-federal hours
Certification of Compliance or Non-Compliance with Buy America Requirements for Steel, Iron, or Manufactured Products being produced by Awardee	15	3	45
Certification of Compliance with Buy America for Rolling Stock	1	62	62
Waivers – Requests/Applications for Waivers, excluding FRA Form 229	15	1200	18000
FRA F 229 NIST Manufacturing Extension Partnership Supplier Scouting – Federal Railroad Administration – Item Opportunity Synopsis	15	18	270
Awardee Investigations (including FRA initiated investigations)	3	333	999
Awardee direct reply to FRA after request to conduct investigation of bidder/offeror	2	1	2
Additional Documents to FRA from Awardee/Investigated Party	1	4	4
Transmission of Awardee/Bidder/Offeror Reply to Petitioner	2	0.5	1
Awardee/Investigated Bidder/Offeror response to Petitioner Comment	1	8	8
Written request to FRA for information bearing on substance of investigation which has been submitted by petitioner, interested parties, or awardees	1	4	4
Detailed Statement to FRA Regarding Confidentiality of Previously Submitted Information to Agency	1	8	8
Awardee Determination to make award before resolution of investigation one of this sections specified reasons	1	40	40
Notification to FRA by Awardee to make award during pendency of investigation	1	1	1
Request to FRA for Reconsideration of Initial Decision by Party Involved in Investigations	1	80	80
Pre-Award Audit	1	33	33
Final Contract between Awardee and Bidder/Offeror	1	16	16
Post Award Audit	1	256	256
Rolling Stock Domestic Content Improvement Plans	1	120	120
<b>TOTAL HOURS</b>			<b>19,949</b>

Thus, the total number of hours estimated for processes associated with Buy America waiver requests is 19,949 (including 270 hours required to complete FRA F 229).

Environmental Process: Environmental Impact Statement, Environmental Assessment, and



Categorical Exclusion Worksheet

The provision of financial assistance by the Administrator under this Part is subject to a variety of environmental and historic preservation statutes and implementing regulations including the National Environmental Policy Act (“NEPA”) (42 U.S.C. 4332 et seq.), Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act (49 U.S.C. 303(c)), and the National Historic Preservation Act (16 U.S.C. 470(f)). Appropriate environmental/historic preservation documentation must be completed and approved by the Administrator prior to a decision by the Administrator on the Applicant’s financial assistance request. FRA’s “Procedures for Considering Environmental Impacts” (“FRA’s Environmental Procedures”) (65 FR 28545 (May 26, 1999)) or any replacement environmental review procedures that the FRA may later issue and the NEPA regulation of the Council on Environmental Quality (“CEQ Regulation”) (40 C.F.R. Part 1500) will govern the FRA’s compliance with applicable environmental/historic preservation review requirements. 49 C.F.R. §260.35(a).

The Administrator, in cooperation with the Applicant, has the responsibility to manage the preparation of the appropriate environmental document. The role of the Applicant will be determined by the Administrator in accordance with the CEQ Regulation and Environmental Procedures.

*Environmental Impact Statement:* FRA estimates that approximately two (2) Applicants will be required to submit environmental impact statement documents once under this program. It is estimated that the total number of hours required of the Applicant and the qualified contractor will be approximately 15,552. This includes the hours required to gather and analyze the data and then develop the appropriate environmental document(s). Total annual burden requirement is 31,104 hours.

Respondent universe:	2
Burden time per response:	15,552 hours
Frequency of response:	Once
Annual number of responses:	2 environmental documents
Annual burden:	31,104 hours

**Calculation:** 2 applicants x 15,552 hrs. per environmental impact statement = 31,104 hours

*Environmental Assessment:* FRA estimates that approximately four (4) Applicants will be required to submit environmental assessment documents once under this program. It is estimated that the total number of hours required of the Applicant and the qualified contractor will be approximately 3,120. This includes the hours required to gather and analyze the data and then develop the appropriate environmental document(s). Total annual burden requirement is 12,480 hours.

Respondent universe:	4
Burden time per response:	3,120 hours
Frequency of response:	Once
Annual number of responses:	4 environmental assessments
Annual burden:	12,480 hours

**Calculation:** 4 applicants x 3,120 hrs per environmental assessment = 12,480 hours

*Categorical Exclusion Worksheet:* FRA estimates that approximately fifty (50) Applicants will be required to submit a categorical exclusion (FRA form FRA F 217) once under this program. It is estimated that the total number of hours required of the Applicant and the qualified specialist will be approximately 156. This includes the hours required to gather and analyze the data and then develop the appropriate environmental document(s). Total annual burden requirement is 7,800 hours.

Respondent universe:	50
Burden time per response:	156 hours
Frequency of response:	Once
Annual number of responses:	50 environmental documents
Annual burden:	7,800 hours

**Calculation:** 50 environmental documents x 156 hrs. = 7,800 hours

**Total Environmental Review Calculation: 51,384 hours**

EIS:	31,104 hours
EA:	12,480 hours
CE:	7,800 hours

**CLOSEOUT:**

**Final Performance Report (FRA F 33)**

All awardees must submit the Final Performance Report upon completion of the project. This report is submitted once. It is estimated that it will take approximately 8 hours on average to complete the report. Please note this is an average due to the wide variance in scope of awards. An estimated 79 awards are expected to submit this report annually. If the project is completed, within 90 days after the period performance end date of the grant or termination by FRA, the grantee must complete a full inspection of all construction work completed under the grant and submit a report to FRA. If the project is not completed, the State must submit a report detailing why the project was not completed. These reports may be included in the final performance report.

Total estimated burden for this requirement is 632 hours.

Respondent Universe:	Awardees with Closeouts
Burden time per response:	8 hours
Frequency of Response:	Once
Total estimated number of Responses:	79 Awards
Total Estimated Burden:	632 hours

**Calculation:** 79 awardees x 8 hours x 1 time = 632 hours

## Summary

APPLICATIONS	Responses	Hours	Frequency	Total Hours
- FRA Grant Application (FRA F 35)	250	34	1	8,500.00
- Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)	250	1.1	1	275.00
- Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)	75	3	1	225.00
- Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B)	75	0.25	1	18.75
- Budget Information for Construction Programs (SF-242C)	175	3	1	525.00
- Assurances for Construction Programs (SF-424D)	175	0.25	1	43.75
- Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL)	250	0.17	1	42.50
- FRA Assurances & Certif. Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension, et al (FRA F 30)	250	0.25	1	62.50
Subtotal Application	1500	42.02	8	9,692.50
MAINTENANCE	Responses	Hours	Frequency	Total Hours
- Federal Financial Report (SF-425) New Awardees	125	1.5	4	750.00
- Federal Financial Report (SF-425) Existing Awardees	216	1.5	4	1,296.00
- Request for Advance or Reimbursement (SF-270)	860	1	1	860.00
- Quarterly Progress Report (FRA F 24) New Awardees	125	2	4	1,000.00
- Quarterly Progress Report (FRA F 24) Existing Awardees	216	2	4	1,728.00
- Grant Adjustment Form (FRA F 31)	212	1	1	212.00

				0
- Service Outcome Agreement Annual Reporting (FRA F 32)	24	1	1	24.0 0
Subtotal Maintenance	24	1	1	5,870.0 0
<b>BUY AMERICA</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Hours</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Total Hours</b>
- Certification of Compliance or Non-Compliance with Buy America Requirements for Steel, Iron, or Manufactured Products being produced by Awardee	15	3	1	45.0 0
- Certification of Compliance with Buy America for Rolling Stock	1	62	1	62.0 0
- Waivers – Requests/ Applications for Waivers, excluding FRA Form 229	15	1200	1	18,000.0 0
- FRA F 229 NIST Manufacturing Extension Partnership Supplier Scouting – Federal Railroad Administration – Item Opportunity Synopsis	15	18	1	270.0 0
- Awardee Investigations (including FRA initiated investigations)	3	333	1	999.0 0
- Awardee direct reply to FRA after request to conduct investigation of bidder/ offeror	2	1	1	2.0 0
- Additional Documents to FRA from Awardee/ Investigated Party	1	4	1	4.0 0
-Transmission of Awardee/Bidder/Offeror Reply to Petitioner	2	0.5	1	1.0 0
- Awardee/Investigated Bidder/Offeror response to Petitioner Comment	1	8	1	8.0 0
- Written request to FRA for information bearing on substance of investigation which has been submitted by petitioner, interested parties, or awardees	1	4	1	4.0 0
-Detailed Statement to FRA Regarding Confidentiality of Previously Submitted Information to Agency	1	8	1	8.0 0
- Awardee Determination to make award before resolution of investigation one of this sections specified reasons	1	40	1	40.0 0
- Notification to FRA by Awardee to make award during pendency of investigation	1	1	1	1.0 0
- Request to FRA for Reconsideration of Initial Decision by Party Involved in Investigations	1	80	1	80.0 0
- Pre-Award Audit	1	33	1	33.0

				0
- Final Contract between Awardee and Bidder/Offeror	1	16	1	16.00
- Post Award Audit	1	256	1	256.00
- Rolling Stock Domestic Content Improvement Plans	1	120	1	120.00
Subtotal Buy America	64	2,188	18	19,949.00
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW</b>	Responses	Hours	Frequency	Total Hours
- Environmental Impact Statement	2	151,552	1	31,104.00
- Environmental Assessment	4	3120	1	12,480.00
- Categorical Exclusion Worksheet	50	156	1	7,800.00
Subtotal Environmental Review	56	154,828	3	51,384.00
<b>CLOSE-OUT</b>	Responses	Hours	Frequency	Total Hours
- Final Performance Report (FRA F 33)	79	8	1	632.00
Subtotal Close-Out	79	8	1	632.00
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>87,527.50</b>

### 13. ESTIMATE OF TOTAL ANNUAL COST BURDEN TO RESPONDENTS.

There are no additional costs to respondents resulting from the proposed collection of information.

### 14. ESTIMATE OF THE ANNUALIZED COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.

The annual estimated cost to the Federal government is **\$949,909**. This estimate is based on burden of previous requests for grant applications; reporting, and closeout documentation; anticipated applications, awards, and reporting requirements; and an approximate salary rate of a federal employee at GS-14, Step 2 of \$57 per hour.

## APPLICATION

### **FRA Application Form and Additional OMB and FRA Application Documents**

As part of the award application FRA requires awardees to submit an Application Form (FRA F 35), which solicits a Project Narrative and Statement of Work; SF-424; SF-424A; SF-424B; SF-424C; SF-424D; Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL); and FRA Assurances and Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements (FRA F 30).

Grantees may submit amendments to the Project Narrative and the Statement of Work, but the revisions are not anticipated to add any significant time or cost burden. 250 program applications are anticipated for review. Total burden for this requirement is 9,693 hours.

Estimated annualized cost for application document collection: 9,693 Total Annual Burden Hours x \$57/hour = \$552,501.

This cost reflects the need to establish an evaluation teams to process and review each of the applications and make recommendations about which projects to fund. FRA estimates that the evaluation team will include 15 contractors and staff from various agencies. This estimate is based on experience in the most recent round of solicitations. This figure was developed based on time spent in reviews for each project type and the technical and executive level reviewers, support staff and contractors required. FRA estimates that the average cost for the services of FRA staff is approximately \$57/hour, based on the salary rate of employees at GS 14, Step 2. FRA does not utilize any special equipment or support, other than printing. As noted above in item 12, FRA anticipates 250 program applications. If each application is 25 pages, FRA would need to print as many as 6,250 pages for each of the 15 member of the executive evaluation team., which adds up to a total of 93,750 pages of printing.

Some of the members of the evaluation team review electronic versions of the applications, but for the purpose of this estimate, FRA assumes that all members will review hard copies of all applications. FRA's printing costs are estimated at approximately one (1) cent per page, which adds up to a total printing cost of \$937.50

**TOTAL ESTIMATED COST FOR APPLICATION REVIEW**  
**\$552,501 (application review) + \$937.50 (printing) = \$553,438.50.**

### **AWARD MAINTENANCE**

The estimated annual cost to the Federal Government for review of award maintenance documentation is **\$577,493**. This cost reflects total amount needed by FRA staff to review and evaluate the required reports submitted by grantees. Although various personnel are involved in the review of these reports, FRA estimates that the average cost for the services of FRA staff is approximately \$57/hour.

### **Federal Financial Report (SF-425)**

It is estimated that it will take 0.25 hour for FRA to review each SF-425. An estimated 125 awardees are expected to submit these reports four times a year, for a subtotal of 500 reports.

Another 216 existing awardees are estimated to submit these reports. The estimated annualized cost to the Federal government for the evaluation team is **\$19,437**.

Report Universe:	All New and Existing Awardees
Burden hours per report:	0.25 hour
Frequency of submission:	4 times a year
Total number of Reports:	1,364 Reports
Total Estimated Burden:	341 hours
Total Estimated Cost:	\$19,437

**Calculation:** ((125 awards x 0.25 hrs. x 4 times per year) + (216 existing awards x 0.25 hours x 4 times per year)) x \$57/hour = \$19,437

**FRA Quarterly Progress Report (FRA F 34)**

It is estimated that it takes 1 hour to review each progress report. An estimated 125 awardees are expected to submit these reports four times a year, for a subtotal of 500 reports. Another 216 existing awardees are expected to submit 864 reports. The estimated annualized cost to the Federal government for the evaluation team is **\$77,748**.

Report Universe:	All New and Existing Awardees
Burden hours per report:	1 hour
Frequency of submission:	4 times a year
Total number of Reports:	1,364 Reports
Total Estimated Burden:	1,364 hours
Total Estimated Cost:	\$77,748

**Calculation:** ((125 new awards x 1 hr. x 4 times per year) + (216 existing awards x 1 hr. x 4 times per year)) x \$57/hour = \$77,748

**Request for Advance or Reimbursement (SF-270)**

It is estimated that it takes 1 hour to review each SF-270. Awardees are expected to submit 860 payment requests annually. The estimated annualized cost to the Federal government is **\$49,020**.

Report Universe:	All New and Existing Awardees for Non-Construction Projects
Burden hours per report:	1 hours
Frequency of submission:	Variable
Total number of Requests:	860 Requests
Total Estimated Burden:	860 hours
Total Estimated Cost:	\$49,020

**Calculation:** 860 requests x 1 hour x 1 time x \$57/hour = \$49,020

**Grant Adjustment Request Form (GARF) (FRA F 31)**

It is estimated that it will take an average of 3 hours to review each GARF. An estimated 212 awards are expected to submit GARFs once per year. The estimated annualized cost to the Federal government for review is **\$36,252**.

Report Universe:	Select New and Existing Awardees
Burden hours per report:	3 hours
Frequency of submission:	Once
Total number of Awards:	212 Awards
Total Estimated Burden:	636 hours
Total Estimated Cost:	\$36,252

**Calculation:** 212 awards x 3 hours x 1 time x \$57/hour = \$36,252

**Service Outcome Agreement (SOA) Annual Reporting (FRA F 32)**

It is estimated that it will take 1 hour to review each SOA. An estimated 24 awards are expected to submit SOAs once on an annual basis. The estimated annualized cost to the Federal government for the evaluation team is **\$300**.

Report Universe:	Select Awardees
Burden hours per report:	0.25 hours
Frequency of submission:	Once
Total number of Awards:	24 Awards
Total Estimated Burden:	6 hours
Total Estimated Cost:	\$342

**Calculation:** 24 awards x 0.25 hours x 1 time x \$57/hour = \$342

**Buy America Certification and Waiver Documentation, including NIST Manufacturing Extension Partnership Supplier Scouting – Federal Railroad Administration – Item Opportunity Synopsis (FRA F 229)**

While the number of awardees responding to the various Buy America documentation requests will vary, it is estimated that it will take 2,745 hours to review each Buy America documentation package related to certification and request for waivers (including NIST Manufacturing Extension Partnership Supplier Scouting – Federal Railroad Administration – Item Opportunity Synopsis (FRA F 229)) and execute one pre- and one post-audit to verify compliance with the Buy America provisions. An estimated 15 awards are expected to submit documentation on an annual basis. The estimated annualized cost to the Federal government for the evaluation team is **\$156,465**.

Report Universe:	Select Awardees
Burden hours per report:	Varies
Frequency of submission:	Once
Total number of Respondents:	Varying
Total Estimated Burden:	2,745 hours
Total Estimated Cost:	\$156,465

**Calculation:** 2,745 hours x \$57/hour = \$156,465

**Environmental Process: Environmental Impact Statement, Environmental Assessment, and Categorical Exclusion Worksheet**



Time for reviewing environmental analysis reports for compliance with NEPA vary by the type of document. For the more extensive EIS, it is estimated that 1,650 hours are needed for review. For EAs, it is estimated that 105 hours are needed. For review of the CE Worksheet, 6 hours are needed. The estimated annualized cost to the Federal government for the environmental team is **\$225,720**.

Report Universe:	All New Awardees
Burden hours per report:	
EIS	1,650 hours
EA	105 hours
CE	6 hours
Frequency of submission:	Once
Total number of Reports:	
EIS	2
EA	4
CE	40
Total Estimated Burden:	3,960
EIS	3,300
EA	420
CE	240
Total Estimated Cost	\$225,720

**Calculation:** [(2 awards x 1,650 hours) + (4 awards x 105 hours) + (40 awards x 6 hours)] x \$57/hour = \$225,720

**TOTAL AWARD MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENT ANNUAL COST: \$577,493**

## CLOSEOUT

### **Final Performance Reporting, including Final Performance Report (FRA F 33), Federally-owned Property Report, Construction and Inspection Report, and Patent Disclosure**

It is estimated that it will take 3 hours to review each final performance report. An estimated 79 awards are expected to submit final performance reports once on an annual basis. The estimated annualized cost to the Federal government for the evaluation team is **\$13,509**.

Report Universe:	Awardees with Closeouts
Burden hours per report:	3 hours
Frequency of submission:	Once
Total number of Awards:	79 Awards
Total Estimated Burden:	237 hours
Total Estimated Cost:	\$13,509

**Calculation:** 79 awards x 3 hours x 1 time x \$57/hour = \$13,509

**TOTAL ESTIMATED BURDEN COSTS: \$553,438.50 (application costs) + \$563,984 (award maintenance costs) + \$13,509 (closeout costs) = \$1,130,931.50**

**15. EXPLAIN REASONS FOR CHANGES IN BURDEN.**

In 2015, OMB approved of FRA combining four (4) existing information collections into this a single collection for efficiency purposes. However, the collection and use of FRA Form 217 and the environmental collection documentation process remained under a separate information collection called the Railroad Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing (RRIF) Loan program (OMB Control No. 2130-0548). In 2017, the RRIF program transferred from under FRA authority to the newly established DOT American Bureau. Therefore, the use of FRA Form 217 and the environmental collection documentation process has been incorporated into this information collection to accurately account for the total burden hours under FRA's responsibility and authority. Furthermore, the burden hour computations have been updated to reflect the current grantee universe, which includes the completion of many High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail projects funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. Additionally, the burden hour computations reflect anticipated new grantees for grant programs authorized through the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act. The actual reporting requirements have not, however, changed.

**16. PLANS FOR TABULATION AND PUBLICATION.**

FRA has no plans to publish the collected information.

**17. IF SEEKING APPROVAL NOT TO DISPLAY THE EXPIRATION DATE FOR OMB APPROVAL, EXPLAIN THE REASONS.**

FRA is not seeking approval not to display the expiration date for OMB approval.

**18. EXPLAIN ANY EXCEPTIONS TO THE CERTIFICATION STATEMENT: THE SENIOR OFFICIAL OR DESIGNEE SIGNING THIS STATEMENT CERTIFIES THAT THE COLLECTION OF INFORMATION ENCOMPASSES BY THE REQUEST COMPLIES WITH 5 CFR 1320.9. PROVISIONS OF THIS CERTIFICATION THAT THE AGENCY CANNOT COMPLY WITH SHOULD BE IDENTIFIED HERE AND FULLY EXPLAINED IN THIS SECTION. NOTE: THE OFFICE THAT "DEVELOPS" AND "USES" THE INFORMATION COLLECTED IS THE OFFICE THAT "CONDUCTS OR SPONSORS" THE COLLECTION OF INFORMATION (SEE 5 CFR 1320.3(D)).**

FRA does not request any exceptions to the certification statement.

## **APPENDIX:**

1. FRA F 35 Program Application Form (including Project Narrative and Statement of Work Instructions)
2. SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance
3. SF-424 A Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs
4. SF-424 B Assurances - Non-Construction Program
5. SF-424 C Budget Information - Construction Programs
6. SF-424 D Assurances - Construction Programs
7. SF-LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities
8. FRA F 30 Assurances and Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements
9. FRA F 229 NIST Manufacturing Extension Partnership Supplier Scouting – Federal Railroad Administration – Item Opportunity Synopsis
10. FRA F 34 Quarterly Progress Report
11. FRA F 31 Grant Adjustment Request Form
12. SF 425 Federal Financial Report
13. SF-270 Request for Advance or Reimbursement
14. FRA F 32 Service Outcome Agreement Annual Reporting (FRA Template)
15. FRA F 33 Final Performance Report (FRA Template)
16. FRA 217 Categorical Exclusion Worksheet