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for the refusal and the record of negotiations, to GSA at the address specified at 41.301(a). Unless urgent and compelling circumstances exist, the contracting officer shall notify GSA prior to acquiring utility services without executing a tendered contract. After such notification, the agency may proceed with the acquisition and pay for the utility service under the provisions of 31 U.S.C. 1501(a)(8)—

(1) By issuing a purchase order in accordance with 13.302; or

(2) By ordering the necessary utility service and paying for it upon the presentation of an invoice, provided that a determination is approved by the head of the contracting activity that a written contract cannot be obtained and that the issuance of a purchase order is not feasible.

(d) When obtaining service without a bilateral written contract, the contracting officer shall establish a utility history file on each acquisition of utility service provided by a contractor. This utility history file shall contain, in addition to applicable documents in 4.803, the following information:

(1) The unsigned, tendered contract and any related letter of transmittal.

(2) The reasons stated by the utility supplier for not executing the tendered contract, the record of negotiations, and a written definite and final refusal by a corporate officer or other responsible official of the supplier (or if unobtainable, documentation of unwritten refusal).

(3) Services to be furnished and the estimated annual cost.

(4) Historical record of any applicable connection charges.

(5) Historical record of any applicable ongoing capital credits.

(6) A copy of the applicable rate schedule.

(e) If the Government obtains utility service pursuant to paragraph (c) of this section, the contracting officer shall, on an annual basis beginning from the date of final refusal, take action to execute a bilateral written contract. The contracting officer shall document the utility history file with the efforts made and the agency shall notify GSA, in writing, if the utility

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continues to refuse to execute a bilateral contract.

[59 FR 67018, Dec. 28, 1994, as amended at 62 FR 64926, Dec. 9, 1997]

41.203 GSA assistance.

(a) GSA will, upon request, provide technical and acquisition assistance, or will delegate its contracting authority for the furnishing of the services described in this part for any Federal agency, mixed-ownership Government corporation, the District of Columbia, the Senate, the House of Representatives, or the Architect of the Capitol and any activity under the Architect's direction.

(b) Agencies seeking assistance shall provide, upon request by GSA, the information listed in 41.301.

41.204 GSA areawide contracts.

(a) *Purpose.* GSA enters into areawide contracts (see 41.101) for use by Federal agencies. Areawide contracts provide a pre-established contractual vehicle for ordering utility services under the conditions in paragraph (c)(1) of this section.

(b) *Features.* (1) Areawide contracts generally provide for ordering utility service at rates approved and/or established by a regulatory body and published in a tariff or rate schedule. However, agencies are permitted to negotiate other rates and terms and conditions of service with the supplier (see paragraph (c) of this section). Rates other than those published may require the approval of the regulatory body.

(2) Areawide contracts are negotiated with utility service suppliers for the provision of service within the supplier's franchise territory or service area.

(3) Due to the regulated nature of the utility industry, as well as statutory restrictions associated with the procurement of electricity (see 41.201(d)), competition is typically not available within the entire geographical area covered by an areawide contract, although it may be available at specific locations within the utility's service area. When competing suppliers are available, the provisions of paragraph (c)(1) of this section apply.