**NWX-HHS HRSA OFAM (US)**

**Moderator: Christopher Suzich**
**January 17, 2013**
**6:00 pm CT**

Coordinator: Welcome and thank you for standing by. At this time all participants are in a listen only mode. If you would like to ask a question during the question and answer session you may press star 1 and record your name to place your line into the queue at any time.

This conference is also being recorded. If you have any objections you may disconnect at this time.

And I would now like to turn the meeting over to Christopher Suzich. Please begin.

Christopher Suzich: Thank you (Gabrielle). Thank you everybody for joining, good morning and good afternoon depending on where you're located.

We are pleased that you could take time out of your day to join us today, hopefully we'll be able to pass along some useful and valuable information to you all regarding EHBs and the HRSA grants process in general.

We have a group, quite a few subject matter experts, on the line and we should be able to answer any questions you have when we get to the Q&A period. If we can't answer your question we'll be glad to take your information and get back in touch with you with an answer.

Just some housekeeping items before we get started through the agenda. As I mentioned there will be a Q&A opportunity after we go through a number of the agenda items. Please keep a piece of paper and a pen or a pencil handy as you might want to jot down some notes as we're going through the various speakers and you're hearing a lot of the information we have to pass on.

When we do get to the Q&A period the, (Gabrielle) will inform us again about how you can ask a question. If you do have a question please have your grant number ready if you do have a HRSA grant already, if you can give us that grant number when you ask your question that helps us to look up things real time so that'll help us greatly in researching whatever question you might have.

At this time I'd like to introduce Rear Adm. Kerry Paige Nesseler. She is the Director of HRSA's Office of Global Health Affairs and the Chief Nurse Officer of the U.S. Public Health Service. Admiral?

Kerry Paige Nesseler: Thank you Chris. Well good morning, good afternoon and good evening. I'd like to wish a warm welcome to our HRSA grantees in the U.S. Pacific Islands. We're so pleased that you can join us today because your work is important to HRSA and the populations you serve.

Today this call is for you to answer your questions and discuss the grants management issues that are most relevant in the Pacific Region. I'd like to also welcome the HRSA Project Officers and any other guests from CDC and

SAMSA who may have dialed in as well. We have invited Project Officers to listen in so we can all learn about grants management together.

As will be discussed HRSA Project Officers and Grants Management Specialists work together as a team to assist and support you and the great work that you're doing in the Pacific.

The HRSA Office of Global Health Affairs mission is to improve health worldwide by providing leadership to develop linkages, foster interconnectedness and facilitate a mutual exchange of expertise that strengthens health system, access, equity and quality.

The Pacific Region is a big part of where we focus our work. In fact a key goal for my office is to improve health access and outcomes in the U.S. API. We are very committed to you and your successes because we share your goal of improving health in the Pacific.

As may of you know the Office of Global Health Affairs coordinates a HRSA Project Officer and Program Management Work Group in which representatives from across HRSA and even CDC, SAMSA and HHS Region 9 where we work together with a common goal of assisting you, our partners in the Pacific.

Tonight, or this morning depending on where you are, we've partnered with the HRSA Office of Federal Assistant Management to provide the first in we hope to be of many, technical assistance calls to better serve you, our grantee.

OFAM, or the Office of Federal Assistant Management, has provided these conference calls in the past but many of our grantees in the Pacific have been unable to attend due to time differences. Chris and his staff have been gracious enough to work with us to plan this call specifically for HRSA grantees in the outer Pacific.

I'd like to acknowledge and thank Chris Suzich and the HRSA Office of Federal Assistance Management staff, my staff, Commander Maria Benke and Lieutenant Commander Alexis Beyer, and all of the folks out there on the call in the Office of Assistance Management for putting this call together and recognize the great work that you all are doing.

I'd also like to give a shout out to the Pacific Island Health Offices Association for their guidance with HRSA as we've planned this call. Before we conclude the call we hope to take a few minutes for you to provide us with feedback on this call today. How we can better assist you in the future and maybe even to give us some future agenda items that you'd like to hear again.

Again, thank you all for your participation and we're really excited to have you all on the call today, so carry on Chris. Thanks again.

Christopher Suzich: Thank you Admiral. The first topic that we have everybody on the call is we're going to touch on a number of different topics, all of them related to the HRSA grants process, or at least most of them, and in particular EHBs, navigating EHBs. Some questions that are often handled by the HRSA call center related to EHBs or grants management.

We have a little bit of a discussion on the FFR, that is the SF-425, that is typically the annual financial report that most of you submit, that of course is done in EHBs.

So we'll be tackling a number of different topics today, the first one that I'd like to talk about briefly is there's a difference, and many of you probably already know this, but let me just go over it anyway. There is a difference between the EHB system, which HRSA uses of course, and the system that you use to draw down your funds if you do have a HRSA grant.

The way that you draw down your funds is not by going into EHBs but it's by going into the PMS system, which is a completely different Web site and system than EHBs.

I do want to pass along the HRSA Contact Center phone number for you and their e-mail address, the e-mail address might be more useful for you because of the time difference, but the contact center phone number in case you ever have an occasion where you need it and you can dial it is a toll free number and it's (877) 464-4772 and that's the HRSA Contact Center.

I believe I know one of my colleagues will know the answer to this, though I don't know, if you call outside of their normal business hours I think there's a voicemail option and there is a voicemail option, so you can leave your message and the Call Center will get back in touch with you.

In addition to that I'm going to give you their e-mail address and that e-mail address is callcenter@hrsa.gov. That's callcenter@hrsa.gov. You might find that useful for questions that you have navigation, EHB issues that you might have.

As I mentioned, when you want to draw down your funds for your HRSA grant you do not do that through EHBs, you do that through a system that we call the Payment Management System, they have a separate help desk phone number and I want to provide that to you now also. The PMS, Payment Management System Help Desk phone number is (877) 614-5533.

When you e-mail the HRSA contact center I just want to pass along that including your grant number in the e-mail is very useful, any other tracking numbers that you might have if you have a prior approval tracking number, if you can include any specific information in your e-mail that greatly speeds the resolution of your issue for the call center.

Let me also touch on, as I mentioned briefly before, the federal financial report, the SF-425. We will hear more about that shortly from one of our subject matter experts, (Kelly), but the SF-425 the data that you input for that particular form in EHBs is typically done on an annual basis. This is an important for, one that we look for and track and monitor the submission of closely for all of our grantees.

That data again you put in EHBs on an annual basis. There is similar financial information that you submit on a quarterly basis in the payment management system, that's oftentimes we refer to that as the federal, I believe it's the federal cash transaction report, we'll hear more about that soon.

But I wanted to draw your attention to the distinction between the financial data that you put on an annual basis into EHBs and the submissions that you do on a quarterly basis in the payment management system, I know that can be somewhat confusing.

Okay our next topic then I'm going to turn it over to (Helen) and she's going to, (Helen) is a long-time HRSA expert around the grant system and the grant process and she's going to talk a little bit about the roles and responsibilities of grants management specialists versus project officers. (Helen)?

(Helen): Thanks you Chris. As you heard previously the program offices and the grants management office they work as partners, we couldn't manage your grant very well if we didn't work well together.

The Project Officers are the, it would be a contact for any of your programmatic questions. For example if you have a condition on your award normally it's a condition that's placed there at the request of the program officer and so if you had a question about how to respond or what kind of information was needed you would likely contact the Project Officer.

If you had a question about the business administration of your grant, such as your budget, allowable costs and such, and your annual financial reporting you would contact your Grants Management Specialist.

Both of these contact names would be the on last page of your Notice of Grant Award. The Program Officer does give input to grants management whenever you submit any kind of prior approval request, we work together to approve your request, to review your request and we get back to you hopefully in a timely manner so that whatever you have requested we can approve or if we can't approve it we'll send it back to you and ask for more information.

So anything related to business, financial or administrative management you call your grants contact for the program, anything that has to do with any of the programmatic parts of your grant you would contact the project officer.

I'd like to just say to really carefully read your Notice of Award because there's several standard requirements, standard terms on your award, which will give you a lot of information about some of the requirements of your grant.

And some of this you'll hear about later such as updating your information and your system for award management and also something that's mentioned there is the, what we call the salary cap limitation. No one on a federal grant can be paid in federal dollars more than $179,700 a year for one FTE.

And when we review your budget if we see anything like that on your award you would probably be contacted or be given a term on your award saying we see that you may have, be exceeding the federal salary cap on your award and you're not allowed to do that. So that would be something that you would contact your grants management specialist about if you had any questions about that.

And I would advise that if you're not sure about who you should contact about any question you have I would say start with your Grants Management Specialist. That person will be able to direct you to where you should go they can, you know they can analyze your questions and they might be able to tell you, you need to go to the, your Payment Management System representative or they would tell you, you need to go to your project officer for that.

But I would suggest start with your Grants Management Specialist and he/she will steer you in the right direction. Thank you.

Christopher Suzich: Thank you very much (Helen).

(Helen): Yes.

Christopher Suzich: The next topic we have everyone is some more detailed information about the SF-425, the Federal Financial Report that we were talking about before. Again in EHBs this is typically submitted on an annual basis, you submit that data directly into fields on EHBs, it is paperless as is everything in EHBs. But there are times when you might find some of the questions or the field confusing, you might have some questions about that so we have one of our SF-425 experts next to walk through some of the features of the FFR. (Kelly) do you want to take it away?

(Kelly): Sure. Thank you Chris. And thank you all who are joining us today. The Federal Financial Report is an essential part of most federal grants; so I'm happy to provide an overview of the report, discuss the importance and purpose of the report and to communicate some resources available to you when you're completing the report.

The Federal Financial Report, also known as the Standard Form 425, is a government-wide form used by organizations to report their financial grant activity.

As Chris previously mentioned there is a difference between the financial reporting to HRSA and the financial reporting to the Payment Management System.

So let me take a moment to talk about the key differences between the FFR that's submitted through the EHBs and the FFR that is submitted to the Payment Management System.

The Form 425 it's broken down into basically two parts, there's a top portion and then there's a lower portion. The top portion of the form, which is questions 10A through C, is for reporting your federal cash transactions. This must be reported quarterly to the Division of Payment Management through the Payment Management System.

This quarterly report is due 30 days after the end of each quarter. Then we have the lower portion of the form which is questions 10.D. through 10.O. and that's for reporting your expenditures to HRSA. This must be submitted annually or semiannually, so that's per your Notice of Award, through the electronic handbooks.

The expenditure reporting to HRSA is what we're talking about mostly here today, and I'll be happy at the end of the call to take any questions that you have pertaining to the FRR.

The FFR submission is available in the Electronic Handbooks one day after the start of a budget period. The recipient users with approved privileges will log into the EHBs, complete and submit the FFR online. It's only the authorized official or the business official that can be responsible for financial grant reporting and they must be registered in the Electronic Handbooks as the Financial Reporting Administrator, we also call that the FRA.

Recipients report their cumulative grant expenditure amounts for each document number or for each segment of their grant. The FFR is to be submitted by the deadline specified on the Notice of Award, which is under your reporting requirements.

The EHB FFR due date has been aligned with the PMS quarterly due date but you definitely want to read your Notice of Award for the reporting requirement to identify which date you fall within.

The EHB does send an e-mail notification reminding you of the finish and requirement and that is sent 30 days before the actual date. If the FFR is not submitted by the due date you will then receive three e-mail reminders to submit before the FFR is marked as delinquent.

When recipients are not compliant with their financial reporting requirements HRSA will take an enforcement action, so you want to be very cautious and compliant of course. Those enforcement actions could include restricting your funds, we could potentially withhold the release of a non-competing continuation award, or in severe cases we will terminate an award. So it's critical that you comply with these financial reporting requirements.

The EHB does have the ability to request an extension to submit the FFR so if you're not able to comply with the due date please utilize the feature in the EHB and request an extension. That's not to be confused with requesting an extension of your grant project, that is something different that is handled through the prior approval module.

So let me just provide you with some resources for the FFR, we have lots of videos and other materials available to you. For general information about how to manage your grant with HRSA and pertaining to the Federal Financial Report you can go to our Internet Website at www.hrsa.gov and if you select Grants and then the Link Manager Grant you'll find a wealth of information there.

You can find an award management tutorial and materials from a grants management technical assistance presentation specific to the FFR. That includes audio recordings, transcripts and answers to frequently asked questions.

There is additional resources available also within the EHB's Web site including tutorials and interactive videos. Here you will find up to date information about the EHBs and the single location with topics ranging from the New User Interface, registration, user account management, applications, post award and the FFR.

From the EHBs home page if you select support in the upper right hand corner of the screen and then click on EHBs help that takes you to a knowledge base with this information.

Of course if you need live support or technical assistance the contact center is available to you, again that toll free number is (877) 464-4772 or you can e-mail them at callcenter@hrsa.gov.

If you have specific questions on how to fill out your FFR you will want to contact your Grants Management Specialist that's listed on your Notice of Grant Award.

I will leave it with that for now Chris, and of course I will be here for questions at the end of the call.

Christopher Suzich: Thank you very much (Kelly). Next we have, we're going to hear from (Melissa). She's going to talk in a somewhat related area about the FFR but specifically about the carry over request functionality related to the FFR. This is an area where, that most of you might be familiar with, there is prior approval functionality around the FFR and (Melissa)'s going to tell us a little bit more about that. (Melissa)?

(Melissa): Yes. Thank you Chris and thank you everybody for joining. One thing on the FFR if the recipient has an unobligated balance one of the questions that the FFR will ask you is if you want to do a carryover request.

The carryover request has to then be a prior approval. The FFR has to be submitted before you get the option to do the prior approval for a carryover request. I think there may have been some calls into the HRSA Contact Center with different grantees trying to request a carryover before the FFR (unintelligible) but FFR has to actually get it first.

When you're working on the prior program request for a carryover it's going to ask you for an amount to carryover. The amount has to match what's on the FFR, it should not have any commas, any special characters or any sense. In this case the system will throw an error.

One thing I wanted to mention as well about prior approvals, you would actually need to have approved privileges in order to work on prior approval request. Chris?

Christopher Suzich: Thank you (Melissa). A few months ago we, we're always making updates to EHBs trying to improve the system and make it more user friendly and improve the functionality and of course things are always changing in terms of requirements that we need to pass along to our grantee community.

One of the things that we are excited about that we added within the past I believe it was three months is a new form, it's called the SF-428 and it's a Property Equipment form and it's been added to EHBs and (Kelly)'s going to give us a little bit more detail about that Property Equipment form, the SF-428. (Kelly)?

(Kelly): Thank you Chris. As Chris just mentioned HRSA recently enhanced the Electronic Handbooks and we have automated the Tangible Personal Property Report, also called the Standard Form 428.

So when a recipient acquires equipment, which is defined as non-expendable personal property, whose original acquisition cost exceeded $5,000 or if you have residual unused supplies, which is defined as the aggregate fair market value at the time of closeout exceeding $5,000.

So if you have the equipment or the supplies under the award you must submit a final inventory that lists all of those items to HRSA, and you can now accomplish that through directly submitted the SF-428, it's a submission requirement in the Electronic Handbooks.

So this requirement is necessary only at the expiration of your grant. You may continue to use the equipment and the original project for which it was acquired or on other federal projects with a similar purpose for as long as needed.

But if you have no further need for the equipment you then have to request the physician instructions from HRSA, and again that too can be accomplished through this SF-428.

If your application has equipment line item, if your budget has the equipment that fits the category your Grants Management Specialist will put a reporting requirement on your Notice of Award informing you that you have to submit this form at the expiration of your grant, and then that will be due 90 days at the end of your grant period. Chris?

Christopher Suzich: Thank you (Kelly). Next we're going to hear about some changes that happened over the past year, you are probably familiar with as grantees the CCR system, CCR.gov is a system that you probably are familiar with and had to go to to register before you submitted your HRSA application.

I didn't talk about Grants.gov before but it's of course an important link in getting any federal grant, not just for HRSA but for any federal grant making agency, the applicants by and large come through Grants.gov. Grants.gov is not a HRSA system but we do retrieve your application for HRSA opportunities from Grants.gov on a very regular basis several times a day.

So CCR.gov has migrated and is an important part on submitting your application to via Grants.gov and (Darren)'s going to tell us a little bit more about that down.

(Darren): Hi. Thank you Chris. Thank you to the, to our stakeholders, HRSA stakeholders and possible future stakeholders out in the Pacific Basin. The Central, the CCR or the Central Contact Registry was moved on last year and it was transferred, all of the information was transferred into something that's called SAM.

SAM, before we go any further, stands for System for Award Management and that Web site if you would take it down if you don't have it is www.SAM.gov. And on that Web site it says that SAM is a federal government owned and operated free Web site that consolidates the capabilities in CCR, Fed Reg, EPLS, as well as some other systems.

SAM will be continued to be developed and there'll be some other future phases, so once you log on and once you register your organization's (done) number with SAM you will be in the queue to always receive updated information.

So as we said CCR.gov was moved and replaced by SAM and in order for you to submit a successful application, well in order for you to submit an application successfully to HRSA you must go through, as Chris said, Grants.gov and a current registration at SAM.gov is required.

Now the information in SAM.gov would include information about your organization and one of the most important tools or parts of that would be the organization or (done) number. A project director or a principal investigator can establish or has the ability to establish a backup who will provide the information or the organization with another person to access in the Electronic Handbook.

In the Electronic Handbook user accounts are disabled after 180 days and grantees would then have to contact the HRSA contact center to have their information updated. And as a very important reminder you as an awardee or as a grantee you must certify or recertify your information in SAM on a yearly basis.

As you go through the competitive awards process the information is needed in SAM and with HRSA if you are a HRSA grantee and you're going through submitting your non-competing progress report you're not going to go through Grants.gov, you'll be submitting directly through the Electronic Handbook but your CCR, or I'm sorry, your SAM information has to be updated on a yearly basis.

So it's very key that you always have a valid (done) number and if there are any changes to your organization that information has to be updated in SAM.

So I want to give you the SAM award, sorry, URL again, it's www.SAM.gov. SAM.gov is not a HRSA system nor is Grants.gov a HRSA system but those, these two sites are very important tools in the awards process for federal grant submissions. Thank you Chris.

Christopher Suzich: Thank you (Darren). And again it's hard to, for us to overemphasize the importance to our grantee community of the DUNS number as (Darren) said. The DUNS number has been around for a number of years and is increasingly important throughout the federal government, the DUNS number that you obtain and then must use in Grants.gov to successfully submit your HRSA application is then passed over to EHBs and follows your HRSA award, your grant through its life cycle.

So that DUNS number is important, maintaining it in SAM.gov is equally important. So thank you for that information (Darren).

Well we, our next topic is the resources that are available to you. We talked a little bit about the two different help desks, the EHBs Help Desk already and the Payment Management System Help Desk and how you can contact them.

We realize that there are challenges, some technological, some because of the time difference and the day difference even in some cases, so Web site documentation and access to EHBs information is perhaps even more important for you grantees on the call now than it is for even other folks.

So here to talk a little bit about what I think is a wealth of information available about EHBs and HRSA, the HRSA grants process in general is (Jillian). (Jillian)?

(Jillian): Thank you Chris. Good day everyone. (Kelly) mentioned some of the help resources that are available earlier when she was talking about the FFR but I want to just review some of the help resources that are available to you.

The first one are the EHB Help File. You can get to these files by going to the Web site help.hrsa.gov or through the support tab at the top of the EHBs page once you're logged in. Also at the bottom of the page there is a question mark icon which will take you directly to Help for the specific page that you're viewing if it's available.

I do want to mention that on the Help Web site there is a search feature that's available in the upper left hand corner of the page. As Chris mentioned we have an increasingly growing amount of information available on the Help system and it may be hard to find what you're looking for, however if you search for a topic or a key word it will bring you a list of articles that pertain specifically to that topic.

So that might be one way of helping you get answers to questions that you need, especially if it's difficult for you to reach the HRSA Contact Center.

I also want to mention that we are constantly updating the information that's available on the Help page, and as a matter of fact some of the questions that you may have tonight will end up being articles on the Help system by the end of the week so we do encourage you to check back there frequently.

Also within the EHBs help you'll have access to videos that will provide overviews of performing certain tasks like the FFR. We are also regularly adding additional videos based on the types of questions that we're getting from grantees to help meet all grantee needs.

Another resource that's available for accessing the videos is HRSATube. HRSATube is just a channel within YouTube that you can get to and it will have all of HRSAs videos available in one location.

You can get to the HRSA Tube video by going to the YouTube Web site and then searching for HRSATube, that's just one word H-R-S-A-T-U-B-E.

There are also, as (Kelly) mentioned earlier, additional resources including transcripts and audio versions of previously held technical assistance calls or Webinars available on the HRSA Web site, and those are available under the Manage Your Grant section of the HRSA Web site.

So if you go to www.HRSA.gov the third tab on the page is grants and then within that grants tab there are additional resources including how to apply, the Manage Your Grant section is where we'll have transcripts of previously held technical assistance presentations and tutorials for managing your HRSA grant.

And I think that covers the help resources that are available at this point, but again we are constantly adding things, making sure that questions that come up frequently are added there and made available to you, especially if it's difficult to reach the HRSA Contact Center.

Christopher Suzich: Thank you (Jillian).

As (Jillian) mentioned there is more and more lately a push towards videos so I think you'll find as you start to look around on the grants, the HRSA grants information portals that (Jillian) mentions more and more videos and you can see that we're trying to take advantage of the YouTube opportunity there also by putting some information on videos and the video format, recognizing that sometimes it's easier for our grantee community to sit through a short video than it is to read a multi-page document, instructional document.

Our next topic has to do with prior approval functionality in EHBs, I think we touched on this briefly before but (Melissa) is going to tell us a little bit more about it. (Melissa)?

(Melissa): Yes. Thank you. Okay. Very briefly about prior approval shortly after the FFR discussion I just wanted to mention again that anyone that wants to work on the prior approval should have the necessary privileges to (unintelligible).

Just a little navigational instructions, the way you would request a prior approval is after you've logged into the EHBs you would click on the (unintelligible) tab and then you would click on the grant folder link from which you'd want to, for the grant that you want to request prior approval on and the middle of the screen should see a link that requests prior approval.

You would also see a link if you had any existing (unintelligible). Some of the reasons you want to request prior approval (unintelligible) supplement if any (unintelligible) restriction (unintelligible) funds as I mentioned briefly (unintelligible). An extension (unintelligible) this is not (unintelligible) extension of an actual solution (unintelligible) touched on (unintelligible) an extension (unintelligible) extension of an actual grant.

If there's a project director (unintelligible) request prior approval (unintelligible) that. In budgeting and then other such as (unintelligible) construction or (unintelligible). Chris?

Christopher Suzich: Thank you (Melissa). You were, we were having some problem telephone problems there so if you don't mind (Jillian) or (Kelly) I'm going to ask you to just jump in to go over those reasons that I think are important just to reiterate the reasons why a grantee might submit a Prior Approval Request. (Jillian)?

(Jillian): Yes. So reasons for a Prior Approval Request would include administrative supplements, extension to the grant project period with or without funds, a change of project director. So if the project director listed on the Notice of Award changes then you would have to submit a prior approval request to reflect that change, so a new Notice of Award will list the new Project director.

A carryover of funds from one year into the next year and I'm missing one, I don't have the list in front of me.

Christopher Suzich: Yeah I'm sorry I put you on the spot. (Kelly) do you have anything to add to that prior approval functionality?

(Kelly): Re-budgeting would be another.

Christopher Suzich: Thank you. Thank you (Jillian) and thank you (Melissa). Admiral do you or your staff have anything that you would like to add before we open it up for questions?

Kerry Paige Nesseler: No it's wonderful. Thank you all so much for the time you've spent and it's a wonderful opportunity right now for us to have some dialog and hopefully answer questions that people might have. Thank you.

Christopher Suzich: Thank you Admiral. Well as you heard we've been doing a lot of talking here but we want to make sure that we give you all an opportunity to ask any questions that you might have, particularly about, maybe it's about your specific grant or the grants process or something that you've encountered while you've been holding your HRSA grant.

So I'm going to ask (Gabrielle) to give us some instructions on how you can pose your question. (Gabrielle)?

Coordinator: Yes. At this time if anyone would like to ask a question please unmute your phone, press star 1 and record your name at the prompt that way I can introduce your question.

Again it's star 1 if you would like to ask a question and we'll just take just a moment to queue up so one moment please for our first question.

We do have a couple questions in queue, the first comes from (Linda Denorsi). Your line is know open.

(Caller): Yes. Thank you. ***[REDUCTED]*** … we have a new business official and we'd like to register them into let's say if we have new grants that have been funded with HRSA how do we go about doing the registration so that that grant with the business official links with that particular grant that has been recently awarded?

Christopher Suzich: (Jillian) do you want to...

(Jillian): Yeah.

Christopher Suzich: ...(unintelligible) that or? We're thinking a minute (Caller).

(Jillian): So linking a business official for a grant that has recently been awarded?

(Caller): Yeah. Let's say the person just recently got awarded a new HRSA grant and the business official hasn't been linked yet to register as the business official.

So how do we register that business official so that that business official is recognized as a business official for a particular HRSA grant?

(Jillian): Okay. So the first thing is that person would have to register in the EHB to create an account and then once that account is created there are steps, and the system will guide you through this process but using the DUNS number search for the organization to associate that person's account to the organization.

And at that point that's where the person would specify that their role is the business official. So once that's done...

(Caller): And do they have to go through a request on the EHB for the authorizing official to accept them in terms of registering?

(Jillian): Right. So when they register right now the way the system works is that the person can register, when they register no one approves it but they won't have access to any information until they validate that they are someone who has information that would make them a business official.

So the next step once they register or create the account, say that they're a business official is they have to add grants to their portfolio.

(Caller): Right.

(Jillian): So they log in and then click the grants tab at the top of the page.

(Caller): Okay.

(Jillian): And there's a few different options there, the second option is stating that the person should be able to access financial reports.

(Caller): Okay. So access financial reports.

(Jillian): And then that user will be asked to enter the PIN form the Payment Management System and the account ID from the Payment Management System.

(Caller): Okay. All right. From the Payment Management System. Okay.

(Jillian): Right. So instead of having to require authorizing official to give privileges...

(Caller): (Unintelligible) Payment Management System reporting the SF-272 I believe right, that's on a quarterly basis?

(Jillian): So that will give them access to the SF-425, the Federal Financial Report, which is typically an annual report. The part that you're talking about, the Federal Cash Transactions Report submitted on a quarterly basis is submitted through the Payment Management System Web site.

(Caller): Okay. So basically all we have to do is just have them register and then once they do that they create their account and then we just have to add grants to their portfolios and then when we go to the grants tab on the top of the page we just link them to have access to the financial report.

(Jillian): Right. So by clicking on the grant tab they won't see any grants in that list and then there's a button at the top of the page that says Add Grants to Portfolio. So they would click on that and that's where they say whether there's a project director or a financial reporting and the financial reporting is the option that will get access to the FFR and also lists the person as a business official throughout the EHBs.

[***REDUCTED]***

Christopher Suzich: Okay. Can we have the next question (Gabrielle)?

Coordinator: Yes. The next question comes from I believe the name was (Caller). Your line is open.

(Caller): Thank you ma'am, I just joined in the call late because I was not able to get through and thank you for calling. My number one question is when I open up my portfolio can my project officer also open up the same portfolio so that when I have question when I will be submitted reports on EHB could we view on the same portfolio so that I can let them know.

Because sometimes the, there's a technical problem that we have that enable us to submit reports but the instruction has been given over and over, we follow but it cannot go through and so my question is can they also view so that we can share the same screen and know what exactly the problem that they can advise or provide (unintelligible) for?

Woman: Unfortunately at this point the HRSA Project Officers do not have the same screen that you see. We are investigating ways to improve the ability for the Program Office and Grants Office staff to see what you're working on to help because sometimes the question is strictly a systematic question but sometimes it ties into you know the kind of information that's being submitted.

So we are looking at ways of making more information available to HRSA staff but unfortunately at this time the response would be to contact a HRSA contact center for assistance with that.

(Caller): The Call Center you mean?

Woman: Yes.

(Darren): No the Contact Center.

Christopher Suzich: I called it the Call Center before but you're right, it's the Contact Center. Unfortunately the e-mail address is callcenter@hrsa.gov.

(Caller): Yes. That's what they always said, you will dial the Call Center and they gave us the number.

Christopher Suzich: Yes.

(Caller): So contact and call number, contact and the call are the same?

Woman: Yes.

(Caller): Okay.

Woman: And sir does that, do they help you? Does the Call Center help you with your questions?

(Caller): Yes. In fact I have just submit the request and they always immediately get back to us, especially me, now that I have some delinquent reports because as you may recall the EHB just started in 2011 and there has been problem getting through (system) to last grantee meeting when we had the meeting with HRSA we share all these, at least for myself from the (unintelligible) share with them about these issues.

Because the Internet is sometimes the problem and the connectivity is sometimes the problem. As of now when we try to send in our, or submit our Grant Application we have nowhere to submit from the (unintelligible) we have to go outside and go to another Web site in order to send it.

So that is our problem we can find out, but my main concern now is when I needed help on reports that are due but I cannot submit, and I will continue to be penalized or the government will continue to penalize because of not following their guideline and the deadline, but in case of that problem when I have no control over that's why I'm asking these questions because I want to be lifted out of this and I work day and night in order to finish these reports that have been overdue because of Internet problem that kept us unable to go through.

And but fortunately just this week we are able to find out why our some of these problem, which I hope that could have been addressed before and so now we're able to go through some of this problem and able to submit some of these reports.

I would suggest during these calls that since there was no training ever conducted through the Pacific Islands if I'm understanding the Pacific Island call that we be trained on and using new technology of the electronic reports and be familiarized before we are asking to otherwise we will continue to face the problem. Thank you very much.

Christopher Suzich: Thank you sir. We are aware that there are certain challenges that everybody in the Pacific Basin faces and we're constantly doing our best to improve things, so we appreciate your feedback. I did also want to mention that because you did join the call a little bit late we are recording the call so the operator will give us some instructions on how everybody can access a recording of the call probably in a few minutes.

(Caller): My last question, not a question rather but an information. As for the (unintelligible) states we are unable to use the toll free numbers but it's okay because we have given grant money to be used for communication so we can do that.

So in case if there is another number that is not a toll free number that we can call for these kind of call please let us know because my late in joining the call because I've been calling, calling and (unintelligible) all the two lines that they provided the 1-800 number and the other one were all busy and finally this person (Maria) keep communicating and e-mailing and telling me that they will be trying and trying.

So it will be really helpful for at least for the (unintelligible) states to be able to join on a timely manner on these important call that an option of other number be provided so that we can call. Thank you very much.

Christopher Suzich: Thank you sir. We're glad that you could join the call and we were able to provide a toll free number, a toll number and there's also the capability for our operator to contact phone numbers directly to join the call, which is I think how you joined so we're trying to make all of the, avail ourselves of all of the opportunities to reach out to the folks in the Pacific Basin. Maria or Admiral did you want to add anything to that?

Maria Benke: No Chris. I just wanted to thank Mr. (unintelligible) for his persistence with and patience with us as we tried to patch him through.

Christopher Suzich: Thank you Maria. (Gabrielle) maybe this is a good time to give the instructions for anybody on the call that would like to hear the recording when we're all done and maybe pass that information along to some of their colleagues that couldn't be on the call now?

Coordinator: Yeah. Of course. After the call if you want to listen to a replay of this conference you have a couple different phone numbers you can dial. There is a toll free U.S. number if you dial 1-888-566-0435 that will take you to a recording of the conference.

There is also a U.S. toll number if the toll free does not work for you that is (402) 998-0605. So again if you dial either of those numbers it will take you to a replay of this conference that you can listen to.

Christopher Suzich: Thank you. That's helpful, and I think we also will make a transcript available, is that right (Gabrielle)?

Coordinator: Yes. That is correct.

Christopher Suzich: So within a few days we will be posting a transcript of this call on the HRSA.gov Web site so look for that if that helps out folks too.

Coordinator: And just one other thing, with that replay you want to wait at least one hour after this call ends to dial to listen to the replay.

Christopher Suzich: Thank you (Gabrielle). I think those are some great opportunities for our Pacific Basin community to access the information from the call that we're on right now through the recording or through the transcript process.

Coordinator: And we do have two more questions in queue if you would like to take those now?

Christopher Suzich: Yes please.

Coordinator: Okay. The next one comes from (Caller). Your line is now open.

(Caller): Good evening Chris and everyone. Thank you for the opportunity for this technical assistance. Can you hear me?

Christopher Suzich: Yeah. Thank you.

(Caller): Okay. I just have a couple of, one question and suggestions for improving the EHB.

Christopher Suzich: Okay. Go ahead.

(Caller): So my first question is regarding to performance progress reports on EHB at times we submit the performance reports but it doesn't actually get cleared on your EHB screen so I was wondering if we can at least take a look into that and so it doesn't show on our incomplete or task on EHB access?

Christopher Suzich: Ma'am you mean the status doesn't change after you make a submission on the EHBs for a certain report?

(Caller): Yes. For example we submitted and there is a change order we would submit it again, the project officer would advise us to just e-mail it so that they can help post it on EHB, for some reason it doesn't get posted although we do meet the reporting requirement and it's cleared but it continues to stay on the EHB task list.

Woman: (Unintelligible).

Woman: So one thing that you'll want to be careful about moving forward is, I know it might be easier to communicate with Project Officers by e-mail but the change won't be reflected, they can't clear it unless it's submitted to the EHBs, so if something isn't back as a change request you would want to also resubmit that through the system.

(Caller): Yes I've done that and I've also raised the same issue with my Project Officer so she is aware of it, I was just wanting to also document it on this call as one of the EHB issues that I'm facing here in Palau.

Christopher Suzich: Thank you for that. I guess I just reiterate that the system is integrated to the point where if when a user feels the need to go outside the system to make a submission for a report of some kind it is extremely difficult then to get that information reflected in EHBs.

So I know sometimes it requires a lot of persistence perhaps to get a report filed in EHBs and you're tempted to reach out to your project officers directly to not be considered delinquent in your submission date but it's important to continue to try to submit that through EHBs because then EHBs will recognize the submission and you won't be caught in this sort of loop where you're getting e-mail reminders about a late submission when maybe you submitted it through e-mail to your Project Officer.

(Caller): Okay. And I'll continue to make a note on that until we see it clear so for the next concern is regarding prior approval request, my request is consideration to the time difference as I've made a couple of prior approval requests, which were granted, except the deadline is always in conflict with the time difference and so by the time I get the notice I've already missed the deadline.

Woman: (Unintelligible).

Christopher Suzich: Do you have, would the grant number help us?

Woman: Yeah. I mean the prior approval request or something that are initiated by the grantees and do not have a deadline as far as the system goes do you have a grant number or a specific example of a submission that we could maybe look up?

Woman: (Unintelligible).

(Caller): For example the, like if I made a request for a prior approval extension without cost or I needed to submit a revised budget and I was given an extension let's say in two days I should've been submitting that but by the time I get the notice from EHB and also on the e-mail that my prior approval was granted because of the time difference I've missed the opportunity to submit any documents that I have request prior approval for and so this is just a note for the HRSA and the EHB help to take consideration into the time difference on when the notices are sent out to the Pacific, especially in Palau and in the return time.

Christopher Suzich: Okay. Thank you for that.

(Caller): Thank you. And then one more. I love EHB, it's very friendly but I just think that there are some ways that would help improve for example with this new EHB size on the task phase you'll get a list of all your pending reports, activities and they only show you a tracking number and date that are they're due but not a full description of what it is and I was wondering if that is something that can be incorporated into the path phase on the EHB?

Woman: Yes that is something that we are working on including. One other thing that you can do, I know that it is an extra click but when you're on the task tab on the left side menu there is a submissions link and if you click on that it will show all of the submissions including the detailed description or the name of the submission.

So you can use that submissions link while we're working on figuring out a way of including the submission name on the tasks tab.

Christopher Suzich: Caller did you hear that?

(Caller): (Unintelligible).

Christopher Suzich: I'm sorry caller, you're breaking up. If you'd like to try to dial in again that would be fine, we're going to go to the next question please.

[***REDUCTED]***

Christopher Suzich: Do we have anything else in the queue?

Coordinator: Yes. We did have one more question again from (Caller). Your line's now open.

Christopher Suzich: Okay.

(Caller): Okay. Thank you again. I'm sorry to ask a lot of questions. I'm already on the Electronic Handbook and I just am walking through the system and I followed your instructions going to organizations and then I choose my organization with my DUNS number.

When I get there it connects me through and I go down and I look at the area where it says grants and I follow it to at grant to portfolio like you said, I went in there and then I see my two grants and I also see this screen that has the grant number, the organization name all blank on the top.

Do I touch any of that if I'm going to like the grant that I want to link with the business official because the business official would be the same for both grants, so would I just not put anything on the blank screen here on the top where it says grant number and organization name and I just go to the add grant to portfolio on the top?

Woman: So when you select add grant to portfolio it should bring up three options...

(Caller): So I don't need to put anything in that box that's blank up there right? I just leave it alone and just go straight to the grants?

Woman: Right.

(Caller): Add grants to portfolio.

Woman: Yes.

(Caller): And I get there and then I see the registrants financial reporting administrator.

Woman: Yes.

(Caller): So that's all I do then and I click that and then that should connect it with a PIN right?

Woman: Right.

(Caller): Okay. So I don't need to do anything when I see my other grants there on the screen on the, there's like a blank on the top you know?

Woman: Yeah that's I think just meant to help you filter if you had a very long list of grants.

(Caller): Oh okay. So I just leave that alone, but would this automatically have my business official registered for all the grants that I have on my screen or do I have to do each one individually?

Woman: For the financial reporting administrator role, that role for the business official it will automatically add all of the grants for the organization that it's tied to the PIN and the account number.

(Caller): Okay. So I don't have to do that individually?

Woman: Right.

(Caller): Okay. Thank you.

Coordinator: All right. I do show we have no further questions.

Christopher Suzich: Can you give the instructions again (Gabrielle) for asking a question?

Coordinator: Oh yes of course. So again at this time if you would like to ask a question please unmute your phone, press star 1 and record your name clearly at the prompt so I can introduce your question. And again those do take just a minute to queue up so one moment please for our first question.

It looks like we have no further questions.

Christopher Suzich: Thank you (Gabrielle). Well at this time I'd like to turn it back over to Rear Admiral Nesseler who I think is going to introduce Mr. Michael Epp. Rear Admiral?

Kerry Paige Nesseler: Thank you. I'm turning the phone over to Commander Maria Benke.

Maria Benke: Thanks Ma'am, thanks Chris. Well we have invited Mr. Michael Epp from, he's an Executive Director of the Pacific Island Health Officer Association and PIHOA is able to provide assistance that HRSA cannot to Pacific grantees and he is thankfully on the line to speak with us about that. Michael?

Michael Epp: Thank you very much. Can everyone hear me?

Woman: Yes.

Woman: Yes.

Michael Epp: Okay. Great. First I want to thank HRSA and the folks at EHB for doing this, they reached out to me and indicate that they wanted to do something specific to the jurisdictions and I think this is one of the few times that the first times the federal agencies have developed the capacity to call out to the freely associated states and so I really want t commend Maria and Rear Admiral Nesseler and her friends at EHB for doing this, this is a very good step.

Maria asked me to talk briefly on what type of support we can provide in terms of grant writing and technical assistance, and it essentially falls into three areas. If there's a critical mass of folks in the jurisdictions who are interested in a particular new granting opportunity we have in the past brought together two or three or as many as six jurisdictions and facilitated technical assistance calls between the funding source and the site.

So for example for the expanded Emergency Medical Service for Children grant we sort of co-facilitated several technical assistance calls with HRSA offered to sort of review grants and really did a lot of follow-up to sort of track people's progress and see if they have any questions.

So if there's a new particular HRSA granting opportunity that you're interested in notify us, what we'll try to do is see how many other jurisdictions we can get sort of on board with it, even if it's just one site we might be able to be in a position to provide you with support.

At this point we sort of cycled through three different granting opportunities and sort of the extra help you might call it with the jurisdictions has been very, very helpful I think from everyone's perspective. So that's the first activity we can sort of help with technical assistance calls as the liaison, we can provide grant review and we can also sort of help you find contract grant writers and particular consultants that may be able to speak to the technical requirements of that grant that you're working on.

Secondly we can provide emergency technical assistance if you're having problems with either Grants.gov or EHB. And by that I mean we can be a liaison. As our friends in the FSM pointed out these 877 or 800 and toll free numbers really don't work for the freely associated states and in some cases they don't work in the territories.

When you have an hour or two left to submit a grant, and I know that despite the best of all circumstances most of us probably go up to a pretty tight deadline in submitting these grants, and as you reach a certain point where you are unable to get through to Grants.gov because you don't have access to a toll line or for whatever reason, I've gotten calls very late at night before and at odd hours and we've really tried to broker the relationship to track down Grants.gov or EHB and to see whether we can be of any assistance with it.

So that's sort of an, I'm going to actually put out my cell phone number and see if this doesn't end up with lots and lots of calls, if it does we're going to have to probably relegate it to someone else on staff, but my cell number's (808) 382-1231. It's (808) 382-1231.

If you find yourself in the last hours of trying to submit a grant through EHB or Grants.gov and you can't get through to technical assistance give us a call and we'll see if we can patch you through. I can actually conference you from Hawaii calling the 800 number myself and then calling out to your site and we've done that before for other sites.

In addition, and probably our EHB friends should plug their ears on this one, if you find that you're having serious connectivity problems sometimes I know in the freely associated states the Internet service is intermittent and the sustained amount of time that it takes to be online and to submit something through Grants.gov or EHB can be a barrier to submission.

If you're able to at least get something through to e-mail, and you let us know what the pass code is we can submit it for you on our end, and this is only on kind of an emergency situation, I realize the sharing of pass codes is not encouraged by EHB, but sometimes the connectivity issues are such that it's probably the best approach.

Lastly we can provide actual direct grant writing assistance if it's a Community Health Center grant that's a particular mandate that we have and we've actually supported the jurisdictions in writing or helping to write particular grants. We do hope to expand our technical assistance in the future in this area.

We have a concept proposal right now that we've completed that would include a kind of a regional resource center where we would have someone on staff who would track both the government and private funding sources, and be just very forward in understanding what are the needs in the jurisdictions, who the contacts are letting them know and providing them with sort of much more intensive technical assistance from grant development.

We're talking about doing a grant writer community practice that's trying to identify the folks in the jurisdictions who are particularly good at grant writing and having them share their expertise with their colleagues who are not as advanced.

We're also at this point looking at developing a curriculum within the community college system for project management. Project management is kind of, there are generic and core skills involved in project management and the various degree programs that are out there that are health related many of them lack some of the sort of the core competencies that might help folks who end up in the health field working with HRSA, working with Department of

Interior, working with CDC and just ensuring that the have some of those, have essential capacities to do project management.

Also at this point we're looking at individual competency standards and project management and departmental standards, what type of infrastructure do you need within a particular department or program within a health department to ensure that you are well situated to do effective project management.

So those are things further down the pike that we hope to bring online but in the meantime there is some assistance we can provide as I had just described.

If I could just pause for a minute also and just make a comment too, if our friends at the HRSA contact center, and I believe there was one other phone number that was given out, if there is something that's not an 877 or 800 number that can be shared regularly with the freely associated states so that they can call in when they have problems with Grants.gov and they have problems with EHB that would be really a tremendous help and then I might get fewer calls late at night where I simply have to conference in the 800 numbers for Grants.gov or EHG and the site that's calling me.

I'd be happy to entertain any questions but that's pretty much all I have to contribute. Thank you.

Christopher Suzich: (Gabrielle) could you give the instructions again for questions?

Coordinator: Yes of course. So again at this time if anyone would like to ask a question please unmute your phone, press star 1 and record your name clearly at the prompt that way I may introduce your question. Again star 1 to ask a question and one moment to see if we do have any questions.

Christopher Suzich: While we're waiting I thank you Michael for those comments. I will certainly raise the possibility of a toll number for the Contact Center, maybe that's something that we would be able to put together here. I guess in the meantime I would just reiterate the e-mail address that we mentioned earlier, even though I realize that's not as good as having a live person on the other end.

Michael Epp: Yeah I think the, I'm thinking specifically of those last hours I think a lot of grants have gone down in flames in the jurisdictions because of these types of communications glitches that if they were in the states they'd be able to get a live person and get technical assistance on.

So for any 877 number that you gave us today if it would be possible to have an equivalent toll number that would be great. The other alternative too, and I don't know whether this is something that HRSA provides, if there's a live chat service either through Facebook or through the HRSA Web site where you know when you logon you can get a live person to help you that would be another way to do it and that would certainly cut down on costs, phone calls from the jurisdictions could be as much as a dollar or two per minute so.

Christopher Suzich: Thank you for that feedback.

Michael Epp: Sure.

Christopher Suzich: Do we have any questions (Gabrielle)?

Coordinator: I do show we do have no questions at this time.

Christopher Suzich: From my colleagues did anything come to mind that you wanted to reiterate or mention as we've been addressing those different topics, (Kelly) or (Melissa) or (Helen) or (Darren)?

(Darren): No. I will follow-up with Michael in regards to some possible discussions with HRSA grants policy and late minute Grants.gov issues, I can follow-up with him next week.

Christopher Suzich: Thank you (Darren). Any of my other colleagues have anything that they'd like to add?

Woman: Chris, we have one additional follow-up with Karen Cruz on the prior approval and we can decide who's going to communicate back with her.

Christopher Suzich: Yeah. I figure we can touch base tomorrow on that.

Woman: That's fine.

Christopher Suzich: Maria or Admiral would you like to add anything?

Kerry Paige Nesseler: I just want to reiterate thanks so much to all of our partners in the Pacific and we really do hope that this call has been useful. We'd love to hear your feedback on how we can improve for next time. We do plan on doing this again on some other topics so please let us know what topics you would like to have a technical assistance call on.

And thanks so much to Chris, you and your staff, it was excellent. I think folks had a chance to learn a lot and have an open dialog about some of their specific issues. And, thanks again so much to my staff for helping coordinate and organize this call. And, Michael we appreciate your time and assistance.

So thanks Chris and I will turn it over. Please email your suggestions for future conference calls to LCDR Alexis Beyer at abeyer@hrsa.gov. Thank you Chris. Maria or Alexis any comments? Thank you.

Christopher Suzich: And as you get those any feedback Maria feel free to contact me and we can discuss anything. (Gabrielle) do we have any questions?

Coordinator: Nope. I show we have no further questions.

Christopher Suzich: Well I'd like to thank all my colleagues for taking time out of their evening again to participate in the call and Admiral your staff it's been a pleasure working with you and I'm sure we'll work together again on similar TA calls.

(Gabrielle) could you give one more time the recording information for folks?

Coordinator: Yes of course. So again if you would like to listen to a replay of this conference call after one hour after this call is over you can dial U.S. toll free number 1-888-566-0435 or U.S. toll number (402) 998-0605 to hear a replay of this full conference.

Christopher Suzich: Thank you (Gabrielle) for all your help and thank you everybody for joining again. (Gabrielle) can you put us in post conference?

Coordinator: Yes of course. One moment. And that concludes today's conference. Thank you very much for your participation, you may disconnect at this time.

END