

Student Guide

Procuring GSA Approved Containers Short

Introduction

Welcome to the Procuring GSA Approved Containers Short.

The Information Security Oversight Office (ISOO) has issued standards security equipment must meet in order to store classified information. 32 CFR 2001.42 states that whenever new secure storage equipment is procured, it must meet the standards and specifications established by the General Services Administration (GSA).

While there are many containers out there, you simply cannot store classified information in non-GSA approved security containers. So how do you go about procuring the right GSA approved container for your facility? Let's look at two different approaches to procuring a GSA approved container.

Procuring a New Container: Procedures

Chris and Paul have worked together over the years on classified projects and have become close colleagues. They are both in charge of ensuring their teams are up-to-date on all security measures.

It so happens that at the moment, both Chris and Paul are looking to acquire another security container for classified storage in their offices.

Chris: Hello this is Chris.

Paul: Hey Chris, it's Paul.

Chris: Oh hey, what's up?

Paul: My group needs another container. I thought you guys were getting one soon. Where are you looking? I'm not sure what I'm looking for.

Chris: No problem. Here, I'll send you an email.

I used the Federal Qualified Products List, you know, GSA QPL, to figure out which container I needed. You can only get them from certain approved vendors on the QPL. I'll attach their info.

Paul: So you're buying a new one?

Chris: Yeah it's in the budget right now so might as well.

Procedure for obtaining a new GSA approved container:

- Identify container on GSA QPL
- Select from one of the vendors specified for your container requirements
 - Alpha Safe and Vault, Inc.
 - Will-Burt
 - Hamilton Products Group
 - Millennium Metals, Inc.
 - Trusted Systems

Procuring a Used Container: Dos and Don'ts

Paul: OK, I got your email and I'm looking at it now.

I think I know what kind of container I need. But my budget for this is really tight. Is there any way I can get something, I don't know... used?

Chris: You might find something. Containers can be repaired and recertified and still be considered GSA approved. The problem you run into is if something happened to the container. The ISOO notice we got a while back, 2012-04, is pretty specific. BUT... containers that store classified information cannot be reconditioned, refurbished, remanufactured, or obtained outside of the GSA procurement process.

Procuring a Used Container: What to Look Out For

Paul: Yeah, I know, I need to be careful about buying used, I have a copy of the ISOO notice right here. But, I just did a web search and I think I may be onto something. I found a post for a repaired container.

Hey, there's even a picture. It's a little blurry, but I can see the certification label and everything. That's good right?

Chris: I don't know, man. You really have to be careful.

Even if you're trying to save money, finding one of these things "used" and still GSA approved is still expensive. And you really need to verify that it hasn't been remanufactured. I've seen some of these non-GSA approved containers. You can spot some of them really easily because they'll have mismatched handles or they're missing a certification label.

Paul: (Paul sighs audibly)

Chris: But you can get containers recertified.

Paul: OK, but how?

Chris: Well, you have to verify certification and recertification label with the inspectors. Call the specific inspection school for your container and get it re-inspected. They keep records on purchase and inspections. During an inspection they can figure out if it still meets GSA requirements for security or if it can be repaired and pass another inspection.

Sometimes you'll find fake labels. And sometimes the certification has been revoked and you need to check the inspector's report. Look out for damage or signs that the container was repaired. That could mean the repairs needed were more extreme and may count as refurbishment. Something like holes from drilling or any welding marks on a container permanently void its approval. Repairs need to happen according to the government standards.

Paul: Right, The Federal Standards for Neutralization and Repair of GSA Approved Containers and Vault Doors.

Okay, thanks. I think I know what I'm looking for now. And I think I know what to look out for. I'll keep you posted.

Procuring a Used Container: Procedures

Chris: Hello, this is Chris.

Paul: Hey man, it's Paul. I've got some good news.

Chris: Really? What's up?

Paul: Okay, so remember how I needed another container?

Well, I found an even better deal. Another agency was looking to offload one of their containers. I called and got the certification label information.

Chris: Was it Lockmaster Security Institute or MBA USA? Those are two schools that train inspectors to recertify GSA approved containers. If the label starts with "MBA" you call MBA USA and if it...

Paul: Oh, it started with "LM," so it was Lockmaster Security Institute. They verified it was the re-certification labels. I went over to that office and took a look myself. It definitely had not been refurbished, remanufactured, or reconditioned. It looked almost brand new.

Chris: Seriously? That's a great find.

Paul: I know, I've got it in our office now and I'm having it inspected this week by a certified inspector, just to be sure.

Chris: Well, congratulations!

Paul: Thanks. And thanks for the help walking me through it.

Chris: No problem. Anytime.

Conclusion

You have seen two approaches to procuring GSA approved containers. For a detailed list of vendors and a printable reminder of how to procure new and used containers, see the Job Aid at the end of this Student Guide.

Knowledge Check

Is the container described below GSA approved or not? Check your answers in the Answer Key at the end of this Knowledge Check.

(1 of 4)

John finds a container on the QPL and will purchase it from one of the approved vendors.

Select the best response.

- GSA approved
- Not GSA approved

(2 of 4)

A friend of Julie has an extra container. He had to replace two of the drawers. The recertification label is missing. He has not had it re-inspected.

Select the best response.

- GSA approved
- Not GSA approved

(3 of 4)

Jack is looking for a used container and finds one that has been refurbished after its first contract.

Select the best response.

- GSA approved
- Not GSA approved

(4 of 4)

Jaime finds a used container that has been repaired and has a valid recertification label.

Select the best response.

- GSA approved
- Not GSA approved

Answer Key – Knowledge Check

Is the container described GSA approved or not?

(1 of 4)

John finds a container on the QPL and will purchase it from one of the approved vendors.

Select the best response.

- GSA approved
- Not GSA approved

Feedback: *GSA has specified approved vendors from whom to acquire a new GSA approved container.*

(2 of 4)

A friend of Julie has an extra container. He had to replace two of the drawers. The recertification label is missing. He has not had it re-inspected.

Select the best response.

- GSA approved
- Not GSA approved

Feedback: *Julie's container is currently not GSA approved. If the repairs were carried out by a certified individual and the container is re-inspected, it might be GSA approved.*

(3 of 4)

Jack is looking for a used container and finds one that has been refurbished after its first contract.

Select the best response.

- GSA approved
- Not GSA approved

Feedback: *Jack's container is not GSA approved according to ISOO Notice 2012–04. Containers storing classified information cannot be refurbished.*

(4 of 4)

Jaime finds a used container that has been repaired and has a valid recertification label.

Select the best response.

- GSA approved
- Not GSA approved

Feedback: Jaime's container is GSA approved. Don't forget to verify the repairs and the recertification!

Job Aid

Procuring GSA Approved Containers Short

Procuring a new container

Before you buy:

1. Identify the type of container you need from the GSA Qualified Products List.
https://portal.navfac.navy.mil/portal/page/portal/navfac/navfac_ww_pp/navfac_nf_esc_pp/locks/dodlock_fedspecs
2. Identify the GSA approved vendor from whom you would like to purchase.

Approved Vendors:

Alpha Safe and Vault, Inc.

Contact Government Sales: (866) 353-7233 www.alphasafeinc.com

Will-Burt

Contact Government Sales: (330) 684-4000 www.willburt.com

Hamilton Products Group

Contact Government Sales: (800) 876-6066 x19
www.hamiltonproductsgroup.com

Millennium Metals, Inc.

Contact Sales at (877) 510-3799 www.millenniummetalsinc.com

Trusted Systems

Contact Government Sales: (410) 647-0762 www.trustedsys.com

Procuring a used container

Before you buy:

1. Verify original or replacement GSA certification labels on GSA approved security containers by contacting one of two GSA-approved certifying schools who issue the recertification labels to persons authorized to repair GSA approved security containers.

For labels beginning with “LM” - Lockmasters Security Institute

Phone: (866) 574-8724 (Toll Free), (859) 887-9633

For labels beginning with “MBA” - MBA USA, Inc.

Phone: (859) 887-0496

2. Make sure there are no signs of refurbishment, reconditioning, or remanufacture.
3. Best practice: always have the container inspected to ensure it meets requirements.

References

- 32 CFR Parts 2001 and 2003, Classified National Security Information
<http://www.archives.gov/isoo/policy-documents/isoo-implementing-directive.pdf>
- Notice 2012-04: Additional Guidance on Standards for Security Equipment
<http://www.archives.gov/isoo/notices/notice-2012-04.pdf>
- DoD Manual 5200.01, Volume 3, February 24, 2012, Incorporating Change 1, March 21, 2012
http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/520001_vol3.pdf
- Federal Standard, Neutralization and Repair Of GSA Approved Containers, FED-STD-809A, May 10, 2005
https://portal.navy.mil/portal/page/portal/NAVFAC/NAVFAC_WW_PP/NAVFAC_NFESC_PP/LOCKS/PDF_FILES/FEDSTD-809.pdf
- National Industrial Security Program Operating Manual (NISPOM), DoD. 5220.22-M
<http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/522022m.pdf>