18. **Required Use of American Iron, Steel, Manufactured Products, and Construction Materials**

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (which includes the Build America, Buy America Act (BABA) at sections 70901-27), requires that, on or after May 14, 2022, none of the funds under a federal award that are part of Federal financial assistance program for infrastructure may be obligated for a project unless all of the iron, steel, manufactured products, and construction materials used in the project are produced in the United States, unless subject to an approved waiver. 177 Pub. L. No. 58 § 70914(a) (2021). The BABA's requirements must be included in all subawards, including all contracts and purchase orders for work or products under a Federal financial assistance program for infrastructure. 2 C.F.R. § 200.101(b)(2).

Buy America Preference. Recipients of an award of Federal financial assistance from a program for infrastructure are hereby notified that none of the funds provided under this award may be used for an infrastructure project unless:

(1) All iron and steel used in the project are produced in the United States—this means all manufacturing processes, from the initial melting stage through the application of coatings, occurred in the United States.

(2) All manufactured products used in the project are produced in the United States— this means the manufactured product was manufactured in the United States; and the cost of the components of the manufactured product that are mined, produced, or manufactured in the United States is greater than 55 percent of the total cost of all components of the manufactured product, unless another standard that meets or exceeds this standard has been established under applicable law or regulation for determining the minimum amount of domestic content of the manufactured product; and

(3) All construction materials are manufactured in the United States—this means that all manufacturing processes for the construction material occurred in the United States. The construction material standards are listed below.

Incorporation into an infrastructure project. The Buy America Preference only applies to articles, materials, and supplies that are consumed in, incorporated into, or affixed to an infrastructure project. As such, it does not apply to tools, equipment, and supplies, such as temporary scaffolding, brought to the construction site and removed at or before the completion of the infrastructure project. Nor does a Buy America Preference apply to equipment and furnishings, such as movable chairs, desks, and portable computer equipment, that are used at or within the finished infrastructure project but are not an integral part of the structure or permanently affixed to the infrastructure project.

Categorization of articles, materials, and supplies. An article, material, or supply should only be classified into one of the following categories: (i) Iron or steel products; (ii) Manufactured products; (iii) Construction materials; or (iv) Section 70917(c) materials. An article, material, or supply should not be considered to fall into multiple categories. In some cases, an article, material, or supply may not fall under any of the categories listed in this paragraph. The classification of an article, material, or supply as falling into one of the categories listed in this paragraph must be made based on its status at the time it is brought to the work site for incorporation into an infrastructure project. In general, the work site is the location of the infrastructure project at which the iron, steel, manufactured products, and construction materials will be incorporated.

Application of the Buy America Preference by category. An article, material, or supply incorporated into an infrastructure project must meet the Buy America Preference for only the single category in which it is classified.

Determining the cost of components for manufactured products. In determining whether the cost of components for manufactured products is greater than 55 percent of the total cost of all components, use the following instructions:

(a) For components purchased by the manufacturer, the acquisition cost, including transportation costs to the place of incorporation into the manufactured product (whether such costs are paid to a domestic firm), and any applicable duty (whether a duty-free entry certificate is issued); or

(b) For components manufactured by the manufacturer, all costs associated with the manufacture of the component, including transportation costs as described in paragraph (a), plus allocable overhead costs, but excluding profit. Cost of components does not include any costs associated with the manufacture of the manufactured product.

Construction material standards. The Buy America Preference applies to the following construction materials incorporated into infrastructure projects. Each construction material is followed by a standard for the material to be considered "produced in the United States." Except as specifically provided, only a single standard should be applied to a single construction material.

(1) Non-ferrous metals. All manufacturing processes, from initial smelting or melting through final shaping, coating, and assembly, occurred in the United States.

(2) Plastic and polymer-based products. All manufacturing processes, from initial combination of constituent plastic or polymer-based inputs, or, where applicable, constituent composite materials, until the item is in its final form, occurred in the United States.

(3) Glass. All manufacturing processes, from initial batching and melting of raw materials through annealing, cooling, and cutting, occurred in the United States.

(4) Fiber optic cable (including drop cable). All manufacturing processes, from the initial ribboning (if applicable), through buffering, fiber stranding and jacketing, occurred in the United States. All manufacturing processes also include the standards for glass and optical fiber, but not for non-ferrous metals, plastic and polymer-based products, or any others.

(5) Optical fiber. All manufacturing processes, from the initial preform fabrication stage through the completion of the draw, occurred in the United States.

(6) Lumber. All manufacturing processes, from initial debarking through treatment and planning, occurred in the United States.

(7) Drywall. All manufacturing processes, from initial blending of mined or synthetic gypsum plaster and additives through cutting and drying of sandwiched panels, occurred in the United States.

(8) Engineered wood. All manufacturing processes from the initial combination of constituent materials until the wood product is in its final form, occurred in the United States.

Waivers

When necessary, recipients may apply for, and the agency may grant, a waiver from these requirements. The agency should notify the recipient for information on the process for requesting a waiver from these requirements.

When the Federal agency has decided that one of the following exceptions applies, the awarding official may waive the application of the Buy America Preference in any case in which the agency determines that:

(1) applying the Buy America Preference would be inconsistent with the public interest.

(2) the types of iron, steel, manufactured products, or construction materials are not produced in the United States in sufficient and reasonably available quantities or of a satisfactory quality; or

(3) the inclusion of iron, steel, manufactured products, or construction materials produced in the United States will increase the cost of the overall project by more than 25 percent.

A request to waive the application of the Buy America Preference must be in writing.
The agency will provide instructions on the format, contents, and supporting materials required for any waiver request. Waiver requests are subject to public comment periods of no less than 15 days and must be reviewed by the Made in America Office.

There may be instances where an award qualifies, in whole or in part, for an existing waiver described at www.doi.gov/grants/BuyAmerica/GeneralApplicabilityWaivers. If the specific financial assistance agreement,

infrastructure project, or non-domestic materials meets the criteria of an existing general applicability waiver within the limitations defined within the waiver, the recipient is not required to request a separate waiver for non-domestic materials. If a general applicability waiver does not already apply, and a recipient believes that one of the above circumstances applies to an award, a request to waive the application of the domestic content procurement preference may be submitted to the financial assistance awarding officer in writing. Waiver requests shall include the below information. The waiver shall not include any Privacy Act information, sensitive data, or proprietary information within their waiver request Waiver requests will be posted to www.doi.gov/grants/buyamerica and are subject to public comment periods of no less than 15 days. Waiver requests will also be reviewed by the Made in America Office.

1. Type of waiver requested (non-availability, unreasonable cost, or public interest).
2. Requesting entity and Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) submitting the request.
3. Department of Interior Bureau or Office who issued the award.
4. Federal financial assistance listing name and number (reference block 2 on DOI Notice of Award)
5. Financial assistance title of project (reference block 8 on DOI Notice of Award).
6. Federal Award Identification Number (FAIN).
7. Federal funding amount (reference block 11.m. on DO Notice of Award).
8. Total cost of Infrastructure expenditures (includes federal and non-federal funds to the extent known).
9. Infrastructure project description(s) and location(s) (to the extent known).
10. List of iron or steel item(s), manufactured goods, and construction material(s) the recipient seeks to waive from Buy America requirements. Include the name, cost, countries of origin (if known), and relevant PSC or NAICS code for each.
11. A certification that the recipient made a good faith effort to solicit bids for domestic products supported by terms included in requests for proposals, contracts, and nonproprietary communications with the prime contractor.
12. A statement of waiver justification, including a description of efforts made (e.g., market research, industry outreach) by the recipient, to avoid the need for a waiver. Such a justification may cite, if applicable, the absence of any Buy America-compliant bids received in response to a solicitation.
13. Anticipated impact if no waiver is issued.

DOI-Specific Buy America Preference General Applicability Waivers

1. GENERAL APPLICABILITY WAIVER FOR SMALL GRANTS
On February 21, 2023, DOI approved a general applicability waiver of the requirements of the Buy America preference for small grants, having determined such waiver to be in the public interest. This waiver is critical to ensure that agency small infrastructure projects conducted through small grants sustain progress and reduce the burden on recipients, many of whom are small organizations operating in rural or disadvantaged communities. The waiver will remain in effect for all eligible DOI Federal grants for a period of five years from the date of final approval and will be reviewed as often as necessary.
This waiver action permits the use of non-domestic iron, steel, manufactured products, and construction materials in such projects that may otherwise be prohibited under section 70914(a) during the specified period for small grants that meet the following standard:
• The total award amount does not exceed the Simplified Acquisition Threshold, which is currently $250,000.00.
• The award amount is not anticipated to exceed the Simplified Acquisition Threshold for the life of the grant.
Additional information about the DOI Small Grants Waiver is available at:
https://www.doi.gov/grants/BuyAmerica/GeneralApplicabilityWaivers.

2. GENERAL APPLICABILITY WAIVER FOR DE MINIMIS PURCHASES On February 21, 2023, DOI approved a general applicability waiver of the Buy America preference requirements for “De Minimis Purchases,” having determined such waiver to be in the public interest. This waiver is critical to ensure that infrastructure project purchases below a de minimis threshold funded through financial assistance agreements sustain progress while reducing the burden on recipients. The waiver will remain in effect for all DOI Federal financial assistance infrastructure projects for a period of five years from the date of final approval and will be reviewed as often as necessary.
This waiver exempts otherwise covered infrastructure project purchases, totaling up to 5 percent of the total applicable project costs, up to a maximum of $1,000,000.00. For example, if a recipient will expend $4,000,000.00 in costs that are subject to the Buy America preference under an infrastructure project, up to $200,000.00 (5%) would be exempt from the Buy America preference. If a recipient’s applicable costs are $20,000,000.00 or greater, this waiver is capped at $1,000,000.00 total in otherwise covered project purchases. Once a Federal financial assistance recipient’s total

purchases of materials otherwise covered by the Buy America preference reach 5 percent or $1,000,000.00, whichever is lower, all other applicable project purchases must comply with the Buy America preference.
Additional information about the DOI De Minimis Purchases Waiver is available at: https://www.doi.gov/grants/BuyAmerica/GeneralApplicabilityWaivers.

3. GENERAL APPLICABILITY TRIBAL CONSULTATION WAIVER
This waives the Buy America Preference for financial assistance agreements issued to Federally recognized Indian tribes in keeping with the Federal Government's commitment to follow consultation polices established through Executive order 13175, Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments. Waiver approval date: September 1, 2023. Waiver expiration date: September 1, 2024. https://www.doi.gov/sites/doi.gov/files/doi-final-tribal-consultation-waiver-for-posting-090123.pdf
Approved waivers will be posted at www.doi.gov/grants/BuyAmerica/ApprovedWaivers. Recipients requesting a waiver will be notified of their waiver request determination by an awarding officer.
Questions pertaining to waivers should be directed to the financial assistance awarding officer.

Definitions

"Buy America Preference" means the "domestic content procurement preference" set forth in section 70914 of the Build America, Buy America Act, which requires the head of each Federal agency to ensure that none of the funds made available for a Federal award for an infrastructure project may be obligated unless all of the iron, steel, manufactured products, and construction materials incorporated into the project are produced in the United States.

"Construction materials" means articles, materials, or supplies that consist of only one of the items listed in paragraph (1) of this definition, except as provided in paragraph (2) of this definition. To the extent one of the items listed in paragraph (1) contains as inputs other items listed in paragraph (1), it is nonetheless a construction material.

(1) The listed items are:
(i) Non-ferrous metals.
(ii) Plastic and polymer-based products (including polyvinylchloride, composite building materials, and polymers used in fiber optic cables).
(iii) Glass (including optic glass).
(iv) Fiber optic cable (including drop cable).
(v) Optical fiber.
(vi) Lumber.
(vii) Engineered wood; and
(viii) Drywall.
(2) Minor additions of articles, materials, supplies, or binding agents to a construction material do not change the categorization of the construction material.

"Infrastructure" means public infrastructure projects in the United States, which includes, at a minimum, the structures, facilities, and equipment for roads, highways, and bridges; public transportation; dams, ports, harbors, and other maritime facilities; intercity passenger and freight railroads; freight and intermodal facilities; airports; water systems, including drinking water and wastewater systems; electrical transmission facilities and systems; utilities; broadband infrastructure; and buildings and real property; and structures, facilities, and equipment that generate, transport, and distribute energy including electric vehicle (EV) charging.

"Infrastructure project" means any activity related to the construction, alteration, maintenance, or repair of infrastructure in the United States regardless of whether infrastructure is the primary purpose of the project. See also paragraphs (c) and (d) of 2 CFR 184.4.

"Iron or steel products" means articles, materials, or supplies that consist wholly or predominantly of iron or steel or a combination of both.

"Manufactured products" means: (1) Articles, materials, or supplies that have been: (i) Processed into a specific form and shape; or (ii) Combined with other articles, materials, or supplies to create a product with different properties than the individual articles, materials, or supplies. (2) If an item is classified as an iron or steel product, a construction material, or a Section 70917(c) material under 2 CFR 184.4(e) and the definitions set forth in 2 CFR 184.3, then it is not a manufactured product. However, an article, material, or supply classified as a manufactured product under 2 CFR

184.4(e) and paragraph (1) of this definition may include components that are construction materials, iron or steel products, or Section 70917(c) materials.

"Predominantly of iron or steel or a combination of both" means that the cost of the iron and steel content exceeds 50 percent of the total cost of all its components. The cost of iron and steel is the cost of the iron or steel mill products (such as bar, billet, slab, wire, plate, or sheet), castings, or forgings utilized in the manufacture of the product and a good faith estimate of the cost of iron or steel components.

"Section 70917(c) materials" means cement and cementitious materials; aggregates such as stone, sand, or gravel; or aggregate binding agents or additives. See Section 70917(c) of the Build America, Buy America Act.

19. **Davis-Bacon and Related Acts/Requirements**

If applicable, all prime construction contracts in excess of $2,000 awarded by non-Federal entities must include a provision for compliance with the Davis-Bacon Act (40 U.S.C. 3141–3144, and 3146–3148) as supplemented by Department of Labor regulations (29 CFR Part 5, "Labor Standards Provisions Applicable to Contracts Covering Federally Financed and Assisted Construction"). In accordance with the statute, contractors must be required to pay wages to laborers and mechanics at a rate not less than the prevailing wages specified in a wage determination made by the Secretary of Labor. In addition, contractors must be required to pay wages not less than once a week. The non-Federal entity must place a copy of the current prevailing wage determination issued by the Department of Labor in each solicitation. The decision to award a contract or subcontract must be conditioned upon the acceptance of the wage determination. The non-Federal entity must report all suspected or reported violations to the Federal awarding agency. The contracts must also include a provision for compliance with the Copeland "Anti-Kickback" Act (40 U.S.C. 3145), as supplemented by Department of Labor regulations (29 CFR Part 3, "Contractors and Subcontractors on Public Building or Public Work Financed in Whole or in Part by Loans or Grants from the United States"). The Act provides that each contractor or subrecipient must be prohibited from inducing, by any means, any person employed in the construction, completion, or repair of public work, to give up any part of the compensation to which he or she is otherwise entitled. The non-Federal entity must report all suspected or reported violations to the Federal awarding agency.