Frequently Asked Questions

WHAT HAS XEROX BEEN DOING ABOUT SECTION 508?
When the Access Board released the draft standards in February 2000, Xerox formed a Section 508 work team comprised of the Business Divisions, Industrial Design/Human Interface, Xerox External Affairs, Public Sector Federal Contracts and Environmental Health and Safety. Here are several highlights of the team's progress:

1. The Xerox Section 508 team defined a consistent assessment process across all of our document output devices. Rigorous task-based assessments were performed and documented. The team continues to have meetings on a regular basis.

2. Xerox conducted several sales training sessions to ensure our Federal Government sales executives understand Section 508 and the Xerox assessment and reporting processes. Xerox is committed to developing a partnership with Federal agencies as we transition to Section 508 purchasing criteria.

3. As an active member of the Information Technology Association of America (ITAA), Xerox has been engaged with other IT companies in a special Section 508 Task Group to monitor Federal movement on 508. ITAA's comments on the Access Board's draft standards and the subsequent FAR final rule were given significant consideration.

4. In June 2001, Xerox presented its 508 progress and communications strategy to the senior management of GSA's Federal Supply Service. On June 25, 2001 Xerox launched our special Section 508 web site (www.xerox.com/section508)

WHAT IS SECTION 508?
Section 508 is a part of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 requiring electronic and information technology ("EIT") developed, procured, maintained, or used by the Federal government be accessible to people with disabilities. This includes Federal employees as well as citizens trying to access Federal EIT. On August 7, 1998, the Workforce Investment Act was signed into a law that includes the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998. These 1998 amendments significantly expand and strengthen the technology access requirements of Section 508 and create binding, enforceable standards now incorporated into the Federal Acquisition Regulations ("FAR").

WHEN DID THE LAW TAKE EFFECT?
Beginning June 25, 2001, Federal contracting officials are to purchase Section 508 compliant EIT.

WHAT COMPRISES "ELECTRONIC AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY"?
Electronic and information technology (EIT) has the same meaning as "information technology" except EIT also includes any equipment or interconnected system or subsystem of equipment, that is used in the creation, conversion, or duplication of data or information. EIT specifically includes copiers, printers and facsimile machines. The Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996 defines "information technology" to include "any equipment or interconnected system or subsystem of equipment, that is used in the automatic accession, storage, manipulation, management, movement, control, display, switching, interchange, transmission, or reception of data or information." It includes computer hardware, software, networks, and peripherals as well as many electronic and communications devices commonly used in offices.

WHO SETS THE STANDARDS FOR ELECTRONIC AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (EIT) ACCESSIBILITY?

The Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (the "Access Board") assembled a group of government and industry representatives to develop the standards. These were released for public comment during the early part of 2000 and became final on December 21, 2000. To access the standards go to: http://www.access-board.gov/sec508/508standards.htm

WHO DETERMINES WHETHER A PRODUCT IS 508 COMPLIANT?
Under the law and the FAR, the acquiring officer is legally responsible for determining 508 compliance. The FAR directs the acquiring officer to conduct market research to determine the most 508 commercially available product on the market. It is incumbent upon the vendor to provide as much information as possible to allow the acquiring officer to conduct market research and make the compliance determination.

MUST THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT REPLACE CURRENTLY INSTALLED HARDWARE OR SOFTWARE THAT IS NOT 508 COMPLIANT?
The final rule on 508 applies only to acquisitions on and after 6/25/01. There is no requirement for the agency to replace existing, non-compliant devices. These questions are covered in G.8 in GSA's "Frequently Asked Questions."

CAN THE AGENCY RENEW IN-PLACE LEASES AND/OR MAINTENANCE AGREEMENTS FOR NON-COMPLIANT EQUIPMENT?
The final rule on 508 applies only to acquisitions on and after 6/25/01. Therefore, agencies may renew service maintenance coverage for these currently installed systems. These questions are covered in G.8 in GSA's "Frequently Asked Questions".

DOES SECTION 508 APPLY TO STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT EIT PROCUREMENTS?
While there has been no across the board movement in the state/local marketplace for accessible EIT, it is inevitable that these public sector customers will require future acquisitions to be accessible. The work we've done for Federal government customers will position us favorably as 508 takes hold in state and local government. The 508 initiative has the potential to become a de facto commercial standard.

HAVE ALL PRODUCTS AVAILABLE ON XEROX'S GSA CONTRACTS BEEN ASSESSED FOR 508 COMPLIANCE?
Xerox has completed assessments on the majority of products available through our GSA Multiple Award Schedule contracts. All newly launched products will go through our assessment process and will be added to this web site. Xerox will continue to work toward a 100% compliant product portfolio.

WHAT IF I STILL HAVE A QUESTION?
Contact Xerox for more information about our efforts to meet Section 508 Accessibility requirements.