# Open Government Plan

## Version 2.5

The Commerce Department's mission is to help make American businesses more innovative at home and more competitive abroad.

Open Government
Transparency ♦ Participation ♦ Collaboration
DATA.GOV
EMPOWERING PEOPLE

Open Government
Transparency ♦ Participation ♦ Collaboration
BusinessUSA

Open Government
FOIAONLINE
♦ Transparency
♦ Participation
♦ Collaboration

## April 2013

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# Introduction

*T*he Department of Commerce fosters economic growth and opportunity by promoting innovation, entrepreneurship, competitiveness, and stewardship. For over 100 years, it has partnered with the U.S. business community to maintain a prosperous, productive America that is committed to trade, competitiveness, and environmental stewardship. Commerce has been an innovator and leader in the open government initiative from the beginning. Now with version 2.5 of Commerce Open Government plan we are making sweeping changes not just to the plan, but to how we achieve the spirit of Open Government. Ongoing Open Government efforts within Commerce continue to change how the department interacts in the modern world of information and knowledge sharing.

The public perception has been that the government is lagging behind the private sector in meeting the objectives of transparency, participation and collaboration. In many cases this is true, restrictions on the government concerning privacy and national security prohibited the release of certain information. Commerce has made a commitment that wherever possible, cost-efficient and where such publication does not compromise privacy and national security issues the department will default to publishing information.

This includes the ongoing efforts to increase public access to government generated information through mobile devices and application program interfaces (API) to allow a more consumer friendly environment. In order to do this in a reduced budget environment Commerce is working with all operating units/bureaus program offices to ensure a lifecycle approach in the delivery of Commerce controlled information. We are also partnering across the government at federal, state, local and international levels to ensure information sharing and consumability in order to allow reuse and development of interactive applications that are value added to the public.

# Background

*O*n January 21, 2009, President Obama issued the first executive memorandum of his Administration, entitled "Transparency and Open Government." In his memorandum, the President established three guiding principles for the conduct of government activities: Government should be transparent, participatory, and collaborative. On December 8,

> "President Obama took office with a call for unprecedented openness in government, and we are heeding that call."

2009, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issued memorandum number M-10-06, "Open Government Directive," providing guidance to federal agencies on specific actions they must take to increase transparency, participation and collaboration in government.

The Department of Commerce has a longstanding record of innovation in manufacturing, transportation, communication and measurement standards, and has contributed significantly to U.S. leadership in the international marketplace. It leads the way in dissemination of information, including economic and demographic statistics, technological innovation, weather and climate research, and marine resources management. As the Department enters its second century of service to the American public, it seeks to ensure that the United States retains its position as the leader in the world economy.

# How We Started

**H**istorically, the Department of Commerce has been a source of information for the public through data collection and dissemination partnerships with federal, state, local, tribal and international governments; educational and scientific institutions; nonprofit organizations; and for-profit businesses. Commerce maintains a comprehensive public records management web site, which provides records control schedules for the Department and its operating units, records management policies and guidance, and links to the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) and the wealth of information it contains. Additionally, Commerce and its operating units have identified and submitted to NARA records schedules for almost all electronic records. Commerce routinely approves the transfer of permanent records stored in the federal records center system to NARA, in accordance with instructions in the applicable records control schedules.

In keeping with transparency and openness, Commerce has developed and documented detailed procedures for posting all information technology (IT) investments to the federal IT dashboard. The monthly reporting process includes publication by the Department's CIO of a red, yellow, or green status rating for each investment. The Department's goal is to review all investments with a red or yellow CIO risk rating each month and to review one-third of all green-rated investments during that same period. By September 1, 2009 – well in advance of the "Open Government Directive" – Commerce had published over 104,000 data sets and data tools on Data.gov and, by January 22, 2010, it had released over 60,000 additional data sets and tools. Since that time the Department increased the number of data sets and tools to 303,611 available on Data.gov. While the vast majority of the data sets involve Census Geodata that will allow the public to map other bits of information, Commerce's 303,611 data sets also include over 170 tools that make other sets easier to use. The tools in Data.gov provide access to multiple datasets; in some cases, these represent thousands of raw datasets from an organization.

To assist Commerce in adhering to the guidance OMB provided in the Open Government Directive and to make existing and new data sets and tools more easily accessible by the public, the Department established an internal community of Data.gov points of contact (POCs) from each of its operating units. This communication network supports the enhanced exchange of information throughout the Department. As part of these efforts, Commerce has encouraged

program managers and data owners to develop timelines to publish new information while enhancing previously published information. Commerce is also improving existing data user tools to allow greater access across all of its operating units and by other federal agencies and departments.

The following table provides additional detail about a snapshot of the data the Department is making available on Data.gov, the operating units that have provided or have responsibility for them, and how often they were refreshed. The initial guidance in the Open Government Directive, "high-value" datasets must have appeared after December 12, 2009; and met other criteria; many of the datasets listed in the table below were available before this date. The Department has been utilizing the same factors to determine if a dataset or tool is "high-value" in all subsequent submissions to Data.gov. A significant number of datasets were provided by the Department have been published in the raw format. These datasets while available to public previously in other formats could not be published to Data.gov because of restrictions on types of datasets allowed. Commerce will continue to produce new and convert existing datasets that developers and other members of the public find most useful where it is cost effective and efficient.

As Commerce leads the way in making information and data consumable for its customers, creating tools such as Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) Interactive Data Tables (iTables) allow customers to perform online analysis of current and historical economic information. BEA has updated its interactive data service to make it easier to access and use BEA statistics. The goal is to provide a common look and feel for users accessing national, international, regional or industry statistics; to make the information easier to print, save and export; to make the charting features more robust and visually appealing; and to make the information easier to share with others via a variety of methods. Table 1 provides a snapshot of the number of datasets and tools provided to the Data.gov catalog.

**Table 1 - Commerce Datasets Published to Data.gov**

| Department of Commerce Data Sets Released to Data.gov as of 04/02/2013 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Agency / Operating Unit** | Raw Datasets (high-value) | Tools (high-value) | Geo-data | Total |
| Department of Commerce (DOC) | 114 (99) | 329 (189) | 263,257 | 263,700 |
| Department/Agency Level (DOC) | 0 | 1 (1) | 0 | 1 |
| Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS) | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| International Trade Administration (ITA) | 3 | 28 (6) | 0 | 31 |
| National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) | 0 | 3 | 0 | 3 |
| National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) | 31 (21) | 112 (70) | 24,102 | 24,245 |
| National Technical Information Service (NTIS) | 1 (1) | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| National Telecommunication and Information Administration (NTIA) | 1 (1) | 29 (2) | 0 | 30 |
| US Census Bureau (CENSUS) | 45 (45) | 112 (103) | 239,155 | 239,312 |
| US Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) | 6 (6) | 25 (5) | 0 | 31 |

**T**he Department of Commerce carries out its programmatic responsibilities through its 12 operating units:

**Table 2 - Commerce Operating Units**

| | |
|---|---|
| Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) | National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) |
| Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS) | National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) |
| Bureau of the Census (Census Bureau) | National Technical Information Service (NTIS) |
| Economic Development Administration (EDA) | National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) |
| Economics and Statistics Administration (ESA) | U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) |
| International Trade Administration (ITA) | |
| Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) | |

Through their distinct missions, each of these operating units contributes to Commerce's overall objective of promoting economic growth for the nation and providing opportunity for all Americans. These organizations are driving initiatives that range from improving patent processing to developing sustainable and resilient fisheries, from transforming service delivery to businesses to expanding international markets for U.S. firms, and from creating scientific and technological innovation to advancing measurement science.

Previously, each Secretary has called upon managers and employees at all levels to seek opportunities for greater collaboration, both among Commerce operating units and other federal agencies. They have challenged the workforce to bring together ongoing initiatives from across the Department to form a unified, strategic approach and to pursue opportunities to collaborate, increase performance, and enhance customer service. Employees are asked to think creatively on how they can work together in harnessing the power of their diverse talents.

In order to strengthen institutionalization of such initiatives, Commerce created an interdisciplinary, Department-wide leadership, planning, and execution team to guide the implement the Open Government. The original membership in this group was comprised Senior Leadership from the Chief Information Officer (CIO), General Counsel, Chief Financial Officer and Assistant Secretary for Administration (CFO/ASA), as well as representatives from the Offices of Public Affairs and Policy and Strategic Planning, Commerce's operating units and subject matter experts from key mission areas. This team supplemented the existing and ongoing efforts of the extensive Data.gov team that Commerce launched in May 2009. Building upon these baseline efforts and in order to encompass the full breadth of the department, each of bureaus/operating units were tasked with assigning Senior Leader to represent their organization. This Open Government Senior Leader (OGSL) Points of Contact (POC) are designated to ensure that Commerce Open Government efforts are integrated into each of the operating units/bureaus business processes in a timely and cost effective manner. The OGSL initially addressed the existing quick wins for integration of Open Government principles into existing Commerce capabilities.

In October 2010 Commerce selected a Senior Executive to head the Office of Privacy and Open Government. This executive is designated as Chief Privacy Officer and Director of Open Government. The primary role is to ensure the Commerce is appropriately addressing all matters of Privacy, Open Government, Freedom of Information Act, Federal Advisory Committees Act and Directives Management across all departmental initiatives.

Each Secretary of Commerce has proactively engaged managers and employees ensuring the continuation of building new and improving existing best practices for Open Government, while increasing avenues of outreach and communications. This has allowed the Department to create new partnerships and build on existing coalitions in order to reduce costs and increase effectiveness of programs, personnel and outreach capabilities.

As a whole, Commerce continues to explore other ways to work better across organizational lines. One example is the initial CommerceConnect Initiative which streamlined how businesses access government services and solutions across the entire Commerce Department. Building upon the synergy from CommerceConnect and its ability to reach across and connect business with multiple programs and agencies the government used Commerce Connect as a model for BusinessUSA.gov. The BusinessUSA program is an intergovernmental effort focused on the provision of outstanding customer service to America's small businesses and exporters in order to make it easier for them to grow and hire. This inter-agency program is led by an executive committee which is made up of the Federal Chief Information Officer (CIO), Chief Technology Officer (CTO), Chief Performance Officer (CPO), Department of Commerce and Small Business Administration.

## Getting To Today

The Department of Commerce is continuing to develop its Open Government efforts through interagency initiatives, in-person and online public engagements and internal programs that include training, collaboration, and modification of existing internal processes. Commerce has fully embraced the President's spirit and principles of transparent and open government. Collaborating with businesses, nonprofit organizations, and private citizens, Commerce is refining the products and services that best serve our customers and stakeholders. This open collaboration is being used to facilitate timely and high-quality review of processes and products building best practices for information and knowledge sharing.

The Department is continuing to accomplish the objectives of transparency, participation, and collaboration by:

- Including processes and best practices that improve and allow effective communication between Commerce and the public sector ensuring openness and transparency as part of all new programs and initiatives as well as any updates to existing programs and initiatives;

- Maintaining its leadership role in the Open Government by building into the information lifecycle best practices that increase the value of information and tools made available to the American public;

- Continuing to improve existing and building new partnerships with the public and private sectors, including businesses, academia nonprofit organizations, inter-governmental at federal, state, and local, to broaden input obtained for consideration during the regulatory process;

- Improving existing and creating new online tools and processes that enhance public and private sector access to Commerce information, services, and that increase the understanding of funding opportunities; and

- Improving and increasing the use of social media and other collaboration tools to encourage the public to participate in idea-generation and to provide feedback on Commerce initiatives building an open two-way conversation.

# Flagship updates

*T*his section of the flagship initiatives covers those initiatives that were new for version 2 of the Commerce Open Government Plan. These initiatives are in support of the Department core mission that create the conditions for economic growth and opportunity by promoting innovation, entrepreneurship, competitiveness, and stewardship informed by world-class scientific research and information.

## BusinessUSA

*O*ver the last several years, the government has spoken with thousands of business owners to hear what works and what doesn't when they deal with the federal government. Entrepreneurs – especially small business owners – stated that they do not have the time or resources to navigate the complex maze of government agencies and need a one stop shop where they can locate all the assistance needed during every stage of their business development.



**Figure 1 – BusinessUSA Services**

On October 28, 2011, the President issued a Memorandum entitled, ***"Making It Easier for America's Small Businesses and America's Exporters to Access Government Service to Help Them Grow and Hire."*** In response, BusinessUSA was initiated as an interagency effort, focused on improving the way business interacts with the federal government as a means to support growth and job creation. Figure 1 – BusinessUSA Services show the various services available.

The U.S. Department of Commerce along with the U.S. Small Business Administration were named as Co-Chairs to serve as the Executive Committee to coordinate the strategy, design, development, launch, and operation of BusinessUSA. The interagency team is supported by a group of federal agency partners including  the Office of Management and Budget, Department of Agriculture,  Department of Defense, Department of the Treasury, Department of Veterans Affairs, Export-Import Bank, Overseas Private Investment Corporation, Department of Labor,  General Services Administration and more. To date, there have been over 150 federal representatives that contributed to achieving the goals of the Presidential Memorandum.

BusinessUSA helps businesses and exporters of all sizes find information about available federal programs without having to waste time and resources navigating the federal bureaucracy. It also streamlines and coordinates federal program assistance through easy to access points via the Business.USA.gov website and 1-800-FED-INFO contact center. These central points of access are capable of providing a full range of government programs and services including: development and training options; financing choices; federal contracting; procurement opportunities; international trade; exporting guidance; business patent and trade assistance; disaster relief assistance; services for veterans, women-owned, and minority businesses; events; workshops; and, services available through state, regional and local organizations.

BusinessUSA is about providing great customer service and giving Americans the government they deserve. It is a "No Wrong Door" approach for businesses and exporters. BusinessUSA creates a common platform to match businesses with the services relevant to them, regardless of where the information is located or which agency's website, call center, or office they go to for help. BusinessUSA's easy to find access points enable customers to get the information they need, 24 hours a day, seven days week through one central website and contact center. Customers can communicate with knowledgeable staff via contact center and through email. Customers can use BusinessUSA's online tool to request appointments with knowledgeable business development staff. They can also follow BusinessUSA through social media Twitter and Linked-In.

BusinessUSA fully embraces open government. It publishes its quarterly performance through Performance.gov and discloses its investment development plans through the OMB Exhibit 300 reporting process. Moreover, BusinessUSA is one of several smarter, more efficient government initiatives. It leverages existing technology and augments that technology only when needed. BusinessUSA practices an "Agile" approach to the development of technology. This approach has contributed to clearer objectives, shorter development times, frequent release schedules, better tools and a responsive website design (for mobile and desk top device usage).



**Figure 2 - BusinessUSA Metrics**

Since the release of the Business.USA.gov website on February 17, 2012 through April 2, 2013, there have been nearly 1M visits, with almost 3M pages viewed, approximately 52K newsletter subscribers, and more than 22K Twitter followers. Figure 2 – BusinessUSA Metrics show metric from the period January 1 to March 5, 2013. BusinessUSA greatly expanded the number of business-facing resources (programs, services, tools and data) in one central location from 297
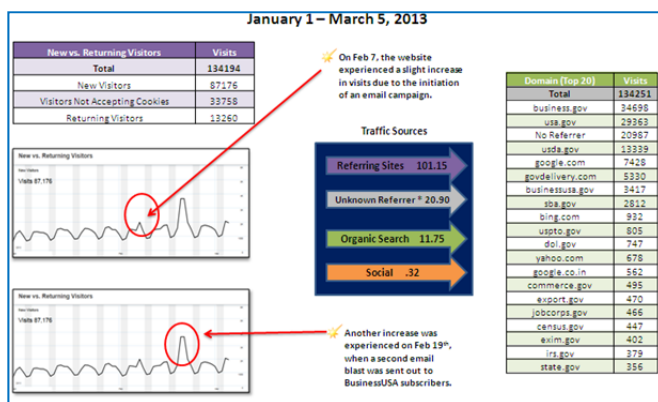
at launch to over 2,500 federal, state and local resources today. In addition, it has promoted over 160 success stories and 8,000 local business-related events.
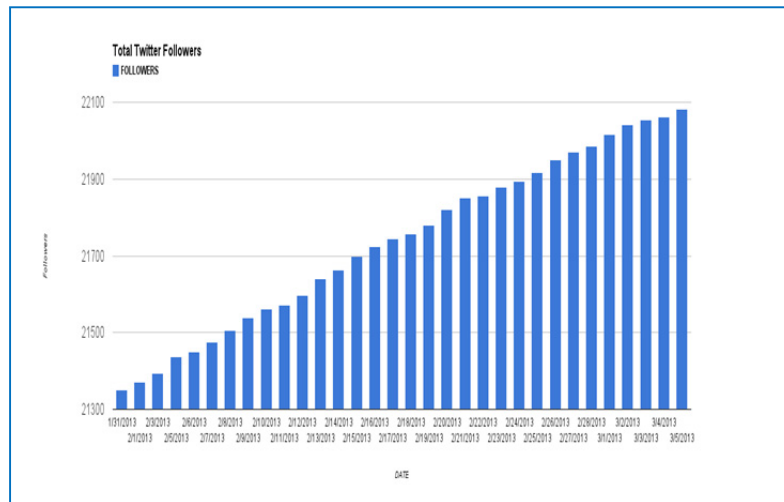


**Figure 3 - BusinessUSA Total Twitter Followers**
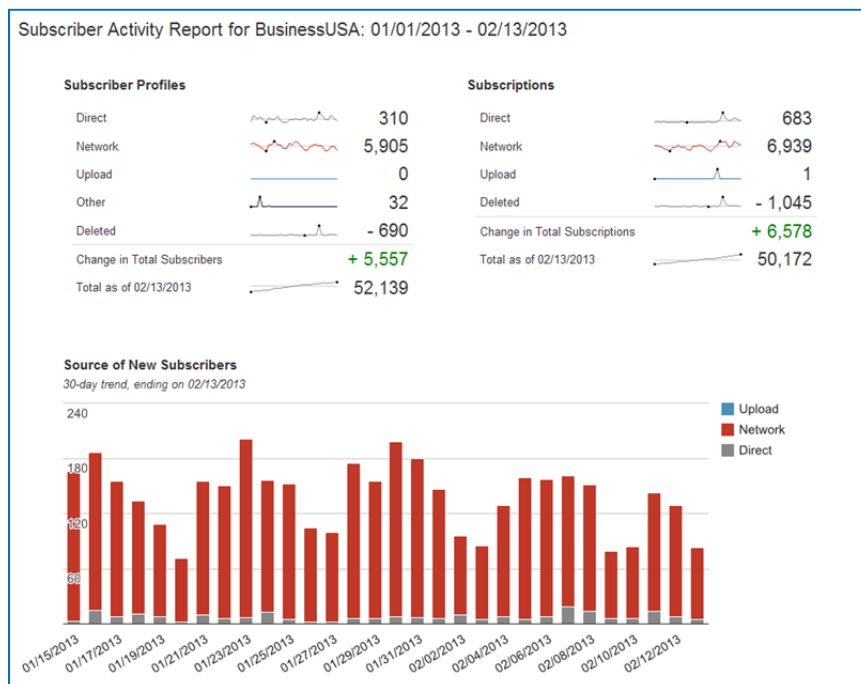


**Figure 4 - BusinessUSA Subscribers**

Eliminating the necessity to navigate federal bureaucracy, BusinessUSA is helping to transform businesses into globally competitive enterprises by providing an efficient 'one-stop-shop' experience for America's business entrepreneurs.

# Freedom Of Information Act (FOIA) Module/Portal (FOIAonline)

Commerce partnering with EPA and National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) developed and deployed the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Module/Portal called FOIAonline that will offer substantial cost savings and enhance capabilities over existing government FOIA systems. The FOIA Module/Portal provides a single interface through which the public can submit requests to any participating agency, eliminating the need to find the contact information for multiple agencies. The systems automatically assign tracking numbers to requests, which the requester can use to automatically view the status of the request, eliminating the need to wait for manual replies from agencies. Agencies are also be able to generate e-mails to requesters through the system to seek clarifying information or send invoices for fees, reducing mail delays and postage costs. When an agency identifies records responsive to a request, it has the ability to add them to the system. Consultations and referrals to other agencies will occur within the system for participating agencies, reducing the need to send documents around. This improves the consultation and referral process for agencies using FOIAonline. The consultation and referral process is a frequent source of delays and dead-ends for FOIA requests; improvements in timeliness here have been very welcome by users. Released documents are now uploaded to a public website, and the requester is notified of their availability. This critical feature will improve transparency by making released documents fully available to the general public, rather than delivered only to the requester. It will also stop agencies from processing multiple requests for the same materials over and over. FOIAonline is supplying the participating agencies a fully compliant records management system, the ability to collect metrics throughout the workflow process as defined by the agency, and it expedites the generation of the Department of Justice Annual Report.

The core functionality for the FOIAonline can be found in Table 3 – FOIAonline Core Functionality.

**Table 3 - FOIAonline Core Functionality**

| FOIAonline Core Functionality | |
|---|---|
| *Accept Requests Online* | • Allow requester to pre-populate their information<br>• Provide status to requesters<br>• Create communications (i.e. letters via email) between agencies and requesters |

| FOIAonline Core Functionality | |
|---|---|
| *Track Requests in a Case File* | • Process and track FOIA request<br>• Break down requests into multiple tasks<br>• Multi-track processing (Simple, Complex, Expedited)<br>• Track time spent on requests (the list shifts from starting with –ing words to not… breaking down, track, assign…)<br>• Assign case numbers<br>• Start and stop the clock according to rules<br>• Keep an online folder of all documents related to a request (*including notifications to requesters*) |
| *Manage Deadlines* | • Start/Stop the clock<br>• Generate backlog reports<br>• Monitor workload<br>• Notify FOIA professionals based on 10- and 20-day deadlines<br>• Close cases when fees are not paid (*according to business rules*) |
| *Calculate Fees* | • Track fees and fee waiver processing<br>• Generate invoices<br>• Deduct what is free of charge (i.e. first 100 pages)<br>• Manually adjust recorded time<br>• Distinguish between search and review time |
| *Research and Upload Records* | • Store consultations, referrals, and letters<br>• Send tasks to others with instructions about which records to search<br>• Upload scanned documents |
| *Publish Electronic Records* | • Review/sign the case file to approve redactions and fee calculations<br>• Issue Partial/incremental releases<br>• Send system-generated email notifications to requesters |
| *Accept Appeals Online* | • Track status and outcome of litigation and appeals<br>• Issue supplemental release after appeal<br>• Forward copies of processing to Appeals unit |
| *Prepare the Annual Report* | • Prepare the report in the required format with the required data structure<br>• Use dashboards to display these metrics throughout the year, including trends |
| *Search and Retrieve* | • Searching (including metadata and full-text) |

# Geospatial Platform

NOAA's Geospatial Platform provides NOAA customers, partners, and staff members with a centralized platform for discovering and accessing much of NOAA's distributed geospatial data, services, and applications. By delivering access to geospatial assets that are built once and used

many times, the Platform will increase information sharing across various levels of government and the private sector, allowing for the reuse and adaptation of geospatial assets. This multi-purposing and availability of assets can lead to cost-savings, wider use of geospatial capabilities, and higher quality assets.

The NOAA GeoPlatform is a component of NOAA's contribution to the national Geospatial Platform, an initiative based in the Fiscal Year 2011 Presidential Budget direction, ultimately designed to become the shared services component of the National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI). The NOAA GeoPlatform supports the national Geospatial Platform by providing access to NOAA's geospatial data and services in support on OMB Circular A-16. NOAA is the lead or co-lead agency for four of the sixteen A-16 Themes. In addition NOAA is actively supporting a 2012 Hurricane Season Response Community on the national Geospatial Platform. For the Hurricane Community, NOAA is providing official storm tracks, storm predictions, weather radar, local storm reports, and weather warnings as live, continuously updated data feeds. These feeds are easily visualized by the public in the native mapping application on the national Geospatial Platform.

The NOAA GeoPlatform is based on a commercial GIS Portal product, and was released to the public in June 2012. In addition to making content available to the public, the site also allows for internal collaboration among NOAA's geospatial community via private groups. Within these private groups, NOAA staff may add, create, and share content of similar themes (e.g., severe weather, sea level rise, ocean observations, etc.) with their colleagues. In addition to facilitating data discovery and access, the NOAA GeoPlatform also provides users with a collaborative, web-based mapping application that allows users to visualize trusted NOAA data with their own data sets.

# Operating Units and Bureau's (Sub Agencies)

*T*hroughout its history, the Department of Commerce has published high-value data as part of its scientific, technological, and economic programs. As a result, Commerce has been able to establish best practices in distribution and publication processes that meet the ever-evolving needs of the public. This portion of the Open Government Plan covers the various initiatives within the Operating Units and Bureaus.

# Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA)

**B**ureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) is an agency of the Department of Commerce. Along with the Census Bureau and STAT-USA, BEA is part of the Department's Economics and Statistics Administration.

BEA is one of the world's leading statistical agencies. Although it is a relatively small agency, BEA produces some of the most closely watched economic statistics that influence the decisions made by government officials, business people, households, and individuals. BEA's economic statistics, which provide a comprehensive, up-to-date picture of the U.S. economy, are key ingredients in critical decisions affecting monetary policy, tax and budget projections, and business investment plans. The cornerstone of BEA's statistics is the national income and product accounts (NIPAs), which feature the estimates of gross domestic product (GDP) and related measures.

The GDP was recognized by the Department of Commerce as its greatest achievement of the 20th century and has been ranked as one of the three most influential measures that affect U.S. financial markets. Since the NIPAs were first developed in the aftermath of the Great Depression, BEA has developed and extended its estimates to cover a wide range of economic activities.

Today, BEA prepares national, regional, industry, and international accounts that present essential information on such key issues as economic growth, regional economic development, inter-industry relationships, and the Nation's position in the world economy.

Transparency and openness have been top priorities of the Bureau of Economic Analysis. The Bureau makes all of its published data publicly available on the Internet, along with detailed methodology papers that explain exactly how BEA computes the nation's key economic indicators. The Bureau publishes on the Web the names, phone numbers, e-mail addresses, and areas of expertise of dozens of subject matter experts. Before implementing changes to the presentation or methodology of the accounts, BEA holds user conferences to explain the changes and solicit input on the impact of the changes on data users. As a 2011 New York Times story notes, "The Bureau of Economic Analysis, an arm of the Commerce Department… emphasizes transparency and is uncommonly open to public questions."

The Bureau is continuing to explore ways to increase openness and transparency in how it produces, presents, and educates the public about its data. Over the past two years, BEA made major improvements to the interactive tables on the BEA Web site, making the Bureau's vast stores of data more accessible, consumable, and shareable.

The table below shows a list of initiatives for ***Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA)***

**Table 4 - BEA Initiatives**

| Operating Unit | Project | Status | Estimated / Actual Completion |
|---|---|---|---|
| **BEA** | **Enhancing Communications through Web and Social Media** | **Planning/Implementation** | **9/30/2012** |

- **Enhancing Communications through Web and Social Media**

  *What's new – Use social media tools and enhanced web tools*

  BEA is enhancing its use of Web and social media tools to make its data more accessible and useful for the public. The first prong of this project involves the next iteration of enhancements to the interactive tables portal on the BEA Website. This year, BEA added a mapping capability for data sets that have a geographic component. This improvement launched in the second quarter of FY 2012. In September, the Center for Digital Government recognized BEA interactive tables with the Driving Digital Excellence Award. In the coming year, BEA will continue to make behind-the-scenes improvements to the interactive tables. BEA is also developing a redesign of BEA.gov that will make BEA data easier to find and more accessible.

  The second prong of this project involves using blogs, social media, and the mobile Web to make BEA data more digestible for the public. In April, BEA launched a blog to educate members of the public about how it might use the data to better understand the dynamics of the U.S. economy. To speed technical implementation, BEA used open-source software to support this project. Next, BEA launched twitter feeds to keep followers apprised of newly available data, BEA events, and job opportunities. BEA's twitter presence launched in the first quarter of FY 2012, while the BEA blog launched in the second quarter. Finally, BEA assisted the Census Bureau in the launch of the America's Economy mobile application, which features three key BEA data sets. In the coming year, BEA will continue to expand the use of blogs, social media, and the mobile Web to make BEA data as open and available as possible.

# Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS)

**B**ureau of Industry and Security (BIS) is to advance U.S. national security, foreign policy, and economic objectives by ensuring an effective export control and treaty compliance system and by promoting continued U.S. strategic technology leadership.

**Primary BIS Activities:**

Maintain and strengthen an adaptable and effective U.S. export control and treaty compliance system: BIS administers and enforces controls on exports of dual-use goods and technologies to counter proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), combat terrorism, and pursue other national security and foreign policy goals.

Integrate non-U.S. actors to create a more effective global export control and treaty compliance system: The effectiveness of U.S. export controls is enhanced by strong controls in other nations that export, or transship sensitive goods and technologies. BIS works to improve the participation and compliance of existing members of multilateral export control regimes and cooperates with other countries to help them establish effective export control programs. As part of policy formulation and implementation toward key trading partners and transshipment countries, BIS utilizes an end-use visit program.

Ensure continued U.S. technology leadership in industries that are essential to national security: BIS works to ensure that the U.S. remains competitive in industry sectors and sub-sectors critical to national security. To this end, BIS analyzes the impact of export controls and trade policies on strategic U.S. industries, administers the Federal Government's Defense Priorities and Allocations System (DPAS), reports on the impact of defense trade offsets, and evaluates the security impact of certain proposed foreign investments in U.S. companies.

The table below shows a list of initiatives for *Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS)*

**Table 5 - BIS Initiatives**

| Operating Unit | Project | Status | Estimated / Actual Completion |
|---|---|---|---|
| **BIS** | **Web site transformation** | Online for public comment | **June, 2012** |

- *Project – Website transformation*

  In response to the feedback from our many stakeholders, the BIS website is being transformed. We are making improvements to the site's appearance, enhancing communications capabilities, and providing better information mapping. Until the new site is fully operational, BIS is offering access to either the current BIS site or the beta version of the new site ([www.bis.doc.gov](http://www.bis.doc.gov)).  By clicking either picture or icon users can explore the beta version of the new site and continue making comments and recommendations as BIS works to improve its service.

# Bureau of the Census (Census)

**C**ensus Bureau is the premier source of information about the American people and the economy. More than just numbers, this information shapes important policy decisions that help improve the nation's social and economic conditions.

The production of high quality, relevant statistical information rests on principles that the Census Bureau holds dear. Openness to user and respondent concerns, independence and neutrality, strong statistical standards, and protection of confidentiality form the foundation for the work we do. These principles are reflected in Office of Management and Budget guidelines for the quality, objectivity, utility, and integrity of information disseminated by federal agencies.

The Census Bureau's mission is built around large-scale surveys and censuses. Activities involve survey and questionnaire design, geographic infrastructure update, and data collection, processing, and dissemination. Research and data analysis help improve processes from data collection through dissemination.

The table below shows a list of initiatives for the Census Bureau.

**Table 6 - Census Initiatives**

| Operating Unit | Project | Status | Estimated / Actual Completion |
|---|---|---|---|
| Census | Improving Operational Efficiency | In Progress | Ongoing |
| | Improving the Census Bureau's History Web Site | In Progress | Ongoing |
| | Add High Value Datasets to Data.gov | Ongoing | Ongoing |
| | Improving Access to Economic Programs | Completed | Dec 2011 |

| Operating Unit | Project | Status | Estimated / Actual Completion |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **Improving Access to Economical Indicators via the Central Indicator Data Repository (CIDR)** | **Completed** | **July 2012** |
| | **Publishing Automated Export Systems Best Practices Online** | **Completed** | **August 2012** |
| | **Implementing Local Employment Dynamics (LED)Program** | **Completed** | **Sept 2011** |
| | **Improving LED Data Visualization** | **In Progress** | **Feb 2012** |
| | **Modernizing Business Help Site** | **Completed** | **Dec 2012** |
| | **Re-engineering State and Local Governments Statistical Programs and Improving Data Presentations** | **In Progress** | **Ongoing** |
| | **Adding Web-based Learning Tools to Improve Access to Economic Programs** | **In Progress** | **Oct 2013** |
| | **Using Mobile Technology to Improve Data Dissemination, Data Collection, and Employee Productivity** | **In Progress** | **Ongoing** |
| | **Application Programming Interface** | **Ongoing** | **Ongoing** |
| | **Implementing the Federal Digital Strategy** | **In Progress** | **Ongoing** |
| | **Creation of the Center for Applied Technology to Promote Innovation** | **In Operation** | **Ongoing** |
| | **A Mobile Strategy to Address Internal and External Market Segments** | **Completed** | **Oct 2012** |
| | **Establishing the 2012 Account Manager Program** | **In Progress** | **Sept 2013** |

| Operating Unit | Project | Status | Estimated / Actual Completion |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **Implementing the Advance Mailing to 80,000 Businesses that the Census is Coming** | **Completed** | **June 2012** |
| | **Installing Economic Directorate Change Management and Succession Management Training Program** | **Completed** | **Sept 2012** |
| | **Testing of Interactive On-line Electronic Tools with the Business Community for the 2012 Economic Census** | **Completed** | **Dec 2012** |
| | **Accelerating release of the FT-900: U.S. International Trade in Goods and Services (FT900)** | **In Progress** | **Mar 2013** |
| | **Improving the Foreign Trade Regulations (FTR)** | **In Progress** | **June 2013** |

- *Project - Improving Operational Efficiency*

The Census Bureau's Improving Operational Efficiency (IOE) 2010 program was a tremendous success. Census Bureau staff submitted over 650 proposals. Suggestions included ideas to eliminate duplicative or unnecessary activities, re-engineer processes, and implement standardized tools.  Senior management selected 20 proposals for business case development, of which 10 were funded.  In addition, 14 original proposals that required few, if any, additional resources were implemented immediately.

The 2011 IOE process began in February 2011 by incorporating lessons learned from the first year. Improvements included developing a social media forum that allowed employees with Intranet access to use a streamlined process to submit proposals, and to vote and comment on other proposals. The social media forum was extremely important in providing feedback for senior managers to use during both the initial and final proposal assessment phases. Additionally, a new Internet site was developed to facilitate submission of proposals from field representatives throughout the country who did not have access to the Census Bureau's Intranet.

These enhancements, along with the continued enthusiasm of Census Bureau staff, generated over 800 proposals in the 2011 IOE program. The goal is to institutionalize this innovative

process by making it an annual event so that Census Bureau staff develop and implement innovative changes and efficiencies as a regular part of their ongoing work.

The 2012 IOE process began in late November 2011 and incorporated a number of improvements from lessons learned in previous years. Improvements included a new social media tool with significant enhancements over the 2011 version providing staff more options to track ideas, provide comments, and participate more in developing ideas. The 2012 IOE process also started almost three months earlier allowing employees additional time to develop their proposals and seek input from staff to ensure ideas were fully considered across the entire agency.

Over 750 ideas were received from staff located at headquarters and the regional offices for the 2012 IOE program.  Seven ideas moved forward to the business case phase and senior managers selected four of those ideas for implementation. A significant number of other ideas that required few if any additional resources are being implemented immediately.

The 2013 IOE process will be refined from previous years, as the focus will shift to request proposals addressing several very specific challenges faced by the Census Bureau. As the IOE program matures, it is necessary to align the current projects with our strategic initiatives and direct the resourcefulness of our employees to address new specific or technical challenges faced by the agency with the 2013 call.

After three highly successful years for the IOE program, the Census Bureau will implement these improvements in FY 2013 allowing the program to continue its success with a new more focused approach..

- *Project – Improving the Census Bureau's History Web Site*

*What's new – Increased attention to editorial accuracy and search ability*

The Census Bureau's History staff continues to make improvements to the history website that enhances our ability to disseminate information to customers. Each month, the staff designs a new "themed" homepage linking "pop culture" and historical events to census data. Recent homepages included Hispanic-American Heritage Month, the presidential elections, and the anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation.

The History staff continually listens to its customers (via telephone calls, e-mail, visitor surveys, and website usage statistics) to develop new content for the website. Examples of this new content included information related to the 1940 census records release in April 2012, genealogical information, "Instructions to Enumerators," and webpages dedicated to the 2010 census.

Finally, the History staff is proud of the accuracy of its website's html coding. All new content is subjected to coding accuracy checks and existing content is rechecked on a regular basis. Biannual reviews are conducted of the website's html coding and links, the most recent taking place in December 2012. In August 2012, the History staff completed an editorial review of webpages, and in November, staff completed adding "meta tags" to each webpage to improve search ability."

- ***Project -- Add High Value Datasets to Data.gov***

  *What's New – Providing important data* series *through Data.gov.*

  The Census Bureau is publishing current datasets to Data.gov as identified on a flow basis. Previously published records for Census Bureau products are reviewed regularly for date of last update and link validation.

- ***Project – Improving Access to Economic Programs***

  *What's New – Improved web site navigation*

  The Census Bureau's Economic Programs cover myriad topics and, over the years, we have published information relating to them on various dissimilar Internet pages. Even the veteran users have found it difficult to find information they need, and new or unsophisticated users are even more challenged. A project now under way seeks to ease access to these data by adopting standard Web page designs and standard access cues. An integrated search tool, linked to the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) keyword search, provides for each industry a list of all available reports as well as available geographic area data. To assist novice users of the data and access tools, a series of brief instructional videos provides step-by-step instructions.

  More information can be found at http://www.census.gov/business.

- ***Project – Improving Access to Economic Indicators via the Central Indicator Data Repository (CIDR)***

  *What's New – Easy access to principal economic indicators published by the Census Bureau*

  The Census Bureau produces 13 principal economic indicators covering retail trade, wholesale trade, services, manufacturing, business inventories, manufacturers' and retailers' profits, construction, and international trade. These monthly and quarterly reports are among the most closely watched statistics published by the Census Bureau. The reports have been published in a variety of dissimilar formats and layouts. The Census Bureau has developed a database-driven access system that provides access to current and historic data from each

report using a single user interface. Users can now easily select the data they want, along with supporting graphics, making it easier than ever to see economic trends.

The Census Bureau has activated the system for all of the - principal economic indicators, with the exception of the Advanced Manufacturers' Shipments, Inventories, and Orders, the only economic indicator not planned for CIDR inclusion since this is a preliminary release of the Manufacturers' Shipments, Inventories, and Orders, which is already activated in the CIDR. http://www.census.gov/econ/currentdata/

- ***Project – Publishing Automated Export Systems (AES) Best Practices Online***

  *What's New – Best Practices manual helps exporters comply with export regulations*

  The AES Best Practices Manual shares with AES filers a variety of methods that can be implemented to stay compliant with the Foreign Trade Regulations (FTR) reporting requirements. The content of the Manual ranges from suggestions on training material and training staff to export checklists, technical documentation references, and links to other government agency resources. The Manual also provides several excellent examples of best practices that could assist exporting companies in meeting the FTR compliance standards. We obtained the best practices from visits to AES filers that maintained a compliance rate greater than 95 percent. The Manual is revised and updated as regulatory changes occur.

  More information can be found at
  www.census.gov/foreign-trade/aes/documentlibrary/bp/aes_bestpractices.html

  www.census.gov/foreign-trade/aes

- ***Project – Implementing Local Employment Dynamics (LED)Program***

  *What's New – Revolutionary new approach to analyze and understand socioeconomic data*

  LED is a voluntary partnership between state labor market information agencies and the Census Bureau to develop new information about local labor market conditions. LED uses modern statistical and computing techniques to combine federal and state administrative data on employers and employees with core Census Bureau censuses and surveys while protecting the confidentiality of people and firms that provide the data. It includes the Quarterly Workforce Indicators (QWI), a set of economic indicators (including employment, job creation, wages, and worker turnover) that can be queried by different levels of geography (state, county, metropolitan, and workforce investment area) and by industry, gender, and age of workers.  Starting in 2006, Census also began to release OnTheMap, an innovative block-level workforce data product by worker residence and workplace geography, based on the same jobs frame as the QWI. OnTheMap and QWI provide powerful tools and entirely new ways to explore, analyze, and understand the American economy.

LED has reached a milestone where all 50 States are members of this partnership as we integrate data from new partners New Hampshire and Massachusetts. In 2011, we released for the first time QWI and OnTheMap data by race, ethnicity, and education (previously only worker age and gender were available). In 2012, we are releasing for the first time new firm characteristics, the age and size of the firm (previously only firm industry and geography were available) in the QWI. We are also releasing in 2012 QWI and OnTheMap data for federal workers, who had not previously been part of the integrated job frame. More information can be found at http://lehd.did.census.gov/led.

- ***Project – Improving LED Data Visualization***

  *What's New – Presentation tools improve understanding and use of Census Bureau data*

  Data visualization tools have emerged as important new ways to present statistical information to make it more understandable for data users. The Census Bureau's LED program has pioneered this effort with its OnTheMap web application that graphically illustrates the relationship between jobs and workplace on user defined maps. Most recent version provides improved performance and additional analytical capabilities. LED has released version 2 of the OnTheMap for Emergency Management, which provides rapid access to labor market information for local areas affected by emergency events. This version provides additional information on hurricanes and includes other events such as floods and wildfires.

  LED continues to review other data visualization methods such as the IBM Many Eyes Stack Graph tool, which was released in September 2010, to show the quarterly employment trends for the private industry in 48 states by industry sector and groups, as well as by worker gender and age groups. A pilot application of Google Public Data based on LED data for seven states: Arizona, California, Iowa, Maine, Ohio, Virginia, and Washington were implemented in January 2011.

  Efforts have continued to build a web based application that visualizes the profiles of U.S. workers by age groups based on LED data as well as begin initial investigation into adding visualization methods to our QWI Online application. More information can be found at http://lehdmap.did.census.gov/.

- ***Project – Modernizing Business Help Site***

  *What's New – Online assistance for business respondents*

  The Census Bureau introduced the Business Help Site (BHS) to provide information to aid businesses in completing census and survey questionnaires. The BHS includes "frequently asked questions," access to regulations, online services such as form re-mails and time extensions, company reporting calendars, and other types of assistance. A Secure Message

Center allows respondents to communicate with the Census Bureau electronically via secure e-mail.

Phase I of the BHS redesign is complete. The new modernized BHS look, feel and functionality will improve its effectiveness in providing assistance to data providers. Phase 2 of the BHS will introduce a survey portal that will be used for some annual surveys and the Economic Census. The portal will allow respondents to access their electronic instruments, online services and SMC. However, they will need to login again to report online or communicate using the SMC. The BHS will continue to be improved to include a Single Sign-on approach. This approach will allow respondents to login once to the BHS for access to online services (including electronic reporting) and the Secure Messaging Center.

More information can be found at http://econhelp.census.gov.

- *Project – Re-engineering State and Local Governments Statistical Programs and Improving Data Presentations*

  *What's New – Improved integration of census and current governments programs, and improved data products*

  Based on extensive consultation with public and private sector data users in a series of workshops, the Census Bureau is re-engineering the government statistics programs. The effect will be better integration of the Census of Governments with associated annual and quarterly tax, finance, pensions, and employment surveys. In addition, tabulations will be improved to better address data user needs. Several improvements already have been introduced, including:

  - summary briefs, issued quarterly, covering government taxes and pensions;

  - annual reports accompany the release of data products, covering government finance, taxes, pensions, and employment;

  - making data more accessible through a variety of modes including data.gov. All state and local governments statistical programs' data are now available through data.gov;

  - a national map of local governments. In addition, Commerce published a graphical summary report of the 2007 Census of Governments;

  - a data user workshop and technical workshop were held in February and March 2012, in which, Commerce staff met with over 60 external stakeholders to discuss data user needs and validate technical methodologies;

  - data visualizations accompanied blog posts published about data releases including the 2009 Annual Survey of State and Local Government Finances in October 2011, the 2010

Annual Survey of School System Finances in June 2012, and the 2011 Annual Survey of Public Employment and Payroll in August 2012;

- public webinars hosted jointly with the Association of Public Data Users to discuss various data products including data about taxes, public pension systems, and special districts; and,

- preliminary counts of governments were released in August 2012 as part of the 2012 Census of Governments. In addition to a national map of local governments, Commerce released two animated maps depicting the change in counts of special district and school district governments over time.

Additionally, Commerce plans to continue making improvements to these programs, including:

- ***increasing the number of data visualizations included in publications; and,***

- ***introducing a variety of new products including informational flyers and slider rulers.***

- ***Project – Adding Web-based Learning Tools to Improve Access to Economic Programs***

    *What's New – On-line resources improve understanding of Census Bureau data and programs*

    The Census Bureau's Economic Programs incorporate vast, complex topics and employ dissemination and collection tools that require some sophistication on the parts of the data user and respondent. New Web-based tools make it easier to understand and use the data and comply with regulations.

    - Videos – Web-based videos explain tools and regulations.  Economic Census-related videos show how to use American FactFinder to accomplish a variety of tasks (http://www.census.gov/econ/census07/www/factfinder_videos/). The Commodity Flow Survey (CFS) video shows respondents how to select a sample of shipment records for reporting on the survey. (http://bhs.econ.census.gov/bhs/cfs/surveytools.html).  Foreign trade videos show how to find and use trade data, submit accurate reports, and comply with trade regulations (http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/aes/exporttraining/videos/). The Secure Messaging Center (SMC) video shows how to register and communicate on the SMC (https://bhs.econ.census.gov/BHS/SMC/smcregvideo.html.  We plan additional videos.

- ***Export Compliance and AES Webinars – The Foreign Trade Division conducts a series of online conferences to help exporters comply with mandatory filing requirements***

- ***(http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/aes/meetingsandpresentations/index.html).***

- *Social Media – The Foreign Trade Division has introduced a blog to show how to find and use trade data, submit accurate reports, and comply with trade regulations.  The blog is updated three times a week and has over 17,000 users*
    ([http://blogs.census.gov/globalreach/](http://blogs.census.gov/globalreach/)).

- *Project – Using mobile technology to improve data dissemination, data collection and employee productivity*

    *What's new – America's Economy app now available on the iOS and Android platforms*

    The Census Bureau released its first mobile app called America's Economy in August 2012. The app makes 16 leading economic indicators available to the public via mobile devices. The Census Bureau collaborated with the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Bureau of Economic Analysis.  The app provides easy access to the indicator data, trend information, up to 24 months of historical data (where available), and a regional breakdown (where available). The app has been very popular since its release and has had almost 40,000 downloads.

    The Census Bureau's OnTheMap application, which provides access to data that shows where workers are employed and where they live, was enhanced to allow easy access from mobile devices. The application (OnTheMap Mobile) can be accessed by Android and iOS devices at [http://onthemap.ces.census.gov/m/](http://onthemap.ces.census.gov/m/).

    The Census Bureau is currently in the process of enhancing its home page ([www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)) to make it more mobile friendly. The enhanced version of the home page will detect where the request is coming from (what type of device) and respond with an appropriately formatted page.

    The Census Bureau is engaged in building several prototypes to determine ways of using mobile devices to improve field data collection activities, as well as to increase employee productivity. The Census Bureau is also in the process of formulating a mobile computing strategy that will guide all efforts related to mobile technology within the Bureau going forward.

- *Project – Application Programming Interface (API)*

    The Application Programming Interface (API) project provides a new online service that makes key demographic, socioeconomic, and housing statistics more accessible than ever before.  The Census Bureau's first ever public API allows developers to design Web and mobile apps to explore or learn more about America's changing population and economy.

    The new API lets developers customize Census Bureau statistics into Web or mobile apps that provide users quick and easy access from popular sets of statistics:

- *2010 Census (Summary File 1), which includes detailed statistics on population*

- *age, sex, race, Hispanic origin, household relationship and owner/renter status,*

- *for a variety of geographic areas down to the level of census tracts and blocks.*

  - *2006-2012 American Community Survey (five year estimates), which includes*

- *detailed statistics on a rich assortment of topics (education, income, employment, commuting, occupation, housing characteristics, and more) down to the level of*

- *Census tracts and block groups.*

The API aligns with the federal digital strategy and serves goals for open government.

- *Project – Implementing the Federal Digital Strategy*

  *What's New – The Census Bureau is fully embracing the business intent of the Federal Digital Strategy for open data, a cost effective mobile strategy, and improving the enterprise architecture and infrastructure to manage the complete data lifecycle.*

  The Digital Government Strategy, released in May 2012, presented a 12-month roadmap for agencies to follow to release better digital services to the American people.

  The Digital Strategy is a critical part of the Open Government initiative, leveraging technology to unlock data and promote transparency with the American public. As a government leader in providing digital products and services, the Census Bureau fully embraces this opportunity and has been working diligently towards a new 21st century digital ecosystem. In the last year, Census has made great strides in delivering on the Digital Government Strategy. As of October, 2012, Census identified the Census Summary File 1 and American Community Survey datasets as first-move candidates to make compliant with new open data, content, and web API policy. This data is also being made available to the public via a standard web API. In December, the bureau was an honorable mention recipient of the Walter Gellhorn Innovation Award for the agency's development of the "America's Economy" mobile app.

  While Census remains a government leader in digital products and services, leadership at the bureau realizes there is even greater potential in connecting existing initiatives and further expanding how citizens access information about our people, economy, and nation as a whole. In late November 2012, Census leadership agreed that the Digital Government Strategy should serve as a vehicle for digital transformation at the Census Bureau – a charge that challenges the Census to envision a future Census digital ecosystem and a path to achieving it. The Census Bureau implementation of the Digital Strategy is based on the fundamental tenet that information is a strategic public asset that must be managed through

the complete lifecycle from data collection through data dissemination.  The Census Bureau will continue to evolve the Bureau's Digital Strategy to ensure openness and application interoperability through shared services and to address heightened awareness of the challenge of maintaining security standards and infrastructure for the growing variety of digital efforts being planned.

There are three foundational elements critical to the success of a future Digital Strategy at Census.

1. Interoperable systems - Improving how our systems exchange data with one another

2. Mobile Flexibility - Strengthening IT infrastructure through modern, scalable tools and software

3. Service Oriented Architecture - Publishing consistent standards to enable reuse and savings

- *Project – Establishing the 2012 Account Manager Program*

The 2012 Account Manager Program is designed to support Economic Programs Directorate Strategic Plan Goal 4: "Limit Respondent Burden". The program looks at large companies across the directorate programs and finds ways to reduce total burden for data providers and to provide expert resources to assist data providers in complete questionnaires. The 2012 program will advance these goals and improve quality and timing of the Economic Census response by providing improved information and individual assistance to a selected group of the largest companies.

- *Project – Implementing the Advance Mailing to 80,000 Businesses that the Census is Coming*

The Advance Mailing is the first major 2012 Economic Census activity. We will mail a letter to 80,000 companies in March 2012, explaining the 2012 Economic Census and requesting contact information via the Census Bureau's Business Help Site. For 2,000 of those companies, we will include an Account Manager's name and contact information.

- *Project – Installing Economic Directorate Change Management and Succession Management Training Program*

In an effort to meet our new strategic vision of being the leader and trusted source in providing comprehensive and timely data that tell the story of the changing economy, the Economic Directorate has developed two new training initiatives. The change management and succession management training programs will provide the means for the Economic Directorate to skillfully and effectively handle change and will help identify, manage, and integrate key positions and key talent in a series of steps that form an ongoing channel of

developing resources, matching supply to demand, and evaluating results to achieve our business goals and priorities. These programs will design, develop, deliver and evaluate effective, efficient, and cost-effective change management and succession planning training to provide the means for Economic Directorate leadership to implement their succession plan process within the Economic Directorate. Over the course of FY12 we offered a broad range of change management and succession planning learning opportunities and exposure of the individuals to as much of the working environment as possible so that they gain a good understanding of what the Economic Directorate requires to remain successful.

- *Project – Testing of Interactive On-line Electronic Tools with the Business Community for the 2012 Economic Census*

Census staff is working with the business community to present the best electronic tools to complete the 2012 Economic Census. Electronic tools include online reporting, requests for time extensions, form re-mails, reporting calendars, and filing status. Usability testing is being performed with the business community to provide feedback on the electronic tools. The Census Bureau uses suggestions from the testing to improve the software, making it more user-friendly and further reducing respondent burden. Respondents have the flexibility to manage their time to complete a survey or census. Electronic reporting also helps to improve the quality of statistical data by using built-in edits. Respondents can communicate confidential information electronically through the Secure Messaging Center (SMC) to get assistance with completing their forms. For the 2007 Economic Census, 54 percent of multiunit establishments reported electronically. In 2012, the expectation is that an even greater number of respondents will submit their data electronically.

- *Project – Accelerating the release of the FT-900: U.S. International Trade in Goods and Services and related releases and data products.*

In response to having more relevant and timely statistics that adhere to the Office of Management and Budget's Statistical Policy Number 3, the Foreign Trade Division will accelerate the release of the *FT-900: U.S. International Trade in Goods and Services* (FT900) beginning with January 2013 statistics. Working together with our partners at the Bureau of Economic Analysis and Statistics Canada, the goal is to release the FT900 accompanied with all underlying detailed statistics on average five days earlier than the current schedule. This translates to providing the Foreign Trade statistics 34 – 36 days after the reference month has ended. By accelerating the release of the Foreign Trade statistics, it will allow other government agencies and private industry to incorporate the data for more efficient economic analysis and decision-making. It will also allow the United States to be more in-line with other major trading partners such as China and Japan, who currently release their trade statistics earlier than the U.S.

- *Project – Improving the Foreign Trade Regulations (FTR)*

What's New- The Census Bureau is amending its FTR to reflect new export reporting requirements.

The Census Bureau is responsible for collecting, compiling, and publishing U.S. International trade in goods. Currently, the Census Bureau is amending the Foreign Trade Regulations (FTR) to reflect new export reporting requirements. The FTR contain the definitions and requirements for reporting export information in the Automated Export System (AES). Specifically, the Census Bureau is requiring mandatory filing of export information through the Automated Export System (AES) or through AES*Direct* for all shipments of used self-propelled vehicles and temporary exports. In addition, the Census Bureau is modifying the required reporting timeframe within the post departure filing program, adding additional security requirements, and is making changes to improve clarity.

More information can be found at:
http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/regulations/npr_ftr_rewrite.pdf

# Economics and Statistics Administration (ESA)

*E*conomics and Statistics Administration (ESA) plays three key roles within the Department of Commerce (DOC). ESA provides timely economic analysis, and disseminates national economic indicators. ESA's expert economists and analysts produce in-depth reports, fact sheets, and briefings on policy issues and current economic events. DOC and White House policymakers rely on these tools, as do American businesses, state and local governments, and news organizations around the world. See our Reports section for a list of recent reports.

ESA also oversees the U.S. Census Bureau (Census) and the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA). In this role, ESA works collaboratively with BEA and Census leadership on high priority management, budget, employment, and risk management issues, integrating the work of these agencies with the priorities and requirements of the Department of Commerce and other government entities.

The table below shows a list of initiatives for ***Economics and Statistics Administration (ESA)***

**Table 7 - ESA Initiatives**

| Operating Unit | Project | Status | Estimated / Actual Completion |
|---|---|---|---|
| ESA | **Economic Indicators** | Ongoing | Continual |
| | **The Competitiveness and Innovative Capacity of the United States** | Completed | January 2012 |

- *Project – Economic Indicators*

  The Economics and Statistics Administration (ESA) releases 12 monthly and quarterly **Principal Federal Economic Indicators** collected by its constituent bureaus: the U.S. Census Bureau and the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA). Businesses rely heavily upon these indicators to make decisions every day. In their public comments, the Secretary and ESA's Under Secretary and Chief Economist put the indicators into a national and global economic context.

- *Project – The Competitiveness and Innovative Capacity of the United States*

On January 4, 2011, President Barack Obama signed into law the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2010 (COMPETES). Section 604 of COMPETES mandates that the Secretary of Commerce complete a study that addresses the economic competitiveness and innovative capacity of the United States (see Supplemental Materials). Congress directed that this report address a diverse array of topics and policy options, including: tax policy; the general business climate in the U.S.; regional issues such as the role of state and local governments in higher education; barriers to setting up new firms; trade policy, including export promotion; the effectiveness of Federal research and development policy; intellectual property regimes in the U.S. and abroad; the health of the manufacturing sector; and science and technology education.

In conducting this study, COMPETES specified that the Secretary of Commerce establish a process for obtaining comments. One part of that process was to establish a 15 member Innovation Advisory Board (IAB) "for purposes of obtaining advice with respect to the conduct of the study." The Department of Commerce announced the members of the IAB (listed in the Supplementary Materials section of this report) on May 4, 2011, and the inaugural meeting of the IAB was on June 6, 2011, in Alexandria, Virginia. A second meeting of the IAB was held September 23, 2011, in Boulder, Colorado. IAB members provided input into the process throughout the summer. Additionally, some IAB members generously hosted COMPETES-related events in Washington, D.C.; Youngstown, Ohio; Morgantown, West Virginia; Philadelphia, PA; and New York, NY. These events brought together community and business leaders, and experts in a wide variety of areas, to share their ideas on competitiveness. Department of Commerce and Administration staff attended all of these meetings.

Additionally, we received input from a number of other groups at various events. These included an all day event with a group of prominent academic economists in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and a conference at the Silicon Flatirons' Center for Law, Technology, and Entrepreneurship at the University of Colorado. Other groups, as well as the general public, provided additional input.

# International Trade Administration (ITA)

*I*nternational Trade Administration's (ITA) mission is to enable U.S. firms and workers to compete and win in the global marketplace. Furthermore, given the importance of the National Export Initiative (NEI) to America's economic recovery, ITA plays a crucial role in its implementation through our programs, people, and global footprint, while leading interagency coordination to expand exports under the Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee (TPCC). ITA is critical to the NEI's success and realizing the President's goal of doubling U.S. exports by the end of 2014.

## GOAL

Create prosperity by strengthening the international competitiveness of U.S. industry promoting trade and investment, and ensuring fair trade and compliance with trade laws and agreements.

## VISION

Foster economic growth and prosperity through global trade.

## VALUES

- High standards of personal integrity and professional excellence
- Mutual respect and teamwork
- Creativity and individual initiative

The table below shows a list of initiatives for *International Trade Administration (ITA)*

**Table 8 - ITA Initiatives**

| Operating Unit | Project | Status | Estimated / Actual Completion |
|---|---|---|---|
| **ITA** | **Improving Online Access to Free Trade Agreement Results: <u>FTA Tariff Tool</u>** | **Phase I: Complete** | **April 11, 2012** |
| | | **Phase II: Development Underway** | **FY2012** |
| | **Improving Online Access to Industry Trade Information: <u>Trade Stats Express - Industry</u>** | **Phase I: Development Underway** | **FY2013** |

- *Project – Improving Online Access to Free Trade Agreement (FTA) Results*

*What's New – Improving public access to tariff and trade data resulting from U.S. FTA negotiations*

ITA has developed a new way for the public to view tariff information and trade statistics for industrial goods under the various FTAs. Previously, the FTA tariff rates for the United States and its FTA partners were available only as large documents appended to the legal texts of the agreements. It was difficult for U.S. exporters and importers to use these documents to determine current and future tariff rates under the agreements. Additionally, users were unable to analyze how the FTAs affect various product groups or sectors, and were unable to examine trade flows with FTA partners via a single website.

ITA's FTA Tariff Tool, deployed in April, 2011, combines tariff and trade data into a simple and easy-to-search public interface. Using the Tool, users can see how U.S. and FTA partner tariffs on individual products—searchable by keyword or tariff code—are treated under an agreement. Additionally, U.S. importers and exporters can see the current tariff and future tariffs applied to their products, as well as the date on which those products become duty-free. Finally, by combining sector and product groups, trade data, and the tariff elimination schedules, users can also analyze how various key sectors are treated under recently concluded FTAs. Since its release in 2011, over 33,100 unique visitors have used the FTA Tariff Tool. On average, the tool has 164 visitors per day.

For FY2012, ITA will be further improving on the FTA Tariff Tool by engaging other agencies in the federal government to further expand the Tool to include agriculture and textile products, along with product-specific rules of origin (ROO).

The FTA Tariff Tool can be located at http://export.gov/FTA/FTATariffTool/.

- *Project – Improving Online Access to Industry Trade Information*

*What's New – Improving public access to trade data via industry-level aggregation*

Following on the success of the [Trade Stats Express](#) website, ITA is exploring the creation of a new database to aid the public and private sectors in analyzing trade data at the industry-level. This project, tentatively called "Trade Stats Express – Industry", will provide the opportunity to retrieve, visualize, analyze, print and download customized trade data at the industry-level, all via a single convenient website.

Specific metrics from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) selected for inclusion currently are: industry employment count, hourly wage, and weekly hours. Specific metrics from the U.S. Census selected for inclusion are: those related to payroll and shipments in the Annual Survey of Manufacturers (ASM) and the most recent Economic Census (conducted every five years).

In addition to the aforementioned list of broad standard metrics that will be reported for all industries, the proposed Trade Stats Express – Industry will include additional metrics that are pertinent to individual industries. These variables will be identified and implemented with assistance from industry experts and would allow Trade Stats Express – Industry to provide a more meaningful picture for each industry. These variables may include the price of key commodity inputs or the performance of substitute/complement markets.

Deployment of the proposed Trade Stats Express – Industry is slated for FY2013.

# Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA)

*M*inority Business Development Agency (MBDA) is an entrepreneurially focused organization committed to wealth creation in minority communities. To foster the growth and global competitiveness of U.S. businesses that are minority-owned.

MBDA actively coordinates and leverages public and private-sector resources that facilitate strategic alliances in support of its mission. MBDA's vision is economic prosperity for all American business enterprises.

MBDA provides funding for a network of Minority business centers located throughout the Nation. The Centers provide minority entrepreneurs with one-on-one assistance in writing business plans, marketing, management and technical assistance and financial planning to assure adequate financing for business ventures.

The Centers are staffed by business specialists who have the knowledge and practical experience needed to run successful and profitable businesses. Business referral services are provided free of charge. However, the network generally charges nominal fees for specific management and technical assistance services. The Centers are located in areas with the largest concentration of minority populations and the largest number of minority businesses. Locate a center near you.

The table below shows a list of initiatives for *Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA)*

**Table 9 - MBDA Initiatives**

| Operating Unit | Project | Status | Estimated / Actual Completion |
|---|---|---|---|
| **MBDA** | **Support of  BusinessUSA.gov Project** | **Active** | **Ongoing** |
| | **Business Development Tools Modernization Project** | **Active** | **End of FY 2013** |

- *Project – Support of  BusinessUSA.gov Project*

*What's new –Integration of MBDA programs and services with BusinessUSA.gov*

In an effort to increase transparency and awareness of its programs and services MBDA is participating on BusinessUSA.gov steering committee to provide a one stop destination of all federal programs that support small businesses. MBDA's role in this effort has been to ensure that its programs and other information specific to minority business enterprises are equitably included within the resulting BusinessUSA.gov portal. The first iteration of BusinessUSA.gov was released on February 17, 2012. Since its release MBDA and the BusinessUSA steering committee have be working on functionality and enhancements to improve the user experience for the portal.

- ***Project – Business Development Tools Modernization Project***

*What's new – Enhancement and redesign of MBDA's business development applications*

MBDA is identifying technology that could be used to enhance or replace its suite of business development applications that residing on the MBDA portal. Historically these tools have been used by MBEs, and MBDA Grantees to support activities associated with their business. Although visitor to MBDA's portal actively used these tools the Agency has determined that they need to be updated to ensure first class experience for visitors of the site. It will also ensure that their experience will be more tailored to their needs and provide a virtual space that can be used to grow their business. A multi-year effort, the ultimate vision for the initiative will be to increase MBE access to financing and procurement opportunities existing within the public and private sector. The first in a series of iterations is expected to be complete by September 2012.

# National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)

**N**ational Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) founded in 1901 is a non-regulatory federal agency within the U.S. Department of Commerce. NIST's mission is to promote U.S. innovation and industrial competitiveness by advancing measurement science, standards, and technology in ways that enhance economic security and improve our quality of life.

The table below shows a list of initiatives for *National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)*

**Table 10 - NIST Initiatives**

| Operating Unit | Project | Status | Estimated / Actual Completion |
|---|---|---|---|
| **NIST** | **Improving Dissemination of Basic Research Results via the NIST and other Web sites** | **Ongoing** | **Sept. 2013** |
| | **Improving access to NIST research results through social media including Wikipedia, Facebook, YouTube, Flickr, and Twitter** | **Ongoing** | **Sept. 2014** |
| | **Improving Access to the Digital Data Repository of NIST Collections, including Publications, Artifacts, and Photographs Relating to Measurement Science** | **Ongoing** | **Sept. 2014** |
| | **Making Photos and Videos from the 9/11 Investigation available to the public** | **Complete** | **8/12/11** |

- *Project – Improving Dissemination of Basic Research Results via the NIST and other Web sites*

  *What's New – Institute-wide effort to examine and make recommendations on standardized long-term solution to improve access to both current and historical collections of publications and data authored or co-authored by NIST researchers or facility users.*

  *Ongoing – Improved tagging of content to ease search, simplifying public feedback process; use of social media to announce research results*

Several years ago, as part of an effort to broadly disseminate its research results, NIST implemented a content management system, which included access to an improved database of research papers authored or co-authored by NIST researchers. Content is "tagged" by topic, enabling the public to subscribe to receive new information posted on the Web site on specific topics of interest such as nanotechnology or energy-related research. Currently, there are more than 60,000 subscribers who receive information on approximately 160 different topics. The Web site also allows members of the public to comment or ask questions about posted research articles and to easily share content from the NIST site with their own Web sites (more than 3,000 "shares" in just 4 months of this fiscal year).

In the last 110 years, NIST published hundreds of technical reports such as NISTIRs and Technical Notes – which were targeted to very specific audiences. Some of these topics are of interest to a broader audience, so NIST is republishing them electronically as papers in the Journal of Research of NIST. Because the Journal of Research is indexed in major scientific/technical databases, these republished reports will reach a broader audience and are more likely to be used and cited, increasing the impact of NIST research. NIST staff members are tracking the number of web hits on and the number of citations of those papers to make a measurement-based determination of the effectiveness of this strategy.

- ***Project – Improving Dissemination and Access to Basic Research Results via Social Media***

   *What's New – NIST has expanded the scope of materials linked to Wikipedia entries to include NIST technical reports and images in the NIST Digital Archives. NIST has increased use of Twitter (for example by participating in a Twitter chat recently on manufacturing R&D) and by expanding use of Twitter to allow the public to ask questions and participate in conferences remotely through Webinars.*

   NIST has created sites on YouTube (more than 2,000 subscribers), Facebook (more than 4,500 "likes"), Twitter (4,800 "followers"), and Flickr (more than 17,000 images viewed). To ensure that as many people as possible benefit from NIST's work, news of major research results posted on the new NIST Web site is routinely announced through these additional social media sites.

   NIST continues to use Wikipedia to improve dissemination of its research results to the public. For selected topics NIST staff members continue to add links to NIST technical reports or papers in the Journal of Research of NIST, to make NIST research information more readily available in a highly used web resource. NIST staff members are adding links to images and descriptions of scientific instruments in the NIST Digital Archives. NIST staff members are tracking the number of web hits on and the number of citations of those reports and papers to make a measurement-based determination of the effectiveness of this strategy to increase the impact of NIST research.

- *Project – Improving Access to the Digital Data Repository of NIST Collections, including Publications, Artifacts, and Photographs Relating to Measurement Science*

  *What's New – NIST is participating in the Library of Congress Open Content Alliance FedScan Initiative. This initiative is major digitization, digital preservation, and access service for the federal library community to build a permanent accessible archive of digitized text and multimedia material.*

  *Ongoing – Using Open Archives Protocol to allow automatic harvesting by major search engines and research repositories*

  Currently, information regarding NIST publications is electronically available through its Research Library's online catalog, which includes links to the full text of many publications. Information about some of the objects in NIST's museum is also available through the NIST Virtual Museum. The online catalog and the NIST Virtual Museum are available to the public.

  In fiscal year 2011, NIST implemented the NIST Digital Archives, a digital library repository. The Digital Archives conforms to the latest library and publishing metadata standards to enhance the ability of other scholarly and research repositories to discover and harvest information. It contains the full text of NIST's technical publications, including the Journal of Research, as well as images of and information about NIST historical scientific objects. The metadata conforms to the Open Archives Initiative Protocol for Metadata Harvesting, which is the accepted standard within scholarly and scientific communities for making the contents of information collections available to researchers. File formats adhere to Government Printing Office, Library of Congress, and NARA preservation requirements. NIST is collaborating with the Library of Congress and the Internet Archive to digitize NIST's legacy publications through the Open Content Alliance FedScan initiative. The NIST Digital Archives permits the digital forms of NIST's technical publications and other content to be easily searchable by the public through major Internet search engines, such as Google, Google Books, Google Scholar, WorldCat, and Yahoo. Through the FedScan initiative NIST's legacy publications are scanned, processed through a rigorous quality assurance protocol, and made available to the public in a variety of file formats (e.g., Daisy, EPub, Kindle) through the Internet Archive website. All file formats are also provided back to NIST. These multiple efforts and searchable access points significantly enhance dissemination and use of NIST's research results.

- *Project – Making Photos and Videos from the 9/11 Investigation available to the public*

  NIST acquired a large amount of visual material as part of its World Trade Center Investigation. A subset of this material, including photographs and video clips, was organized into a searchable database in which each image and video clip was characterized by a set of attributes including: source/owner, time of shot/video, content (including building,

face(s), key events such as plane strike, fireballs, collapse), and other details. These materials can be obtained by visiting http://wtcdata.nist.gov/index2.htm.

# National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

$N$ational Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is an agency that enriches life through science. Our reach goes from the surface of the sun to the depths of the ocean floor working to keep citizens informed of the changing environment around them.

The range from daily weather forecasts, severe storm warnings and climate monitoring to fisheries management, coastal restoration and supporting marine commerce, NOAA's products and services support economic vitality and affect more than one-third of America's gross domestic product. NOAA's dedicated scientists use cutting-edge research and high-tech instrumentation to provide citizens, planners, emergency managers and other decision makers with reliable information they need when they need it.

NOAA's roots date back to 1807, when the Nation's first scientific agency, the Survey of the Coast, was established. Since then, NOAA has evolved to meet the needs of a changing country. NOAA maintains a presence in every state and has emerged as an international leader on scientific and environmental matters.

NOAA's mission touches the lives of every American and has a role in protecting life and property and conserving and protecting natural resources.

The table below shows a list of initiatives for *National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)*

**Table 11 - NOAA Initiatives**

| Operating Unit | Project | Status | Estimated / Actual Completion |
|---|---|---|---|
| **NOAA** | **Modernizing the NOAA Climate Database** | Shutdown Closeout | Estimated FY13, Early Q3 |
| | **Improving Access to Severe Weather Data Inventory (SWDI)** | Ongoing Incremental Improvement | Completed |

| Operating Unit | Project | Status | Estimated / Actual Completion |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **Upgrading Ocean Surface Current Simulator** | Ongoing Incremental Improvement | Completed |
| | **Instituting Online Access to Regional Data in Partnership with the San Francisco Exploratorium** | Ongoing Incremental Improvement | Completed |
| | **Providing Online Access to Historical Climate Data Through Historical Climate Reanalysis Project** | Completed | Completed |
| | **Establishing NOAA Climate Services Portal** | Ongoing Incremental Improvement | Completed |

- *Project – Modernizing the NOAA Climate Database*

*What's New – Converting 19th century paper shoreline charts to digital geo-referenced images to track and compare current and historical shoreline change.*

The Climate Data Modernization Program (CDMP) supports NOAA's responsibility to collect, integrate, assimilate and effectively manage Earth observations on a global scale, ranging from atmospheric, weather, and climate observations to oceanic, coastal, and marine life observations. Many of these data were originally recorded on paper, film, and other fragile media. Prior to CDMP, not only were these valuable data sources mostly unavailable to the scientific community, but storage technology for the archive had become obsolete. Today, CDMP has greatly improved the preservation of and access to NOAA's holdings by migrating many of these resources to new digital media. CDMP has placed online over 54 million weather and environmental images that are now available to researchers around the world via the Internet. The amount of data online has grown from 1.75 terabytes in 2001 to over 15 terabytes in 2011. One rescue project involves research done under the direction of some of the leading American scientists of the 19th century, the United States Coast Survey created exceptionally accurate and detailed maps of the country's coastline. In the San Francisco Bay Area, these surveys (commonly referred to as "T-sheets") are the most important data sources for understanding the physical and ecological characteristics of the Bay's shoreline prior to Euro-American modification. One of NOAA's Climate Database Modernization Program (CDMP) multiyear tasks is to convert approximately 15,000 old manuscript paper copy T-sheets from the 1840s through the 1980s to digital geo-referenced and vectorized image products accessible via GIS technology. Nearly 200 of these images were provided to San Francisco Estuary Institute, http://www.caltsheets.org  allows these

remarkable maps to be viewed in full detail and overlaid on modern aerial photography. These GIS files with metadata and JPEG images can also be downloaded. These baseline data will be useful for a range of current concerns, including wetland restoration, shoreline protection and identifying engineering hazards and potential contamination associated with San Francisco Bay fill. The increase in the quality and quantity of historical climate and environmental data helps researchers worldwide improve real-time monitoring and forecasting of environmental, solar and geophysical events.

- *Project – Improving Access to Severe Weather Data Inventory (SWDI)*

*What's New – Simplified access to current and past information about severe weather incidents*

The SWDI at NOAA's National Climatic Data Center (NCDC) provides users access to archives of several data sets critical to the detection and evaluation of severe weather. These data sets include:

- Next Generation Radar – or NEXRAD – Level-III point features describing general storm structure, hail, mesocyclone and tornado signatures,

- NWS local storm reports collected from storm spotters,

- Lightning strikes from Vaisala's National Lightning Detection Network.

SWDI provides these data sets in a spatial database that permits convenient searching. These data are accessible via the NCDC Web site, FTP or automated Web services. The results of interactive Google Maps-based Web page queries may be saved in a variety of formats, including plain text, XML, Google Earth's KMZ, and Shapefile. Summary statistics, such as daily counts, allow efficient discovery of severe weather events. More information may be obtained at http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/swdi.

- *Project – Upgrading Ocean Surface Current Simulator*

*What's New – Upgrading the ability to visualize changes in ocean surface currents*

The Ocean Surface Current Simulator (OSCURS) numerical model is a research tool that allows oceanographers and fisheries scientists to perform retrospective analyses of daily ocean surface currents anywhere in an ocean-wide grid of 90 km cells that stretches from Baja California to China and from 10 degrees north of the equator to the Bering Strait. This model is used to measure the movement of surface currents over time, as well as the movement of what is in or on the water.  Ocean surface currents affect organisms suspended in the water column – such as fish eggs, small larvae, and plankton – and may affect their survival by determining their location after a few months of drift. Even swimming or migrating fish or mammals may have their destinations significantly offset by currents or the

annual variability of currents. OSCURS has gained visibility as an accidental debris tracker to analyze accidental but fortuitous at-sea events beyond the scale of normal oceanographic science. Investigations of events such as spills of cargo containers loaded with plastic bathtub toys have been used to fine-tune the OSCURS model.

An updated interface to serve the OSCURS model has been developed by NOAA (http://las.pfeg.noaa.gov/oscurs) that uses Google Maps as the visualization tool and the latest in AJAX technology to improve users' experience.

- *Project – Instituting Online Access to Regional Data in Partnership with the San Francisco Exploratorium*

  *What's New – Near real-time ability to visualize weather and water conditions in San Francisco Bay*

  NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service has developed a new way to visualize regional data in the San Francisco Bay (http://las.pfeg.noaa.gov/SFBay or on a tablet: http://las.pfeg.noaa.gov/SFBay/tablet). Data from shore stations, buoys, high-frequency radar, and satellites are available, but scattered among many Web pages and stored in many formats making it difficult for regional and public interests in the San Francisco Bay area to visualize and use this system to assess real-time conditions.

  As a demonstration tool to support NOAA's new partnership with the renowned science museum, the Exploratorium, and in collaboration with the Central and Northern California Ocean Observing System and other regional data providers, NOAA developed a Web page to make it easy to visualize near-real time data in San Francisco Bay. The interface uses Google Maps and the latest AJAX technology to combine and compare data from diverse sources. Users can visualize water temperature, salinity, and other station-based measurements along with overlays of satellite measurements of Sea Surface Temperature (SST) and radar measurements of currents, and can compare time series of measurements from various stations and sources. Use of the web page on tablets on the Exploratorium floor enhances public understanding of the environment. For example, the arrival of the tsunami-generated water level signal at tidal stations in San Francisco Bay was viewed on Exploratorium tablets with great interest in real-time by museum visitors during and after the Japanese earthquake and tsunami of March 2011.

- *Project – Providing Online Access to Historical Climate Data Through Historical Climate Reanalysis Project*

  *What's New – Re-launching and expanding access to data sets describing past weather*

  The Historical Climate Reanalysis Project uses a three-dimensional globally-complete climate model and available weather observations to produce output fields of weather

variables measured four times daily from 1871, to the present. Using what are often, especially in earlier years, sparse data sets of observations, the Project is able to reconstruct past weather and fill in missing data values around the rest of the globe. These data are available through a number of different types of Web-based, interactive plotting pages as well as file download. In addition to generating plots, users are able to conduct basic analyses of data, download subsets of data, and obtain data in Google Earth format, which will permit easy visualization by the general public using the Google Earth application.

Currently, the data are available at the Physical Sciences Division of NOAA's Earth Systems Research Laboratory only in "grib" format, which is difficult to read and not available for online plotting and analysis. The complete dataset itself is well over four terabytes, so examining even portions of it requires enormous storage space and computing resources.

By enabling the public to work with the data and data products online, NOAA will allow users to examine past weather and climate events in a detailed way never before possible. Version 1 of the Project is available today at http://www.esrl.noaa.gov/psd/data/20thC_Rean/ However, it spans only the years 1908 through 1958 and does not include the interactive plotting tools described above. NOAA expects Version 2 to include data for 1891, to the present, provide online plotting and analysis tools, and be available online during the second quarter of calendar year 2010.

- *Project – Establishing NOAA Climate Services Portal*

*What's New – Enhanced Access to NOAA Climate Information*

NOAA is enhancing its climate information Web presence in response to customer requirements, emerging needs for improved decision-making capabilities across all sectors of society facing impacts from climate variability and change, and the value of leveraging climate data and services to support the private sector, the Nation's economy, research, and public education. NOAA is developing a Climate Services Portal with the goal to become the "go-to" Web site for NOAA's climate data, products, and services for all users. The portal (now called NOAA Climate.gov) was released for public access in early 2010 as a prototype, and at this stage only scratches the surface of the many climate datasets, products, and services available across NOAA. The prototype highlights some of most popular datasets and products based on customer usage of the data, focused on numerous datasets and products from NOAA's National Climatic Data Center, Coastal Services Center, and Climate Prediction Center, among others.  NOAA is continuing to gather user feedback through focus groups, usability studies, and informal communications, and an extensive study was completed in FY12.  Over the next several years, NOAA will expand Climate.gov's scope and functionality in a user-driven manner to enhance the access to, and extensibility of, climate data and services, timely articles and information, education resources, and tools for engagement and decision-making.

# National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)

*N*ational Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) is the Executive Branch agency that is principally responsible for advising the President on telecommunications and information policy issues. NTIA's programs and policymaking focus largely on expanding broadband Internet access and adoption in America, expanding the use of spectrum by all users, and ensuring that the Internet remains an engine for continued innovation and economic growth.

The table below shows a list of initiatives for *National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)*

**Table 12 - NTIA Initiatives**

| Operating Unit | Project | Status | Estimated / Actual Completion |
|---|---|---|---|
| **NTIA** | **Creating a National Broadband Map** | **Ongoing** | |
| | **Establishing Online Access to Results of Broadband Survey** | **Ongoing** | |

NTIA is embarking on a series of data collection and dissemination initiatives to provide a more detailed, quantitative understanding of broadband Internet access and use in the United States. This information will inform efforts to increase broadband access and adoption, thereby supporting economic growth. Initiatives will include data collected through NTIA's broadband mapping program and a new broadband-related survey.

- *Project – Creating a National Broadband Map*

  *What's New – National, interactive map showing broadband availability and speeds*

Through its State Broadband Data and Development Grant Program, which is funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, NTIA awards financial assistance grants for broadband data collection and planning. Data is displayed in NTIA's National Broadband Map, which was made publicly available in March 2011. The map displays the geographic areas where broadband service is available and its speed, as well as the technology by which it is provided, and its availability at public schools, libraries, hospitals, colleges, universities, and public buildings. The National Broadband Map is interactive and searchable by address, and identifies broadband service providers by census block or street segment. Data collection began in 2009 and continues to take place semiannually. Data sets are presented in a clear, accessible, and open format to the public, government, and research community. This initiative provides broadband information at an unprecedented level of comprehensiveness and granularity.

- *Project – Establishing Online Access to Results of Broadband Survey*

  *What's New – Resuming use of the Census Bureau's periodic Current Population Survey to study Internet usage*

  Working with the Census Bureau, NTIA has undertaken a series of 54,000-household Internet-use supplements to the basic *Current Population Survey, most recently in October 2009, October 2010, and July 2011.* Through this effort, NTIA is examining why people do not use high-speed Internet service and is exploring differences in Internet adoption and usage patterns around the country and across socio-economic groups. NTIA is releasing these data in open, Web-based formats, making the survey instruments and associated reports as widely available as possible.

# National Technical Information Service (NTIS)

**N**ational Technical Information Service (NTIS) seeks to promote American innovation and economic growth by collecting and disseminating scientific, technical and engineering information (STEI) to the public and industry, by providing information management solutions to other Federal agencies, and by doing all without appropriated funding. NTIS outreach to the public and industry is for the purpose of promoting scientific research and technology transfer to enhance economic growth.

The table below shows a list of initiatives for *National Technical Information Service (NTIS)*

**Table 13 - NTIS Initiatives**

| Operating Unit | Project | Status | Estimated / Actual Completion |
|---|---|---|---|
| **NTIS** | **Making Five Years of Bibliographic Data Searchable (Data.gov)** | Released Jan. 2010 | Regular Updates |
| | **National Technical Reports Library (NTRL)** | | |
| | Online access to an electronic library of over 2 million bibliographic records (dating from 1964)<br>Links to over 700,000 corresponding full-text reports<br>Coverage from the late 1890's to present (most reports date from the 1970's to present.)<br>Search engine capabilities | Release 1, 2009<br>Release 2, 2011<br>Release 3, 2012 | Content continuously added; software upgrades periodically |
| | **Federal Science Repository Service (FSRS)** | | |

| Operating Unit | Project | Status | Estimated / Actual Completion |
|---|---|---|---|
| | The FSRS is based on open-source approaches, is durable against technological changes, and is flexible enough to support broad and varied uses, increasing access to the Federal Government's data and information.<br><br>• *Storage and preservation of diverse resources*<br><br>• *Ingestion of distributed content*<br><br>• *Access control customized to agency requirements*<br><br>• *A robust interface with advanced metadata and full text search, filtering, and full-text and media display* | Launched 2011 | Federal Projects in Development |

- *Project – Making Five Years of Bibliographic Data Searchable*

  NTIS is making the latest five years of the NTIS Bibliographic File searchable via Data.gov. The file contains over 180,000 bibliographic records that link to a Web-store of federally funded technical reports from a broad spectrum of federal agencies. This bibliographic file is being made available through Data.gov in a compiled XML format, which will – for the first time – fully open access to NTIS' technical reports collection to Web exposure and extraction. Titles within the NTIS Collection represent billions of dollars in research. Metadata content corresponds to research reports, computer products, software, video cassettes, audio cassettes and more. Data includes such fields as Title, Author, Source Agency, Document Type, Page Count, Category Code, as well as a link to NTIS' online ordering system for those who wish to purchase the title directly from NTIS. Users can also access the NTIS Website at www.ntis.gov to search, identify and purchase items within the NTIS Collection of more than 3,000,000 products.

- *National Technical Reports Library (NTRL)*

  The National Technical Reports Library (NTRL) provides access to the largest collection of U.S. Government-sponsored technical reports. There is metadata for more than 2 million records with links to approximately 700,000 digitized full-text reports. Primarily, the NTRL provides an open environment online subscription access to the results of U.S. Government-sponsored basic and applied research.

The development of the NTRL is rooted within NTIS' basic authority to operate a permanent clearinghouse of scientific and technical information as codified in chapter 23 of Title 15 of the United States Code (15 U.S.C. 1151-1157). This chapter also established NTIS' authority to provide products and services in a cost sustainable manner. Federal Agencies are required to provide their research results to NTIS per the American Technology Preeminence Act (ATPA), and the results are available to the public in perpetuity.

- *Federal Science Repository Service (FSRS)*

NTIS created the Federal Science Repository Service (FSRS) to transition and modernize the Federal investment in scientific research. Building on the existing Federal information assets of Data.gov and Science.gov, the FSRS creates a common foundational platform to move existing science discovery to the future of e-science while embodying the principles of technology transfer--research, innovation, and economic growth. The FSRS is an information management tool that can be used effectively by Federal agencies, laboratories, and the science community. The objective for these more robust repositories for federally funded scientific content has been to highlight interagency collaboration and interoperability of various data object types joined together for ease of discovery and access. Developed with a private-public partnership, the FSRS fulfills the Federal archival mandate for opening up access to Federally-funded scientific research.

# United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO)

*U*nited States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) is the Federal agency for granting U.S. patents and registering trademarks. In doing this, the USPTO fulfills the mandate of Article I, Section 8, Clause 8, of the Constitution that the Executive branch "promote the progress of science and the useful arts by securing for limited times to inventors the exclusive right to their respective discoveries." The USPTO registers trademarks based on the Commerce Clause of the Constitution (Article I, Section 8, Clause 3). Under this system of protection, American industry has flourished. New products have been invented, new uses for old ones discovered, and employment opportunities created for millions of Americans. The strength and vitality of the U.S. economy depends directly on effective mechanisms that protect new ideas and investments in innovation and creativity. The continued demand for patents and trademarks underscores the ingenuity of American inventors and entrepreneurs. The USPTO is at the cutting edge of the Nation's technological progress and achievement.

The USPTO advises the President of the United States, the Secretary of Commerce, and U.S. Government agencies on intellectual property (IP) policy, protection, and enforcement; and promotes the stronger and more effective IP protection around the world. The USPTO furthers effective IP protection for U.S. innovators and entrepreneurs worldwide by working with other agencies to secure strong IP provisions in free trade and other international agreements. It also provides training, education, and capacity building programs designed to foster respect for IP and encourage the development of strong IP enforcement regimes by U.S. trading partners.

The table below shows a list of initiatives for *United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO)*.

**Table 14 - USPTO Initiatives**

| Operating Unit | Project/Major Milestone | Status | Estimated / Actual Completion |
|---|---|---|---|
| **USPTO** | *Improving Transparency* | | |

| Operating Unit | Project/Major Milestone | Status | Estimated / Actual Completion |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Customer service enhancements related to the American Invents Act | underway | FY2013 (projected) |
| | Trademark Educational Outreach Program | Established | March 2012 |
| | Estimator for Patent first office action on the USPTO website | completed | April 2012 |
| | Social Media | | |
| | *Improving Participation* | | |
| | America Invents Act Roadshow – Fall 2012 | Scheduled | September 2012 |
| | Redesign of www.uspto.gov | Underway | FY2013 |
| | National Trademark Expo – 2012 | planned | October 2012 |
| | Using Challenge.gov to modernize tools for patent examination | closed | April 2012 |
| | Using Challenge.gov for Patents for Humanity submissions | accepting submissions | December 2012 (projected) |
| | Improving the Manual of Patent Examining Procedures (MPEP) and Manual of Trademark Examining Procedures (TMEP) through a public discussion forum | ongoing | |
| | Roundtable regarding Identifications of Goods and Services | completed | February 2012 |
| | Patent Public Advisory Committees | ongoing | |
| | Trademark Public Advisory Committee | ongoing | |
| | *Improving Collaboration* | | |
| | Satellite offices – Detroit | Opened | July 13, 2012 |
| | Thomas Alva Edison Visiting Professionals Program | established | February 2012 |
| | Seeking public comment on new locations for satellite offices | completed | January 30, 2012 |
| | Trademark Public Advisory Committee | ongoing | N/A |

- *Project– Improving Transparency*

 *Milestone – Making Patent Maintenance Fee Events data available in machine-readable form for the first time [completed]*

The USPTO works to improve transparency by harnessing new technologies to put its data and other program information online and readily available to the public. More data is freely available online than ever before, with searchable databases and free downloadable datasets representing an annual dissemination of over 7,000 patent weekly data files and over 10,000 trademark daily data files. USPTO's online dashboards, updated monthly at http://www.uspto.gov/dashboards, offer insight into pendency, quality, and other activities.

*What's New – Customer Service enhancements related to the American Invents Act*

In September 2011 the Leahy-Smith America Invents Act (AIA) was signed into law. This law changes the manner in which patents are issued to the public, and there are 20 AIA provisions related to USPTO operations which take effect between September 2011 and March 2013.

The USPTO created a special area on its website to disseminate information and provide guidance to the public regarding the changes prescribed by the law. New features and capabilities will be added on this AIA website to improve the organization of information, and to provide answers regarding various aspects of the law and the resulting regulations.

*Milestone - Trademark Educational Outreach Program*

In March 2012, the USPTO announced the launch of its new trademark educational outreach program. The program will promote partnerships with colleges and universities, entrepreneurship clubs, and similar groups to present informational lectures on trademarks. The lectures will be conducted by a USPTO attorney in a location designated by the sponsoring organization. The target audiences are non-trademark attorneys, the small business community, the entrepreneurial community, and students.

*Milestone – Estimator for Patent first office action*

In April 2012, the USPTO launched a tool on its website to allow current and potential applicants to check current estimates on how long it will take for a first office action on a patent application. Estimates are calculated based on the Art Unit or Class and Subclass associated with a current or potential application.

- ***Program – Improving Participation***

*Milestone – Providing online access to assignment documents [**completed**]*

In August 2011, the USPTO began offering on its website the ability to view or print the cover sheet and underlying documents supporting a recorded trademark assignment.

*Milestone – Virtualization for Trademark Document Retrieval (TDR) [**completed**]*

In April 2011, the TDR system became the first USPTO application running partially in a cloud-computing environment. Virtualization and cloud computing are now the industry standards in information technology solutions, and the USPTO is taking advantage of this technology to provide full end-to-end electronic processing for Trademarks. It is the agency's first step toward the Trademarks Next Generation goal of providing a system that is faster, more practical, more feature-rich, and reliable for both the public and staff. This new system will eventually provide direct the ability to access data directly, including multimedia content. The USPTO improves public engagement through its outreach efforts involving public events and new social media tools. With more than 11,000 Facebook followers and 9,000 Twitter subscribers, USPTO has broadened participation beyond traditional means such as roundtables and seminars.

*What's New – America Invents Act Fall 2012 Roadshows*

The USPTO is hosting eight roadshows during September 2012 to interact with the public in a discussion of new final rules implementing provisions of the America Invents Act that become effective on September 16, 2012, as well as proposed rules scheduled to go into effect in the Spring of 2013. The final rules relate to provisions for inventor's oath/declaration, preissuance submissions, citation of patent owner statements, supplemental examination, inter partes review, post grant review, and covered business method review. An agenda and directions for all events are published on the website. The roadshows are free and open to the public; pre-registration is not required. The agency will webcast the roadshows during the first week (from Minneapolis, Alexandria, and Los Angeles) and post videos of those events on the micro-site. Copies of the written materials will also be made available on the website.

*What's New – Website Improvements for www.uspto.gov*

The USPTO is undertaking an effort to redesign its website, www.uspto.gov using feedback gathered through its website satisfaction survey and interactive focus sessions with inventors, legal professionals, and others in the IP community. A more user-friendly site will go live in fiscal year 2013.

*Milestone – 2012 Trademark Expo [upcoming]*

The United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) will host its annual National Trademark Expo on Friday, Oct. 19, and Saturday, Oct. 20, at the USPTO's headquarters in Alexandria, Va. The free, two-day event is designed to educate the public about trademarks and their importance in the global marketplace. Last year's National Trademark Expo attracted more than 15,000 visitors of all ages. Exhibitors will showcase their federally-registered trademarks through educational exhibits, including booths, themed displays, costumed characters, and inflatables. In addition, the expo features educational seminars and children's workshops and activities.

*Milestone – using Challenge.gov to recognize patents for humanitarian needs [underway]*

Announced in February 2012, Patents for Humanity is an awards competition for patent owners and licensees. It is the USPTO's voluntary pilot program to recognize patent owners who apply their patented technology to address humanitarian needs. The program advances the president's global development agenda by rewarding companies who bring life-saving technologies to underserved people of the world, while showing how patents are an integral part of tackling the world's challenges. The submission period is March 1, 2012 – Oct. 31, 2012. Participants are sending in applications describing how they've used their patented technology or products to address humanitarian challenges. Judges will choose winners in four categories: medical technology, food and nutrition, clean technology and information technology. Winners will receive a certificate for accelerated processing of select patent USPTO matters. The program creates a powerful tool for businesses to expedite handling of their most important matters and help validate technology in the market – leading to quicker and more efficient investment decisions.

Highlighting success stories of humanitarian engagement that are compatible with business interests and strong patent rights will demonstrate how businesses can effectively contribute while maintaining commercial markets.

*Ongoing – Improving the Manual of Patent Examining Procedures (MPEP) and Manual of Trademark Examining Procedures (TMEP) through a public discussion forum*

The USPTO continues to rely on an innovative online tool that was launched in January 2011 to foster public discussion of ideas for improving the MPEP and TMEP. Collected suggestions and comments are considered during the production of subsequent editions of these important publications. As of September 30, 2012, the MPEP site lists 84 ideas, with 270 comments and 435 votes, and the TMEP site shows 23 ideas, 53 comments, and 62 votes.

In September 2012, the USPTO uploaded a searchable MPEP and the agency launched a new online version of the TMEP 8th edition with new search and help tools.

*Ongoing – Public Advisory Committees*

The Public Advisory Committees for the USPTO were created by statute in the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 to advise the Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the USPTO on the management of the patent and the trademark operations. The Advisory Committees consist of citizens of the United States chosen to represent the interests of the diverse users of the USPTO. The Advisory Committees review the policies, goals, performance, budget, and user fees of the patent and trademark operations, respectively, and advise the Director on these matters. Appointments to the

Advisory Committee are made by the Secretary of Commerce. Agendas, live webcasts, and transcripts of past meetings are available on the USPTO website at http://www.uspto.gov/about/advisory/.

- ***Program – Improving Collaboration***
  The USPTO engages in active collaboration with the public, nonprofit organizations, businesses, and individuals, along with other agencies and all levels of government.

*What's New – Satellite Offices*

On July 13, 2012, Acting U.S. Commerce Secretary Rebecca Blank and Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) David Kappos, along with elected officials, participated in a ribbon-cutting ceremony to officially open the Elijah J. McCoy USPTO in Detroit, Michigan – the first-ever U.S. Patent and Trademark Office location outside of the Washington, D.C., area. The Department of Commerce and the USPTO also announced in June that additional regional USPTO offices will open in Dallas-Ft. Worth, Texas, Denver, Colo., and Silicon Valley, Calif. The four offices will function as hubs of innovation and creativity, helping protect and foster American innovation in the global marketplace, helping businesses cut through red tape, and creating new economic opportunities in each of the local communities.

*Milestone – Thomas Alva Edison Visiting Professionals Program*

On February 16, 2012, the USPTO announced the establishment of a new program designed to tap expertise of distinguished IP professionals and academics. The Thomas Alva Edison Visiting Professionals Program enlists the services of leaders in academia and the intellectual property (IP) industry who can devote up to six months of service to the agency on a full time basis. The first Edison Professional, Jay Thomas, a tenured member of the Georgetown University law faculty, previously served at the USPTO as an instructor at the Patent Academy.

# Office of the Secretary (OS)

*O*ffice of the Secretary is the general management arm of the Department and provides the principal support to the Secretary in formulating policy and in providing advice to the President. It provides program leadership for the Department's functions and exercises general supervision over the operating units. It also directly carries out program functions as may be assigned by the Secretary, and provides, as determined to be more economic or efficient, administrative and other support services for designated operating units. The Office of the Secretary consists of the Secretary, certain Secretarial Officers, designated staff immediately serving those officials, and a number of "Departmental offices" which have Department-wide functions or perform special program functions directly on behalf of the Secretary.

The table below shows a list of initiatives for *Office of the Secretary (OS)*

**Table 15 - OS Initiatives**

| Operating Unit | Project | Status | Estimated / Actual Completion |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Office of the Secretary** | **Publishing Public Schedule Data for Secretary Online** | **On-hold** | **4th Quarter 2012** |
| | **Expanding Video Streaming for More Commerce Meetings** | **Canceled budget** | **N/A** |

- *Project – Publishing Schedule Data for Secretary Online*

   *What's new – Regularly updated, searchable feed of the Secretary's public schedule*

   The Office of Public Affairs, in conjunction with the Offices of Scheduling and Business Liaison, now releases the Commerce Secretary's public schedule on a daily basis. Commerce intends for this data to be as readable and as complete as possible. It is currently examining options for dealing with technical and managerial hurdles involved in regularly releasing this data, this was originally planned to begin posting it on Commerce.gov and Data.gov by the end of 2010. Currently the public schedule is tweeted out via @CommerceSec but is not available on the website. The department was working to

integrate this feature with a target of 4ᵗʰ Quarter 2012. However, the due to budget constraints this project has been put on hold.

- ***Project – Expanding Video Streaming for More Commerce Meetings***

  *What's new – Expanded availability of Commerce meetings via the Web*

  One of the more widely requested methods of being more transparent involves streaming video of appropriate Commerce meetings for public viewing. While it would be prohibitively expensive to provide video access to all meetings that occur at Commerce on any given day, it is important to increase the extent to which streaming is currently employed. To do so, Commerce had planned to meet core new media objectives relative to streaming meetings or events in 2011. However, due to budget this objective has been canceled until such time that it is economically feasible.

# Conclusion

*D*epartment of Commerce is committed to the principles of Open Government transparency, participation and collaboration while insuring privacy and national security. It will build on our long history of information dissemination while adopting new tools and technology available to make its actions, decisions and information more transparent and accessible to the American people. It will continue to encourage and strive for increased participation among its employees, with other government agencies and by the American people.

This plan represents our ongoing growth from our beginning in the Open Government efforts and includes the changes in a continuing journey – a journey toward a more fully open and effective Department of Commerce. As implementation proceeds, the team of open government collaborators is growing both internally and externally. Commerce will continue to make public its ideas and plans to become more open on the Open Government Web site – www.commerce.gov/open – and to seek input from stakeholders to help in achieving that objective.

The Department invites the American public to join in as it moves toward a more collaborative, effective provider of government services and information.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
OPEN GOVERNMENT PLAN

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