

# United States Department of Commerce Open Government Plan



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



September 2016  
*Version 4.0*



## FOREWORD

*September 2016*

The Department of Commerce's (Department) continued commitment to the principles of Open Government is presented in the release of the September 2016 "Department of Commerce Open Government Plan" (Plan). We update our Plan annually to ensure the most current status of existing initiatives, as well as a discussion of new initiatives are made available to the public. The release of this Plan, version 4.0, represents the Department's sixth publication. This version builds on our long history of innovative approaches to information dissemination and the adoption of new tools and technology that help enable the principles of Open Government—transparency, participation, and collaboration.

The concept of Open Government is integral to the Department's mission and to that end, we have been one of the leaders in Open Government across the Federal government. The Department continues its leadership by encouraging and striving for increased participation and collaboration among its employees, external government agencies, and the American people.

Comprised of twelve (12) different agencies or bureaus and operating units (BOUs), responsible for everything from weather forecasts to patent protection and providing quality data about the nation's people and economy, the Department touches the lives of Americans every day. This Plan includes progress updates from our BOUs on previously reported Open Government initiatives that support the core mission of the Department. A summary of "What's New," has been added after the introduction section, which describes new initiatives. Furthermore, beginning with this version, the Office of the Secretary's BusinessUSA flagship initiatives will no longer be featured in the Department's Plan, as the BusinessUSA Program Office function is moving to the General Services Administration (GSA). The Department will continue to support BusinessUSA through the program efforts within the Department's BOU.

The American people are invited to join the Department as it moves towards an open and effective provider of government services and information. Please feel free to provide feedback by submitting comments to [open@doc.gov](mailto:open@doc.gov).

Sincerely,  
Dr. Catrina D. Purvis  
Chief Privacy Officer, and  
Director, Office of Privacy  
and Open Government



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## Introduction

**T**he Department’s mission is to make American businesses more innovative at home and more competitive abroad. Comprised of twelve (12) different agencies responsible for everything from weather forecasts to patent protection, the Department touches lives of Americans every day. It fosters economic growth and opportunity to encourage innovation, entrepreneurship, competitiveness, and stewardship. For over 100 years, it has partnered with the U.S. business community to maintain a prosperous, productive America committed to trade, competitiveness, and environmental stewardship. The concept of Open Government is integral to the Department’s mission and is one of the innovator leaders in the Open Government Initiative.

The Department provides annual updates of its Plan which are posted at [www.Commerce.gov/open](http://www.Commerce.gov/open), and this version 4.0 represents its sixth publication. It provides an overview of the Department’s 2014-2018 Strategic Plan status of programs and assessment of functional areas, which are critical to Open Government. The Plan features two (2) “flagship” Open Government initiatives, and highlights Open Government accomplishments of ongoing initiatives across the Department’s BOU. To learn more about the Department, and the Secretary on social media, take a look at the below links:

- Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/Commercegov>),
- YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com/user/CommerceNews>),
- Twitter (<https://twitter.com/CommerceGov>), and
- Flickr (<https://www.flickr.com/photos/commercegov/>).

## What’s New

**T**his version of the Plan includes a discussion of some of our new exciting initiatives. For instance, one of the key efforts during this reporting period is the Department’s [Commerce Data Advisory Council \(CDAC\)](#), led by the Department’s Chief Data Officer (CDO), which includes 19 distinguished private and public sector leaders on data management and dissemination in the United States (U.S.). The [CDAC](#) is guiding the Department’s data revolution to foster innovation, assist in the creation of jobs, and stimulate better decision-making throughout our economy and society. There are also many other new initiatives across multiple BOUs, such as:

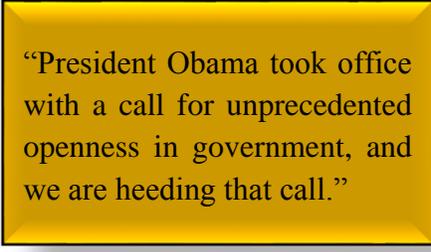
- The Census (Census) Application Program Interface (API) flagship initiative has been enhanced with over 60 API endpoints across 17 different datasets. There are also now more than 11,200 key requests, and more than 1.3 billion accesses. In addition the Census added nine new initiatives that increase the quantity and improve the quality of information assets made publicly available.

- Economics and Statistics Administration (ESA) has 11 initiatives/reports: Reports Women-Owned Small Business (WOSB) Federal Contracting Program, requested by Small Business Administration (SBA), and “What is Made in America?” which used data from the Census and the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) which shed light on the dollar value of what America produces, and the percentage of the dollar value of an industry’s domestic output. Collaborating with National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to create the Natural Capital Website. These and many more efforts were completed.
- The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) initiatives include: improving access to publications by NIST authors; improving NIST’s data management infrastructure; engaging citizens for the development of a disaster resilience framework; establishing new centers of excellence; and the Head Health Challenge III – Advanced Materials for Impact Mitigation. The NIST is also continuing to improve its proactive disclosure efforts through public collaboration and meetings to determine the most sought information assets within the NIST Information Asset Inventory (IAI).
- The NOAA initiatives include: implementation of the Big Data Partnership; Digital Object Identifiers; Redesigning of NOAA.gov; and the consolidation of corporate websites; wireless emergency alerts and common alerting protocol.
- The US Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) developed initiatives to enhance open data; improve Big Data access and consumption; and increased participation by utilizing several major public-private partnerships with representatives of the Additive Manufacturing, Bio-Chem-Pharma, Cybersecurity, and Software industries.

Additional information and updates on the above initiatives are available in the “Ongoing Initiatives at the BOU (Sub Agencies)” section of this plan.

## Background

*O*n January 21, 2009, President Obama issued the first executive memorandum of his Administration, entitled “Transparency and Open Government”



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

([http://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/news/20090121/2009\\_transparency\\_memo.pdf](http://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/news/20090121/2009_transparency_memo.pdf)). 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, 2009, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issued the Memorandum M-10-06 “Open Government Directive” at the following link

([http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/assets/memoranda\\_2010/m10-06.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/assets/memoranda_2010/m10-06.pdf)) to facilitate guidance on specific actions federal agencies must take to increase transparency,

participation, and collaboration in government, and established a requirement for agency publication of an Open Government Plan.

## Program Oversight and the Open Government Senior Leaders Group

The Department carries out its programmatic responsibilities through its 12 BOUs identified below in “Figure 1.”

Figure 1 - Commerce Bureaus and Operating Units (BOU)



Each of these BOUs, through their distinct missions, contribute to the Department’s overall objective of promoting economic growth for the nation and providing opportunities for all Americans. These organizations are driving Open Government through initiatives that range from improving patent processing to developing sustainable and resilient fisheries, transforming service delivery to businesses, expanding international markets for U.S. firms, creating scientific and technological innovation, advancing measurement science, and providing quality data about the nation’s people and economy.

Departmental employees are called upon by the Secretary to seek opportunities for greater collaboration, among the BOUs, other federal agencies, and the public. The entire workforce is challenged to bring together ongoing initiatives across the Department to form a unified strategic approach to pursue opportunities to collaborate, increase performance, and enhance customer service. Employees are asked to think creatively about how to work together to harness their diverse talents.



## U.S. Department of Commerce – Open Government Plan



To further strengthen the institutionalization of Open Government transparency, participation, and collaboration principals and initiatives, the Department created an interdisciplinary Department-wide leadership, planning, and execution team to guide and implement the Department's Open Government program called the Open Government Senior Leaders (OGSL). The original membership of this OGSL group included the Department's Chief Information Officer (CIO), General Counsel (GC), Chief Financial Officer and Assistant Secretary for Administration (CFO/ASA), as well as representatives from the Office of Public Affairs (OPA), the Office of Policy and Strategic Planning (OPSP), the Department's BOUs, and subject matter experts from key mission areas. The OGSL group provided extensive support to early [Data.gov](http://Data.gov) efforts which, as the central site for US Government data, is essential to the Administration's overall Open Government program. Today, the OGSL group, through its designated points of contact (POC) is responsible for ensuring that the Open Government efforts are integrated into the functional processes of each BOU's program and business lines.

In late 2015 the Department moved to operationalize its Open Government Program. The Department's Office of Privacy and Open Government (OPOG) working with the BOU OGSLs began the process to integrate the Open Government as a repeatable process within the BOU's business lifecycle with a two-step process, as part of this effort in early 2016. First, the OPOG, in partnership with the OGSLs, developed an Open Government Handbook (Handbook), which was implemented through the OGSLs at each BOU. Second, the OPOG developed an Open Government Operations Plan (Ops Plan), which will also be implemented through the OGSLs, on October 1, 2016. Both the Handbook and Ops Plan will act as the catalysts for formalizing, as well as increasing the Department's proactive efforts through interagency initiatives, in-person and online public engagements, and internal programs that include training, collaboration, and modification of existing internal processes.

# Building for Tomorrow - An Overview of the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan

| SUMMARY OF FY 2014 – 2018 STRATEGIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES  |                               |   |                   |
|---|-------------------------------|---|-------------------|
| <b>1</b>  | <b>TRADE AND INVESTMENT</b>   | <b>2</b>  | <b>INNOVATION</b> |
| <p><b>Expand the U.S. economy through increased exports and foreign investment that lead to more and better American jobs.</b></p> <p>1.1. Increase opportunities for U.S. companies by opening markets globally (ITA, NOAA, USA, USPTO)</p> <p>1.2. Increase U.S. exports by broadening and deepening the U.S. export base (ISA, USA, USA, USA, USA, USA)</p> <p>1.3. Increase high-impact inward foreign direct investment into the United States (USA, USA, USA)</p> <p>1.4. Strengthen fair competition in international trade for U.S. firms and workers by addressing and resolving longer-term trade practices and resolving international trade agreements (ITA)</p>  |                               | <p><b>Foster a more innovative U.S. economy—one that is better at inventing, improving, and commercializing products and technologies that lead to higher productivity and competitiveness.</b></p> <p>2.1. Grow a more productive, agile, and high-value manufacturing sector through partnerships and collaborations that accelerate technology development and commercialization (NIST)</p> <p>2.2. Increase the capacity of U.S. regional economies to accelerate the production of value-added goods and services by providing services and investments in business and commercial (USA, USA, NOAA, NIST, USPTO)</p> <p>2.3. Strengthen the nation's digital economy by sharpening policies that will maximize the potential of the Internet, expanding broadband capacity, and increasing cybersecurity (NIST, USA, USPTO)</p> <p>2.4. Accelerate the development of industry-led skills strategies that result in a production workforce for employers and high-quality jobs for workers (USA, USA, NIST)</p> <p>2.5. Accelerate growth of innovation-intensive economic sectors by building public and private capacity to invest, innovate, and commercialize new products and services (USA, NIST, USPTO)</p> |                   |
| <b>3</b>  | <b>ENVIRONMENT</b>            | <b>4</b>  | <b>DATA</b>       |
| <p><b>Ensure communities and businesses have the necessary information, products, and services to prepare for and prosper in a changing environment.</b></p> <p>3.1. Advance the understanding and prediction of changes in the environment through world class science and observations (NIST, NOAA)</p> <p>3.2. Improve preparedness, response, and recovery from weather and water events by building a Weather-Ready Nation (USA, NOAA)</p> <p>3.3. Strengthen the resiliency of communities and regions by delivering targeted services to local capacity (USA, USA, NIST, NOAA)</p> <p>3.4. Foster healthy and sustainable marine resources, habitats, and ecosystems through improved management and partnerships (NOAA)</p> <p>3.5. Enable U.S. businesses to adapt and prosper by providing environmental and climate-related solutions (USA, USA, NIST, NOAA)</p> |                               | <p><b>Improve government, business, and community decisions and knowledge by transforming Department data capabilities and supporting a data-enabled economy.</b></p> <p>4.1. Transform the Department's data capacity to enhance the value, accessibility and usability of Government data for government, business and the public (USA, NIST, NOAA, NITS)</p> <p>4.2. Improve data based services, decision-making and data literacy within the Department and with other parts of the federal government (USA, USA, USA)</p> <p>4.3. Collaborate with the business community to provide more timely, accurate, and relevant data products and services to customers (USA, NOAA)</p>  |                   |
| <b>5</b>  | <b>OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE</b> |   |                   |
| <p><b>Deliver better services, solutions, and outcomes that benefit the American people.</b></p> <p>5.1. Strengthen organizational capabilities to drive customer-focused, outcome-driven mission performance (USA, All Business)</p>   |                               |   |                   |

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE • FY 2014 – FY 2018 STRATEGIC PLAN



America is Open for Business. The vision laid out in the Department’s 2014-2018 Strategic Plan will ensure that this message continues to resonate across the country and throughout the world. It provides a broad foundation for economic growth and opportunity by focusing on five key priorities:

- **Trade and Investment:** Expanding the U.S. economy through increased exports and foreign direct investment that leads to more and better American jobs.
- **Innovation:** Fostering a more innovative U.S. economy—one that is better at inventing, improving, and commercializing products and technologies that lead to higher productivity and competitiveness.

- **Environment:** Ensuring communities and businesses have the necessary information, products, and services to prepare for and prosper in a changing environment.
- **Data:** Improving government, business, and community decisions and knowledge by transforming Department data capabilities and supporting a data-enabled economy.
- **Operational Excellence:** Delivering better services, solutions, and outcomes that benefit the American people.

The Department and its BOUs will work together to drive progress in the five goals and priorities, identified above. Open Government is tightly woven into each. The Strategic plan emphasizes that the foundation to all of the Department’s goal areas is data. Data which is also key to Open Government is recognized in the Strategic plan as the fuel that powers the 21<sup>st</sup> Century’s economy. Whether it is ITA determining which foreign markets to target, EDA understanding a regional economy, NOAA’s terabytes of weather and climate data helping predict severe events and enabling weather forecasts, or NIST data and models catalyzing advanced manufacturing, the Department’s data enables the setting of conditions which enable economic growth. It touches every American and informs daily business decisions. The Department’s data enable start-ups, moves markets, protects life and property, and powers both small and multi-billion dollar companies. The BEA produces estimates of gross domestic product (GDP), a key indicator of the health of the economy. The Census carries out the constitutionally mandated decennial census, which determines the allocation of billions of federal dollars for states and the drawing of Congressional districts. Data is not only a means of advancing the trade, innovation, and environment goals, it is also a national asset with untapped potential. The ESA/Commerce Data

Service will works with the private sector to harness Big Data and accelerate a data-enabled economy.

The Department’s Strategic Plan incorporates the Open Government charge for a more transparent, participatory, and collaborative government supported by the production and publication of high value information in data formats, which are consumable by the American public. The Strategic Plan is available at [Commerce Strategic Plan 2014 – 2018](#).

## Program and Functional Area Updates

### Open Data

**O**MB Memorandum M-13-13 ([M-13-13, Open Data Policy – Managing Information as an Asset](#)), requires agencies to manage information they produce from data as an asset throughout its life cycle and to create an IAI of all agency assets. The IAI is to include public, non-public and restricted assets. Agencies must evaluate all assets not made publicly available to determine the reasonableness of potential future release. M-13-13 also requires agencies to collect or create information in manner that supports downstream information processing and dissemination. This includes using machine-readable and open formats, data standards, and common core and extensible metadata for all new information creation and collection efforts. Agencies must ensure information stewardship through the use of open licenses and review of information for privacy, confidentiality, security, or other restrictions prior to release. M-13-13 applies to all new information collection, creation, and system development efforts as well as major modernization projects that update or re-design existing information systems.

The Department’s CDO in partnership with the BOUs have created a path to maximize the use of information asset, foster information asset-driven policymaking, and increase citizen awareness on the value and consumability of the information assets.

This is occurring through:

- Expanding information asset user engagement and creating a user engagement strategy;
- Creating developer relations teams;
- Launching cross-bureau information asset initiatives;
- Undertaking demand-driven information asset dissemination to unlock high-value information asset;
- Increasing Commerce information asset “Brand Recognition.”

### Expanding Data User Engagement and Creating a User Engagement Strategy

To promote and expand best practices in user engagement, the Department is working to significantly expand the user base with a “user first” approach. This approach will expose valuable

data assets to a massive and untapped community of innovators, entrepreneurs, policymakers, and the general public.

This expanded data engagement will be accomplished by:

- Creating a user engagement strategy:
  - Building on existing and creating new Cross-BOU teams to identify best practices in user engagement;
  - Creating a user engagement playbook all BOUs can use to improve/create user engagement strategies.
- Creating BOU developer relations teams to work with the CDO on expanding outreach and engagement with large community of innovative developers.

### **Launching Cross-BOU Information Assets Initiatives**

During this reporting period, the CDO convened BOUs for which information assets are typically related, in order to improve the overall consumability of the Department’s information assets. Combining similar information assets not only helped to improve the delivery of information, while making it more intuitive and user-friendly, this approach also helped to maximize use of the assets.

- *Trade information asset initiative:* Led by ESA and ITA, and building on the launch of the ITA Trade Developer Portal (TDP), this initiative will identify and prioritize key data on exports and trade to make it available via high quality APIs.
- *Place-based initiatives:* Led by Census and building from the Open City Data Challenge, this initiative will work to bring the Department information assets together with local information assets to create more focused, scalable tools for policy makers to tackle common challenges.
- *Mapping:* Led by NOAA and building from their ongoing work in Geospatial mapping efforts, this cross bureau project will explore the creation of a common, open source map as an information assets visualization tool.
- *Workforce and skills information asset initiative:* Led by Office of the Secretary (OS), Office of Policy and Strategic Planning (OPSP) and the CDO, this initiative will leverage private sector partners and identify opportunities to share information assets on jobs and more effectively disseminate labor market information.

### **Undertaking Demand-driven Information Asset Dissemination to Unlock High-value Information Assets**

Using a combination of user feedback and website analytics, the CDO, CIO and BOUs have identified the most in-demand information assets and prioritized their release, in the most useful formats along with supporting documentation. This is being accomplished by:

- *Creation of the Department IAI:*

- The CDO and CIO convened a cross-BOU group to define the necessary elements for an IAI and catalogue.
- The CDO and CIO are working with each BOU to create a plan to inventory and catalogue all information assets.
- *Demand based prioritization of information asset releases:*
  - The CDO and BOUs are utilizing web analytics and demand-metrics to prioritize and unlock our most high value, in demand information assets.
  - The CDO and BOUs are working with user communities to create information asset feedback loops that improve quality of the Department information asset products.
- *API and Metadata Strategy:*
  - The CDO and BOUs are working to create an API strategy and metadata standardization plan.
  - BOUs are creating a “product” lead for each information asset release or new information asset product to ensure that the information asset products released are responsive to user needs, include feedback loops to iterate on products, and create aggressive, but workable timelines.

### **Increasing Commerce Information Asset “Brand Recognition:”**

A challenge faced by several BOUs has been the lack of public recognition for the information asset produced and released. In February, 2015, the CDO started a process to develop strategies to increase public awareness of the information assets Commerce produces. This strategy includes:

- Creating a media and promotion strategy;
- Leveraging Commerce Principals;
- Identifying Branding opportunities.

Moving Forward with Open Data the Department’s CDO and CIO will continue working with the [Data.gov](#) POCs within the BOUs to improve the baseline IAI. The CDO and CIO are responsible for developing guidelines and implementing procedures to build the complete IAI. The CDO and BOU CIOs will work with their business/program offices and data stewards to develop procedures to identify information assets and determine if the information assets are public, non-public, or restricted. As IAs are identified, any flagged as non-public or restricted, will be confirmed as such by the BOU CIO to ensure appropriateness of the determination as consistent with M13-13 guidance. The ultimate goal is to make the information asset available to the public, wherever possible.

Each BOU and its program offices have been directed to catalogue, document, and assess whether each identified IA can be made available for public consumption. Each BOU CIO is responsible for constructing a system to best distribute the information asset. To assist in this effort the Department provides a page for program developers at the [Department of Commerce Developer](#) web page, which can be used to enhance the public’s ability to utilize the information published.



## U.S. Department of Commerce – Open Government Plan



Once data is available to consumers, each BOU will solicit feedback on the information they publish. The [U.S. Census's developer hub](#) has been identified as a best practice for efforts in obtaining feedback from customers. There are other examples such as, the industry-led consultation groups run by the [International Trade Administration](#) National Export Initiative (NEI) NEXT program ([NEI NEXT](#)) that provide venues for constructive conversations about data and improving consumability across multiple environments.

Detailed information on what each BOU is doing to improve information dissemination is provided in the “Ongoing Initiatives at the BOUs” section of this plan.

For more information visit: [Commerce Data Advisory Council \(CDAC\)](#) or [Commerce on Data.gov](#).

### Privacy

**T**he Department assigns high priority to privacy considerations for all systems and programs. It recognizes that individual trust in the privacy and security of personally identifiable information (PII) and business identifiable information (BII) is the foundation of trust in the government and the Department in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. As an employer, a collector of data on millions of individuals and companies, the developer of information-management standards, and a federal advisor on information management policy, the Department strives to be a leader in best privacy practices and privacy policy.

OMB Memorandum M–13–13 requires departments and agencies to review information assets for privacy, confidentiality, security, or other restrictions on information released. The Department has a robust Privacy Program charged to assist the Department and BOU CIOs with meeting this requirement. The necessary balance between the “presumption in favor of openness” and the duty to protect and safeguard PII and BII is well understood. The Department’s OPOG works with the GC, CIO and across BOUs to ensure that information is appropriately secured to prevent information loss or erroneous release.

Authorities and requirements for the Department’s Privacy program include:

- The Privacy Act of 1974, 5 U.S.C. § 552a  
<http://www.opm.gov/investigations/requesting-investigation-copies/freedom-of-information-and-privacy-act/> provides privacy protections for records containing information about individuals (i.e., citizen and legal permanent resident) that are collected and maintained by the federal government and are retrieved by a personal identifier. The Act requires agencies to safeguard information contained in a system of records;
- The Federal Information Security Management Act of 2002, 44 U.S.C. § 3541,

<http://csrc.nist.gov/drivers/documents/FISMA-final.pdf> requires agencies to develop, document, and implement an agency-wide program to provide information security for the information and information systems that support the operations and assets of an agency;

- OMB Memorandum M-03-22, Guidance for Implementing the Privacy Provisions of the E-Government Act of 2002 (September 26, 2003),  
[http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/memoranda\\_m03-22](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/memoranda_m03-22) requires agencies to conduct reviews of how information about individuals is handled when information technology (IT) is used to collect new information, or when agencies develop or buy new IT systems to handle collections of personally identifiable information, and to describe how the agency handles information that individuals provide electronically;
- OMB Memorandum M-06-15, Safeguarding Personally Identifiable Information (May 22, 2006),  
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/memoranda/fy2006/m-06-15.pdf> reiterates and emphasizes agency responsibilities under law and policy to appropriately safeguard sensitive PII and train employees regarding their responsibilities for protecting privacy;
- OMB Memorandum M-06-16, “Protection of Sensitive Agency Information” (June 23, 2006),  
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/memoranda/fy2006/m06-16.pdf> requires agencies to implement encryption protections for PII being transported and/or stored offsite;
- OMB Memorandum M-06-19, “Reporting Incidents Involving Personally Identifiable Information and Incorporating the Cost for Security in Agency Information Technology Investments” (July 12, 2006),  
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/memoranda/fy2006/m06-19.pdf> requires agencies to report all incidents involving PII to US-CERT within one hour of discovery of the incident;
- OMB’s Memorandum entitled “Recommendations for Identity Theft Related Data Breach Notification” (September 20, 2006)  
[http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/memoranda/fy2006/task\\_force\\_theft\\_memo.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/memoranda/fy2006/task_force_theft_memo.pdf) outlines recommendations to agencies from the President's Identity Theft Task Force for developing agency planning and response procedures for addressing PII incidents that could result in identify theft;
- OMB Memorandum M-07-16, “Safeguarding Against and Responding to the Breach of Personally Identifiable Information” (May 22, 2007),

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/memoranda/fy2007/m07-16.pdf>

identifies existing procedures and establishes several new actions agencies should take to safeguard PII and to respond to Privacy Incidents;

- OMB Memorandum M-11-02, “Sharing Data While Protecting Privacy” (November 3, 2010),

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/memoranda/2011/m11-02.pdf>

requires agencies to develop and implement solutions that allow data sharing to move forward in a manner that complies with applicable privacy laws, regulations, and policies;

The Department’s PII incident reports are submitted to the U.S. - Computer Emergency Readiness Team (CERT) within one hour of discovery/detection, in addition to the Department's CPO and the Department's Computer Incident Response Team (CIRT). The Department produces and submits Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) Senior Agency Official for Privacy (SAOP) reports in accordance with OMB guidance.

For more information visit: [Commerce Privacy Program](#)

## Whistleblower Protection

**T**he Department recognizes that the effectiveness of its Whistleblower Protection Program is critical to ensuring transparency in government operations. The Department does not tolerate retaliation against whistleblowers. It is prohibited to take or fail to take, or threaten to take or fail to take, a personnel action against an employee or applicant because of disclosure of information that an individual reasonably believes to evidence violation of law, rule or regulation; gross mismanagement; gross waste of funds; an abuse of authority; or a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety, unless disclosure of such information is specifically prohibited by law or specifically required by Executive Order (EO) to be kept secret in the interest of national defense or the conduct of foreign affairs.

The OIG, which has achieved its own U.S. Office of Special Counsel (OSC) certification, has a Whistleblower Protection Program that carries out a number of key functions, including communicating with whistleblowers, ensuring the timely reporting of findings; promoting awareness of, and compliance with, whistleblower protections through the Department; and communicating with, and reporting to, OSC, Congress, and other oversight entities on whistleblower protection matters. A Whistleblower Protection Ombudsman has been designated within the OIG to educate Department employees about prohibitions on retaliation for protected disclosures, as well as the rights and remedies against retaliation for protected disclosures for those who have made or are contemplating making a protected disclosure.

The provisions of the Department's nondisclosure policies, forms, and agreements are consistent with, and do not supersede, conflict with, or otherwise alter the employee obligations, rights, or liabilities created by existing statute or EO relating to (1) classified information, (2) communications to Congress, (3) the reporting to an Inspector General of a violation of any law, rule, or regulation, or mismanagement, a gross waste of funds, an abuse of authority, or a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety, or (4) any other whistleblower protection. The definitions, requirements, obligations, rights, sanctions, and liabilities created by controlling EO and statutory provisions are incorporated into the Department's agreements and are controlling. See:

- EO No. 13526;
- Section 721 1 of Title 5, United States Code (governing disclosures to Congress);
- Section 1034 of Title 10, United States Code, as amended by the Military Whistleblower Protection Act (governing disclosure to Congress by members of the military);
- Section 2302(b)(8) of Title 5, United States Code, as amended by the Whistleblower Protection Act of 1989 (governing disclosures of illegality, waste, fraud, abuse or public health or safety threats);
- Intelligence Identities Protection Act of 1982 (50 U.S.C. 421 et seq.) (governing disclosures that could expose confidential Government agents);
- the statutes which protect against disclosure that may compromise the national security, including sections 641, 793, 794, 798, and 952 of title 18, United States Code; and
- Section 4(b) of the Subversive Activities Act of 1950 (50 U.S.C. 783(b)).

For more information visit:

<https://www.oig.doc.gov/Pages/Whistleblower-Protection-Program.aspx>

## Websites

**T**he Department leverages its websites for Open Government. A Departmental [Web Advisory Council](#) (WAC) ensures policies are in place for consistency and ease of use of all Departmental websites. The WAC website is provided to web managers and developers to ensure awareness of all mandatory policies and recommended best practices. The website also provides links to resources and guidance on how to comply with the [Department's Policies and Best Practices](#). All Departmental websites must comply with the policies listed on this site. Each BOU CIO is required to certify annually that all websites comply with the policies published on this site.



The Department is using the guidance provided in the Digital Strategy to redesign its web presence. This guidance, along with input gathered from public and internal consultations, was provided to a website redesign team. The team, using qualitative and quantitative analytics, updated the design focusing on consumer requirements of topic-based navigation and user friendly presentation. This ensured usability across multiple screens including mobile devices.

In February 2015, the Department launched the new Commerce website (<http://www.commerce.gov/>). The site included a component to capture comments received from the individual users who visited the beta site through a prominent new feature “provide feedback” button.

Several BOU websites have also been redesigned along the principles of customer-first, and mobile-friendly. It is now the Department’s standard practice to utilize built-in feedback mechanisms to help improve the website. These feedback links are designed to ensure anyone can submit comments.

For more information visit: <http://www.osec.doc.gov/webresources/> or <http://www.commerce.gov/digitalstrategy>

### Transparency

**T**he Department improves transparency by proactively participating in and posting its information publicly at [Data.gov](#), [eRulemaking](#), [IT Dashboard](#), [Recovery.gov](#), and [USAspending.gov](#) initiatives. It participates in the eRulemaking initiative [Regulations.gov](#) for all Departmental generated regulations to ensure full public disclosure and collection of comments are addressed appropriately. The latest information on the Department’s Information Technology (IT) investments can be found by clicking this link [Commerce IT Dashboard submission](#). The Department also participates in utilizing the [FOIAonline](#), a government partnership that provides shared services for Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) processing along with providing public access to many requested and released documents.

### Public Notice

**T**he Department has an extensive outreach program to ensure the public is informed and up-to-date on agency actions and business. The outreach programs include: public meetings, stakeholder meetings, online press conferences, and numerous technology-enabled public engagement forums which promote transparency, participation and collaboration. The Office of Digital Engagement, within the Department’s OPA, specifically focuses on outreach efforts, ensuring effective two-way communications with the public about the Department’s services. In addition, the Department is working through the BOUs to enable outreach to the appropriate

communities of practice and interest (COPs/COIs) within the various business lines. You can read more about the Office of Digital Engagement in the OS Initiatives section of this document. Public notices about meetings and other notices, such as system of records notices, are also published in the Federal Register.

Below are BOU public outreach links:

Bureau of the Census (Census)

[Foreign Trade Outreach and Education](#)

Economics and Statistics Administration (ESA)

[Commerce Data Advisory Council \(CDAC\)](#)

International Trade Administration (ITA)

[AES Meetings and Presentations AES Town Hall Meetings](#)

Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA)

[National Advisory Council on Minority Business Enterprise](#)

National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)

[NIST Events](#)

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

[Florida Keys - Sanctuary Advisory Council Meetings, Announcements and Actions](#)

[National Weather Service - Climate protection Center Meetings](#)

National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)

[Internet Policy Task Force's](#)

U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO)

[Public Advisor Committees](#)

## Records Management

**T**he Department implements the largest portion of the records management program through the BOUs. This allows those who are closest to the mission and understand the mission's unique needs to determine the appropriate record schedules. Each BOU Records Officer is responsible for reporting directly to National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), and is responsible for the implementation of OMB Memorandum M-12-18 (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/memoranda/2012/m-12-18.pdf>) for their BOU. At an enterprise level, the Department is in the early stages of building a supporting program for the BOUs to leverage.

The Department's Records Officers promote collaboration, the sharing of tools and templates, and provide in-person and virtual collaboration space for issue resolution. The Department teamed with the Department of Transportation to establish and serve on the Core Team for the Federal Records Officer Network (FRON). The Department uses the FRON to meet M-12-18 by leveraging best practices, tools, and templates across the federal agencies, as well as a forum to address M-12-18 issues.

USPTO is developing a series of virtual training courses for All-Hands. The courses will provide lessons and materials to target improvement in records management from the user and trainee point of view. In addition, the Department has identified 39 areas of practical application to be developed into a future online resource that dovetails with the virtual training. These resources are being written so that they can be leveraged by any BOU. The Department is integrating in the recommendations from the FRON during this development period.

Each BOU expects to initiate email management by 2016 and electronic records management by 2019. The Department is pursuing policy and other actions to support the BOU efforts.

The Department has utilized a series of meetings to bridge the BOUs and the Federal Records Centers (FRCs) to identify records ready for disposition, removal of freezes (when appropriate), and ensure schedules are established for unscheduled records.

The Department has been active in providing guidance and feedback on the development of the professional Records Management job series via the Federal Records Council (FRC), OPM, and the FRON.

As changes are made to the Department's records management process and procedures, updates will be provided in the Open Government Plan. One of the first changes is to rebuild the public facing records management website to create a 21<sup>st</sup> Century interface following the guidance set forth within the strategic plan.

### Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Requests



**E**lectronic FOIA tracking systems have helped and continue to help improve the efficiency of the Department's FOIA program. All BOUs, except USPTO, use [FOIAonline](#). This system allows anyone to submit a FOIA request, correspond with FOIA professionals processing the request, track the status of a request, and download any responsive documents once they are released to the requester. Requests who provide an email address will also receive email notifications informing them of when a request has been submitted, evaluated (scope, fee waiver, expedited processing issues), assigned, processed, and closed. The core functionality for the [FOIAonline](#) can be found in Table 1 – [FOIAonline](#) Core Functionality.

USPTO uses an electronic system found at: <https://foia.uspto.gov/palMain.aspx>. Requesters who submit requests to USPTO can track the status of their requests by clicking on the "Check FOIA Request Status." The USPTO system allows requesters to determine what stage the request is in (Received; Assigned for Processing; On Hold-Need Info/Clarification; In Process; Cost Estimate Sent; Completed; or Closed). Requesters will also see a key to explain what each of these statuses means.

The Department’s FOIA professionals also continually review FOIA business processes to determine the need for updates to ensure the program runs efficiently and effectively. The successfulness of the Department’s FOIA program is also measured through metrics, such as backlog reduction, age of backlogged requests, and backlog growth, which are reported and discussed on a quarterly basis during venues that include Quarterly FOIA Officer Roundtable meetings and Balanced Score Card reporting to senior management.

With the signing into law of the FOIA Improvement Act of 2016 (Improvement Act) by President Obama, several changes were required by FOIA programs across the Federal Government. The Department is well on its way to meeting the requirements of the Improvement Act. For example, FOIA response letters have been revised to include updated appeals language and contact information for FOIA Public Liaisons and the Office of Government Information Services. The Departmental FOIA regulations are also being updated to reflect changes and should be published in the December 2016 timeframe.

Information on the Department’s FOIA program can be found at [Commerce FOIA webpage](#) and/or [Electronic Library \(Formerly e-Reading Room\)](#).

Table 1 - [FOIAonline](#) Core Functionality

| <i>FOIAonline Core Functionality</i> |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <i>Accept Requests Online</i>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow requester to pre-populate their information</li> <li>• Provide status to requesters</li> <li>• Create communications (i.e. letters via email) between agencies and requesters</li> </ul>  |
| <i>Track Requests in a Case File</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process and track FOIA request</li> <li>• Break down requests into multiple tasks</li> <li>• Multi-track processing (Simple, Complex, Expedited)</li> <li>• Track time spent on requests (the list shifts from starting with –ing words to not... breaking down, track, assign...)</li> <li>• Assign case numbers</li> <li>• Start and stop the clock according to rules</li> <li>• Keep an online folder of all documents related to a request (<i>including notifications to requesters</i>)</li> </ul> |

| <i>FOIAonline Core Functionality</i> |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <i>Manage Deadlines</i>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start/Stop the clock</li> <li>• Generate backlog reports</li> <li>• Monitor workload</li> <li>• Notify FOIA professionals based on 10- and 20-day deadlines</li> <li>• Close cases when fees are not paid (<i>according to business rules</i>)</li> </ul> |
| <i>Calculate Fees</i>                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Track fees and fee waiver processing</li> <li>• Generate invoices</li> <li>• Deduct what is free of charge (i.e. first 100 pages)</li> <li>• Manually adjust recorded time</li> <li>• Distinguish between search and review time</li> </ul>               |
| <i>Research and Upload Records</i>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Store consultations, referrals, and letters</li> <li>• Send tasks to others with instructions about which records to search</li> <li>• Upload scanned documents</li> </ul>  |
| <i>Publish Electronic Records</i>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review/sign the case file to approve redactions and fee calculations</li> <li>• Issue Partial/incremental releases</li> <li>• Send system-generated email notifications to requesters</li> </ul>  |
| <i>Accept Appeals Online</i>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Track status and outcome of litigation and appeals</li> <li>• Issue supplemental release after appeal</li> <li>• Forward copies of processing to Appeals unit</li> </ul>  |
| <i>Prepare the Annual Report</i>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare the report in the required format with the required data structure</li> <li>• Use dashboards to display these metrics throughout the year, including trends</li> </ul>  |
| <i>Search and Retrieve</i>           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Searching (including metadata and full-text)</li> </ul>   |

## Proactive Disclosures

All FOIA Officers routinely review FOIA requests to identify types of frequently requested records and other records of interest for proactive posting. Additionally, the Department is proactively posting documents responsive to FOIA requests in an electronic format through [FOIAonline](#), an automated online tracking and records management system. Released documents are uploaded to [FOIAonline](#), where they are available at no cost, to the general public at <https://FOIAonline.regulations.gov>. Additionally, all FOIA professionals provide guidance and training to encourage proactive disclosures whenever possible. All component subject matter experts (SME) in various business units routinely identify records to be made publicly available. Once identified, these records are uploaded to websites.

## Congressional Requests

The Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs (OLIA) supports the Department’s Secretary on matters pertaining to legislative issues, congressional relations, and on the Department’s relationship with state, county, municipal and tribal governments and their associations. OLIA is the focal point within the Department for coordinating all activities involving legislative and congressional relations and activities. The Assistant Secretary for Legislative and Intergovernmental affairs is delegated authority to provide policy guidance and oversight of Department legislative and congressional relations and activities. The OLIA Assistant Secretary also develops an integrated Department plan to collect, coordinate and distribute timely and accurate information relating to those relations and activities to the Secretary and the Department. OLIA accomplishes these goals with the support of the legislative affairs offices in the Department’s BOUs.

OLIA’s authorities rest with a Department Organizational Order (DOO) 10-12 “Assistant Secretary for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs,” which prescribes the top level organization, authority, functions and responsibilities of the Assistant Secretary for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs and, therefore, OLIA. The DOO can be accessed at the following website: [http://www.osec.doc.gov/opog/dmp/doos/doo10\\_12.html](http://www.osec.doc.gov/opog/dmp/doos/doo10_12.html).

In addition to the DOO, other OLIA responsibilities and procedures are laid out in Department Administrative Order (DAO) 218-2 “Congressional and Legislative Affairs,” which details policies and procedures for responding to Congressional and Intergovernmental inquiries and outlines other procedures for OLIA. All of the DAOs can be accessed at the following website: <http://www.osec.doc.gov/opog/dmp/daos.html>.

Several other DAOs have portions that reference or relate to processes or duties to which OLIA is a party, including:

- DAO 202-334 “Details”: This DAO has a section on the Department’s details to Congressional Committees. Office purview: Assistant Secretary for Administration;
- DAO 203-1 “Appropriation Requests and Related Budget Matters.” Office purview: Assistant Secretary for Administration. It details how Office of Budget (OB) interacts with Congress on issues related to appropriations. In practice, OLIA supports OB in their efforts;
- DAO 218-3 “Reports to Congress Required by Law.” Office purview: the Office of the General Counsel. It prescribes the procedures and responsibilities for sending Departmental reports to Congress. In addition, it details clearance and signature authorities. The Assistant Secretary for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs is one of the Secretarial Officers responsible for clearing Congressional reports; and
- DAO 218-1 “Legislative Activities.” Office purview: the Office of the General Counsel, however, it details the duties and policies of the Department with respect to legislative activities.

## Declassification

The Department's and BOU, specifically those with Original Classification Authority (OCA) can declassify documents. The Director of the Office of Security (OSY) is one of the three OCAs within the Department who gives final approval for document declassification. Documents received are reviewed by the subject matter experts. When the declassification has been determined and the document(s) have historical permanent value they are transferred to NARA via their web link at <http://www.archives.gov/declassification/ndc/releases.html>.

The OSY collaborates with NARA to develop schedules for the declassification of records in the National Archives of the U.S. and the presidential libraries to ensure declassification is accomplished in a timely manner. The NARA provides information about the records proposed for automatic declassification. The BOUs consult with the Department's Records Management Officer before reviewing records in their holdings. This ensures that appropriate procedures are established for maintaining the integrity of the records and provides NARA accurate information about BOU declassification actions when records are transferred to NARA. The NARA provides guidance to the Department's Records Management Officer concerning the requirements for notification of declassification actions on transferred records, box labeling, and identifying exempt information in the records.

The OSY is required to submit an Agency Security Classification Management Program Data (SF 311), which is used to collect data from executive branch agencies that create and/or handle classified national security information. The report includes: the number of original classification authorities; number of original and derivatively classified decisions; number of mandatory declassification review requests and appeals; number of pages declassified; number of inspections conducted; and number of classification guides. The information is submitted to the Information Security Oversight Office (ISOO), and is compiled, analyzed, reported, and published in ISOO's annual report to the President. The reports are available in printed format upon request or can be downloaded from the ISOO website at <http://www.archives.gov/isoo/reports/>.

Most documents are declassified in accordance to their declassification date, or subject to Part 3 declassification, of EO 13526. All classified records that (1) are more than 25 years old and, (2) have been determined to have permanent historical value under Title 44 of the U.S. Code shall be automatically declassified whether or not the records have been reviewed. To the extent practicable, operating units shall adopt a system of records management that will facilitate the public release of documents at the time such documents are declassified based on the automatic declassification provisions of E.O. 13526.

The DOC is a Non-Title 50 agency and has no public links or webpages where the public can learn about the agency's declassification program, and or access declassified material. Declassified documents are only accessible via NARA at

<http://www.archives.gov/declassification/ndc/releases.html> or ISOO  
<http://www.archives.gov/isoo/>.

## Participation

**P**articipation is critical for the Department to achieve its strategic goals. The BOUs are actively using meetings, conferences, and extensive outreach programs to ensure the public, private, and government participation is fulfilling the Department's mission. This includes issuing requests for information (RFIs) for input to building the requirements, outcomes and way ahead for programs. One such example is the [BusinessUSA](#) initiative which reaches out to public, Federal, state, local, and tribal partners to ensure that they are providing the best products in the most efficient manner.

The Department has implemented a digital strategy of shared services to gain economies of scale, while providing state of the art tools for analytics and collaboration to effectively communicate with our partners. This enables full participation without traveling. The Department's CIO is working to improve these shared services capabilities while reducing the cost.

All Departmental BOUs have similar outreach programs. Many of which are linked in the Public Notice section of this document.

## Collaboration

**T**he Department is continually working across the public/private sector (federal, state, local, tribal), and international government to build partnerships. The partnerships afford the development and sharing of best practices which initiate an environment for economic growth and opportunity. To achieve this goal, the use of collaboration tools, public meetings, and feedback efforts, such as website comments and social media are used to identify innovative ways to effectively collaborate.

The Department is continuing to accomplish these objectives by:

- Including processes and best practices that improve and allow effective communication between the Department and the public sector, ensuring openness and transparency is part of all new programs and initiatives, as well as, any updates initiated to existing programs and initiatives;
- Maintaining a leadership role in the Open Government initiatives, by building into the information lifecycle best practices that increase the value of information and tools made available to the American public;

- Continuing to build and improve existing partnerships with the public and private sectors, which includes businesses, academia nonprofit organizations, inter-governmental at federal, state, and local, to broaden input obtained for consideration during the regulatory process;
- Improving the creation of new online tools and expanding existing tools and processes to enhance public and private sector access to the Department’s information, services, and 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 use feedback on the Department’s initiatives to establish two-way conversations.

The [Presidential Ambassadors for Global Entrepreneurship](#) is representative of a successful initiative in this area. It is a first-of-its-kind collaboration between eleven (11) of America's most inspiring and prominent entrepreneurs, the White House, the Department and the Department of State and U.S. Agency for International Development partners. You can read about the Presidential Ambassadors for Global Entrepreneurship new commitments at <https://www.commerce.gov/news/press-releases/2015/08/presidential-ambassadors-global-entrepreneurship-announce-new>.

Another significant collaboration effort of the Department is the [NEI NEXT](#) initiative. [NEI NEXT](#) is collaboration with industry groups and the public around aimed at streamlining the export process and reducing wait times for American goods and services at ports.

## Open Source Software

An example of the Department using and contributing to open source software is illustrated by NOAA. To date, NOAA’s efforts have focused on creating a capability for broad sharing of code and content, consistent with the M-16-21 objectives and in the general spirit of collaboration and open government. In particular, NOAA has established an organization account with GitHub ([@noaa.gov](#)) and we are in the process of piloting GitHub as a platform for sharing of code and content. In addition to the GitHub account and capability per se, we have also defined NOAA's use cases for GitHub and developed a draft NOAA policy that provides guidance for how to use GitHub.

## Flagship Initiatives

While the Department has numerous outstanding Open Government initiatives, it would like to highlight two Flagship Open Government Initiatives for this reporting period: (1) NIST Making More Scientific Data Available to the Public and (2) the NOAA Big Data Partnership. NIST is

well on its way with efforts to make freely available to the public, in publicly accessible repositories, all peer-reviewed scholarly publications and associated data arising from unclassified research and programs funded wholly or in part by NIST. The Big Data Project is an innovative approach to publishing NOAA’s vast data resources and positioning them near cost-efficient high performance computing, analytic, and storage services provided by the private sector. The Department is also highlighting one its flagship initiatives from last year, CDAC, because of the important role the initiative continues to play in Open Government. The CDAC advances Open Government and serves as the frontline for engagement between private and public sector thought leaders on data management and dissemination in the U.S allowing the Department to build its information asset strategy.

### **NIST Making More Scientific Data Available to the Public**



In response to the Memorandum from the executive Office of the President for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies: Increasing Access to the Results of Federally Funded Scientific Research, dated February 22, 2013, NIST developed a NIST Public Access Plan. The plan describes NIST efforts to make freely available to

the public, in publicly accessible repositories, all peer-reviewed scholarly publications and associated data arising from unclassified research and programs funded wholly or in part by NIST. Within the constraints of its mission and funding, NIST will also promote the deposit of scientific data arising from unclassified research and programs, funded wholly or in part by NIST, free of charge unless an exception exists, in publicly accessible databases. A NIST Public Access Policy will articulate the roles and responsibilities of NIST staff for ensuring public access.

The NIST is partnering with the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to use the existing PubMed Central (PMC) repository system to provide public access to full-text peer-reviewed scholarly publications and associated data for NIST, leveraging the well-established search, archival, and dissemination features of PMC. NIST plans to acquire a web-based manuscript submission and peer-review workflow solution that enables geographically dispersed stakeholders, including both NIST employees and non-NIST collaborators, to electronically submit, edit, and search bibliographic information and view progress-tracking information during internal review.

The NIST is also working with the Internet Archive, under an arrangement with the Library of Congress, to digitize the hundreds of technical reports it has published over more than 100 years, with the goal that the entire legacy collection of NBS/NIST technical series publications will be available to the public through the Government Printing Office’s Federal Digital System. Some of these technical publications were targeted to very specific audiences, but many are about topics of interest to a broader audience.

The NIST staff members are also enhancing the NIST Digital Archives by adding information about and images of artifacts in the NIST Museum collections and photographs portraying NBS/NIST history. 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. More details about this initiative are available under the NIST section of the Plan.

## NOAA Big Data Partnership



**T**he Big Data Project (BDP) is an innovative approach to publishing NOAA's vast data resources and positioning them near cost-efficient high performance computing, analytic, and storage services provided by the private sector. This collaboration combines three powerful resources - NOAA's tremendous volume of high quality environmental data and advanced data products, private industry's vast infrastructure and technical capacity, and the American economy's innovation and energy - to create a sustainable, market-driven ecosystem that lowers the cost barrier to data publication. This project will create a new economic space for growth and job creation while providing the public far greater access to the data created with its tax dollars.

These partnerships were created through Cooperative Research and Development Agreements (CRADAs) with Amazon, Google, Microsoft, IBM, and the Open Commons Consortium. CRADA partners will join with interested private 3rd parties and leverage their cloud computing capabilities to develop "big data" value-added products and services. Additionally, the CRADA model allows NOAA to recover its dissemination costs, which could enable the BDP to operate at no net cost to the government.

On October 27, 2015, Amazon Web Services announced the public release of NOAA's Next-Generation Weather Radar, or NEXRAD, data for public use. The real-time feed and full historical archive of original resolution (Level II) NEXRAD data, from June 1991 to present, are currently freely available through the company's cloud infrastructure. Ranked as the Nation's second most valuable geospatial dataset by the National Science and Technology Council, providing fast, efficient, and easy access to NEXRAD data is of great importance. However, the unwieldy size and limitations associated with retrieving the data from tapes made the full dataset very difficult to access and transmit. With a copy of NEXRAD data available via Amazon Web Services, users can now access the entire dataset in one place without the need for special arrangements. Users no longer need to move the data across networks or maintain their own computer power to store it. Users can also access processing, analysis, and visualization resources on Amazon Web Services along with the data storage infrastructure. Overall, the move gives more users equal access to the data and allows them to easily develop comprehensive statistical and probabilistic products.

The Climate Corporation, a company that examines weather data to provide insurance to farmers, is the first large-scale user of NEXRAD data on Amazon Web Services. In a presentation to the American Meteorological Society on January 12, 2016, The Climate Corporation showcased the benefits of having the entire data set available in the cloud, including a reduced time-to-market for their weather-based products and increased accuracy of their weather predictions.

## Commerce Data Advisory Council (CDAC)



The [CDAC](#), includes 19 of the preeminent and brightest private and public sector thought leaders on data management and dissemination in the U.S. The [CDAC](#) helps guide the Department’s data revolution to foster innovation, assist in the creation of jobs, and stimulate better decision-making throughout our economy and society.

As “America’s Data Agency,” working to unleash more data to strengthen our nation’s economic growth, the [CDAC](#) represent a diverse range of sectors from across the U. S. The [CDAC](#) will help make the Department’s data easier to access and use, and maximize the return of data investments for entrepreneurs, government, businesses, communities, and taxpayers.

[Click here for the list of CDAC members.](#)

The Department’s data inform decisions that help make government smarter, keep businesses more competitive and better inform citizens about their own communities – with the potential to guide up to \$3.3 trillion in investments in the U.S. each year. The 19 members of the [CDAC](#) provides the Department with guidance on areas, such as, data management practices; common, open data standards; policy issues related to privacy, latency, and consistency; effective models for public-private partnership; external uses of the Department data; and, methods to build new feedback loops between the Department and data users.

The [CDAC](#) members ensure representation from the entire spectrum of the Department’s data including demographic, economic, scientific, environmental, patent, and geospatial data. The leaders come from the information technology, Non-Government Organizations (NGO), non-profit, and academic communities, and local governments – individuals who appreciate the range of data that the Department distributes and the full lifecycle of data collection, compilation, analysis, and dissemination. They offer a balanced perspective and varied expertise to ensure meaningful dialogue and guidance on how the Department can realize its vision as America’s Data Agency.

The [CDAC](#) is housed in the Department’s Economics and Statistics Administration, and members will serve two-year terms. To learn more about CDAC, visit:

<http://www.esa.doc.gov/content/commerce-data-advisory-council-cdac>.

## Ongoing Initiatives at the Bureaus and Operating Units (BOU) (Sub Agencies)

**T**he Department has published high-value data as part of its scientific, technological, and economic programs. As a result, the Department has been able to establish best practices in the distribution and publication process to meets the needs of an ever-evolving public. This portion of the Open Government Plan identifies the various initiatives within the BOUs.



## Office of the Secretary (OS)

### Background

**O**S 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 Commerce's functions and provides 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. OS 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.

### OS Open Government Initiatives

The table below shows a list of initiatives for **OS**.

Table 2 - OS Initiatives

| Operating Unit                 | Project   | Status  | Estimated Completion  |
|--------------------------------|---|---|-----------------------|
| <b>Office of the Secretary</b> | * Creation of the Commerce Data Advisory Council (CDAC)                         | Live / Operational                              | --                    |
|                                | BusinessUSA   | Moving to General Services Administration (GSA) | <b>FY 2016 – 2017</b> |
|                                | * FOIAonline Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Request Management and Reporting | Live / Operational                              | --                    |
|                                | Office of Digital Engagement  | Live / Operational                              | --                    |
|                                | Publishing Public Schedule Data for Secretary Online                            | Live / Operational                              | --                    |

**Note:** \* Identifies Departmental Flagship Initiative identified in Flagship section of this plan

- **Project – Commerce Data Advisory Council (CDAC)**  
*What's new – CDAC helps guide the Department's data revolution to foster innovation, help create jobs, and stimulate better decision-making throughout our economy and society and provide increase tool capabilities making it easier for customers to access government IA.*

The new CDAC includes 19 of the preeminent and brightest private and public sector thought leaders on data management and dissemination in the U.S.

*For more information, this initiative is highlighted in the Departmental Flagship Initiatives section.*

- **Project – FOIAonline Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Request Management and Reporting**

*What's new – Improved request capabilities that include standard request input, improved tracking and reporting.*

[FOIAonline](#) provides a single interface through which the public can submit requests to the Department or directly to any BOU and provides full tracking and updates with electronic document management.

*For more information, this initiative is highlighted in the Departmental Flagship Initiatives section.*

- **Project – BusinessUSA**

*What's new – [BusinessUSA](#) is moving to the General Services Administration (GSA) in FY 2016 – 2017 time frame. The [BusinessUSA](#) functions will still be operational during the transition period to increase tool capabilities making it easier for customers to access government services.*

BusinessUSA helps businesses and exporters of all sizes find information about available federal programs in a one-stop platform which reduces the amount of time searching various website. It streamlines and coordinates federal program assistance through easy to access points via the Business.USA.gov website and 1-800-FED-INFO contact center.

- **Project – Office of Digital Engagement**

*What's new – Office of Digital Engagement to enhance the Departments outreach capabilities using 21<sup>st</sup> Century tools.*

This office is located within the OPA, which serves as the frontline for digital communication with consumers, businesses, and other key Department stakeholders. The Office of Digital Engagement is an important component of our 'Open for Business Agenda' helps the Department engage in a two-way, 21<sup>st</sup> Century dialogue with America's business community, by using the power of digital media. The Department through the BOUs are working together

to ensure that American businesses have access to more agency information and resources that can help them grow and hire.”

To further amplify the “Open for Business Agenda” and the priorities of the Department the Secretary uses LinkedIn, Vine, YouTube, and other platforms. The Secretary also host a number of digital events, such as Twitter and Facebook chats, which attracts interest from a wide spectrum of stakeholders, including small business owners, exporters and venture capitalists. The Office of Digital Engagement launched Secretary Instagram account, the first-ever Cabinet official to have an Instagram account.

As part of the Department’s OPA, the Office of Digital Engagement is directed by Director of Digital Strategy. The team also includes members from the Office of the Secretary and a Digital Engagement Council made up of representatives from the following Departmental BOUs:

- Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA)
  - U.S. Census (Census)
  - International Trade Administration (ITA)
  - Economic Development Administration (EDA)
  - Economics and Statistics Administration (ESA)
  - Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA)
  - National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)
  - National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
  - National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)
  - U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO)
- ***Project – Publishing Schedule Data for Secretary Online***  
*What’s new – Regularly updated, searchable feed of the Secretary’s public schedule*

The OPA, in conjunction with the Offices of Scheduling and Business Liaison, now releases publically via twitter at @CommerceSec (<https://twitter.com/CommerceSec>) the Department’s Secretary’s schedule daily.

## Public and Agency Ideas

**T**he Department has an extensive outreach program which includes public and stakeholder meetings, online press conferences, and numerous other tools and messaging platforms designed to engage the public. It uses the community of practice/community of interest (COP/COI) method for two-way conversations and full exchange of ideas with the public. This allows the BOUs to reach out through mission oriented COP/COIs to solicit information to improve their business lines enables the public to submit ideas and suggestions directly to the Department.



## U.S. Department of Commerce – Open Government Plan



The Department established a CDAC and designated a CDO to lead the Data efforts for improving the outreach efforts. Given the large amount of data produced by the Department and the inherent value stored within it. The CDO working with the Office of Digital Engagement, the Office of Policy and Strategic Planning and BOUs, have begun to reach out to users, big and small to better share needs and best practices. Roundtables and virtual town halls key to implementing the Department's 2014-2018 Strategic Plan are currently operational and will continue into 2017.

The Department will continue efforts to improve capabilities for idea sharing and soliciting and incorporating feedback. This will ensure that the Open Government principles of transparency, participation, and collaboration are emphasized across all five of the strategic Departmental priorities: trade and investment, innovation, data, environment, and operational excellence.



## Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA)

### Background

**B**EA is a component bureau of the Economics and Statistics Administration within the Department.

BEA is one of the world's leading economic statistics agencies, charged with the production of some of the nation's most closely watched economic indicators, influencing decisions made by government officials, businesses, and households. BEA's economic data, which provides 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. The cornerstone of BEA's statistics is the national income and product accounts (NIPAs), which feature estimates of gross domestic product (GDP) and related measures.

### Primary BEA Activities

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

Transparency and openness have long been hallmarks of the Bureau. The BEA publishes all data, research and publications on its website [www.bea.gov](http://www.bea.gov), along with detailed methodology papers that explain exactly how BEA computes the nation's key economic indicators. The Bureau's subject matter experts are made available, with names, phone numbers, email addresses published online. Additionally, to ensure transparency, prior to implementing changes to the presentations or methodologies, BEA announces and conducts 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 Department... emphasizes transparency and is uncommonly open to public questions."

The Bureau continuously explores ways to increase openness and transparency as it relates to its processes and products. The BEA devotes a substantial amount of resources to educate the public about its data. Over the past two years, BEA made major improvements to its premiere data

retrieval system on the BEA website, making the Bureau’s vast stores of data more accessible, consumable, and shareable.

## Open Data

<http://bea.gov/data.htm>

The BEA has a public listing of all datasets currently available at [www.bea.gov](http://www.bea.gov). This listing includes datasets from all economic program areas of the Bureau, and the various formats data is available including interactive web applications and flat, downloadable files.

The BEA datasets are available for download either as static files or via various interactive web applications. In 2012, BEA implemented an award winning data retrieval system known as the Interactive Data Tables, or iTables, to make it easier to access and explore BEA data. In addition, in 2013 BEA implemented an API, further expanding machine-readable access. The API provides direct access to nearly all BEA datasets, allowing developers to search, retrieve, analyze, and display BEA statistics.

In addition, BEA publishes a blog to further support our efforts to promote data releases, highlight new data offerings, and provide insight into our data products.

## Privacy

The BEA views privacy and confidentiality of data as paramount, particularly given the vital trust our mission demands from businesses that provide confidential data to BEA. In addition to standard privacy and confidentiality protections in statute, BEA is also subject the requirements of the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act and the International Investment and Trade in Services Survey Act, both of which extend additional civil and criminal penalties for violations of confidentiality.

- [Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act of 2002 \(CIPSEA\)](#)
- International Investment and Trade in Services Survey Act ([Pub. L. 98-573](#))

## Whistleblower Protection

On May 15, 2002, President Bush signed legislation called the No FEAR Act (Notification and Federal Anti-Discrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002). This act, which took effect on October 1, 2003, makes federal agencies individually accountable for violations of anti-discrimination and whistleblower protection laws. See the [DOC No FEAR Act Policy](#), which dictates BEA policy.

## Websites

The BEA maintains one domain, [www.bea.gov](http://www.bea.gov). Through this website, BEA provides access to its data, information about the methodology by which that data was produced, data release calendars, a blog, as well as an open data portal. The website complies with the Department's policies and best practices.

## Transparency

The BEA participates in Data.gov and e-rulemaking initiatives, and publishes all data allowable under statute. Further, BEA publishes extensive documentation on methodology and procedures, recognizing that the highest level of transparency is necessary to fulfil our mission.

## Public Notice

The BEA works with the Department's Office of Digital Engagement on ensuring effective two-way communication with the public about the Bureau's initiatives.

The [BEA Advisory Committee](#) advises the Director of BEA on matters related to the development and improvement of BEA's national, regional, industry, and international economic accounts, especially in areas of new and rapidly growing economic activities arising from innovative and advancing technologies, and provides recommendations from the perspectives of the economics profession, business, and government.

Further, with respect to changes in schedules, methodologies or other pertinent information, BEA follows the requirements of OMB Statistical Directives #3 and #4, outlining public notices requirements and dissemination procedures for statistical products.

## Records Management

The BEA's Administrative Services Division includes a records management specialist who takes lead responsibility for ensuring BEA complies with all applicable record retention and archival regulations.

## Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Requests

The FOIA provides the public a means to access Federal agency records, except those excluded or protected under the Act. All BEA's FOIA requests are reviewed and responded to promptly as directed by law. Requests must be submitted electronically through the Department's e-FOIA system, and are coordinated by the dedicated FOIA officer within the ESA. See the [ESA Freedom of Information Act Policy](#).

## Proactive Disclosures

As a data producing agency, the Bureau proactively publishes or otherwise makes available all data, research, reports and publications allowable under Federal law or regulation. The BEA only restricts access to company confidential, embargoed or other information protected by law.

## Congressional Requests

The BEA works closely with the Department's Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs to collect, coordinate, and distribute timely and accurate information related to the Bureau's congressional relations and activities. Within the Bureau's Communications Division is a staff member designated as the bureau's Congressional Affairs Officer.

## Declassification

The BEA does not have classification authority. The BEA does impose strict embargos on public release of market sensitive information until the specified date and time of release. Authority and procedures for data embargo are provided by OMB Statistical Policy Directives #3 & #4.

## Participation

The BEA actively reaches out to data users, survey respondents, and other stakeholders at meetings and conferences, both in person and through web conferences. This outreach is vital to guiding the direction of BEA's programs, including its open data initiatives.

The [BEA Advisory Committee](#) advises the Director on matters related to the development and improvement of BEA's national, regional, industry, and international economic accounts, especially in areas of new and rapidly growing economic activities arising from innovative and advancing technologies, and provides recommendations from the perspectives of the economics profession, business, and government. The BEA also receives guidance and advice from the [Federal Economic Statistics Advisory Committee](#) and the [Interagency Council on Statistical Policy](#).

Additionally, the BEA is an active participant and a representative of the U.S. to the [United Nations Statistical Commission](#), the [Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development](#), and appropriate working groups of the [International Monetary Fund](#).

## Collaboration

The BEA follows the Department's best practices for ensuring effective two-way communication with the public, ensuring openness and transparency.

## BEA Open Government Initiatives

The table below shows a list of initiatives for *BEA*.

Table 3 - BEA Initiatives

| Operating Unit | Project   | Status               | Estimated Completion |
|----------------|---|----------------------|----------------------|
| <b>BEA</b>     | Open Data   | Ongoing / Continuous | --                   |
|                | Enhancing Communications through Web and Social Media | Ongoing / Continuous | --                   |
|                | New Data Products                                     | In Progress          | December 2015        |

- ***BEA Open Data***

The BEA has a public listing of all datasets currently available on the BEA website ([www.bea.gov](http://www.bea.gov)). This listing includes datasets from all economic program areas of the Bureau, and the various formats data is available including interactive web applications and flat, downloadable files.

BEA’s website has long made datasets available for download either as static files or via various interactive web applications. In 2012, BEA implemented an award winning data retrieval system known as the [Interactive Data Tables](#), or iTables, to make it easier to access and explore BEA data. In addition, in 2013 BEA implemented an [Application Programming Interface](#) (API), further expanding machine-readable access. The API provides direct access to nearly all BEA datasets, allowing developers to search, retrieve, analyze, and display BEA statistics.

In addition, BEA publishes a blog to further support our efforts to promote data releases, highlight new data offerings, and provide insight into our data products.

In 2016, BEA is continuing to work with third-party vendors to explore and pilot additional open data opportunities.

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

The 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 BEA’s website, [bea.gov](http://bea.gov). BEA has improved the functionality and usability of its interactive data tables. These improvements include mapping tools. In 2015, BEA embarked upon a comprehensive reexamination of the structure, content, usability, and design of its website, [bea.gov](http://bea.gov).

The second prong of this project involves using blogs, social media, and the mobile Web to make BEA data more digestible for the public. BEA has 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.

In 2015, BEA focused on creating innovative video content and improving its social media presence.

- ***BEA New Data Products***

The BEA is releasing a batch of new statistics this year, part of an ongoing effort to better measure the dynamic U.S. economy and give businesses, policymakers, and households additional tools to make informed decisions. The new compilations includes:

***Arts and Culture Statistics***

- Release date: January 12, 2015
- These annual statistics show the impact of arts and culture on the U.S. economy.
- Annual report covers 1998 – 2012.
- Report provides detailed information on spending on arts and culture as well as employment in those industries.

***Health Care Statistics***

- Release dates: January with additional statistics released in the Spring.
- BEA in the January report releases a new set of Health Care Satellite Account statistics that for the first time provides information about the changes in prices to treat different diseases – illustrating trends in prices over time. The report covers 2000-2010.
- BEA also in January releases a new set of annual statistics that track how much is spent to treat different diseases, covering 2000-2010.
- The report in the Spring provides the same information but covers 2011 and 2012.
- BEA's new health care statistics emerge from a multiyear project to improve the way health care spending is measured throughout the U.S. economy.

***Quarterly Statistics on State Economic Activity***

- Release dates: September 2 and December 10, 2015
- New quarterly Gross Domestic Product by State statistics provide information on state economic activity six to seven months after the end of a quarter going back to the first quarter of 2005.
- In the September 2 report, most recent period covered is the first quarter of 2015. In the December 10 report, it's the second quarter of 2015.

- Quarterly reports provide information on economic activity generated by each state as measured by gross domestic product as well as forces supporting or restraining economic activity.
- These statistics offer a more up-to-date picture of how states' economies are faring and provide a more detailed view of economic activity across the entire United States. The statistics also serve as a better barometer for potential turning points in state economies.
- BEA released a prototype version of this report last year and begins releasing quarterly statistics on a regular basis starting in September.

### ***Consumer Spending by State***

- Release date: December 1, 2015
- Annual report covers 1997 to 2014
- The new Personal Consumption Expenditures by State statistics provide information on how much consumers are spending in each state as well as details on the goods and services they are buying.
- These statistics offer a detailed look at consumer spending behavior in each of the country's 50 states. Report provides a gauge of how consumers in different states are faring, offering a richer picture of economic activity across the entire United States.
- BEA released a prototype version of this report last year and releases the annual report for the first time on a regular basis in December.

### ***New International Investment Statistics***

- Release date: December 4, 2015
- New survey, launched near the end of 2014, collected information from companies in 2015. This laid the groundwork for BEA to produce new statistics about new investment made by foreign companies in the United States.
- These statistics provide information on “greenfield” investment – investment that occurs when a foreign firm establishes a new U.S. business or expands an existing one by building a new plant or facility. The statistics also cover also the acquisition of U.S. businesses by foreign companies.
- BEA previously had once collected similar information, but that survey was discontinued in 2008 due to budget constraints.



## Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS)

**B**IS is committed to all three pillars of open government – transparency, participation, and collaboration - not only because it is the right thing to do, but also because doing so helps us fulfill our mission 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. One way this Open Government Plan will help us meet our mission and also make sure we continue to be a model employer is by strengthening internal collaboration.

### Primary BIS Activities

Maintain and strengthen an adaptable and effective U.S. export control and treaty compliance system. BIS also administers and enforces controls on exports of dual-use goods and technologies to counter proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), combats terrorism, and pursues 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 export control 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.

BIS actively pursues a policy of Open Government throughout the Bureau. BIS' outreach activities and websites are great examples of how BIS embraces Open Government. Information is updated as it becomes available through the EFOIA website at <http://efoia.bis.doc.gov/> which also includes

press releases, speeches, testimonies and an index of other documents for public release. The Bureau's main public website at <http://www.bis.doc.gov/> post regular updates of information for the Export Administration and Export Enforcement communities and other items of interest to the public dealing with BIS.

## **Proactive Disclosures**

To achieve an informed citizenry BIS proactively takes affirmative steps in releasing information to the public without waiting for specific requests. Whenever possible, BIS releases information to the public through FOIA with frequently asked questions being posted via the Office of Congressional and Public Affairs Staff, (OCPAS). The Bureau also publishes information on Regulations, Licensing, Enforcement, Compliance & Training, Policy Guidance, and Export Control Reform on its public webpage at [www.bis.doc.gov](http://www.bis.doc.gov). BIS publishes releasable information through the Department's FOIAonline program and releases information via EFOIA on BIS' public website. Information such as Antiboycott Violations is posted for public viewing. BIS is committed creating transparency of information to the extent feasible and consistent with applicable laws, policies, agency missions, resources constraints, and U.S. National, economic securities.

## **Whistleblower Protection**

A core value of BIS is to protect its diligent employees, contractors and grantees that step forward and identifies what they perceive to be wrongdoings in their organization from unlawful reprisal. In doing so, BIS has created a team to develop the Bureau's Whistleblower Protection Plan. Milestones are being created to show how the Bureau plans to inform all employees of their rights and protections under this plan. At a minimum, the plan shall include, consistent with Federal law:

- (1) a reporting structure that ensures that the officials who are the subject of a whistleblower's complaint will not learn the identity of the whistleblower;
- (2) a single point to which all complaints can be made without fear of retribution;
- (3) procedures to enable the whistleblower to track the status of the case;
- (4) activities to educate employees about their rights as whistleblowers and how they are protected by law;
- (5) activities to educate employees about their obligations to report concerns and their accountability before and after receiving the results of the investigations into their concern.

## Privacy

The Bureau is committed to the principles of transparency while also meeting its responsibility to privacy compliance. BIS considers Personally Identifiable Information (PII) and Business Identifiable Information (BII) to be of the highest priority. The Bureau complies with the following:

- The Privacy Act of 1974, 5 U.S.C. § 552a
- The Federal Information Security Management Act of 2002, 44 U.S.C. § 3541
- OMB Memorandum M-03-22, Guidance for Implementing the Privacy Provisions of the E-Government Act of 2002 (September 26, 2003)
- OMB Memorandum M-06-15, Safeguarding Personally Identifiable Information (May 22, 2006)
- OMB Memorandum M-06-16, “Protection of Sensitive Agency Information” (June 23, 2006)
- OMB Memorandum M-06-19, “Reporting Incidents Involving Personally Identifiable Information and Incorporating the Cost for Security in Agency Information Technology Investments” (July 12, 2006)
- OMB’s Memorandum entitled “Recommendations for Identity Theft Related Data Breach Notification” (September 20, 2006), OMB Memorandum M-07-16, “Safeguarding Against and Responding to the Breach of Personally Identifiable Information” (May 22, 2007)
- OMB Memorandum M-11-02, “Sharing Data While Protecting Privacy” (November 3, 2010)

## Ongoing Initiatives

BIS holds regular seminars, as well as online training modules and webinars to assist individuals and companies with complying with the Export Administration Regulations.

One of the Bureau’s major outreach initiatives is the “Annual Update Conference on Export Controls and Policy”. This conference gives the exporting community the opportunity to learn first-hand from senior U.S. Government officials about current issues and trends in export control policies, regulations and practices. This event draws business and government representatives from around the world to learn and exchange ideas about export control issues. It provides the opportunity to network with colleagues in the export control industry, interact with U.S. Government officials, and learn about programs and services offered by U.S. Government and industry exhibitors. It is one of the Department’s most notable international trade events.

Other initiatives include instructional programs on “Complying with U.S. Export Controls”. This two-day program is led by BIS's professional counseling staff and provides an in-depth examination of the Export Administration Regulations (EAR). The program covers information exporters need to know in order to comply with U.S. export control requirements on commercial goods. This program of instruction focuses on what items and activities are subject to the EAR; steps to take to determine the export licensing requirements; how to determine an export control classification number (ECCN); when and if an exporter can export or reexports without applying for a license; export clearance procedures, record keeping requirements and Export Management Compliance Program (EMCP) concepts. Presenters typically conduct a number of "hands-on"

exercises that will prepare practitioners to apply the regulations as it pertains to industry export activities. This one-of-a-kind program is well suited for those who need a comprehensive understanding of their obligations under the EAR.

BIS also offers export control conferences where senior U.S. Government officials discuss current issues and trends in export control policies, regulations and practices. These conferences are intended for the experienced export control practitioners.

### **Congressional Requests**

The legislative branch of our Federal government has intense interest in the work conducted by BIS. Like the public, members of Congress and their staff frequently direct letters, emails, facsimiles and phone calls that require timely and responsive reply. The Bureau's Office of Congressional and Public Affairs works closely with the Office of the Under Secretary and Deputy Under Secretary to oversee all requests and responses to and from Congress.

### **Public Notice**

BIS publishes on its website all upcoming seminars being held in an effort to keep industry informed of any and all upcoming changes and answer questions concerning the export control regulations. BIS ensures compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act by posting public notices in the Federal Registry six months ahead of a renewal for required information.

### **Records Management**

BIS continues to move from paper to electronic use and storage of documents. This is being done by electronic use and storage of current documents and destroying paper documents through attrition. Each entity throughout the bureau coordinates with the records manager to archive documents when necessary and destroy when the annual disposition date for these document have come.

### **Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Requests**

BIS FOIA officer uses the Department's FOIA tracking system for tracking and release of information to the public. The Bureau also has a FOIA webpage located at <http://efoia.bis.doc.gov/> which includes EFOIA releases and how to file, and the process of filing a FOIA request. BIS has one FOIA officer and provides additional support when needed to alleviate any backlog from occurring. The FOIA officer receives requests through the Commerce FOIAonline system, through emails, faxes, or regular mail. All FOIAs are tracked in the FOIAonline system which informs the Commerce FOIA officer of the new FOIA requests and shows the tracking and progress of each request.

## Collaboration

The Bureau actively communicates with Industry to share and collect information needed to accomplish both the Bureau and Departmental goals. In FY 2016, BIS held 51 domestic export control seminars conducted in 13 states and the District of Columbia. These seminars provided guidance to new and experienced exporters regarding the EAR, changes in export policy and licensing procedures, as well as encryption and technical data issues. BIS also participated as a speaker or represented BIS within information booths at several dozen additional events hosted by other organizations.

## Declassification

BIS declassifies information as soon as it is publically releasable. Whenever possible, the Records Manager assist the office of responsibility in reviewing and releasing information which has reached its declassified date or is no longer required to be classified.

## BIS Open Government Initiatives

The table below shows a list of initiatives for *BIS*.

Table 4 - BIS Initiatives

| Operating Unit | Project                            | Status             | Estimated Completion |
|----------------|------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| BIS            | Website transformation             | Live / Operational | --                   |
|                | Seminars and Webinars for training | Live / Operational | --                   |

- *Project – Website transformation*

In response to the feedback from our many stakeholders, BIS’ website is continually being enhanced to meet Open Government requirements. The new site is operational and can be accessed with the following link: [www.bis.doc.gov](http://www.bis.doc.gov). By clicking either picture or icon users can explore and continue to provide comments and recommendations as BIS continues to enhance outreach efforts. BIS’ public website has links to the Bureau’s latest information at the Headquarters Offices and Field Offices. Information such as upcoming seminars are promoted along with a page called the BIS “Newsroom” with the latest information in the Bureau. Speeches, Testimonies, Press Releases, Electronic FOIAs and other news can be read by the public on this webpage. BIS has improve and expand its online presence and has successfully created a presence on Facebook, YouTube and Twitter to connect with the public and share information on Export Administration Regulations (EAR), Export Controls, Export Control Reforms, as well as educational seminars on BIS missions. These initiatives, as they continue to evolve and develop, will increase BIS’ interaction with the public at large.

- Project – Seminars and Webinars for training**

BIS will continue to hold its regular seminars and training webinars for individuals and companies wanting to understand the Export Administration Act. These seminars are physically held in various locations such as Houston Texas, San Diego California, and Boston Massachusetts. These training sessions gives the exporting community the opportunity to learn first-hand from senior U.S. Government officials about current issues and trends in export control policies, regulations, processes and practices.

| Department                        | Bureau                                | Bureau Open Government Lead | Name of Information   | Type of Information  | BOU Running Total | Starting Baseline FY2015 | Increase for FY 2016 Q1 | Increase for FY 2016 Q2 | Increase for FY 2016 Q3 | Increase for FY 2016 Q4 | Running total for FY 2016 | Total Percent increase from FY 2015 Baseline | Date of last Update |              |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|--|-------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|--|---------------------|--------------|
| Commerce                          | Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS) | Carol Rose                  | Press Releases / News Updates   | General Releases   | 55                | 38                       | 7                       | 4                       | 6                       | 0                       | 17                        | 44.74%                                       | October 2015        |              |
|                                   |                                       |                             | Blog Posts  | Blog Posts on Gov websites   | 0                 | 0                        | 0                       | 0                       | 0                       | 0                       | 0                         | 0  | #DIV/0!             | October 2015 |
|                                   |                                       |                             | Speeches & Testimony  | On the record remarks  | 0                 | 0                        | 6                       | 0                       | 2                       | 0                       | 8                         | 8  | #DIV/0!             | October 2015 |
|                                   |                                       |                             | Seminars  | Public Seminars (schedules are also published on the BIS web site) | 118               | 19                       | 28                      | 29                      | 42                      | 0                       | 99                        | 99   | 521.05%             | October 2015 |
|                                   |                                       |                             | Regulations and Federal Register notices  | published in the Federal Register and on the BIS web site          | 108               | 30                       | 22                      | 26                      | 30                      | 0                       | 78                        | 78   | 260.00%             | October 2015 |
|                                   |                                       |                             | Weekly Teleconference   | Export Control Reform updates                                      | 69                | 30                       | 14                      | 6                       | 19                      | 0                       | 39                        | 39   | 130.00%             | October 2015 |
|                                   |                                       |                             | Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and President's Export Council Subcommittee on Export Administration (PECSEA) meetings | technical updates  | 44                | 23                       | 3                       | 5                       | 13                      | 0                       | 21                        | 21   | 91.30%              | October 2015 |
|                                   |                                       |                             | Export, and Antiboycott Violations  | Final decisions for public release and comment.                    | 0                 | 0                        | 16                      | 7                       | 13                      | 0                       | 36                        | 36   | #DIV/0!             | October 2015 |
|                                   |                                       |                             | Social Media  | Twitter (number of tweets)   | 253               | 0                        | 112                     | 88                      | 53                      | 0                       | 253                       | 253  | #DIV/0!             | October 2015 |
|                                   |                                       |                             |   | Facebook (number of posts)   | 0                 | 0                        | 0                       | 0                       | 0                       | 0                       | 0                         | 0  | 0                   | #DIV/0!      |
| YouTube (number of videos posted) | 0                                     | 0                           |   | 0  | 0                 | 0                        | 0                       | 0                       | 0                       | 0                       | #DIV/0!                   | October 2015                                 |                     |              |



## Bureau of the Census (Census)

Census 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.

Four principles form the foundation for the work done at Census: openness to user and respondent concerns, independence and neutrality, strong statistical standards, and confidentiality. Through these principles, Census is inherently aligned with the cornerstone principles of the Open Government Directive: transparency, participation, and collaboration.

Census aims to build a 21<sup>st</sup> Century digital platform to serve the American people with greater transparency, participation, and collaboration. As a government leader in providing digital products and services, Census fully embraces the opportunity to unlock data and promote transparency with the American public through digital means. The open data API is an integral part of Census response to the comprehensive Federal Digital Strategy, of providing data and services that are available “anywhere, anytime, on any device.”

Guided by customer-centricity, information-centricity, shared services, and security and privacy, Census will continue to drive towards a 21st century digital platform by executing projects and initiatives across the Bureau.

## Open Data

The Census currently has an inventory of 213 public datasets in data.gov. We routinely reach out to all the points of contact for each dataset that is in inventory.data.gov and for updates, and revisions. Out of date links or other errors associated with datasets are also continuously assessed. A calendar list of known updates for datasets is currently being developed.

Additionally, the Census is continually making public use datasets available through the Census Data Application Programming Interface (API) on a flow basis. We added 28 new datasets in first quarter of this year alone. The data can be pulled from the API as needed. Data can also be downloaded from the American Fact Finder (AFF), and through a tool called DataFerrett for any public use datasets that are accessible from that tool.

We are frequently updating and adding information about dataset availability for the API through the developers forum at <http://www.census.gov/developers>. Our Chief Technology Officer (CTO) office is working on a "CitySDK" -Software Developer Kit that is a proof-of-concept to see how we can enhance use of the Census Data API and the Census Geo API for developers.

As our Center for Enterprise Dissemination Services and Consumer Information (CEDSCI) evolves, we will enhance our datasets availability and access for the public.

The Data Management System (DMS) is the means by which we inventory internal datasets that are restricted and not available to the public. This internal data includes our survey data, data from reimbursables, and administrative records. The DMS does not include public information. That is inventoried through other means.

## Participation and Collaboration

The Census uses a number of technologies to promote opportunities for public participation in decision-making processes, and improve collaboration. For example, the Census executes its Digital Strategy through initiatives such as digital transformation and developer engagement on Census.gov. We communicate these initiatives through means such as blogs and Open Government policies. Below are some examples of public-facing communications with our customers on digital strategy initiatives and innovations:

### *Blogs communicating Census efforts to align with the Digital Government Strategy*

- <http://directorsblog.blogs.census.gov/2015/01/06/improving-your-access-to-u-s-census-bureau-data-two-new-features-on-census-gov>
- <http://directorsblog.blogs.census.gov/2014/03/06/changing-the-way-we-do-business>
- <http://blogs.census.gov/2014/02/19/welcome-to-the-future-of-census-gov>

### *Policies*

- <http://census.gov/about/policies/section207.html>

### *Developer engagement*

- <http://www.census.gov/developers>
- <http://blogs.census.gov/category/web-transformation>

SharePoint is another tool that the Census leverages to enhance participation and collaboration. As an example of how the SharePoint tool works, it was used to streamline the Census Interagency and Other Special Agreements (IOSA) process. The Administrative Records (ADREC) Branch initiated a centralized approach to managing all Census IOSAs. Based on this approach, the ADREC Branch became the focal point for managing, tracking, and routing IOSAs within the



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Census and Office of General Counsel, Department of Commerce (OGC). The ADREC Branch restructured workflow processes and routing procedures for reimbursable, payable, joint statistical projects and no-funds exchanged IOSAs; established an IOSA management database; developed a SharePoint IOSA routing option; and enhanced channels of communications between program managers, Census Legal, Office of General Counsel, Budget, and Finance Divisions with extranet capabilities.

Results of this new SharePoint process consist of reduced IOSA review times, workflow clarity, less paper routing, and transparency. For example, regarding transparency, IOSA SharePoint feature provides functionality by allowing program managers the ability to view and track the status of any IOSA in the review process at Census and OGC. In addition, located on the ADREC Branch's intranet site, the PCO provides IOSA developmental tools and online advice regarding legal authorities, model agreement templates, checklists, and helpful links for program managers.

Upcoming enhancements for this process include implementation of an IOSA/SharePoint platform, electronic signatures, and a publicly available website for current and prospective sponsors. Descriptions of and links to appropriate websites where the public can learn about existing collaboration efforts of your agency. See

<http://www.census.gov/procur/www/iossa.html>.

Open innovation methods — such as incentive prizes on Challenge.gov, citizen science programs, and other crowdsourcing approaches — designed to obtain ideas from and to increase collaboration with those in the private sector, non-profit, and academic communities.

Future extranet capabilities plans will allow major stakeholders/agencies/customers restricted permission into our IOSA SharePoint website. This will allow faster agreement submissions and an effective streamlined IOSA community of users.

## Privacy

The Census has a strong privacy compliance program. Our Privacy Compliance Branch leads and participates in a variety of privacy related trainings and workgroups to ensure the bureau's overall privacy compliance.

The Privacy Compliance Branch produces a quarterly Federal Information Security Management Act report, which is sent to the Department of Commerce (DOC). The fourth quarter report contains a summary for the entire year.

Additionally, whenever there is a breach of personally identifiable information (PII), the Privacy Compliance Branch prepares a PII Breach report to the DOC outlining the circumstances surrounding the incident and the steps taken to mitigate the breach. These reports are sent to the DOC as incidents occur. We do not engage in data mining and therefore are not producing data mining reports.

For more information visit <http://www.osec.doc.gov/opog/>.

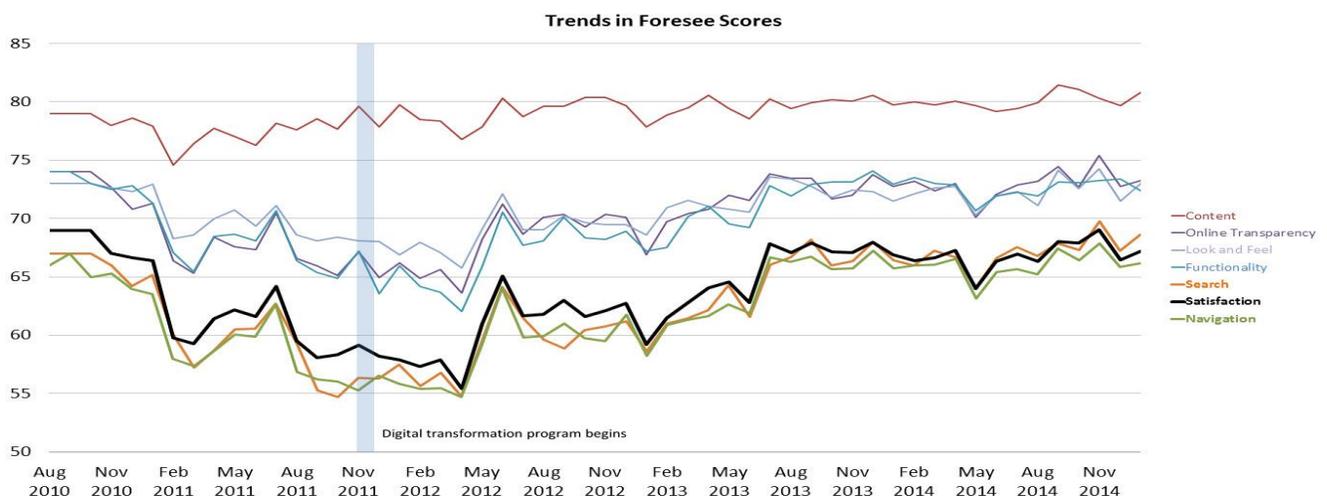
## Whistleblower Protection

In accordance with the Department’s latest Open Government Plan, the Census meets the requirements of the Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act. Detailed information is available at <http://www.commerce.gov/Whistleblower%20Protection%20Enhancement%20Act>. The Census NO FEAR ACT reports are posted quarterly on <http://www.osec.doc.gov/ocr/nofear/nofear.htm>.

Additionally, the Census continuously takes steps to inform our employees of their rights and remedies under the prohibited personnel practices and whistleblower retaliation protection provisions of Title 5. For example, we included a question, "I can disclose a suspected violation of any law, rule, or regulation without fear of reprisal" on our Organizational Climate Survey (OCS) that was offered to all Census employees. Asking the question on the OCS, with its accompanying organizational granularity, will allow leaders, managers and supervisors to target "No Fear" communications more effectively.

## Website

The Census signature website is [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov). We conduct usability testing of our website and content through our Usability Lab. Our usability/findability evaluations by web visitors have improved steadily since we began our digital transformation efforts at the beginning of Fiscal Year 2012 – satisfaction scores have climbed to about 68 in January 2015 from about 57 in November 2012. We have found that users' ratings for search and navigation scores drive their overall satisfaction with Census.gov, despite relatively flat (high) satisfaction with our content.



Over the last three years, the Census has pursued a goal of making Census.gov a customer-centric destination that serves as the first stop for economic, demographic, and geographic data.

Census.gov is one of the largest websites in the federal government, with over 46 million annual visits and more than a million pages and assets. The site serves a wide range of users—from the general public, journalists, educators and students hunting for facts, to economists, academics and researchers conducting sophisticated data analysis. Through Census.gov, the Census aims to facilitate access to its statistics, increase customer satisfaction, and grow its audience.

In line with the Digital Government Strategy, the new website is just one part of our digital transformation. Together with other innovations, such as our mobile apps, we are using 21<sup>st</sup> century technology to meet our mission of making the statistics that define our growing, changing nation more accessible than ever before.

We are excited about the changes we are making to Census.gov, but we recognize the importance of getting feedback from customers to further understand how the Census can continue to improve its services online in order to meet customer needs. We encourage customer feedback at [cnmp.web.comments.list@census.gov](mailto:cnmp.web.comments.list@census.gov) and hope to construct a new Census.gov site worthy of daily customer interest and exploration. Feedback is analyzed, prioritized and incorporated into the agile project management, in order to have faster and more effective response to customer needs.

The Census uses the ForeSee Customer Satisfaction (CSAT) survey – which is introduced to a sample of users who visit at least two webpages – to evaluate users' experiences with Census.gov. In addition to asking questions about aspects of their experience such as look and feel, online transparency and navigation, the survey asks about specific content areas and data tools, and the intention of the visit and any searches. It also makes heat maps and activity captures of surveyed users' actions on the site. All this gives us a good picture of what users are seeking and how satisfied they are with the results.

The Census also uses Adobe Analytics to measure actions taken by all users, not just the subgroup who respond to the survey, to assess search results, numbers of pages visited, most popular content, paths taken to reach the desired content, etc. We cross-reference this with the results from the satisfaction survey to see if user behaviors correspond with trends in reported experience.

The Census has implemented a Customer Experience Management Platform (CEM) that brings together key sources of customer interactions on website, social media, call centers, media outreach, stakeholder relations etc. in a dashboard display that allows managers to make informed decisions on customer experience improvements.

The Customer Experience Management (CEM) platform provides shared, centralized business intelligence, reporting and insight generation from a growing number of Census data sources. The initial approach was to capture and provide insight into customer interactions with Census products, tools, and services. The unique power of this system is the integration of previously stove-piped data sets by ingesting them into a centralized data warehouse and using a common coding schema. This approach enables users to reveal multiple views of the same customer

segments across various customer interaction channels such as web, mobile, social, and contact center. The platform was designed and architected to enable the addition of different data sources from across the organization to deliver timely insights into consumer behavior and organizational operations.

The near real-time dashboards and visualizations provided by the CEM platform offer Census leadership a multi-faceted view of customer needs and expectations, regardless of the channel through which the customer interacts with us, or the program or tool they are using. The visualizations encourage and enable deeper exploration, giving leadership real data needed to collaboratively make better customer-focused decisions that ultimately support the Bureau in meeting their mission objectives and creating value for the American Public.

Analytics have proved that the most popular content users are looking for on our site falls into four broad categories:

- NAICS/Schedule B/trade reporting information
- Topics such as population, income, poverty, and other demographic data
- Geography-based demographic and economic data (i.e., data specific to a city, county, state or other place)
- Data tools such as the Population Clock and QuickFacts are hugely popular among one-time visitors to the site who seek fast answers.

As a direct result of customer feedback, the Census recently updated two key tools on Census.gov – search and QuickFacts – with new features to make accessing statistics easier than ever before.

With an improved search feature generating better results on census.gov, users can discover a wealth of information and visualizations just by typing key words, such as “median income,” “population” or a particular NAICS (North American Industry Classification System) code. For example, a search of “California population” will display the latest population statistics along with other popular statistics for California. Users are also able to filter their search by other content types, such as image and videos.

The Census also recently debuted an updated beta version for one of its most popular web tools, QuickFacts. The tool now provides multiple data views, including viewing charts, maps and statistics for up to six geographies at once, and the ability to share on social media, embed and download content. Statistics are also now available for Puerto Rico and townships. During the QuickFacts beta period, users can submit feedback through the “Tell Us What You Think” link that is available on the application. These updated tools follow recent innovations, such as the development of the Open API and three mobile apps. These improvements are aimed at making the Census statistics on our growing and changing nation more accessible to the public than ever before.

We have taken significant steps towards making our information more accessible to the public.

The digital transformation program focuses on customer-centricity, shared platforms and innovative technologies and solutions to build a 21<sup>st</sup> century platform to better serve the American people. Each initiative in the digital transformation program was selected for its alignment with the three digital transformation goals and their affiliated objectives. These initiatives are a critical part of the Census Strategic Plan:

### Goal 1: Mission Excellence:

Objective 1.1: Collect, process, and release high-quality statistical benchmarks to meet constitutional and legislative mandates.

### Goal 2: Customer Service Excellence:

Objective 2.1: Increased effectiveness of stakeholder engagement.

Objective 2.2: Increased visibility and utility of Census products.

The goals of the digital transformation program are:

- Increase awareness and access to Census statistics
- Improve customer satisfaction
- Expand our audience

The Census digital transformation strategy addresses the agency's digital presence – including user experience, search, mobile access, social media, analytics and content management. The strategy envisions digital content that is conceived, developed and delivered to create a positive, customer-centric experience. The key components of the strategy are:

- Redesigned Census.gov: The Census used user research and validation to create an engaging experience online. This encourages exploration of web content and makes the site easier to navigate.
- Content management system: A next-generation digital platform was introduced to present content in a consistent, user-friendly way. It also reduces the burden on internal content contributors.
- Smart search: With new integrated search capabilities pulling information from the Census API, users can get answers and visualizations to the most popular queries on Census.gov directly on the search page.
- Mobile and embeddable web applications: Interactive data tools, mobile and embeddable web applications now bring Census content to a wider audience beyond Census.gov.
- Customer experience management: By consolidating data across all of the agency's digital platforms, we created a single view of each customer and their behavior. This enables leadership to understand customer behavior and trends and aids in decision making.

Here are some results of our digital transformation:

- Overall Customer Satisfaction has risen 11 points, from 58 at the start of the program to 69 currently.
- Satisfaction with Search has improved by 12 points, going from 55 in September 2011 to 68 in January 2015.
- Satisfaction with Navigation has improved 10 points, from 56 to 66.
- Engagement with Census Content has increased by 118%, as measured by year-over-year download rates of PDF documents.
- More than 1.1 million pages viewed within our web applications embedded on other websites.
- More than 180,000 downloads of our mobile apps.
- We frequently released updates and upgrades of our most popular data tools. In the past few years, we have substantially improved and simplified access to data in the Population Clock, QuickFacts, and American FactFinder, three of our most popular tools. We have introduced new web tools to help the public find and understand our data, including My Congressional District and a consolidated glossary of census and survey terms. We have developed embeddable widget versions of many of these tools so that users can add them to their own websites. We have developed and released a "smart search" capability, unique among federal agency websites, that provides Google-style overviews and mini-reports in addition to keyword-driven search results.
- In addition to web access, we also offer economic and demographic data through our mobile apps America's Economy, dwellr and Census PoP Quiz.

As the Census looks ahead, the focus remains the same: providing digital content that delights the customer, improves access to statistics, enables informed decision making, and continues to transform the Census into a true digital services organization. Our upcoming efforts in this area will include:

- Developing a 5-year digital roadmap to prioritize efforts that form the foundation of digital communications and data dissemination.
- Implementing responsive design on Census.gov to optimize the user experience, regardless of device, and provide a truly seamless digital experience.
- Expanding the Customer Engagement Management business intelligence platform to create performance management and operational insight capabilities. This system will first be used to measure the performance of the 2015 Census Test, and then evolve to integrate critical business operations from every Census directorate.
- Continuing to enhance Census.gov and smart search to align with agency-wide dissemination initiatives, as well as adding personalization features to appeal to the diverse set of Census stakeholders.



We are constantly gathering user feedback and leveraging the CEM platform to guide future digital innovations. The result of the digital transformation strategy will be a Census that is digitally led, with an eye on delivering content to its customers and the American public.

For more information, visit <http://www.census.gov/data/developers/about.html>.

## Public Notice

We use our [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov) as a platform for sharing information and providing opportunities for participation and collaboration with the public. Internally, we use our Intranet as a platform for keeping our employees informed and engaging them in open government ideas and initiatives. Here are some of tools currently in use:

Externally:

- Crowd-sourcing and idea-generating tools;
- Federal Register Notices;
- Social media (Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, blogs etc.);
- Electronic newsletters;
- Webinars/webcasts;
- Video and slide presentations;
- National conferences and other speaking engagements;
- Census Advisory Committees <http://www.census.gov/cac/> ;
- Trade Outreach Branch meetings <http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/outreach/>;
- stakeholder meetings;
- Focus groups;
- Surveys; and
- Mobile applications.

Internally:

- Electronic technology repository for collaboration;
- Director's and Deputy Director's messages (email, video, audio);
- Broadcast messages;
- Conference phone calls and video teleconferences;
- Training;
- Presentations and workshops for upper management;
- Presentations for the regional offices;
- Town hall meetings with employees;
- Employee newsletter;
- Focus groups; and
- Surveys.

## Records Management

The Census is following the NARA developed government-wide records management directive as called for in the Presidential memorandum. This directive along with the Presidential Memorandum -- Managing Government Records is being posted to the Census Intranet, Administrative and Customers Services Division, Property and Records Management, Sharepoint webpage.

The Records Management Office (RMO) is conducting benchmarks, attending brainstorming meetings, and has drafted an email records management requirements document for internal review/comments. RMO has met with staff from the Department of Interior to inquire and seek guidance on their email records management system. RMO has reviewed the Capstone approach from NARA, and RMO has also participated in a email records management DEMO presented by SMARSH, "one archiving platform for all your communications". RMO is diligently looking at other government agencies to understand which email record management systems are working for their agencies that may provide the exact or similar services for the Census. RMO is paying close attention to the risk and additional implementation requirements to ensure accuracy in email records management for all staff levels here at the Census.

RMO is currently meeting with all Census division's record custodians to review/update and create new record schedules for all the Census records. Our goal is to have all the Census record schedules updated (or create new record schedules) by the end of this fiscal year. RMO is striving to meet the Presidential Memorandum requirements to implement an email records management system here at Census by the end of December 2016.

## Freedom of Information Act Requests

The Census has leveraged, and will continue to leverage, technology as a way to enhance customer service, as well as further integrate a “presumption of openness,” with regard to its FOIA program. For example, information about FOIA requests submitted to and fulfilled by Census FOIA staff are available to everyone with access to the Internet, through an electronic tracking and processing tool, FOIAonline. FOIAonline can be accessed through the following url: <https://foiaonline.regulations.gov/foia/action/public/home>. FOIAonline, as well as information on how to file a FOIA request can also be found at [http://www.census.gov/about/policies/foia/foia-requests/how\\_to\\_file\\_a\\_foia\\_request.html](http://www.census.gov/about/policies/foia/foia-requests/how_to_file_a_foia_request.html). We consider the requirement of posting quarterly FOIA reports satisfied by providing access to the FOIAonline system, because the web-based application has a function that allows individuals to search for and view other people’s requests, as well as any requests they might have submitted to our Agency. Information available to people for requests in the FOIAonline system includes a FOIA tracking number, the requester’s name, and a request’s submission date and description. Although FOIA logs available are on the FOIAonline system, FOIA logs prior to FY 2014 are accessible on [http://www.census.gov/about/policies/foia/foia\\_library/foia\\_logs.html](http://www.census.gov/about/policies/foia/foia_library/foia_logs.html).

The ability to for customers to know whom to contact for help or service and how to contact those individuals is important to us. As such, we provide contact information for our FOIA staff on our public web site at <http://www.census.gov/about/policies/foia/contact.html>. Included on this page are the names and contact information for the Chief FOIA Officer and the FOIA Public Liaison. We also have a Resources page where customers can find a listing of FOIA laws, regulations, and policies, along with links to those documents:

<http://www.census.gov/about/policies/foia/resources.html>. Additionally, on the same Resources page, we have a guide named the *United States Census Bureau Freedom of Information Reference Guide*, which has more detailed information about the FOIA and how the Census FOIA staff processes requests.

Since the Census does not have a significant backlog, there was not a need to develop a Plan on how to reduce its pending backlog of FOIA requests by at least ten percent each year. To that end, we reported in our 2014 Annual FOIA Report that we had a backlog of two requests; we closed both of those requests within the first quarter of FY 2015. Similarly, we reported in our 2013 FOIA Annual Report that we had a backlog of three requests; we closed those requests within the first quarter of FY 2014.

While our Census FOIA Plan does not need to focus on backlog reduction, it does incorporate steps we undertake to ensure our FOIA program continues to operate efficiently and effectively, which in turn enhances the service we provide to our customers. For instance, FOIA managers and staff continually review established FOIA business processes to determine where changes, if any, can or need to be made to help our FOIA program run more efficiently and effectively. As another example, Census FOIA supervisors and managers conduct FOIA case audits on all completed cases. We use the audits as a tool for ensuring FOIA professionals are following established FOIA laws, regulations, policies, guidance, and procedures. Not only do the audits help us with program compliance, we also use them to establish staff training needs.

## Proactive Disclosures

In order to support the Open Government Directive the Census has a distinct system and process in place to identify records for proactive disclosure. The Freedom of Information Act and Open Government Office at the Census uses FOIAonline to both identify and make available records for proactive disclosure. Census FOIA professionals use the system to assist them in reviewing responses to requests to determine if material disclosed may be of use to other requesters and discussing how to make responsive records available through the FOIAonline system, which is available to the public. Through the FOIAonline system, individuals can access posted FOIA requests and agency responses to those requests. Those responses include disclosed responsive records.

Additionally, the FOIAonline system allows the Census to collaborate with agency staff outside of the FOIA office by allowing:

- Department of Commerce (DOC) FOIA staff to review Census FOIA cases, as well as task or assign cases;
- Staff to refer “misdirected” FOIA cases to other DOC Bureaus or Operating Units; and
- Staff to send consultation requests to other agencies that use FOIAonline.

As part of a regular process, the Census FOIA staff reviews FOIAonline to make a determination on whether or not records requested have been requested in the past. If the records have been previously requested, the “Frequently Requested” field in FOIAonline is marked as “Yes.” Those records are made available to the public through FOIAonline by setting the proper system “flag.”

The following are links to posted material:

- <http://www.census.gov/topics.html>,
- [http://www.census.gov/about/policies/foia/foia\\_library/congressional\\_correspondence\\_logs.html](http://www.census.gov/about/policies/foia/foia_library/congressional_correspondence_logs.html)
- [http://www.census.gov/about/policies/foia/foia\\_library/policies.html](http://www.census.gov/about/policies/foia/foia_library/policies.html)
- [http://www.census.gov/about/policies/foia/foia\\_library/custom\\_tabulations.html](http://www.census.gov/about/policies/foia/foia_library/custom_tabulations.html)

### Congressional Requests

The Census receives congressional inquiries by phone, letter, fax, and email.

Congressional Correspondence for the Census is handled through the Office of Congressional and Intergovernment Affairs (OCIA). All incoming congressional correspondence is date stamped and placed in an in-box. The Correspondence Quality Assurance Staff control staff retrieves the correspondence from the in-box and determines the type of correspondence, who receives info copies, and the appropriate Action Office (AO) to draft the response. The CQAS control staff logs into its correspondence tracking system database all controlled correspondences.

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests regarding Census Congressional Correspondence logs and records are handled through the Policy Coordination Office’s Freedom of Information Act and Open Government Office. FOIA staff are responsible for reviewing, coordinating, and responding to incoming requests to the Census that ask for logs and correspondence under the FOIA. On a quarterly basis, the FOIA Office will furnish a report to the public listing Congressional correspondence received by the Census during the quarter. This includes the correspondence control number, member of congress, and the subject and the incoming date of the correspondence.

### Census Open Government Initiatives

The table below shows a list of initiatives for *Census*.

Table 5 - Census Initiatives

| Operating Unit | Project   | Status                     | Estimated Completion |
|----------------|---|----------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Census</b>  | Improving Operational Efficiency  | Live / Operational         | --                   |
|                | Improving the Census History Website  | Live / Operational         | --                   |
|                | Add High Value Datasets to Data.gov   | Live / Operational         | --                   |
|                | Improving LED Data Visualization  | Ongoing / Continuous       | --                   |
|                | Re-engineering State and Local Governments Statistical Programs and Improving Data Presentations  | Live / Operational         | --                   |
|                | Using Mobile Technology to Improve Data Dissemination, Data Collection, and Employee Productivity | Live / Operational         | --                   |
|                | Application Programming Interface   | Live / Operational         | --                   |
|                | The CitySDK   | Live / Operational         | --                   |
|                | Implementing the Federal Digital Strategy   | Live / Operational         | --                   |
|                | Seasonal Adjustment of International Trade Statistics by Geography                                | Completed (March 2014)     | --                   |
|                | Indicator Release Improvement Project (IRIP)  | Completed (January 2016)   | --                   |
|                | Census Business Builder: Small Business Edition   | Completed (September 2015) | --                   |
|                | Census Business Builder: Regional Analyst Edition   | Completed (August 2015)    | --                   |
|                | Administering a Reimbursable Customer Survey  | Completed (June 2015)      | --                   |
|                | Increasing support for American Community Survey Data Users                                       | Ongoing / Continuous       | --                   |
|                | Agility in Action – a New Research Agenda to Enhance the ACS                                      | Ongoing / Continuous       | --                   |
|                | Improving Demographic Mapping Tools   | On-going/Continuous        | --                   |

| Operating Unit | Project  | Status                      | Estimated Completion |
|----------------|--|-----------------------------|----------------------|
|                | Census Flows Mapper                              | Live / Operational          | --                   |
|                | TIGERWeb   | Live / Operational          | --                   |
|                | Live Webcasting                                  | Live/Operational            | --                   |
|                | Prepare 2020 Census Operational Plan             | Completed<br>(October 2015) | --                   |
|                | Enhanced Smart Search                            | Live/Operational            | --                   |
|                | Quickfacts Beta                                  | Live/Operational            | --                   |
|                | Deploying Mobile Responsive Design on Census.gov | In Progress                 | --                   |
|                | Community TIGER                                  | Live/Operational            | --                   |
|                | Census Geocoder                                  | Live / Operational          | --                   |

- Project - Improving Operational Efficiency***

The Census implemented the Improving Operational Efficiency (IOE) program in 2010 to engage employees in identifying opportunities to increase efficiency and reduce cost in Census operations. The 2010 program was a tremendous success. Census’s staff submitted over 676 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 Census's Intranet.

These enhancements, along with the continued enthusiasm of Census staff, generated over 800 proposals from staff located at headquarters and the regional offices in the 2011 IOE program. The goal was to institutionalize this innovative process by making it an annual event so that Census 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 Census did not have a call for ideas in 2013 due to the sequestering and program retooling.

In 2014, the IOE call for ideas was determined to officially be from the first Monday in January until the second Friday in February every year. An annual call for ideas would allow employees to have a routine for submitting challenge-focused ideas. There were three challenges for the 2014 IOE data call. Ideas were collected using IdeaScale, the same platform as 2012. In 2014, 135 ideas were received from headquarters and 413 from the regional offices. Twelve ideas were selected to become projects. Of those, three began funded implementation after a business case was created and seven ideas proceeded immediately toward implementing the solution.

Throughout the project lifecycle, the IOE program monitors and evaluates the health of each ongoing project. The Census also integrated performance measures and metrics into project lifecycles.

A new integrated online ideation platform was created in SharePoint Online for the collection of ideas in the formal IOE data call for 2015 that commenced in January. Ideas were submitted, commented and voted upon by all Census employees in an open crowdsourcing format during a six-week period. The Census formed a Commerce wide Ideation group to share best practices

and assisted with the Department of Commerce formation of the Ideas Tool platform. They also engaged Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), EPA, USPTO, GSA and other agencies in sharing best practices in Ideation.

In 2015, 150 ideas were received from headquarters employees and 580 from the field staff, including from the National Processing Center and the Regional Offices. Nine (9) ideas, or a combination of ideas, went to Business Case to see if these projects should be funded. Seven (7) projects received the go-ahead for funding pending a validation and verification of the business case. To date the IOE program has achieved over 44 million dollars in savings and cost avoidance to for the Census.

- ***Project – Improving the Census History website***

*What's new – Promoting the History Web site and Developing Content that Encourages Expanded Use of Census Data*

The Census History Web site <<http://www.census.gov/history/>> is the primary online source for information about the agency's history. The Census history staff (within the Public Information Office) adds files and develops new content for the site every month. These home pages tell the story of important anniversaries, events, and people using data collected by the Census and other statistical agencies. Recent pages marked the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake, the 105<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire, the 88<sup>th</sup> Academy Awards, and the anniversary of Herman Hollerith's patent for the mechanical tabulator that revolutionized data tabulation. Coming in May 2016, the History Home Page will celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> running of the Indy 500. Students, teachers, and the media can access past home page content at the site's "Home Page Archive." Archived home pages and files are a valuable resource for visitors linking their lesson plans, school projects, or articles to the History Web site's content.

The Census promotes the History Web site using social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, and YouTube). Social media allows the history staff to reach a diverse audience of data users and receive more immediate feedback about the content it provides. Social media posts link to the History Web site or its data, demonstrating not only the range of topics census data can enhance, but also how easily accessible historic statistics are for Internet users. Two ongoing social media promotions include the "This Day in Census History" (#OnThisDay) and "Throwback Thursday" (#TBT) announcements highlighting the agency's history.

- ***Project -- Add High Value Datasets to [Data.gov](http://data.gov)***

*What's New – Providing important data series through Data.gov using the ODP New IAI*

The Census is publishing current datasets to [Data.gov](http://Data.gov) as identified on a flow basis. Previously published records for Census products are reviewed regularly for date of last update and link validation.

- ***Project – Improving Local Employment Dynamics (LED) Data Visualization***

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

Data visualization tools are an important and necessary means by which statistical information can be made more understandable to data users. The Census's LED partnership (or LEHD program) has pioneered this effort with its public OnTheMap web application, which allows graphical analysis of the relationship between residence and workplace locations on user-defined maps. The latest version includes additional years of data and functionality, including improvements to the cartography and updating the base geography to TIGER 2014. In April 2015, Census released version 4.2 of OnTheMap for Emergency Management. First introduced in 2010, this is a public data tool that provides unique, real-time information on the workforce for U.S. areas affected by hurricanes, floods, wildfires, FEMA Disaster Declaration Areas, and other emergency events. OnTheMap for Emergency Management now includes selected characteristics from the American Community Survey (ACS) dataset.

LEHD has successfully completed two pilot data visualization projects for displaying the Quarterly Workforce Indicators (QWI) data. In 2013, the LED Extraction Tool was released to enable access to all 32 indicators of the QWI. This was followed in 2014 by the release of QWI Explorer, an analysis tool that visualizes the QWI through dynamic line/bar charts and tables. A 2015 update to QWI Explorer made thematic mapping functionality available for user to visualize and compare workforce information for sub-state geographies. A web-based visualization tool for the newest LEHD product, Job-to-Job Flows, is currently under development. More information can be found at <http://lehd.ces.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, Census has re-engineered its government statistics programs for better integration of Census of Governments with associated annual and quarterly tax, finance, pensions, and employment surveys. In addition, tabulations have been improved to better address data user needs. Several improvements 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
- an informational flyer for the Quarterly Summary of State and Local Government Tax Revenues included in the component surveys' mailing package in October 2013 to encourage response
- making data more accessible through a variety of modes. Specifically, all state and local governments statistical programs' data are now available through data.gov; the Quarterly Summary of State and Local Government Tax Revenues and the Quarterly Survey of Public Pensions data are included in the Central Indicators Data Repository (CIDR); and the 2012 Census of Governments:
  - Organization, 2012 Census of Governments
  - Employment, 2012 Census of Governments: Finance – Survey of State Government Tax Collections, 2012 Census of Governments: Finance – Survey of Public Pensions (state, and state and local products), 2012 Census of Governments
  - Finance – Survey of State Government Finances, and 2012 Census of Governments:
  - Finance – Survey of School System Finances data were released in American FactFinder. Annual survey data are being released in American FactFinder
- a national map of local governments based on results from the 2012 Census of Governments: Organization. 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, the 2011 Annual Survey of Public Employment and Payroll in August 2012, the 2012 Census of Governments: Finance – Survey of State Government Tax Collections in April 2013, and the 2011 Annual Survey of State and Local Government Finances in July 2013, and the 2012 Census of Governments: Finance – Survey of School System Finances in May 2014;
- 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
- 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, and
- slide rulers providing data from the 2011 Annual Survey of Public Pensions, 2011 Survey of Public Employment and Payroll, and 2012 Census of Governments: Finance – Survey of State Government Tax Collections.

Additionally, the Department plans to continue making improvements to these programs, including:

- increasing the number of data visualizations included in publications, and
- increasing the number of new products including informational flyers and slider rulers.
- ***Project – Using mobile technology to improve data dissemination, data collection and employee productivity***

*What's new – The Census has released its three mobile applications - America's Economy, "dwellr" and Pop Quiz app. These are available on the iOS and Android platforms.*

The Census released its first mobile app called America's Economy in August 2012. The app added 3 new indicators in July 2013 and another in November 2013 and now makes **20** leading economic indicators available to the public via mobile devices. Census 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 **130,000** downloads. In December 2012, 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. In January 2014, the app was named a finalist for the ACT-IAC Excellence.gov award in the category of 'Enhancing the Customer Experience'.

The Census'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/>.

The Census is enhancing its home page <http://www.census.gov> to make it more mobile friendly. The enhanced version of the home page will detect the type of device the request is coming from and respond with an appropriately formatted page.

The Census 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 is also in the process of formulating a mobile computing strategy that will guide all future efforts related to mobile technology within the Bureau.

- ***Project — Application Programming Interface (API)***

The [Application Programming Interface](#) (API) makes key demographic, socioeconomic, and housing statistics more accessible than ever before. The API lets developers customize Census statistics into Web or mobile apps that provides users quick and easy access from more than sixty popular sets of statistics including:

- The 1990, 2000, and 2010 Decennial Census, which include 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.
- American Community Survey (ACS): Several vintages (currently spanning from 2010 – 2013) of the ACS (one, three, and five year estimates), which include 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.
- Economy-wide Keyed Statistics from Economic Census, which includes statistics on establishments, employees, receipts, and payroll for all industries. The API also includes data on an annual basis from County Business Patterns and Nonemployer Statistics.
- Population estimates, which includes statistics that are the timeliest measure of current population available.
- Economic Indicators Time Series – which provide monthly and quarterly data that offer comprehensive measures of the U.S. economy.
- New Geographical APIs
- [And many more...](#)

The API aligns with the federal digital strategy and supports the goals of Open Government by making Census data available in an information-centric and machine-readable format.

- ***Project – CitySDK (Software Development Kit)***

The CitySDK arose from a need to improve the usability of three internal Census APIs: Dataweb (“The Census API” listed above), Tigerweb (a geographic boundary/shape server) and Geocoder (a service that takes addresses, zip codes or geographic coordinates and translates them into FIPS codes). Working with software developers, our communications team found that these customers would need all three of these services (not just any one) in order to build a working map application (most common type of app). However, developers would identify these needs only through a steep learning curve that the team found to take over 12 hours. With the CitySDK, that time has been reduced to around 4 hours. This has made [CitySDK](#) popular among the community of Census data app makers and won the Census an “[Innovation of the Year](#)” award from Fedscoop last year (2015).

- ***Project – Implementing the Federal Digital Strategy***

*What’s New – Census 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, Census fully embraces this opportunity and has been working diligently towards a new 21<sup>st</sup> century digital ecosystem. In the last year, Census has made great strides in delivering on the Digital Government Strategy (DGS). Census is making their data available via API and has been doing so since before the DGS came out. However, Census has ramped up efforts to show support for the DGS, not only through API, but also in the migration to an "information-centric" content management system (CMS) and improving search and navigation, for its almost 50 million yearly website visitors. Efforts also include increased engagement with the customer through a broad variety of channels (both online and offline) in line with the "customer-centric" tenets of the DGS.

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 was made available to the public via a standard web API in July 2012. In December, the API was named a Computerworld Honors Laureate in April 2013.

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 the nation. In late November 2012, Census leadership agreed that the Digital Government Strategy should serve as a vehicle for digital transformation at Census – a charge that challenges Census to envision a future Census digital ecosystem and a path to achieving it. Census 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. Census 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.

- Interoperable systems - Improving how our systems exchange data with one another
- Mobile Flexibility - Strengthening IT infrastructure through modern, scalable tools and software
- API by Default Policy (CIO) - Publishing consistent standards to enable reuse and savings
- ***Project – Seasonal Adjustment of International Trade Statistics by Geography***

The Census currently adjusts monthly international merchandise trade statistics for seasonality by summarized commodity groupings. Working together with our partners at the Bureau of Economic Analysis, the Census began publishing seasonally adjusted trade value (goods only)

by selected countries and geographic areas; the *FT-900: U.S. International Trade in Goods and Services*. The Census currently publishes tables in the FT-900 that includes trade value by country, but none are adjusted for seasonality. In addition, the BEA **publishes** seasonally adjusted trade in goods and services on a balance of payments basis by selected countries and geographic areas. The implementation of geographic seasonal adjustments **has** improved the relevance and usefulness of published trade statistics by providing data users with an ability to assess underlying patterns in time series value data for select countries and world areas.

- ***Project – Indicator Release Improvement Project (IRIP)***

The Census currently produces 13 principal economic indicators that provide relevant, timely, and high quality information to a wide variety of public and private sector data users. These monthly and quarterly reports are among the most closely watched statistics published by the Census. At an economic indicator release time, the process of transferring secure information from an internal server to a public web server can take up to 45 seconds for standard exhibits to become available for data users. In addition, the latency of the Census’s economic indicator release in comparison to the Department of Commerce lockup release poses a problem regarding equal access to the economic indicator data. IRIP entails a three-phase approach that will increase efficiency in releasing economic indicator data by minimizing, if not eliminating, the manual steps and reducing the time it takes to post economic indicator data to the public website to within five seconds, but as close as possible to one second, after the official release time. Project benefits include: 1) the elimination of entering and storing similar data in different areas; 2) a complete redesign of the Briefing Room to match the Economic Indicator Dashboard and America’s Economy mobile application; 3) the facilitation of quicker and equal access to indicator data after the official release time; 4) the ability to update all data driven applications simultaneously; and 5) an additional layer of security.

- ***Project – Increasing Support for American Community Survey Data Users***

In 2015, the Census added momentum in strengthening the American Community Survey (ACS) Data User Group, which was formed in 2013 to improve understanding of the value and utility of ACS data and to promote information sharing among data users about key ACS data issues and applications. The online community forum has grown to over 1,400 ACS data users.

In addition, the second ACS Data Users Conference was held May 11-13, 2015, at the College Park Marriott Hotel & Conference Center in Hyattsville, MD. Over 250 ACS data users attended the conference, which included 33 contributed presentations by ACS data users and three plenary sessions, including a focus on business applications of ACS data, such as by the mobile-app based real estate company, Zillow.

As a result of feedback from the inaugural conference held the preceding year, a half-day workshop was added ahead of the conference sessions to provide novice ACS data users with

an opportunity for hands-on instruction in ACS basics. Informal roundtable discussions were also added over lunch during the conference itself to offer more opportunities for networking and information exchange. While fiscal constraints have precluded holding a third conference in 2016, the intention is to hold future conferences as funding permits.

The ACS Data User Group also conducted a survey of its members in the Spring 2015 to learn more about the challenges data users face and opportunities to improve the survey. Of the 243 responses received, the most notable areas of concern included the margins of error (MOEs) for small geographies and small population groups and constructing MOEs for derived categories or geographies. Many respondents also mentioned the loss of three-year data products affects their work. Concerning tools and other capabilities that would be useful, many data users also expressed the desire for tools to create ACS estimates and MOEs for custom geographies or categories; data products that help users combine ACS data with data from other sources; and data products that provide annual ACS data for small geographies, such as for the Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) Program. These results are informing results from a separate survey of ACS data products the Census also conducted in April 2015 to further assess data user needs.

Finally, on the point of improving ACS data products, the Census launched a new initiative beginning in Fiscal 2016 to establish a Data Products Redesign Group (DPRG). Via a contract established with the Population Reference Bureau, the Census will leverage this informal, non-advisory group to help collect feedback from stakeholders and data users on new, innovative data products and dissemination channels. The DPRG's work may include conducting user surveys, focus groups, and/or other methods to elicit input from a range of stakeholders and data users representing the spectrum of skill levels and interest areas in the use of ACS data products. Topics may include content, geographic usage, supporting documentation, and accessibility and dissemination channels for the products.

- ***Agility in Action – a New Research Agenda to Enhance the ACS***

In June 2015, the Census published the plan, *Agility in Action: a Snapshot of Enhancements to the American Community Survey*:

<http://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/operations-and-administration/2015-16-survey-enhancements/agility-in-action.html>

*Agility in Action* describes enhancements that the Census is making to the American Community Survey (ACS) to ensure that it continues to deliver deep public value to our nation's communities. The audience for the plan is a broad one that ranges from the American public to data users from diverse sectors such as business, academia, and local government. Knowing how critical the ACS is to the strength of our nation, the Census is constantly looking

for ways to ensure that our customers trust and value the survey, so sharing the Census work on enhancements is critical.

The plan describes a series of activities that will take place over the course of the next year and beyond, the Census will be engaging in numerous activities to not only enhance the ACS, but also build and maintain customer support and awareness of this comprehensive survey. Largely focused on providing a positive experience for our customers, the Census is working to minimize burden for survey respondents while still allowing the survey to be responsive to emergent issues, keeping content current, and maintaining the high quality of data that our country demands and deserves. The research and activities that the Census is currently pursuing to accomplish these goals include:

- Evaluating the Availability and Suitability of Other Data Sources
- Reducing Follow-Up Contact Attempts to ACS Respondents
- Testing of ACS Mail Materials Messaging
- Evaluating Modifications to Survey Questions to Reduce Respondent Burden
- Evaluating Methods to Ask Questions Less Frequently or of Fewer Respondents
- Communicating with Respondents on Why We Ask Questions
- Data Use Awareness
- Subject Matter Expert Engagement
- Respondent Advocacy
- Implementing a Communication Strategy with ACS Stakeholders

The Census will be releasing regular updates on its progress in addressing these research areas in the coming months and years. As the Census pursues the *Agility in Action* activities, a priority continues to be that the Census constantly improves the ACS survey experience for respondents, while maintaining the high quality of ACS estimates supporting every community and small population group in the nation.

- ***Improving Demographic Mapping Tools***

This project is intended to improve and expand access to demographic survey content via enhanced mapping tool capabilities. Mapping tools for various surveys and programs have already launched while others are in development. Among these are mapping tools for metropolitan/micropolitan geographic areas, language use, small area income and poverty estimates, small area health insurance estimates, international population estimates, and the HIV/AIDS Surveillance database. There are continuous additions, enhancements and integration with other data access methods such as table lookup and visual charting using a standardized framework that reduces one-time customization for each survey or program. New and modern user interface releases were completed in December 2014 for SAIPE, June 2015 for SAHIE, and June 2015 for the International Database.

- ***Project – Census Flows Mapper***

The Census Flows Mapper is an interactive on-line mapping and data dissemination tool that provides access to county-to-county migration data from the American Community Survey. The tool substantially expands access to, and understanding of, the number and characteristics of county-to-county migrants. Prior to development of the Census Flows Mapper, the complex county-to-county migration datasets generally were accessible only to expert data users and migration analysts. The Census Flows Mapper provides novice users with the ability to access and utilize complex county-to-county migration data that previously were beyond reach; experienced migration analysts can use the tool for exploratory analysis before delving deeper into the dataset.

The Census Flow Mapper's functionality makes it easy to visualize patterns of migration, as well as to produce multiple maps quickly to compare migration patterns for different counties. The ability to download data for a specific county and flows of interest allows the user the benefit of data tailored to their own analytical needs. The design of the map and the data download also provides information to our users that might otherwise be lost due to disclosure avoidance methodology when providing flow information by detailed characteristics. Having access to the full list of counties involved in any flow interaction with a selected county, and the ability to see spatial proximity by characteristic, even without the details, provides a wealth of information for both the experienced and novice user. Census Flows Mapper also provides the ability to download the map display in Portable Document Format (PDF). The on-line display and PDF map adhere to standard cartographic design principles, providing the user with the ability to produce cartographically sound maps for inclusion in reports and presentations. For more information, please visit:

<http://flowsmapper.geo.census.gov/index.html>

- ***Project – TIGERWeb***

TIGERWeb has made it easier and more efficient for users to access and view the full range of census geographic areas and features contained within the Topologically Integrated Geographic Encoding and Referencing (TIGER) database—the Census geographic database. Previously, TIGER data were available only as downloadable files for use in a Geographic Information System (GIS). Customers who lacked access to a GIS could only view census geographic area information on reference maps produced to support specific statistical data releases. To view boundaries and other information for the full range of geographic areas for which the Census tabulates data, a data user would have to access multiple reference map types and series. TIGERWeb's on-line map viewer utilizes standard functionality to provide easy and open access to all census geographic areas, boundaries, relationships, and attributes. TIGERWeb Web Mapping Service (WMS) and Representational State Transfer (REST) services have made it more efficient for developers to access and consume spatial data for use in their own GIS and for use in applications. For more information on TIGERWeb, please visit:

[http://tigerweb.geo.census.gov/tigerwebmain/TIGERweb\\_main.html](http://tigerweb.geo.census.gov/tigerwebmain/TIGERweb_main.html)

- ***Project – Census Business Builder: Small Business Edition***

The *Census Business Builder: Small Business Edition* tool, created in conjunction with Esri, fosters the private sector’s development of new data-based businesses, products, and services. The *Small Business Edition* presents official Census statistics to entrepreneur’s (as well as the ability to incorporate data from other 3rd party sources) to guide their research for opening a new business. This desktop/tablet tool is aimed at first time small business owners and those wanting to expand an existing small business and allows easy access to the key economic and demographic data they need to develop a business plan, to support a loan application, and to assist in choosing a business location. A prototype of the tool was released for user comment and feedback in September 2014, and version 1.0 of the tool was soft launched August 8, 2015. Its public debut took place September 9, 2015 at America’s Small Business Development Center’s 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference.in San Francisco

- ***Project – Census Business Builder: Regional Analyst Edition***

As a result of Census attendance at the Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives annual conference (ACCE) in August 2014, the Census is developing a customized tool that combines economic and demographic data from the Census to create profiles for Chambers of Commerce and others interested in regional analysis. The Census leveraged the existing Census Business Builder platform, and related technology to develop this tool. A prototype (beta version) of the tool debuted at the 2015 ACCE Annual Conference in August 2015 in Montreal, Canada. The public release took place January 7, 2016.

- ***Project – Administering a Reimbursable Customer Survey***

The Economic and Demographic Directorates of the Census administered a Reimbursable Customer Survey to obtain feedback from our reimbursable customers who contracted with the Census for survey support. The Reimbursable Customer Survey was conducted in late 2014/early 2015. Results from the survey were available in the spring of 2015. An Action Plan was developed and recommendations have begun to be implemented. Project – Live Webcasting Public Events

In order to provide greater public access to information about major programs and activities at the Census, staff was directed by senior agency leadership in the summer of 2014 to provide a public Webcast capability of the 2020 Census Program Management Review (PMR) scheduled for Oct. 3, 2014. This was the first time this event was streamed for viewing via the Web for outside audiences.

In addition to Webcasting the PMR, the Oct. 6, 2014, 2020 Census Operational Press Briefing (about the 2015 National Content Test) and the Oct. 9-10, 2014 National Advisory Committee meeting were webcast. All three Webcasts were very successful. They were promoted on social media, to the Census's stakeholders and on census.gov. There were 982 views of the PMR, 187 views of the Operational Press Briefing and 1,264 views of the National Advisory

Committee meeting. Those viewing the Webcasts could watch the entire proceedings, including the presentations and participant/attendee interactions. The Census is planning to Webcast upcoming events in 2015, including all 2020 Census PMRs.

Since webcasting the Oct. 3, 2014 PMR, the Census has broadcast an additional 10 events for a variety of audiences and stakeholders. Topics include updates from national Advisory Committees and expert meetings about Income, Poverty and Health Insurance statistics and the Middle Eastern and North African population. To date, there have been an estimated 4,000 viewers of the webcasts..

- ***Project – Prepare 2020 Census Operational Plan***

The Census baselined the 2020 Decennial Census Operational Plan at the end of September. The plan is available online at the following location:

<http://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial/2020/program-management/planning-docs/2020-oper-plan.pdf>. Producing and sharing this plan almost five years before the next census, and three years earlier than for the 2010 Census, will provide all 2020 Decennial Census stakeholders a real opportunity to understand and comment on how the Census plans to conduct the 2020 Census; what will be different from the past; and provide a roadmap and timeline for work that still needs to be done. As the initial version of an emerging concept of operations, it reflects and supports evidence-based decision making by describing design concepts and their rationale, identifying decisions still to be made, and describing significant issues and risks related to the implementation of the Operational Plan.

The Census will release Detailed Operational Plans for each of the operations for the 2020 Census on [www.Census.gov](http://www.Census.gov). Each operation of the 2020 Census will describe detailed operational designs required to execute the 2020 Census. These Detailed Operational Plans complement the 2020 Census Operational Plan, thus, providing the public and other stakeholders the opportunity to review a breakdown of Census’ detailed plans.

Each document describes the objectives and procedures for all aspects of each individual 2020 Census operation. Each Detailed Operational Plan will be updated over time to reflect changes in strategies that result from census planning, research, and testing activities. There will be a memorandum accompanying the release of each operation’s Detailed Operational Plan on the [www.Census.gov](http://www.Census.gov) website.

The first of the series, 2020 Census Detailed Operational Plan for the Address Canvassing Operation, was released to the public in December of 2015.

- ***Project – Enhanced Smart Search***

The new “smart search” is powered by the Census’s application programming interface or API. We now provide more statistics to users directly on the search results page, along with

traditional links similar to search engines. For example, if you search for “California population,” the latest population statistics along with related demographic and economic figures will appear in an information panel at the same time. With just one click, users can see visualization or a table of California’s population at the state or county level. Users will also be able to see the results any images or videos associated with a search. You can also filter search results by content types, such as image and videos.

In addition, our smart search function includes NAICS (North American Industry Classification System) codes, a very popular search topic among Census customers. The business community can easily use this function plus other website resources to find information essential to start and or grow their businesses.

- ***Quickfacts Beta***

Since its launch in 2000, QuickFacts has been one of the most popular and widely used tools on census.gov. The original vision of this tool has not changed – in one or two clicks, customers of all skill levels get to profiles showing data from across programs. The agency has introduced a completely re-imagined QuickFacts, which can be found in a beta version at [www.census.gov/quickfacts](http://www.census.gov/quickfacts). The interactive QuickFacts beta has a number of exciting improvements, including customized tables that let users compare statistics for up to six locations side-by-side. Users can also view data on a map instead of a table. Additionally, in an effort to continue growing the agency’s customer base, users can also now embed QuickFacts on their websites and share it in social media. Furthermore, new data has been added. For the first time, QuickFacts now includes profiles for townships and locations in Puerto Rico.

Since the QuickFact beta launch in December, the tool has received more than 140,000 visits. Customer feedback was monitored, prioritized and became part of a second version, Beta 2.0, release 5 months post launch. The new QuickFacts Beta 2.0 delivers the following improvements: search by zip code, improved table display, browse more data feature, download data, among others.

- ***Project – Deploying Mobile Responsive Design on Census.gov***

The Census has implemented mobile optimization for mobile users at <https://www.census.gov/about/www.html?intcmp=slldr5> . This innovative initiative provides an improved experience for census.gov visitors accessing the website from a smartphone or tablet. The mobile optimization is through responsive design, which is an approach to web page creation that makes use of flexible layouts, flexible images and cascading style sheet media queries. In the last few years the Census has made major improvements in the digital experience of census.gov providing better access to Census statistics.

- ***Project – Community TIGER***

Community TIGER, through web-based address and spatial data exchange functionality provides governments the ability to create their own geospatial data in the web-based cloud, upload their data at any time, access their data on demand, and review, edit, and validate their data through freely accessible functions. The partner toolbox contains a set of user-friendly tools to migrate, standardize, edit, validate, and package data for submission to the Census. Once packaged, the data are uploaded to the contribution management system where the data are compared to previously submitted addresses and spatial data for their community. The address data are evaluated for compatibility with address requirements and standards for their eventual upload into the Census's geographic database. Street centerline data also are compared to TIGER and any differences are noted and displayed. These functions allow users to conduct a quality check of their data as part of the contribution management system, view the results, and offer updates to the Census for inclusion in their geographic database.

- ***Project – Census Geocoder***

Launched in 2014, the Census Geocoder provides web services for geocoding addresses nationwide. The geocoder uses the publicly available TIGER/Line data as its data repository, but for the first time makes it available for on demand geocoding.

The geocoder is freely available to all government agencies as well as the general public. Addresses can be geocoded through the web interface or using the services API. Files of up to 1000 addresses may also be submitted for batch geocoding.

- ***Federal Advisory Committee's***

The U.S. Census follows the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), which governs the establishment and operation of advisory committees. Currently, our agency has two chartered advisory committees: the Census Scientific Advisory Committee (CSAC) and the National Advisory Committee on Racial, Ethnic and Other Populations (NAC). Having committee members representing the nation demographics and specific fields of expertise, aids the agency with its mission and innovation goals. The committees provide sound feedback for our operations, programs, methodologies, technologies, outreach, and current and new developments.

Our agency strives in ensuring transparency and openness in all the advisory committees' activities and proceedings. The public has access to the deliberations, along with time for commentary at all the proceedings, in person or in writing. At our Census Advisory Committee website, which follows Open Government guidelines, the public can access the following: standard operating procedures, charters, federal register notices, committee recommendations and Census responses, membership bios and contact information, meeting materials, working group guidelines, and other relevant documentation. Our advisory committees' meetings are widely advertised and transmitted via Census Ustream, as an Open Government initiative. We invite you to visit our website to find more information related to our advisory committees: <https://www.census.gov/cac/>

- **Sunshine Week Event**

Each year the Census hosts events in recognition of National Sunshine Week. National Sunshine Week occurs each year in mid-March, coinciding with James Madison's birthday and National Freedom of Information Day on the 16th. It is a national initiative to promote a dialogue about the importance of open government and freedom of information. The events are open to the civil society.

<https://www.census.gov/about/policies/foia/event.html/>

- **Privacy Day Event**

Privacy Day is an annual event that provides a forum for Census employees and contractors to discuss current data protection and privacy policy and to general ideas to help evolve the current policies. The event offers a variety of workshops about major Privacy and E-Government Act requirements, as well as other tools available for protecting our customer's privacy.

### **Census Featured Initiative – Open Data API**

Like many federal agencies and bureaus facing continued budget reductions and limited resources, the Census is adapting its operating model to be a smarter, faster, and leaner 21st century organization. As the leading source of quality data about the nation's people and economy, the Census collects, analyzes, and disseminates massive amounts of information to a widely diverse audience spanning localities, companies, even countries. These large volumes of data, coupled with the rapid pace, democratization of technology presented the Census with a challenge in how it should expand access to its data while ensuring quality and security, and minimizing costs.



**API**  
Launched in July 2012, 11,209  
Key requests since it was  
launched.  
1.3 Billion API accesses since it  
was launched.

To address this complex challenge the Census launched the Open Data Strategy project. The project aimed to deliver an application-programming interface (API) to the public that can provide building blocks for third-party developers to design online and mobile applications using Census statistics. The API empowers developers with easy web-access to a single pipeline of data with full flexibility, and control over which data variables to request and receive, without the need to create copies or download potentially massive files, requiring additional infrastructure to store them. To achieve this, Census had to develop innovative approaches to harnessing data from two of the largest federal statistical datasets available for public consumption, comprising nearly 400GB of storage. A key challenge was the ability to improve performance given the API needed to handle up to a thousand concurrent users and return data requested with an acceptable response time (sub-second more than ninety-nine percent of the time).

While APIs help expand computing potential at Census, their real value comes through enabling innovation and fostering a 21st century economic model. The Census Open Data API

allows developers both inside and outside the agency to create new, and perhaps unexpected, applications based on Census statistics, thereby extending their reach.

The Census Open Data API was implemented in July 2012 with the release of the 2010 Decennial Census data and the 2006-2010 5-Year American Community Survey (ACS) Summary File (SF). The API currently serves up just under 100 datasets with additional datasets being added every month. In 2015, it was expanded to include international data, including population and trade data for more than 200 countries. Additionally, the API serves up the Economic Indicators. These surveys produce a variety of statistics covering construction, housing, international trade, retail trade, wholesale trade, services and manufacturing. The survey data provide measures of economic activity that allow analysis of economic performance and inform business investment and policy decisions. Other data included, which are not considered principal economic indicators, are the Quarterly Summary of State and Local Taxes, Quarterly Survey of Public Pensions, and the Manufactured Homes Survey. The Census Open Data API has incorporated continuous updates and enhancements as suggested by our user community of developers. For example, a machine-readable dataset discovery service is now available in response to user need for easier search and discover of available data in the API. Content is largely based on the Open Project Data Common Core Metadata Schema, and extended to include metadata specific to Census datasets. In addition, to help exploration of the API examples provided by the discovery service, users are now allowed up to 500 queries per day without a key. There are four phases to this project including the remainder of Phase I: Incorporating additional aggregate datasets; Phase II: Normalizing time series datasets; Phase III: Normalizing public use micro data datasets; and Phase IV: Normalizing longitudinal datasets so that the complexity of their use is transparent to the developer/user community. The project is currently in maintenance of Phase I and Phase II, where additional aggregate datasets are being included, and in the design stage of Phase III.

One example of how the open data API has benefited an organization is the Sunlight Foundations' Sitegeist application (recently retired), the goal of which is to show how government data can be useful to the average person. "The (sic) majority of the data used in Sitegeist comes from the U.S. Census and their wonderful API...I've never worked with the Census bulk downloads, but I hear from colleagues that it can be a daunting task. Their API makes it incredibly easy to slice and dice the numbers as needed; combining data across "tables" for any geography you are working with." Other examples include platitudes from general public developers: "Having used these APIs for a while, I find them very useful and working well. Thank you." and, "First, let me applaud the Census for doing this, it's an awesome project. I'm glad to see JSON as the response format for the API."

The Census Open Data API is considered a notable advancement that could be adopted by or tailored for other organizations, especially smaller federal agencies that may not have the resources or funding to establish the necessary infrastructure to fully support the potential users of their data. The open data API is an integral part of the Census's response to the

comprehensive federal Digital Government Strategy, of providing data and services that are available "anywhere, anytime, on any device."

In addition to the ability to allow external developers to create new applications, internal developers are leveraging the same technology and analysts are using the open data API to disseminate complex information to the public in an easily digestible format through web and mobile applications and newly developed data visualizations. For example, the recently released Census Business Builder pulls all data from the Census Data API.

“Census is also creating one process to handle data dissemination, called the Center for Enterprise Dissemination Services and Consumer Innovation, or CEDSCI. Data will come into a central, shared services platform, and go out in the form of APIs, web tools, data visualizations, and maps.”



## Economic Development Administration (EDA)

**E**DA leads the Federal economic development agenda by promoting innovation and competitiveness, preparing American regions for growth and success in the worldwide economy. EDA's investment policy is designed to establish a foundation for sustainable job growth and the building of durable regional economies throughout the United States. This foundation builds upon two key economic drivers - innovation and regional collaboration. Innovation is the key to global competitiveness, new and better jobs, a resilient economy, and the attainment of national economic goals. Regional collaboration is essential for economic recovery because regions are the centers of competition in the new global economy and those that work together to leverage resources and use their strengths to overcome weaknesses will fare better than those that do not. The EDA encourages its partners around the country to develop initiatives that advance new ideas and creative approaches to address rapidly evolving economic conditions.

As the only federal government agency focused exclusively on economic development, EDA plays a critical role in fostering regional economic development efforts in communities across the nation. Through strategic investments that foster job creation and attract private investment, EDA supports development in economically distressed areas of the United States.

Guided by the basic principle that communities must be empowered to develop and implement their own economic development and revitalization strategies, EDA works directly with local economic development officials to make grant investments that are well-defined, timely, and linked to a long-term, sustainable economic development strategy.

The EDA's flexible programs and structure enable nimble operations and allow for innovation and responsiveness to changing economic needs and conditions faced by its local and state government partners. Grants made under these programs are designed to leverage existing regional assets to support the implementation of economic development strategies that advance new ideas and creative approaches to advance economic prosperity in distressed communities.

The EDA's economic footprint is wide and its tool box is extensive—including technical assistance, post-disaster recovery assistance, trade adjustment support, strategic planning and research and evaluation capacity, thereby allowing the agency to offer the most effective investment to help communities succeed in the global economy.

## Open Data

For prospective grantees, EDA makes all funding opportunity notices available on [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) and its website: <https://www.eda.gov/funding-opportunities/>. The EDA also has a dedicated webpage providing resources for existing grantees, including training on the use of EDA's online grants portal (Grants Online) and links to various grant and performance-related forms (<https://www.eda.gov/about/resources-for-grantees.htm>). Numerous other resources, such as EDA's major investment programs and investment priorities, EDA's implementing regulations, Annual Reports from Fiscal Year 2007 to 2014, economic development tools, and a state-by-state directory of economic development resources are also available on [www.eda.gov](http://www.eda.gov).

## Privacy

The EDA takes seriously its responsibilities to protect privacy, including PII and BII information. The EDA ensures its employees are adequately trained on privacy requirements and follows DOC procedures for reporting, responding to and mitigating any breaches of PII. The EDA does not engage in data mining.

## Whistleblower Protection

The EDA strictly adheres to all anti-discrimination and whistleblower requirements. The EDA is fully compliant with the Department's No FEAR Act Policy.

## Websites

The EDA maintains one domain, [www.eda.gov](http://www.eda.gov). Through this website, EDA disseminates information related to economic development to the public, communities, and prospective and current grantees. The website complies with the Department's policies and best practices.

## Transparency

EDA actively contributes to Data.gov.

## Public Notice

The EDA utilizes a variety of methods to keep the public aware of its initiatives, funding opportunities, programs, resources, and events. The primary tools for this are EDA's Newsroom, available at: <https://www.eda.gov/news/>, the EDA blog (<https://www.eda.gov/news/blogs/>), and its twitter feed @US\_EDA.

## Records Management

The EDA's records management specialist takes lead responsibility for ensuring EDA complies with all applicable record retention and archival regulations.

## **Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Requests**

All EDA's FOIA requests are reviewed and responded to promptly. Requests may be submitted electronically through the Department's e-FOIA system or directly to EDA or its regions.

## **Declassification**

The EDA does not have statutory or delegated authority to classify or declassify information. EDA supports the Department's declassification program by providing subject matter expertise when material is presented with EDA mission equities.

## **Participation**

Through resources such as its Economic Development Representatives, EDA works directly with local economic development officials to make them aware of the resources available to them through EDA's various grant programs. The EDA also proactively reaches out to prospective and current grantees, stakeholders and local communities directly and at meetings and conferences to help them align community needs with EDA's mission, clarify EDA grant requirements and apprise them of EDA and other Federal economic development funding opportunities.

Also illustrative of EDA's significant public engagement is EDA's National Advisory Council on Innovation and Entrepreneurship (NACIE), charged with identifying and recommending solutions to issues critical to driving the innovation economy, including enabling entrepreneurs and firms to successfully access and develop a skilled, globally competitive workforce. NACIE serves as a vehicle for ongoing dialogue with the entrepreneurship and workforce development communities, including working with business and trade associations, and reporting its advice to EDA.

## **Collaboration**

The EDA follows the Department's best practices for ensuring effective two-way communication with the public, ensuring openness and transparency.

## EDA Open Government Initiatives

The table below shows a list of initiatives for *EDA*.

Table 6 - EDA Initiatives

| Operating Unit | Project                      | Status   | Estimated Completion |
|----------------|------------------------------|----------|----------------------|
| <b>EDA</b>     | 2016 EDA National Conference | Complete | April 2016           |

- ***2016 EDA National Conference (April 7-8, 2016)***

The 2106 EDA National Conference focused on the future of economic development, including high-level conversations about how we can create the conditions for economic growth for decades to come, panel discussions with administration and congressional officials, and in-depth analysis from public and private sector economic development leaders. The Conference brought together hundreds of regional and local economic development professionals, non-profit and private partners, and federal, state, tribal and local officials to explore the top issues facing communities today relating to improving competitiveness, job growth, innovation and overall quality of life. EDA’s role as the integrator of federal economic development opportunities and the only federal agency solely focused on economic development provided a venue for thought-provoking, cutting-edge ideas with public, private and non-profit partners from every sector of the economy.



## Economics and Statistics Administration (ESA)

**E**SA plays three key roles within the Department. ESA provides timely economic analysis, disseminates national economic indicators, and oversees the Census and BEA. In this latter role, ESA works closely with the leadership at BEA and Census on high priority management, budget, employment, and risk management issues, integrating the work of these agencies with the priorities and requirements of the Department and other government entities.

The 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.

The CDAC is administratively housed at ESA and reports through the Under Secretary of Economic Affairs to the Secretary. The CDAC provides the Secretary and the DOC data-bureau leadership with guidance on areas such as data management practices; common, open data standards; policy issues related to privacy, latency, and consistency; effective models for public-private partnership; external uses of Commerce data; and, methods to build new feedback loops between the Department and data users.

### ESA Open Government Initiatives

The table below shows a list of initiatives for **ESA**.

Table 7 - ESA Initiatives

| Operating Unit | Project   | Status                 | Estimated Completion |
|----------------|---|------------------------|----------------------|
| ESA            | Economic Indicators   | Live / Operational     | --                   |
|                | Women-Owned Small Business (WOSB) Federal Contracting Program | Completed (March 2016) | --                   |

| Operating Unit | Project   | Status                       | Estimated Completion |
|----------------|---|------------------------------|----------------------|
|                | Natural Capital Website   | Live/Operational             | --                   |
|                | What is Made In America?  | Completed<br>(December 2015) | --                   |
|                | The Pay Premium for Manufacturing Workers as Measured by Federal Statistics                                 | Completed<br>(October 2015)  | --                   |
|                | Taking the High Road: New Data Show Higher Wages May Increase Productivity, Among Other Benefits            | Completed<br>(August 2015)   | --                   |
|                | July 2015 Temporary Help Workers in the U.S. Labor Market   | Completed<br>(July 2015)     | --                   |
|                | The Value of the American Community Survey: Smart Government, Competitive Businesses, and Informed Citizens | Completed<br>(May 2015)      | --                   |
|                | An Update on Temporary Help in Manufacturing  | Completed<br>(April 2015)    | --                   |
|                | Supply Chain Innovation: Strengthening America's Small Manufacturers  | Completed<br>(March 2015)    | --                   |
|                | The Importance of Data Occupations in the U.S. Economy  | Completed<br>(March 2015)    | --                   |
|                | Competition Among U.S. Broadband Service Providers  | Completed<br>(December 2014) | --                   |
|                | The Economic Benefits of Reducing Supplier Working Capital Costs  | Completed<br>(November 2014) | --                   |
|                | Active Twitter and Facebook   | Live / Operational           | --                   |

- Project – Economic Indicators.** The ESA releases 12 monthly and quarterly Principal Federal Economic Indicators collected by its constituent bureaus: the Census and 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 - Women-Owned Small Business (WOSB) Federal Contracting Program:** At the request of the SBA, ESA conducted a study on the WOSB Federal Contracting Program. The study, released to the public in March 2016, reevaluated the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) industry groups in which WOSBs are underrepresented and

substantially underrepresented in Federal contracting. As a result of the study, the SBA has determined changes will be implemented to the WOSB Federal Contracting Program.

- **Project - *Natural Capital Website*:** The ESA and NOAA collaborated in the creation of the [natural capital website](#) to provide resources and information to businesses seeking to incorporate natural capital into their planning and operations. During the course of 2015, ESA and NOAA hosted four regional roundtables, culminating in a final National Summit in Washington, DC during which the web site was unveiled.
- **Project - *What is Made in America?*:** This report used data from Census and BEA to help shed light on the dollar value of what America produces, and what percentage of the dollar value of an industry's output that is considered domestic.
- **Project –*Taking the High Road: New Data Show Higher Wages May Increase Productivity, Among Other Benefits*** : This report examined differences in the highest- and lowest-paying establishments *within* the same industry. The results implied that higher wages often lead to improvements in skills, motivation, and workforce stability, especially when combined with changed strategies in areas such as product design and cross-training. Thus, employers can often adjust to higher wages without significant reductions in employment or profits.
- **Project –*Temporary Help Workers in the U.S. Labor Market*:** This report looked at the latest official U.S. government statistics on the temporary help services industry and its workforce to provide an overview of its role in the labor market and the U.S. economy.
- **Project –*The Value of the American Community Survey: Smart Government, Competitive Businesses, and Informed Citizens*:** This report provided examples of how ACS data has served as an important component of the information that businesses use to stay competitive—helping them run efficiently, hire wisely, and serve their customers' needs. This report also discussed how ACS data is used by researchers and the media to advance the Nation's understanding of a broad range of issues.
- **Project –*An Update on Temporary Help in Manufacturing*:** This report updates previously published estimates on the number of temporary workers in manufacturing using data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey.
- **Project –*The Importance of Data Occupations in the U.S. Economy*:** This report identifies occupations where data analysis and processing are central to the work performed and measures the size of employment and earnings in these occupations, as well as in the industries that have the highest concentration of these data occupations.
- **Project –*Competition Among U.S. Broadband Service Providers*:** This report examines the availability of Internet service providers (ISPs) to consumers at different levels of download speeds.



## U.S. Department of Commerce – Open Government Plan



- **Project –*The Economic Benefits of Reducing Supplier Working Capital Costs***: This report explores the potential economic benefits -- throughout the supply chain -- of reducing suppliers' working capital costs.



## International Trade Administration (ITA)

**I**TA's mission is to enable U.S. firms and workers to compete and win in the global marketplace. Through the use of partnerships, technology and key sector analysis, ITA provides the gold standard of service for businesses and client-focused organizations. ITA's goals are to strengthen the competitiveness of U.S. industry, promote U.S. exports and business investment in the U. S., and ensure fair trade through the rigorous enforcement of our trade laws and agreements.

Attracting more foreign investors to the U. S. and retaining investment has a positive impact on our economy and creates and supports millions of jobs. ITA's efforts to promote exports and business investment support President Obama's National Export Initiative (NEI) and our nation's sustained economic growth. ITA is laser-focused on helping more U.S. exporters reach more markets and making trade a bigger part of the DNA of our economy.

The ITA is the premier resource for American companies competing in the global marketplace. With its mission to strengthen the competitiveness of U.S. industry, promote U.S. exports and business investment in the U.S., and ensure fair trade through the rigorous enforcement of ITA's trade laws and agreements, ITA is continuously improving its outreach to stakeholders, clients, and the general public.

The ITA's efforts to promote exports and business investment support President Obama's National Export Initiative, NEI/NEXT, SelectUSA, and the nation's sustained economic growth. The President's Open Data Initiative is a critical element of ITA's efforts to help U.S. companies compete and win in global markets. Providing actionable information to U.S. companies, foreign buyers of U.S. goods and services, and foreign investors in projects that create jobs in the United States is a key strategy within the Department of Commerce's Strategic Plan.

### Open Data

#### **Systematic Inventorying of Non-Public, Restricted, and Public Data Assets**

The ITA has recently begun a knowledge management initiative that involves identifying ITA's IA and developing a data services platform that will facilitate the development and delivery of ITA information products to internal users and external customers. This effort will include cataloguing ITA's data assets in terms of data sensitivity and access rules.

### **Making Public Assets Available**

The ITA makes its data publicly available through the TDP (<http://developer.trade.gov>), a collection of Application Programming Interfaces that allow software developers to create web and mobile applications using information produced by ITA and other U.S. government trade promotion agencies. Currently, ITA has six APIs available for public use that are sourced from ITA, the Department, and other trade agency data. These provide information about trade events, market research, locations of domestic and international export assistance centers, business opportunities, and trade news and articles. Our most recent API, released in November 2014, is the Consolidated Screening List (CSL). This API consolidates nine export screening lists of the Departments of Commerce, State, and the Treasury into a single data feed as an aide to industry for electronic screening of potential parties to regulated transactions.

In the coming year, ITA will improve the usability of existing public data assets as well as expand our data offerings. We are adding a “fuzzy search” capability to the CSL (to produce better search results in response to less precise search terms), and we will be launching new tools and data offerings that will enable users to generate reports detailing the size, challenges, and opportunities of specific export market segments by product type and/or country. New APIs planned for the coming year will focus on data related to tariff information for goods and services covered under Free Trade Agreements, and frequent questions asked by exporters.

### **Steps to Encourage Public Use, Promote Public Knowledge, and Foster Innovation**

The ITA utilizes a variety of methods to encourage public use, promote public knowledge, and foster innovation. Links to ITA’s TDP can be found on a variety of websites, including: [Export.gov](http://Export.gov), [Trade.gov](http://Trade.gov), and [Commerce.gov](http://Commerce.gov). ITA also actively markets the TDP through outreach to ITA Strategic Partners, speaking at public forums such as the Association of Public Data Users (APDU), and providing TDP demonstrations in various government-sponsored venues (Open Data meetings, President’s Export Council, etc.).

The ITA’s outreach and promotional efforts have resulted in several partner organizations integrating data access through TDP into products and services for their customers and a partner-created mobile app that is now available in two of the major mobile app stores.

### **Data Asset Identification**

The ITA’s TDP publishes data related to U.S. exports. Because the origins of the TDP platform lie in the [Export.gov](http://Export.gov) website (a Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee (TPCC) product), The ITA’s TDP team first considers datasets available from TPCC agencies including ITA. If the dataset is not yet in an open and structured form, the TDP team collaborates with the data’s steward to determine the timeline for opening that dataset.

The TDP team also considers data that will bolster its own datasets. For example, ITA and several other trade-related agencies publish trade leads and trade events. The TDP reaches out to the stewards of those datasets to determine if it is available in a structured format and, if not,



what the timeline is for opening it. The timeline for publishing data in open formats is dictated by several factors, including the structure, quality and reliability of the dataset.

## **Privacy**

The ITA completes the annual FISMA report and the Federal Agency Data Mining report (Question 6.1 in the FISMA report). However, we submit those reports to the Senior Agency Official for Privacy, (i.e., Executive Council for Privacy, through the Department’s Chief Privacy Officer). For the breach PII incident reports, ITA files the initial breach incident reports with the Chief Privacy Officer and the DOC CIRT, which maintains a report on all PII breach incidents.

## **Whistleblower Protection**

The ITA takes seriously its commitment to the Whistleblower Protection Act. ITA performs the following activities in support of Whistleblower Protection:

Information about Whistleblower Protection and ITA’s commitment to it are included in our periodic New Employee Briefings.

The ITA invites the Office of the Inspector General Ombudsman annually to brief our Office Directors on Whistleblower Protection and to respond to their questions.

The ITA distributes to our entire staff an annual announcement via email from the Deputy Under Secretary reasserting our commitment to Whistleblower Protection.

Once a year, ITA includes an article in the Office of the Chief Financial and Administrative Officer “News You Can Use” publication, reminding staff about Whistleblower Protection and ITA’s commitment to it.

The Office of the Chief Financial and Administrative Officer intranet site contains a section on Whistleblower Protection so that ITA employees can research the topic independently.

## **Websites**

In 2014, ITA established a Digital Communications Office within the ITA Office of Public Affairs led by a Director of Digital Communications with the mandate to help all ITA staff around the globe better utilize digital communication tools, including web pages, social media, and open data to communicate with the general public. The Digital Communications Office will lead a customer-centric, digital communications strategy to share information, market products and services, and engage customers. The overall strategy will adapt to evolving business needs, market trends, and customer analytics to continually adjust and improve.

The ITA has established a Digital Council comprised of representatives throughout ITA to advise and consult with the Director to create a customer-centric model for digital communications.

The ITA uses several web domains (e.g., trade.gov, export.gov, businessusa.gov, selectusa.gov) to distribute content across targeted audience segments. In FY15, ITA will continue its agency-wide digital strategy, and content will be made directly available to our partners via open data tools, thus expanding ITA’s public engagement to sites that integrate content for the business and exporter communities regardless of what sites they visit.

### Transparency

The ITA actively contributes to Data.gov. The agency currently has 13 datasets posted to the site. In addition, ITA business units provide online access to a variety of data, reports, resources, and other critical information that keeps the public up-to-date on the agency’s activities. Some examples of these transparency actions include:

The ITA provides access to public versions of every document submitted on the record for every ongoing trade remedy action through the [ACCESS](#) tool.

The ITA’s [Office of Advisory Committees](#) (OAC) is the primary source for outreach to the private sector on trade issues that cut across all sectors of the U.S. economy. The OAC houses the President’s Export Council, the [Industry Trade Advisory Center](#), the Manufacturing Council, and the Travel and Tourism Advisory Board. OAC ensures that meeting notifications, committee recommendations, and other actions for the groups are available to the public.

The [U.S. Foreign-Trade Zones Board](#) provides updated information on all existing and potential foreign-trade zones, including announcements of open public comment periods and case status, on its website.

### Public Notice

The ITA utilizes a variety of methods to keep the public aware of its initiatives, trade remedy actions, programs, resources, and events. ITA’s new Digital Communications team within ITA’s Office of Public Affairs will develop and implement new strategies to better engage users, ensuring effective two-way communications about ITA’s activities. Below are several examples of existing outreach efforts:

[SelectUSA](#) regularly distributes information about its programs, resources, and other events via blast e-mails and Twitter. SelectUSA has sent e-mails to nearly 17,000 interested parties during the planning stages for the 2015 SelectUSA Investment Summit, providing Summit and foreign direct investment-related content.

The ITA’s [Trade Missions](#) team within the Industry and Analysis unit announces new trade mission opportunities through Federal Register notices, e-mails to relevant industry trade association members, a series of public webinars, direct outreach to regional chambers of commerce, and social media platforms (e.g., LinkedIn, Twitter).

The ITA promotes the resources available to U.S. companies looking to export through its network of trade promotion and policy professionals located in more than 75 countries and 100 U.S. cities through the [Export.gov](http://Export.gov) web portal. Information on upcoming trade shows, informative webinars, and opportunities for training are instantly available to potential clients around the globe.

## **Records Management**

The ITA Records Management Program has embarked on the following initiatives to ensure compliance with M-12-18, Presidential Directive on Records Management and related NARA regulations:

### **Expanding Records Management Training with Computer-Based Training**

Training is a very important component to developing and sustaining a viable records management program within any organization. Effective records management training is not only a requirement for compliance, but also reduces the risk associated with poor recordkeeping, such as unauthorized disposal, the inability to access documentation when needed, or respond to litigation or FOIA requests. The Records Management 101 on-line training is an initiative borne out of a partnership between the Federal Records Officers Network (FRON) and the NARA Records Management training program. The Records Management 101 on-line training course prepares staff with the knowledge to accomplish their records management responsibilities, as well as comply with the applicable records management statutes. To meet logistical and resource challenges, the training is scheduled to be deployed through Commerce Learning Center (CLC) computer based training network in FY 2015.

### **Revising the ITA Records Management Website**

The ITA Records Management will revamp its webpage as a one-stop resource for information on ITA records management program activities, services, policies and procedures. In addition, by accessing the “Hot Topics” link, users will be directed to the NARA YouTube site. This site hosts a number of free on-demand training topics related to managing Federal records and accessible to all staff.

### **Updating the Records Control Schedule**

The ITA is the process of integrating NARA’s updated General Records Schedules into its comprehensive records control manual and revising its programmatic records schedules to ensure they are maintained for the entire record life cycle, as well as support FOIA, Litigation or other investigatory purpose. NARA requires all agencies unscheduled records to be scheduled by December 2019.

## **Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Requests**

The ITA has the capacity to analyze, coordinate, and respond to FOIA requests. As reported in the Fiscal Year 2014 FOIA Annual Report, the average number of days to respond to a simple FOIA

request was four days. Complex requests averaged 119 days, almost 100 days longer than the statutory time period for responding.

The ITA is currently looking into solutions to conduct electronic searches on a network-wide level as an alternative of having each person who may have responsive records conduct an electronic search. In addition, we are looking at the possibility to contract out document imaging, scanning, and management to reduce time FOIA professionals spend on the administrative activities of a FOIA program.

As part of ITA's approach to assure the presumption of openness, ITA attaches the President's FOIA Memorandum and the Attorney General's FOIA Guidance as a reminder of the presumption of openness when tasking FOIA requests to subject matter experts. This topic is also reiterated during individual training sessions.

- **FOIA links:**

Description of your staffing and organizational FOIA program

<http://www.osec.doc.gov/omo/FOIA/contactfoia.htm>

<http://www.osec.doc.gov/omo/FOIA/servicecenters.htm>

- **Process for analyzing and responding to FOIA request**

<http://www.osec.doc.gov/omo/FOIA/foiarequest.htm>

[http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title15/15cfr4\\_main\\_02.tpl](http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title15/15cfr4_main_02.tpl)

- **Links to agency FOIA reports**

<http://www.osec.doc.gov/omo/foia/ereadingroom.htm>

## Proactive Disclosures

The ITA has utilized [FOIAonline](#) to process all FOIA requests since the beginning of FY2013. If a requestor submits a request other than through [FOIAonline](#), ITA uploads the request into [FOIAonline](#) to be processed. Once a request is in the system, the general public has electronic access to what is being requested, where the FOIA request is in the FOIA process, and if responsive records are located and can be released, they are publicly disclosed electronically through [FOIAonline](#).

## Congressional Requests

The ITA's Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs (OLIA) webpage (<http://trade.gov/olia/>) describes our staffing, organizational structure, and process for analyzing and responding to Congressional requests for information. Congressional staff can sign up to receive OLIA's regular updates. The ITA follows the Department's guidelines related to public disclosure of Congressional requests and agency responses.

## Declassification



## U.S. Department of Commerce – Open Government Plan



The ITA does not have statutory or delegated authority to classify or declassify information in accordance with E.O. 13526, Classified National Security Information. This authority, referred to as Original Classification Authority (OCA) outlined in Part 1 of E.O. 13526, resides with the head of each Executive Branch agency.

The ITA supports the Department’s declassification program by providing subject matter expertise when material is presented with ITA mission equities. The subject matter expert, normally the Deputy Assistant Secretary for the country/region, reviews the material and makes a recommendation to the Department for declassification. Those recommendations are approved by ITA’s Deputy Under Secretary and forwarded to the Department for final determination and action.

### **Participation**

The ITA depends on the continued participation of its public and private sector clients and stakeholders to achieve its strategic goals. ITA staff members throughout the world are committed to providing excellent customer service and these efforts require the use of a multitude of tools.

The ITA is taking advantage of new technologies and communications platforms to get its products and services into the hands of its customers. ITA’s business units are also developing new approaches to meeting the needs of our stakeholders. Some prime examples include:

The ITA is sponsoring its annual Discover Global Markets (DGM) Business Forum Series in selected cities around the country. In 2015, four DGMs are scheduled that will allow attendees to tap into ITA’s global expertise, and to explore opportunities in key industry sectors that offer high export potential. The Global Markets team actively recruits attendees through the [Export.gov](http://Export.gov) web portal, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Facebook.

The ITA’s [International Buyers Program](#) connects U.S. exporters to potential global customers at major industry trade shows. Every year, the IBP results in approximately \$1 billion in new businesses for U.S. companies.

The ITA actively markets the [TDP](#) through outreach to ITA Strategic Partners, speaking at public forums such as the Association of Public Data Users (APDU) and local DC API Meetups, and providing TDP demonstrations in various government-sponsored venues (Open Data meetings, President’s Export Council, etc.).

### **Collaboration**

The ITA has launched a knowledge management initiative that initially aims to provide a platform for broader internal collaboration among the Department and interagency partners related to the creation, use, and distribution of ITA information products.

The ITA houses the secretariat for the [Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee](#) (TPCC), the interagency committee that supports President Obama’s overall economic and trade agenda, including President Obama’s National Export Initiative, and its successor, NEI/NEXT. The mission of the TPCC is to foster coordination among trade agencies that will make it easier for U.S. exporters to access the information and services they need. The TPCC consists of 20 U.S. government departments and agencies, and is chaired by the Secretary of Commerce. Since Congress instituted the TPCC in the early 1990s, the interagency committee has coordinated and developed government-wide priorities for federal trade promotion efforts, including export assistance and financing programs.

In May 2014, Secretary Pritzker launched the second phase of President Obama’s National Export Initiative – [NEI/NEXT](#). Through NEI/NEXT, 20 federal agencies are advancing program and policy improvements to provide exporters more tailored assistance and information; streamline export reporting requirements; expand access to export financing; ensure market access and a level playing field; and partner at the state and local level to support export and foreign direct investment attraction strategies. These efforts will enable more U.S. businesses to capitalize on existing and potential opportunities created by free trade agreements and the U.S. trade agenda.

## ITA Open Government Initiatives

The table below shows a list of initiatives for *ITA*.

Table 8 - ITA Initiatives

| Operating Unit | Project  | Status           | Estimated Completion |
|----------------|--|------------------|----------------------|
| <b>ITA</b>     | Developing a 21st Century Digital Presence to Better Serve our Customers                   | Live/Operational | --                   |
|                | Raising awareness of the SelectUSA program and its available services                      | Live/Operational | --                   |
|                | Providing industry-specific information on global market opportunities and challenges      | Live/Operational | --                   |
|                | Educating U.S. companies on the export opportunities created by U.S. free trade agreements | Live/Operational | --                   |

- ***Project – Developing a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Digital Presence to Better Serve our Customers***

*What’s New – Improving communications with the public by utilizing all available online and social media platforms and channels*

The ITA is continuing to make great strides toward developing a 21<sup>st</sup> Century digital presence that will better serve our customers and stakeholders. Currently, ITA’s digital communications

are conducted through three primary vehicles – websites, social media/third-party services, and e-mail.

In March 2014, ITA approved the establishment of a digital communications team within the ITA Office of Public Affairs that will be led by a Director of Digital Communications. The team’s mandate will be to help all ITA staff better utilize digital communication tools, including web pages, social media, and open data to communicate with the general public. ITA has established a Digital Council comprised of representatives from each of the business units, the Office of the Chief Information Officer, and public affairs to advise and consult with the Director.

Beginning in FY2015, a full team will be assembled under the Director of Digital Communications to develop and implement a digital communications strategy in support of a broader ITA communications strategy. The team will focus on three principal areas: technology, content management and outreach/promotion.

Public website channels have traditionally been split into Trade.gov and Export.gov. Trade.gov has been more trade-policy focused, and Export.gov has targeted businesses and other organizations interested in exporting. As a first step in an ITA-wide digital strategy, Export.gov will be consolidated into Trade.gov, and ITA’s content will be made directly available to our partners via [Data.gov](#) tools, thus expanding ITA’s public engagement. Reducing the number of websites ITA supports will allow us to develop a high-quality, customer-friendly website experience. The goal is to have the consolidation completed by the end of 2014.

- ***Project – Raising awareness of the SelectUSA program and its available services***

*What’s New – Expanding online access to the SelectUSA program and Federal government resources to attract and retain business investment in the United States*

President Obama and Secretary Pritzker have prioritized U.S. government efforts to attract and retain business investment in the U. S. through ITA’s SelectUSA program. SelectUSA is the first federal-wide effort to promote and facilitate business investment in the U. S. as an engine for job growth and economic development. SelectUSA provides information and assistance to businesses on how to take advantage of the U. S.’ business-friendly environment, ensure that a leadership role is maintained to increase a competitive environment for new investment. The initiative coordinates investment-related resources across U.S. federal agencies, and is the single point of contact at the national level to help international and domestic firms grow and invest in the U. S.

SelectUSA is also increasing efforts to raise awareness of best practices and opportunities for reshoring. SelectUSA offers an ombudsman service regarding federal rules and regulations for any company considering making an investment in the U. S., including U.S. companies that could re-shore. SelectUSA also offers assistance to U.S. economic development organizations

(EDOs) as they seek to attract investment and promote reshoring. Commerce is hosting a SelectUSA Summer Forum with the theme “Reinvesting in America, Creating Jobs at Home,” to promote awareness of reshoring.

Throughout FY2014, SelectUSA is conducting consumer needs analysis to determine the optimal way to meet the needs of SelectUSA clients, including U.S. state and local governments and investors. This effort provides follow up activities to the inaugural SelectUSA Investment Summit, held in Washington, D.C., October 31-November 1, 2013. Approximately 1,300 business and government leaders from nearly 60 countries and economic development organizations from 48 states, the District of Columbia, and four territories met at the SelectUSA Investment Summit to learn about the advantages of doing business in the U. S. and to explore investment opportunities. Planning for the 2015 SelectUSA Investment Summit is underway.

In 2014, SelectUSA is hosting a series of Road Shows and trade show pavilions internationally to bring U.S. economic development organizations face-to-face with investors. Events are being held in Germany, the United Kingdom, Japan, Korea, China, Mexico, Israel, Switzerland, Austria, Chile, Brazil, Colombia, Australia, New Zealand, and other locations. Events are planned into FY2015 and beyond.

SelectUSA has launched a series of webinars – some co-branded with various stakeholders and clients – that provide detailed information about SelectUSA programs and services available to retain and attract business investment. Up to 20 of these webinars are scheduled to be completed by the end of FY2014.

SelectUSA is working to update the information, tools, and resources available through the [www.SelectUSA.gov](http://www.SelectUSA.gov) website. A complete redesign of the site is underway and should be completed by mid-FY2015. The website provides industry reports and economic trends outlining the key reasons why the U. S. is the premier international investment destination, describes the Federal government resources available to businesses looking to invest, and highlights upcoming events hosted by SelectUSA and its partners to promote investment in the U. S.

A major component of the website redesign will be the launch of new data tools that will greatly expand public access to research databases and other resources. These new tools will enable potential investors, economic development organizations, and the general public to quickly identify opportunities for investment within the U. S.. In FY2014, SelectUSA is reviewing deployment of four potential data tools with the goal of these major projects coming online by the end of FY2015:

- *Nationwide Investment Incentives*: Provides companies, U.S. economic development organizations (EDOs), service providers, and policy-makers a comprehensive, comparable and up-to-date collection of federal-level and state, county, and city incentives.

- *Nationwide Investment Sites*: Allows firms to search and identify optimal sites available across the U. S. through a comprehensive, Geographic Information Systems-based depository of available greenfield, brownfield, office, warehouse, industrial, and other available commercial sites.
- *Nationwide Investment Projects*: Offers U.S. EDOs a place to post and share public tenders and other investment opportunities, and allows firms and investors to identify opportunities for expansion.
- *ServiceSolutionsUSA*: Enables investors to directly connect with U.S. companies that provide services, and offers service providers an open opportunity to reach new clients. This will facilitate investment while also increasing U.S. service exports.

The expanded access to these databases – once operational – will help fulfill Secretary Pritzker’s pledge to increase availability of Commerce data.

- ***Project – Providing industry-specific information on global market opportunities and challenges***

*What’s New – Introducing industry-specific exporting opportunities to U.S. companies through sector spotlights posted to Trade.gov*

ITA’s Industry and Analysis (I&A) unit focuses on helping U.S. businesses become more competitive in the global marketplace. I&A industry analysts ensure that federal government trade policy and promotion agencies have access to industry-specific information on global trends and opportunities. Many agencies provide technical assistance to U.S. companies, as well as develop and implement policies. I&A has developed specific industry sector spotlights to help U.S. government agencies focus and prioritize efforts that could significantly improve U.S. export performance.

I&A works closely with ITA’s industry advisory groups – comprised of private sector representatives – in the development of these strategies. We also prepare public versions of this information that companies can use to help guide in their strategic planning process and aid in identifying potential export opportunities.

Public spotlights are currently available for the following sectors: Aerospace; Agricultural & Food Machinery; Automotive Parts; Building Products; Chemicals; Construction Machinery; Environmental Technologies; Health Information Technology; Oil & Gas Equipment; Processed Foods; Professional Services; Recreational Transportation; Renewable Energy; the U.S.-European Union Safe Harbor Framework (consumer data protection); and Travel & Tourism.

By the beginning of FY2015, I&A plans to make the following additional sector spotlights publicly available: Architecture, Construction, and Engineering; Civil Nuclear; Express Delivery/Distribution; Insurance; Intellectual Property protection; Semiconductors; and Smart Grid technologies.

Sector strategy reports are available at <http://trade.gov/industry/newita.asp>.

- ***Project – Educating U.S. businesses on the export opportunities created by U.S. free trade agreements***

*What's New – Provide updated fact sheets that highlight the economic impact of free trade agreements on individual states and sectors*

The ITA produces reports that highlight the benefits of trade agreements for the U. S. In particular, ITA prepares fact sheets that explain the benefits and opportunities from trade agreements for companies and workers in each of the 50 states. These fact sheets include a selection of state export trends, an overview of export-supported jobs, and a summary of the major commitments from a trade agreement. The fact sheets also provide details of all pending trade negotiations.

In addition, ITA prepares a series of industry-specific sector reports that outline the effects of an agreement on the market access opportunities in the partner market for each industry. The sector reports profile the current trade and tariff environment for U.S. exporters, summarize the sector-specific market access results of the agreement, assess foreign competition in the partner market, and describe non-tariff barriers addressed by the agreement that are critical for exporters in each sector. This information is critical to U.S. companies as they decide how to take advantage of these free trade agreements.

These products are available at [www.trade.gov/fta](http://www.trade.gov/fta). ITA will continue to update these state fact sheets as negotiations on the Trans-Pacific Partnership, the Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, and the Trade in Services Agreement progress.



## Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA)

**M**BDA is an entrepreneurially focused organization committed to wealth creation in minority communities. MBDA was created to foster the growth and global competitiveness of U.S. businesses that are minority-owned.

The 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.

The 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.](#)

## Open Data

In 2015, MBDA revised the MBDA Business Center client engagement and client intake forms to enable the sharing and use of minority business data with federal agencies for research purposes. The forms provide notice to minority business enterprises on the collection and use of the data provided to the MBDA Business Centers. MBDA will begin using the forms effective September 2016.

## Privacy

The MBDA completed the annual FISMA report and the Federal Agency Data Mining report (Questions 1 and 6 in the FISMA report). These reports were submitted through the Senior Agency Official for Privacy, (i.e., Executive Council for Privacy, through the Department's Chief Privacy Officer). MBDA also provided updated information on the FISMA report regarding privacy

training, PII holdings and SSN use for the agency. For the breach PII incident reports, MBDA files the initial breach incident reports with the Chief Privacy Officer and the DOC CIRT, which maintains a report on all PII breach incidents.

### Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Requests

The MBDA has the capacity to analyze, coordinate, and respond to FOIA requests. As reported in the Fiscal Year 2015 FOIA Annual Report, the average number of days to respond to a simple FOIA request was 19.4 days. MBDA did not receive complex requests.

The MBDA FIOA Officer requests staff to conduct electronic searches on an office-wide and network level as an alternative of having each person who may have responsive records conduct an electronic search. In addition, MBDA has added one staff person to assist with the document imaging, scanning, and management to reduce time FOIA professionals spend on the administrative activities of the FOIA program. MBDA has attached the President’s FOIA Memorandum, the Attorney General’s FOIA Guidance, and the Department’s FOIA regulations to the MBDA website as a reminder of the presumption of openness

<http://www.mbda.gov/freedom-information-act-reading-room> .

### Proactive Disclosures

The MBDA has utilized [FOIAonline](#) to process all FOIA requests since the beginning of FY2013. If a requestor submits a request other than through [FOIAonline](#), MBDA uploads the request into [FOIAonline](#) to be processed. Once a request is in the system, the general public has electronic access to what is being requested, where the FOIA request is in the FOIA process, and if responsive records are located and can be released, they are publicly disclosed electronically through [FOIAonline](#).

The MBDA is in the early phases of an ongoing initiative to process, analyze and scan previous and current applications submitted by business center grantees for upload on the MBDA website as a proactive disclosure. See <http://www.mbda.gov/main/foia-proactive-disclosures>. Grant applications are frequently the subject of FOIA requests.

### MBDA Open Government Initiatives

The table below shows a list of initiatives for *MBDA*.

Table 9 - MBDA Initiatives

| Operating Unit | Project                          | Status                | Estimated Completion |
|----------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| MBDA           | Support of SelectUSA.gov Project | On-Going / Continuous | --                   |

| Operating Unit | Project  | Status                | Estimated Completion |
|----------------|--|-----------------------|----------------------|
|                | Support of BusinessUSA.gov Project               | On-Going / Continuous | --                   |
|                | Business Development Tools Modernization Project | In Progress           | August 2016          |

**•Project – Support of *SelectUSA.gov***

*What’s new –Integration of information regarding [SelectUSA.gov](http://SelectUSA.gov)*

The MBDA continues its promotion of [SelectUSA.gov](http://SelectUSA.gov) initiatives on the [MBDA.gov](http://MBDA.gov) website and participates in all [SelectUSA](http://SelectUSA.gov) events. MBDA promoted the 2016 [SelectUSA](http://SelectUSA.gov) Investment Summit on the [MBDA.gov](http://MBDA.gov) website and maintains a blog page that references all [SelectUSA](http://SelectUSA.gov) activities with active hyperlinks.

**•Project – Support of *BusinessUSA.gov Project***

*What’s new –Integration of MBDA programs and services with [BusinessUSA.gov](http://BusinessUSA.gov)*

The MBDA is continuing its participation on the [BusinessUSA.gov](http://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 included in the [BusinessUSA.gov](http://BusinessUSA.gov) portal. The first iteration of was released on February 17, 2012. Since the first iteration of [BusinessUSA.gov](http://BusinessUSA.gov) in February 2-12, MBDA and the [BusinessUSA](http://BusinessUSA.gov) steering committee have been 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*

In MBDA’s continuing efforts to modernize its business development tools, MBDA has acquired access to the ITA subscription to the Salesforce cloud-based application for customer relations management. MBDA’s access to the salesforce licenses in 2015 will continue its use of the customer management system built on Salesforce’s platform since 2014. Salesforce use will further the MBDA goals increasing MBE access to financing and procurement opportunities by providing an efficient, and flexible cloud based solution for monitoring and developing customer relationships.

The MBDA continues to identify advanced technology that can be used to enhance or replace the suite of business development applications that reside on the MBDA portal. Historically, these tools have been used by Minority Business Enterprise’s (MBE), and MBDA Business Centers to support activities associated with their business. Although visitors to MBDA’s portal actively use these tools, the agency has determined that there are more modern tools that could be used to improve the effectiveness of and ensure a first class experience for visitors to



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the site. Newer tools will provide visitors with access to a virtual space that can be used to grow their businesses and will also allow visitors to tailor the site to their individual business needs. The ultimate vision for the initiative will be to increase MBE access to financing and procurement opportunities existing within the public and private sector.



## National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)

**N**IST founded in 1901 is a non-regulatory federal agency within the [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.

### Open Data

#### NIST Public Access Plan

In response to the Memorandum from the Executive Office of the President for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies: Increasing Access to the Results of Federally Funded Scientific Research, dated February 22, 2013, NIST developed a NIST Public Access Plan. The plan describes NIST efforts to make freely available to the public, in publicly accessible repositories, all peer-reviewed scholarly publications and associated data arising from unclassified research and programs funded wholly or in part by NIST. Within the constraints of its mission and funding, NIST will also promote the deposit of scientific data arising from unclassified research and programs, funded wholly or in part by NIST, free of charge unless an exception exists, in publicly accessible databases. A NIST Public Access Policy will articulate the roles and responsibilities of NIST staff for ensuring public access.

#### Improved Access to Publications and Archival Materials

The NIST is partnering with the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to use the existing PubMed Central (PMC) repository system to provide public access to full-text peer-reviewed scholarly publications and associated data for NIST, leveraging the well-established search, archival, and dissemination features of PMC. NIST plans to acquire a web-based manuscript submission and peer-review workflow solution that enables geographically dispersed stakeholders, including both NIST employees and non-NIST collaborators, to electronically submit, edit, and search bibliographic information and view progress-tracking information during internal review.

The NIST is also working with the Internet Archive, under an arrangement with the Library of Congress, to digitize the hundreds of technical reports it has published over more than 100 years, with the goal that the entire legacy collection of NBS/NIST technical series publications will be available to the public through the Government Printing Office's Federal Digital

System. Some of these technical publications were targeted to very specific audiences, but many are about topics of interest to a broader audience.

The NIST staff members are also enhancing the NIST Digital Archives by adding information about and images of artifacts in the NIST Museum collections and photographs portraying NBS/NIST history. 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.

### **Improved Access to Data**

The NIST's plan for providing public access to data consists of three components: data management plans (DMPs), an Enterprise Data Inventory (EDI), and a Common Access Platform providing a public access infrastructure. Generation of data management plans has begun, providing documentation of plans for storage, archival, and accessibility for NIST's multiple types of data. The EDI is a catalog of the datasets with a user-friendly front end to enable NIST scientists to easily enter metadata about their datasets and an export capability to facilitate feeding that metadata into data.gov. The Common Access Platform will create an infrastructure of registries to make it easier for users to find and use datasets from any source.

To enhance its ability to store, exchange, and disseminate its research data to external stakeholders and the public as well as to share it between NIST technical staff and their immediate collaborators, NIST is making foundational improvements to its data management infrastructure. There are four prongs to this initiative:

- Analyze data management practices across NIST organizational units, document procedures, and build out flexible and extensible tools to support data management plans and the Enterprise Data Inventory;
- Create a robust data management framework for data of all working levels by extending cloud-based storage and network connectivity, and deploying easy-to-use interfaces for the management of NIST data;
- Pilot development of a NIST public access data portal with improved interfaces, with particular focus on supporting Standard Reference Data;
- Accelerate the identification, assessment, authorization, and deployment process for widely used software tools that support data exchange and research collaboration.

### **Materials Genome Initiative**

The Materials Genome Initiative (MGI) is a multi-agency initiative designed to create a new era of policy, resources, and infrastructure that support U.S. institutions in the discovery, manufacture, and deployment of advanced materials twice as fast, at a fraction of the cost. The

discovery and optimization of new materials for innovative products is a time-consuming and laborious process, and computational design of materials has begun to emerge as a powerful new tool for materials discovery and optimization. However, major efforts in both theory and experiment are needed to provide the data that underlies successful modeling. Given NIST expertise in the integration, curation, and provisioning of critically evaluated data and models, NIST has assumed a leadership role within the MGI, establishing essential data exchange protocols and the means to ensure the quality of materials data and models. These efforts will yield the new methods, metrologies, and capabilities necessary for accelerated materials development. NIST is working with stakeholders in industry, academia, and government to develop the standards, tools, and techniques enabling acquisition, representation, and discovery of materials data; interoperability of computer simulations of materials phenomena across multiple length and time scales; and the quality assessment of materials data, models, and simulations.

## **Privacy**

The NIST follows departmental guidance from the Office of Privacy and Open Government.

## **Whistleblower Protection**

The NIST follows departmental guidance from the Office of Inspector General.

## **Websites**

Several years ago, as part of an effort to expand dissemination of its research results, NIST implemented a CMS, 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 website on specific topics of interest such as nanotechnology or energy-related research. Currently, there are more than 110,000 subscribers who receive information on approximately 160 different topics. The NIST website also includes several blogs that allow members of the public to comment or ask questions about posted articles and the CMS includes icons to easily share content from the NIST site with social media websites (more than 3,000 “shares” in the first 4 months of FY2015).

### **External Website Migration**

The NIST is migrating its central web pages from a proprietary CMS to Drupal, an open source CMS. The new website will allow greater flexibility in the functionality of NIST internal and external web pages. It will also be hosted in the cloud, which will improve NIST’s ability to meet current and future needs.

### **Social Media**

The NIST has created sites on YouTube (more than 4,300 subscribers, nearly 1 million video views), Facebook (more than 20,000 “likes”), Twitter (16,000 “followers”), LinkedIn (10,000

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 NIST website is routinely announced through these additional social media sites.

## Transparency

The NIST strives to be consistently open and transparent in its interactions with the public and news media.

The Institute implements the Department Public Communications Policy, which includes explicit approval for research staff to talk with the news media and the public directly--without prior permission from the Public Affairs Office--about the results of their taxpayer funded research.

The NIST Public Affairs Office regularly offers communications training to its research staff, including describing this portion of the policy, to ensure that they are committed to broadly disseminating NIST results to a wide variety of audiences. Plain language training is available online and through regularly scheduled in-person courses on campus.

The Union of Concerned Scientists, a non-profit dedicated to encouraging transparency in scientific communication, surveyed the NIST technical staff and found that NIST scientists “are aware of free speech protections in the official policy and report a comparatively high degree of openness.”

The NIST provides a dedicated phone and email public inquiries referral service during all business hours to ensure that any member of the public may request assistance in locating specialized technical reports or experts or in resolving customer services concerns they may have. The Public Inquiries email is available in the footer of most NIST web pages to facilitate easy access to this service.

NIST’s [policy on scientific integrity](#) is also easily accessed on its homepage.

## Public Notice

The NIST follows departmental guidance from the Office of Public Affairs.

## Records Management

The NIST manages its records in accordance with NARA and the Department regulations, ensuring that records are economically and effectively created to meet business needs, kept long enough to protect rights and assure accountability, and preserved and available for future generations. NIST is updating its records management directives to be clear and concise, conveying records management requirements and responsibilities to all NIST staff.

## Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Requests

The NIST responds to FOIA requests in accordance with Department of Commerce regulations and Department of Justice guidance. NIST emphasizes the importance of transparency of its operations and regularly performs discretionary releases of documents and information that could qualify for exemption from release, but for which there is no foreseeable harm. The NIST FOIA Office works collaboratively with the NIST Operating Units to obtain information in response to requests in a timely manner and to encourage proactive disclosure of information.

## **Proactive Disclosure**

In November 2013, NIST initiated a review of its cryptographic standards development process in response to concerns about the integrity of NIST cryptographic standards and guidelines. As a critical component of this review, the NIST Director charged the NIST Visiting Committee on Advanced Technology (VCAT) to form a Committee of Visitors (CoV) to serve as technical experts to assess NIST cryptographic standards and guidelines development process and if necessary provide findings on how it could be improved. NIST made publicly available all materials provided to the panel by posting the content on the VCAT website. NIST also held open discussions with multiple stakeholders for awareness and input.

## **Participation**

The NIST has a rich history of participation in numerous standards development efforts, dating back to the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century when the National Bureau of Standards (which became NIST in 1988) was founded. Currently, over 450 NIST staff members participate in over 120 standards development organizations on both a national and international scale.

To increase citizen involvement in the development of standards to address new technological challenges, NIST has reached out into the community to convene workshops at key locations around the country, organize diverse stakeholders, and establish consensus-developing organizations. This strategy has broadened participation and organized communities to take action in a prioritized, timely manner. It has been used successfully for developing standards frameworks for the Smart Grid sector and critical infrastructure cybersecurity. The strategy is currently being used to develop a community-centric resilience framework and to bring a uniform structure to the previously ad hoc development of forensic standards and guidelines.

### **Smart Grid Interoperability Panel**

In 2009, the NIST initiated the Smart Grid Interoperability Panel (SGIP) as a vehicle for NIST to solicit input and cooperation from private and public sector stakeholders in developing the smart grid standards framework. With NIST encouragement, the SGIP was transitioned to a non-profit private-public partnership organization in 2013, supported by industry stakeholder funding and funding provided through a cooperative agreement with NIST. The SGIP does not develop standards directly, but rather it provides an open process for stakeholders, including

NIST, to coordinate and accelerate standards development and harmonization and to advance the interoperability of smart grid devices and systems.

### **Green Button Initiative**

The NIST provides leadership to the standards development work in the White House-inspired and industry-led Green Button Initiative, which enables consumers to download their own energy usage information from their utilities' websites in a standardized electronic format. Working closely with the SGIP, industry and other federal agencies, NIST has led the development of the technology foundation for Green Button, including standards, testing, developer tools and technical support for implementers. Based on significant nationwide voluntary adoption by utilities, and with support by NIST, over 100 million U.S. consumers (and over 8 million Canadian consumers) now have Green Button data access to help them better understand and manage their energy usage.

### **Framework for Improving Critical Infrastructure Cybersecurity**

Starting in 2013, the NIST has worked with stakeholders to develop a voluntary framework – based on existing standards, guidelines, and practices – for reducing cyber risks to critical infrastructure. The first version of the Framework for Improving Critical Infrastructure Cybersecurity was released on February 12, 2014. Since then, NIST has collected user feedback and experience through a Request for Information and a public workshop. NIST also facilitated working sessions on specific technical areas that will be used to enhance the Framework in the future.

### **National Strategy for Trusted Identities in Cyberspace**

In 2011, the President signed the National Strategy for Trusted Identities in Cyberspace (NSTIC). This important White House initiative aims to improve the privacy, security, and convenience of online transactions through a collaborative effort between the private sector, the public sector, advocacy groups and other non-profit organizations. The National Program Office (NPO) was established at NIST by the Secretary of Commerce to coordinate the implementation of the NSTIC. Modeled after the SGIP, NIST initiated the Identity Ecosystem Steering Group (IDESG) as a multi-stakeholder vehicle for the development of the Identity Ecosystem Framework – the policy, standards, and accreditation processes for Identity Ecosystem participants. Over the past three years, NIST has funded twelve private sector pilots through cooperative agreements to facilitate the adoption of NSTIC-aligned identity solutions.

### **Privacy Risk Management Framework**

The NIST also has initiated development of a privacy risk management framework to support improved privacy engineering in the design of information systems. NIST is developing a NIST Interagency Report on privacy engineering objectives and a risk model. NIST held two public workshops, with attendance from industry, government and academia, in FY2014 to inform the development of this report, and presented the draft concepts through a live webcast with an interactive question and answer period. Comments received were posted publicly.

### **Organization for Scientific Area Committees**

In 2014, the NIST collaborated with the Department of Justice and the forensic science community to create the Organization for Scientific Area Committees (OSAC), established to coordinate development of standards and guidelines for forensic science. OSAC has named 402 new members to 23 subcommittees on forensic disciplines such as firearms and toolmarks and facial identification, and is bringing a uniform structure to what was previously an ad hoc system, with the goal of improving the quality and consistency of forensic science in the United States.

### **Disaster Resilience Framework**

The NIST is leading the development of a community-centric Disaster Resilience Framework, which will establish the overall performance goals; assess existing standards, codes, and practices; and identify gaps that must be addressed in order to bolster community resilience. In 2014 and 2015, NIST is convening a series of Disaster Resilience Workshops around the country to engage a broad network of stakeholders with multidisciplinary expertise to help develop the Disaster Resilience Framework, with a focus on the role that buildings and infrastructure lifelines play in ensuring community resilience. To date, NIST has convened 3 workshops and has another scheduled for mid-February 2015. The first version of the Disaster Resilience Framework will be released for public comment in the spring of 2015.

### **Big Data Public Working Group**

Big Data is another important area in which NIST is leading public participation in standards development. Although there is broad agreement about the remarkable potential of "Big Data" to spark innovation, fuel commerce, and drive progress, the rate at which data volumes, speeds, and complexity are growing is outpacing scientific and technological advances in data analytics, management, transport, and more. NIST is leading the NIST Big Data Public Working Group (NBD-PWG) to develop consensus definitions, taxonomies, reference architectures, and technology roadmaps to accelerate the deployment of robust Big Data solutions. The NBD-PWG, open to the public with active membership from industry, academia, and government, has five subgroups developing a working draft of a Big Data Interoperability Framework that will be available for public comment in February 2015.

## **Collaboration**

To help accomplish its mission, NIST seeks out high-quality partnerships, collaborations, and other interactions with U.S. companies, universities, and agencies at the federal, state, and local levels. Each year, NIST hosts about 2,700 associates and facility users who collaborate with its scientists. NIST works with over 1,300 manufacturing specialists around the country to help small and mid-size manufacturers improve and grow. NIST has several designated user facilities available for both proprietary and non-proprietary research. Access to these facilities is generally provided on a first-come, first-served cost-reimbursable basis. In addition, NIST jointly operates research organizations explicitly established to promote the kind of cross-disciplinary collaborations that accelerate research results. NIST hosts as many as 100 conferences, workshops,

symposia, and other meetings annually. Most are co-sponsored with other federal agencies, academic institutions, professional societies, or industry groups.

### **National Cybersecurity Center of Excellence**

The NIST has established the National Cybersecurity Center of Excellence (NCCoE) to collaborate with user communities and vendors and integrators of commercially available technologies to build practical cybersecurity reference designs that can be rapidly applied to the real challenges that businesses face each day.

### **Centers of Excellence**

The NIST is also in the process of creating Centers of Excellence to provide an interdisciplinary environment where researchers from NIST, academia, and industry will collaborate on emerging areas of basic and applied research and innovations in measurement science. The first of these centers, the Center for Hierarchical Materials Design (CHiMaD), was established in 2013 to accelerate materials discovery and development; provide opportunities to transition new breakthroughs in advanced materials to industry; convene multidisciplinary and multi-sector communities for in-depth discussions; and provide training opportunities for scientists and engineers in materials metrology.

The second, the Community Resilience Center of Excellence, was selected through a merit-based competition and announced in February 2015. The new center will collaborate with NIST to achieve its long-term goal of developing tools that individual communities can use to assess their resilience. This includes evaluating the effectiveness of alternative measures intended to improve performance and minimize post-disaster disruption and recovery time. These tools will improve decision-making so that communities can build a “business case” for the measures they take.

A third center, the competitive selection of which is to be announced in FY 2015, will support NIST's efforts to strengthen forensic science through the development and delivery of improved measurement and analysis technologies and the development of best practices and standardized methodologies to improve evidence interpretation and reporting.

### **Advanced Manufacturing National Program Office**

The NIST provides leadership and coordination across all federal agencies with program in advanced manufacturing by leading the interagency Advanced Manufacturing National Program Office (AMNPO), hosted by NIST. In particular the AMNPO is charged with enabling industry-led, private-public partnerships focused on manufacturing innovation to enhance technology transfer in U.S. manufacturing industries. With participation from all federal agencies involved in U.S. manufacturing, the AMNPO is establishing the National Network for Manufacturing Innovation (NNMI), a network of linked Institutes for manufacturing innovation with common goals but unique concentrations, which will create a manufacturing research infrastructure for U.S. industry and academia to solve industry-relevant problems, as well as provide work force training needed in manufacturing. To date,

these Institutes have been stood up by the mission agencies DoE and DoD, but it is proposed that DOC, USDA and other agencies soon fund institutes. NIST is responsible for convening all Institutes with the NNMI for sharing of best practices and providing support infrastructure. NIST also responsible for managing a competitive proposal and review process to select and fund Institutes funded by DOC that bring together industry, academia, and government partners to collaborate and co-invest in manufacturing innovation.

### **Technology Transfer**

The NIST works to disseminate its research results as broadly as possible. In October 2014, NIST and NOAA co-sponsored a Technology and Entrepreneurship Showcase to bring together innovative technologies, licensable inventions, research and engineering facilities, small business support resources at the Federal and state levels, and sources of funding—all under one roof, and all available for networking. Excluding presenters, over 60 individuals attended. NIST plans to continue this series in 2015, working in conjunction with the Commonwealth of Virginia. NIST also plans to host two “listening sessions” in Maryland to hear from the local communities about how federal labs can contribute to economic development.

### **Lab to Market**

The NIST plays a prominent role in fulfilling requirements of the Lab to Market Cross Agency Priority (CAP) Goal, one of 15 goals established as part of the President’s Management Agenda and stemming from the Presidential Memorandum on Technology Transfer of 2011. As part of this effort, in FY2015 NIST is initiating a pilot NIST entrepreneurship program, partnering with the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) to integrate minority business development into the Lab to Market process, working with other agencies to develop policies and tools to bring investors and capital to the technology commercialization process, holding workshops with universities on extramural commercialization, and conducting economic studies to evaluate impact in identified priority areas. Also as part of the Lab to Market Team, NIST has placed all of its technology data and facility use data on data.gov in a machine readable format for other parties to use.

### **Challenges**

#### **Global City Teams Challenge**

The NIST is partnering with other federal agencies and the private sector to sponsor a year-long [Global City Teams Challenge](#) to help communities around the world work together to address issues ranging from air quality to traffic management to emergency services coordination. NIST is inviting communities and innovators to create teams that will foster the spread of “smart cities” that take advantage of networked technologies to better manage resources and improve quality of life. Voluntary participants will work collaboratively to build, deploy and test transformative “Internet of Things”/“Cyber-Physical Systems” applications within communities across the U.S. This new challenge will leverage the

success of the [SmartAmerica Challenge](#), which from December 2013 through June 2014 brought together more than 100 companies, universities and other organizations to form teams that developed and applied networked technologies. That challenge demonstrated that these technologies have the potential to create jobs and business opportunities and provide socioeconomic benefits.

### Head Health Challenge III

The NIST has joined with the NFL, GE and Under Armour to launch Head Health Challenge III, an open innovation competition to advance materials that better absorb or dissipate energy. These new materials could improve the performance of protective equipment for athletes, military personnel and those in dangerous occupations. The challenge, which will award up to \$2million for innovative materials, is part of the \$60 million Head Health Initiative, a multiyear collaboration between GE and the NFL launched in March 2013. It aims to support the discovery, design and deployment of advanced materials that can improve the protection of athletes, members of the military and others from brain injuries by better absorbing and mitigating force. Additionally, NIST will work to refine measurement approaches, convene the research and industry communities to assess the state of performance testing for impact energy absorbing/dispersing materials and identify gaps in these measurements. The ultimate goal will be to develop standard testing methods for these materials systems over the next several years.

## NIST Open Government Initiatives

The table below shows a list of initiatives for *NIST*.

Table 10 - NIST Initiatives

| Operating Unit | Project   | Status                  | Estimated Completion |
|----------------|---|-------------------------|----------------------|
| NIST           | Improving Dissemination of Basic Research Results via the NIST and other websites   | Live / Operational      | --                   |
|                | Improving access to NIST research results through social media including Wikipedia, Facebook, YouTube, Flickr, and Twitter                              | Live / Operational      | --                   |
|                | Improving Access to the Digital Data Repository of NIST Collections, including Publications, Artifacts, and Photographs Relating to Measurement Science | Live / Operational      | --                   |
|                | Making Photos and Videos from the 9/11 Investigation available to the public  | Completed (August 2011) | --                   |

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

Several years ago, as part of an effort to broadly disseminate its research results, NIST implemented a CMS, 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 website 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 website 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 websites (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 NIST Interagency or Internal Reports (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***

The 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 website is routinely announced through these additional social media sites.

The 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***

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***

The 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)

NOAA is an agency that enriches life through science. NOAA’s 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.

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. Its mission touches the lives of every American and has a critical role in protecting life and property and conserving and protecting natural resources.

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

In keeping with the Open Government goals, NOAA has made notable progress in a number of the 13 Open Government functional areas in FY-15, as highlighted below.

### Open Data

The NOAA has a long-standing formal policy (which pre-dates OMB M-13-13) requiring NOAA’s environmental data to be managed based upon an end-to-end data lifecycle, and to be “visible, accessible and independently understandable to users”. In support of this policy, NOAA has an active Environmental Data Management Committee (EDMC), which comprising members from all Line Offices to facilitate and guide the myriad NOAA data producers and data stewards toward effective implementation of the policy. In turn, this effort significantly advances and enables the Open Data agenda for NOAA’s environmental information.

In early 2016, the EDMC approved the Data and Publication Sharing Directive for NOAA Grants, Cooperative Agreements, and Contracts. This was an important milestone because it completed the policy framework required to support the White House Office of Science and Technology

Policy (OSTP) Memorandum "[Increasing Access to the Results of Federally Funded Scientific Research](#)"

On an annual basis, NOAA hosts an Environmental Data Management Workshop to promote awareness, discussion, and problem-solving of NOAA data management activities including data discovery, access services, metadata, usage, citation, "big data" issues, and other relevant topics. The most recent workshop was held in January 2016 in conjunction with the winter 2016 meeting of the Earth Science Information Partners (ESIP), with more than 160 registered participants.

## Privacy

- The NOAA has published 9 System of Record Notices (SORNs) since the beginning of FY-15. SORN review and publication has greatly improved due to additional staffing at NOAA and DOC.
- The NOAA currently has 31 Privacy Impact Assessments (PIAs) in place covering the FISMA systems that collect Personally Identifiable Information (PII). There are 11 PIAs that have been approved within the Bureau that are pending DOC Senior Agency Official for Privacy (SAOP) approval, and 7 PIAs that are currently being reviewed within NOAA.
- The NOAA has prepared a governance document providing a procedure for using Google Apps to electronically transmit sensitive PII in compliance with the DOC Electronic Transmission of Personally Identifiable Information Policy.
- The NOAA has developed a NOAA Privacy Plan.

## Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Requests

- In FY-15, NOAA instituted an intensive effort to decrease the FOIA backlog and improve agency responsiveness to FOIA requests.
- This has included monthly FOIA Legal Expert calls, monthly FOIA Professionals discussions with all FOIA Liaisons, regular meetings with program office FOIA leadership to encourage enhanced FOIA processing, and significant guidance on FOIA best practices.
- These efforts have led to a decrease in the bureau's FOIA request backlog from 138 at the end of FY-14 to 70 backlogged FOIA requests at the end of FY-15. This represents a reduction of more than 49% year over year, despite an increase of the number of requests received by 14% over the same timeframe.
- NOAA has instituted mandatory FOIA Training for all new employees during their Entrance on Duty Orientation Training. This training outlines the basic obligations under the FOIA, and the expectations of every NOAA employee in adhering to the responsibilities for FOIA processing when tasked with processing a FOIA request.
- NOAA has instituted specialized FOIA "Boot Camp" training sessions for all FOIA staff professionals. This training provides an overview and refresher of key FOIA statutory obligations and detailed FOIAonline user administration training which strengthens the knowledge, ability and confidence of FOIA support staff.

## NOAA Open Government Initiatives

The table below shows a list of initiatives for *NOAA*.

Table 11 - NOAA Initiatives

| Operating Unit | Project   | Status                | Estimated Completion |
|----------------|---|-----------------------|----------------------|
| NOAA           | NOAA Big Data Partnership   | Live / Operational    | --                   |
|                | Digital Object Identifiers  | Live / Operational    | --                   |
|                | Expanding Citizen Science Community of Practice and Inventory           | Live / Operational    | --                   |
|                | NOAA Climate.gov Portal   | Live / Operational    | --                   |
|                | Integrated Severe Weather Data via GIS Map Interface                    | On-Going / Continuous | --                   |
|                | New Data Visualization Capabilities for Global Summary Data             | On-Going / Continuous | --                   |
|                | New Local Climatological Product for US and Global Locations            | On-Going / Continuous | --                   |
|                | Redesign of NOAA.gov and Consolidation of NOAA Corporate Websites       | Live / Operational    | --                   |
|                | NOAA Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) and Common Alerting Protocol (CAP) | Live / Operational    | --                   |

- ***Project – NOAA Big Data Partnership***

The Big Data Project (BDP) is an innovative approach to publishing NOAA’s vast data resources and positioning them near cost-efficient high performance computing, analytic, and storage services provided by the private sector. This collaboration combines three powerful resources - NOAA’s tremendous volume of high quality environmental data and advanced data products, private industry’s vast infrastructure and technical capacity, and the American economy’s innovation and energy - to create a sustainable, market-driven ecosystem that lowers the cost barrier to data publication. This project will create a new economic space for growth and job creation while providing the public far greater access to the data created with its tax dollars.

These partnerships were created through Cooperative Research and Development Agreements (CRADAs) with Amazon, Google, Microsoft, IBM, and the Open Commons Consortium. CRADA partners will join with interested private 3rd parties and leverage their cloud computing capabilities to develop "big data" value-added products and services.

Additionally, the CRADA model allows NOAA to recover its dissemination costs, which could enable the BDP to operate at no net cost to the government.

On October 27, 2015, Amazon Web Services announced the public release of NOAA's Next-Generation Weather Radar, or NEXRAD, data for public use. The real-time feed and full historical archive of original resolution (Level II) NEXRAD data, from June 1991 to present, are currently freely available through the company's cloud infrastructure. Ranked as the Nation's second most valuable geospatial dataset by the National Science and Technology Council, providing fast, efficient, and easy access to NEXRAD data is of great importance. However, the unwieldy size and limitations associated with retrieving the data from tapes made the full dataset very difficult to access and transmit. With a copy of NEXRAD data available via Amazon Web Services, users can now access the entire dataset in one place without the need for special arrangements. Users no longer need to move the data across networks or maintain their own computer power to store it. Users can also access processing, analysis, and visualization resources on Amazon Web Services along with the data storage infrastructure. Overall, the move gives more users equal access to the data and allows them to easily develop comprehensive statistical and probabilistic products.

The Climate Corporation, a company that examines weather data to provide insurance to farmers, is the first large-scale user of NEXRAD data on Amazon Web Services. In a presentation to the American Meteorological Society on January 12, 2016, The Climate Corporation showcased the benefits of having the entire data set available in the cloud, including a reduced time-to-market for their weather-based products and increased accuracy of their weather predictions.

- ***Project – Digital Object Identifiers***

The NOAA observations and forecasts are critical to the nation's commerce, decision-making, and research. When data are utilized for such purposes, it is important to be able clearly cite the data used, much as the author of an article or a book can cite sources. A key element of such citations is a unique identifier. A book can be referenced by its International Standard Book Number (ISBN), whereas an article or data can be referenced by a Digital Object Identifier (DOI). DOIs have long been used in the publishing industry, and are increasingly being assigned to datasets. Once a DOI has been assigned, it is possible to use that identifier to navigate directly to an informational web page that describes the data and includes links to obtain the data and detailed documentation. The DOI remains the same even if the data are moved to another web site or organization, so this provides a permanent ID.

As part of its Open Government activities, NOAA will continue for the foreseeable future an initiative to assign DOIs to datasets archived in its National Center for Environmental Information (NCEI). The NOAA Central Library is also issuing DOIs for technical

reports archived there. The NOAA Environmental Data Management Committee (EDMC) has also issued a Data Citation Procedural Directive with guidelines for obtaining and citing DOIs.

The DOI initiative has several benefits:

- It allows users to cite data unambiguously
- It enables NOAA to track such citations in the literature
- It encourages submission of data to the archives
- It supports the linkage of publications and data called for in the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) memorandum [Increasing Access to the Results of Federally Funded Scientific Research](#), and
- It enables data producers to get credit for data they have properly documented and managed for long-term preservation

NOAA will report at least quarterly the number of new DOIs assigned (465 as of March 18, 2016) and any future metrics or milestones in this initiative.

- ***Project – Expanding Citizen Science Community of Practice and Inventory***

The field of citizen science is experiencing rapid growth empowered by emerging technology. NOAA has a rich tradition of supporting citizen science. Today that tradition is being carried on through a portfolio of projects and a diversity of efforts fostered and supported across the Agency.

#### **NOAA Community of Practice**

A [NOAA Citizen Science Community of Practice](#) was launched in November of 2013 to foster communication and collaboration among the Agency's citizen science efforts. The Community of Practice is facilitated by NOAA's Office of Education and relies on grassroots participation from community members throughout the Agency. Since its formation, this NOAA community has grown steadily with over 160 members currently engaged representing 67 projects. It is estimated that these projects result in more than half a million volunteer hours per year (equal to more than 239 person-years of effort). A volunteer Steering Committee, made up of members from across NOAA, provides guidance on how the Community of Practice can best be supported as it continues to grow and evolve. Webinars for the Community of Practice have focused on topics such as integration of mobile devices and project evaluation.

#### **Complementary Efforts**

The NOAA is an active participant in the [Federal Community of Practice on Crowdsourcing and Citizen Science](#) (FCPCCS). Working with the FCPCCS, NOAA has created a collection of projects our agency supports within the [Database of Federal Crowdsourcing and Citizen Science Projects](#), launched in August of 2015. NOAA also worked collaboratively with the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy and fellow Federal agencies to create the [Federal Citizen Science and Crowdsourcing](#)

[Toolkit](#). We also supported the installation of a citizen science rain gauge in the First Lady’s Kitchen Garden. Data from this gauge has been helping us better understand the precipitation received in downtown Washington, DC, and has garnered significant media attention.

- **Project – NOAA Climate.gov Portal**

*What’s New – Launched newly rebuilt “Maps & Data” section, featuring easy to access and download image maps of various climate-related parameters in the “Data Snapshots” section, which users can animate to see changes over time; a new “Climate Data Primer” to guide people who are new to working with climate data; and a comprehensive new “Dataset Gallery” offering an easy-to-search online catalog of NOAA’s climate data and services. Climate.gov again saw a very large growth (83%) in user visit rate over FY-14. In response to the President’s Climate Action , also completed Phase I development of the U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit ([toolkit.climate.gov](http://toolkit.climate.gov)), Plan. The Toolkit saw a very healthy visit rate in its first year — averaging almost 33,000 visits per month in FY-15.*

The NOAA Climate.gov ([www.climate.gov](http://www.climate.gov)) provides easy online access to authoritative science data and information for a climate-smart nation. In FY-15, NOAA Climate.gov experienced an 83% growth in our rate of visits compared to FY-14 (the target was 10%). The site offers four audience-focused sections:

- News & Features — a popular-style online magazine for the climate-interested public, covering topics in climate research and science-based applications benefitting society;
- Maps & Data — an easy-to-use gateway to help scientists and non-scientists to find and use climate maps and data for research and analysis;
- Teaching Climate — a compendium of learning activities and curriculum materials, multi-media resources, and professional development opportunities for formal and informal educators who want to incorporate climate science into their work; and
- Supporting Decisions — a clearinghouse of reports, resources, and decision-support tools for planners and policy leaders who want authoritative climate science information. (This section will be superseded by the U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit in FY-16).

In 2014, in response to the President’s Climate Action Plan and E.O to help the nation prepare for climate-related changes and impacts, the Climate.gov team led a partnership of federal agencies in developing the U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit ([toolkit.climate.gov](http://toolkit.climate.gov)). Phase1 development was completed in FY-15. The Toolkit provides scientific tools, information, and expertise to provide decision-support to application-oriented professionals (planners, policy leaders, businesses and resource managers). The site helps

people manage their climate-related risks and improve their resilience to extreme events. The Toolkit offers:

- A 5-step resilience-building process;
- A library of about 100 real-world case studies showing people taking adaptation actions all across the nation;
- A compendium of over 220 science-based decision-support tools;
- A geobrowser (Climate Explorer) offering maps of climate stressors as well as people and assets impacted;
- Nine different Topic sections with summary narratives excerpted from the 3<sup>rd</sup> National Climate Assessment and other authoritative reports;
- A catalog of training courses
- Maps highlighting the locations of regional and local climate science and service centers; and
- A semantic search tool allowing users to search the entire federal government’s climate science domain and filter results according to facets of interest

In late FY-15, the team began Phase 1.5 development of the Toolkit to expand the site’s scope and functionality, as follows:

- Refresh the site’s interface to be more mobile device-friendly;
  - Add three new Topics sections — Arctic, Fisheries and Marine Ecosystems, and Urban Environments;
  - Upgrade the “Climate Explorer” to OpenLayers3 (to be more mobile device-friendly) and add climate projection data of decision-relevant parameters;
  - Add a “Climate By Location” graphing tool allowing users to display time series climate projection data at county-scale resolution;
  - Add a “Regions” section with regional-scale narrative information to complement the “Topics” section;
  - Add a “Reports” section allowing users to discover cities and states that have produced vulnerability assessments and/or adaptation action plans; and
  - Scale up the reach and frequency of stakeholder engagements to more rapidly boost awareness and use of the site.
- ***Project – Integrated Severe Weather Data via GIS Map Interface***

This initiative provides an integrated map interface for the US, state and county-level storm damage information, lightning strike data, NEXRAD products (such as hail signature) along with other available severe weather data from NOAA's National Center for Environmental Information (NCEI). A user of the interface may, for example, select

a date (a very recent date or for a major historical event) and view the data through one interface.

Dataset Used: 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 (storm events database), summarized lightning strikes from Vaisala’s National Lightning Detection Network.

Future enhancement plans include integrating this interface with the Storm Events Database, thus expanding the sources of data available through the interface.

- ***Project – New Data Visualization Capabilities for Global Summary Data***

A dynamic mapping application for Global Summary Data from NOAA’s National Center for Environmental Information (NCEI) displays colorized maps for temperature, precipitation, snowfall and snow depth for all global locations, for any point in time. This application provides new capabilities via online services, to include implementation of the following example use cases:

- An agricultural company can view information regarding a recent heavy rainfall event to assist in determining the area’s most susceptible to nitrogen-leaching and would require supplemental fertilization for crops.
- The USDA can view temperature data from a recent heat wave to determine regions which are likely to suffer from lower crop yields due to high temperatures.
- In post-storm event analysis (such as a major hurricane), the data can be quickly viewed to correlate damage reports with climatological data.
- Parameters such as temperature, precipitation, and snow depth have visualization capabilities via colorized maps, for all global locations, for any point in time. This includes over 30,000 currently active stations. For example, users are able to select a date (very recent date or for a major historical event) and view a color-plot of the data, such as minimum temperature. Additional station locations are being added to this dataset, to provide better spatial coverage.
- Dataset Used: Global Historical Climate Network (GHCN)-Daily, comprising daily summary data (e.g., maximum/minimum temperature, precipitation, snowfall) for global locations.

- ***Project – New Local Climatological Product for US and Global Locations***

NOAA’s National Center for Environmental Information (NCEI) Local Climatological Data (LCD) product provides a very easy-to-read summary of hourly and daily summary data for each location, to include parameters such as:

- Hourly temperature
- Dew point
- Cloud cover

- Precipitation
- Wind speed
- And many others

This data is available for any point in time for US and many global stations. The LCD product is scheduled for release in “beta” in Q3 FY-16, with product review and finalization scheduled for Q4 FY-16.

Dataset Used: Integrated Surface Dataset (ISD), comprising hourly data (e.g., temperature, cloud cover, humidity, visibility, etc.) along with selected daily and monthly summary parameters for global locations.

- ***Project – Redesign of NOAA.gov and Consolidation of NOAA Corporate Websites***

The [noaa.gov](http://noaa.gov) website serves as the primary public face of the NOAA organization. The site logs nearly 100 million visits annually and is consistently one of the top accessed Federal Websites. In 2016, NOAA implemented a redesign of the NOAA.gov main site, providing the technology and framework for consolidation and integration of NOAA corporate information and resources into the new site organization and presentation. Through this effort, NOAA has improved the overall user experience for the general public and key audiences by improving the appeal, user friendliness, navigation, information accessibility, search capabilities and usability of the sites. Executing the redesign and consolidation within a content management system (CMS) has improved the overall agility and maintenance of the site structure and content; decreased the time to publish; and extended access to a broader, more geographically diverse content contributor group allowing content to flow more organically from NOAA’s line organizations.

This redesign and consolidation project serves as a catalyst for future improvements to NOAA’s vast public Websites and services as well as provides for expansion of NOAA’s shared IT services model for Web hosting, infrastructure support and development across a common CMS platform.

The new image and content rich design introduces new focus areas to guide visitors to new and interesting aspects of the NOAA mission. Analytics show that since the redesign click through rates have dropped by more than 30% and visitors are staying on the site to view new content three times longer than with the previous design. The introduction of a responsive design provides easy and clear navigation and viewing of the site across all platforms and screen sizes.

Work continues to expand on the core site, continuing to bubble NOAA’s programs up to the top site level for easier access by the public and closer integration within common themes across focus area content. This new way of presenting NOAA’s vast information

promotes the understanding and use of NOAA products and services guiding visitors to the data and information they seek - where and when they need it most.

- ***Project – NOAA Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) and Common Alerting Protocol (CAP)***

*What's New – WEA Improvement Recommendations being reviewed by FCC*

Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) are 90-character emergency messages sent by alerting authorities through the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) to cell phones via commercial wireless carriers. WEA is an opt-out service and there is no charge to consumers. NWS began participating in WEA in late June 2012. NWS activates WEA for Tsunami, Tornado, Flash Flood, Hurricane/Typhoon, Dust Storm, and Extreme Wind Warnings. NWS activation of WEA has been credited with saving hundreds of lives, particularly during tornadoes.

WEA is a partnership between public safety officials, FEMA, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and NOAA's National Weather Service (NWS). Each WEA message is geographically targeted to cell phones using cell broadcast technology. Cell broadcast uses radio technology to deliver the alert to cell phones via cell towers which are inside and/or adjacent to the threat area as defined by the alerting authority. The use of radio broadcast technology means WEA is not subject to network congestion as with traditional point to point SMS text messaging.

In 2014, NWS led the FCC's Communications Security, Reliability and Interoperability Council (CSRIC) in developing recommendations on WEA message length, content, geo-targeting, and testing. The CSRIC was comprised of members from industry, government, and academia. In November 2015, the FCC announced a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) which proposes to adopt many of these recommendations including expansion of WEA message length to 360 characters. The public comment period to the NPRM ended in February 2016. The FCC could adopt the recommendations and make rule changes in late 2016 or 2017.

The system which enables NWS activation of WEA is HazCollect Extended. HazCollect Extended ingests NWS's traditional teletype style alerts, parses them into their most atomic parts, reproduces each alert in Common Alerting Protocol (CAP) format, and transmits each CAP message to FEMA IPAWS. NWS CAP messages which warrant WEA activation are specially marked so that IPAWS only passes those alerts to commercial wireless carriers. See <http://weather.gov/wirelessalerts> for more information about NWS activation of WEA.



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CAP is based on Extensible Markup Language (XML) and is an industry standard for the exchange of emergency alert information. FEMA officially adopted CAP for IPAWS in 2010. NWS CAP messages are publicly available over a variety of NWS dissemination channels as well as FEMA IPAWS. See <http://alerts.weather.gov> for more information about NWS produced CAP.

FEMA IPAWS is this nation's all-hazard alert aggregator and serves as a gateway to wireless carriers for WEA as well as broadcasters for the Emergency Alert System (EAS), and a variety of other dissemination channels.

See <https://www.fema.gov/integrated-public-alert-warning-system> for more information.



## National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)

**N**TIA 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 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 U.S.. 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.

The NTIA has a range of activities to facilitate the public’s access to information. NTIA is now making Census Current Population Survey Internet use data available in the [Data Central](#) section of its website, and has developed an important tool to help site visitors find information quickly. This information will inform efforts to increase broadband access and adoption, thereby supporting economic growth. Other initiatives include updates to the federal spectrum compendium, and three ongoing multistakeholder privacy policy processes.

### Open Data

The NTIA publishes datasets and APIs at [data.gov](http://data.gov) and on its websites. The Data Central section of NTIA’s website, [www.ntia.doc.gov/category/data-central](http://www.ntia.doc.gov/category/data-central), is home to data and analysis on computer and Internet use in the United States. In addition to the APIs at [data.gov](http://data.gov) and [broadbandmap.gov](http://broadbandmap.gov), all of the National Broadband Map datasets from June 2010 through June 2014 are posted at [www2.ntia.doc.gov/broadband-data](http://www2.ntia.doc.gov/broadband-data). Data on Federal frequency assignments in the 225 to 5000 MHz bands by agency, band, and radio service are posted at [data.gov](http://data.gov) and [www.ntia.doc.gov/other-publication/2015/federal-government-spectrum-compendium](http://www.ntia.doc.gov/other-publication/2015/federal-government-spectrum-compendium).

### Privacy

The NTIA OCIO prepares compliance reports such as those required under the FISMA. The NTIA follows departmental guidance from the Office of Privacy and Open Government. The Office of

Policy Coordination and Management (OPCM) requires IT security awareness training that covers Personally Identifiable Information to new employees during in-processing, as well as annual computer based training.

## Whistleblower Protection

The NTIA follows departmental guidance from the Office of Inspector General. NTIA Associate Administrators send reminders to employees that any instance of waste, fraud and/or abuse should be reported to their supervisor, the office head, other Department officials or the OIG, without fear of retaliation. NTIA employees also receive periodic No Fear Act training.

## Websites

The NTIA uses websites as an effective tool to disseminate information about its programs and activities. The main website is [www.ntia.doc.gov](http://www.ntia.doc.gov); information on grant programs and the BroadbandUSA initiative is [www2.ntia.doc.gov](http://www2.ntia.doc.gov); telecommunications research and engineering services and technical reports at NTIA's Institute for Telecommunication Sciences are featured at [www.its.bldrdoc.gov](http://www.its.bldrdoc.gov); and the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet), an independent authority within NTIA that is deploying a nationwide public safety wireless broadband network, provides extensive information at [www.firstnet.gov](http://www.firstnet.gov).

## Transparency

The NTIA publishes on its websites extensive information throughout its grants-making processes, including grant applications, awards documents, and quarterly and annual reports. The FirstNet Board of Directors webcasts its quarterly meetings, as well as committee meetings. Meetings of the Commerce Spectrum Management Advisory Committee are also webcast, as are all multistakeholder process meetings.

## Public Notice

The NTIA uses its public websites for sharing information and providing opportunities for participation and collaboration with the public. *Federal Register* notices of public meetings and requests for comment are posted on [www.ntia.doc.gov](http://www.ntia.doc.gov) and [www.firstnet.gov](http://www.firstnet.gov). All comments in public comment proceedings are also posted. Numerous listservs provide announcements of events and activities. NTIA provides links to Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and LinkedIn accounts, as well as RSS feeds, to publicize its publications and activities.

## Records Management

The NTIA is in the process of moving from paper to electronic records management in accordance with NARA guidelines.

## Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Requests

FOIA requests to NTIA must be in writing and can be submitted by mail, e-mail, fax, or via the Department's FOIA Online system. NTIA uses FOIA Online for tracking and release of information to the public. A webpage of instructions on filing a FOIA request is at [www.ntia.doc.gov/page/2011/foia-information](http://www.ntia.doc.gov/page/2011/foia-information).

## Proactive Disclosures

The NTIA publishes on its websites extensive information throughout its grants-making processes, including grant applications, awards documents, and quarterly and annual reports. This supports both the transparency goal as well as providing the public with information that otherwise would have to be obtained through FOIA requests.

## Congressional Requests

The NTIA receives congressional inquiries by phone, letter, and email. The Office of Congressional Affairs in the Office of the Assistant Secretary works with the Department's Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs to respond to inquiries promptly.

## Declassification

The NTIA has no original classification authority.

## Participation and Collaboration

The NTIA uses its public websites for sharing information and providing opportunities for participation and collaboration with the public. *Federal Register* notices of public meetings are posted on [www.ntia.doc.gov](http://www.ntia.doc.gov) and [www.firstnet.gov](http://www.firstnet.gov). All comments in public comment proceedings are posted. Many public meetings are webcast and opportunities to participate by teleconference are provided. NTIA provides links to Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and LinkedIn accounts, as well as RSS feeds, to publicize opportunities for participation and collaboration.

The NTIA's Institute for Telecommunication Sciences hosts the International Symposium on Advanced Radio Technologies (ISART) that brings together government, academia, and industry leaders for the purpose of collaborating on groundbreaking developments and applications of advanced radio technologies.

## NTIA Open Government Initiatives

The table below shows a list of initiatives for *NTIA*.

Table 12 - NTIA Initiatives

| Operating Unit | Project   | Status                | Estimated Completion |
|----------------|---|-----------------------|----------------------|
| <b>NTIA</b>    | Creating a National Broadband Map                         | Completed, March 2015 | --                   |
|                | Establishing Online Access to Results of Broadband Survey | Live / Operational    | --                   |
|                | Publishing Federal Spectrum Transition Plans              | Live / Operational    | --                   |
|                | Creating a Federal Spectrum Compendium                    | Live / Operational    | --                   |
|                | Multistakeholder Privacy Policy Process                   | Ongoing               | --                   |

- ***Project – Creating a National Broadband Map***

Through the State Broadband Data and Development Grant Program, which was funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, NTIA awarded financial assistance grants to states for broadband data collection and planning. Data displayed in the National Broadband Map was made publicly available in March 2011. Data collection began in 2009 and concluded in 2015 when the Federal Communications Commission took over maintenance of the Map.

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

The NTIA has periodically sponsored data collections on Internet use and the devices Americans use to go online as a supplement to the Census’s annual Current Population Survey. The most recent surveys were conducted in October 2009, October 2010, July 2011, October 2012, and July 2015. 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 and the Census release these data in open, Web-based formats, making the survey instruments and associated reports as widely available as possible. The Data Central section of NTIA’s website, [www.ntia.doc.gov/category/data-central](http://www.ntia.doc.gov/category/data-central), is home to this data. The Data Explorer tool enables users to select from dozens of metrics tracked over time, as well as a number of demographic characteristics, and charts the requested data.

- ***Project – Publishing Federal Spectrum Transition Plans***

In March 2014, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) adopted rules governing use of spectrum in the 1695-1710 MHz, 1755-1780 MHz, and 2155-2180 MHz bands for Advanced Wireless Services (AWS-3). The FCC, in collaboration with NTIA and the federal agencies, reallocated from federal use to non-federal use the 1695-1710 MHz and 1755-1780 MHz bands. Most of the incumbent federal systems currently using the 1755-1780 MHz band will relocate out of the band, but the FCC’s rules also provide for indefinite sharing with a limited number of federal systems. Federal entities have submitted transition plans to NTIA, and NTIA has compiled and consolidated the estimated costs and timelines contained in the agency transition plans. In September 2014, NTIA published on its website the individual agency transition plans, and all plan data spreadsheets in machine readable format. Updated plan data as well as aggregated Frequency/ Location/ Timeline data and aggregated Costs and Timeline data in XML and JSON formats will be published in FY 2016.

- ***Project – Creating a Federal Spectrum Compendium***

In April 2014, NTIA published a compendium of federal spectrum use in the 225 megahertz through 5 gigahertz bands—prime real estate that has prompted the most interest from both federal and commercial users. The compendium contains information for each frequency band in which the federal government has significant operations on an exclusive or shared basis. NTIA’s compendium shows agencies need spectrum for crucial tasks ranging from military flight testing to air traffic control to weather forecasting. The band reports provide a band-by-band description of how spectrum is used by federal agencies, the number and type of frequency assignments NTIA has authorized, and the percentage of frequency assignments by category. In addition, the data also feature contour maps showing where federal systems that utilize spectrum are located across the country. The compendium was made available initially in pdf format. NTIA first made the compendium data available in machine readable formats in FY 2015 and NTIA updates the information semiannually.

- ***Project – Multi-stakeholder Processes***

In July 2012, NTIA began its first domestic multi-stakeholder privacy policy process, bringing together representatives from technology companies, trade groups, consumer groups, academic institutions and other organizations to develop a code of conduct on mobile application (“mobile app”) transparency. A number of companies have adopted or are beginning to implement the code of conduct for mobile app transparency. A second multi-stakeholder process, begun in February 2014, is focused on crafting privacy safeguards for the commercial use of facial recognition technology. A third multi-stakeholder process, begun in August 2015, focuses on privacy, accountability, and transparency issues concerning Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS). And finally, NTIA began a multistakeholder process in September, 2015



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concerning the collaboration between security researchers and software and system developers and owners to address security vulnerability disclosure.



## National Technical Information Service (NTIS)

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.

### NTIS Open Government Initiatives

The table below shows a list of initiatives for *NTIS*.

Table 13 - NTIS Initiatives

| Operating Unit | Project   | Status             | Estimated Completion |
|----------------|---|--------------------|----------------------|
| NTIS           | Making Five Years of Bibliographic Data Searchable (Data.gov) | Live / Operational | --                   |
|                | National Technical Reports Library (NTRL)                     | Live / Operational | --                   |
|                | Federal Science Repository Service (FSRS)                     | Live / Operational | --                   |

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

The NTIS is making the latest five years of the NTIS Bibliographic File searchable via [Data.gov](http://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](http://Data.gov) in a compiled XML format, which will – for the first time –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](http://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.

- Online access to an electronic library of over 2 million bibliographic records (dating from 1964)
- Links to over 700,000 corresponding full-text reports
- Coverage from the late 1890's to present (most reports date from the 1970's to present.)
- Search engine capabilities
- Release 1, 2009
- Release 2, 2011
- Release 3, 2012

- ***Federal Science Repository Service (FSRS)***

The NTIS created the Federal Science Repository Service (FSRS) to transition and modernize the Federal investment in scientific research. Building on the existing Federal IA of [Data.gov](http://Data.gov) and [Science.gov](http://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.

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.

- Storage and preservation of diverse resources
- Ingestion of distributed content
- Access control customized to agency requirements
- A robust interface with advanced metadata and full text search, filtering, and full-text and media display
- Launched 2011



## Office of the Inspector General (OIG)

**O**ffice of Inspector General's (OIG) seeks to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Department's programs and operations. The OIG also endeavors to detect and deter waste, fraud, and abuse.

The OIG Open Government operations and plan contributes to the Departmental Open Government plan by ensuring that the principles of transparency, collaboration and participation are built into our policies and operations. In order to ensure that these principles are supported routinely throughout OIG, certain programmatic functions are dedicated with open government commitments and responsibilities. These programmatic functions include positions such as the OIG Records Officer, the OIG FOIA Officer, and positions within the OCIO.

One of the ways the OIG supports the principle of transparency is to routinely update the Webmaster posts with cleared and finalized OIG information to the website. To ensure that the OIG operations support the principles of collaboration and participation, we periodically review our website to ensure that all reports and audits are easily accessible. In FY 2013, the OIG's Public Affairs Specialist led an effort to update the OIG's website, resulting in improved public access to agency material and general navigation of the website. Recently, we also joined other the Department's bureaus in using FOIAonline to process OIG FOIA requests. This action resulted in improved tracking of OIG requests, improved coordination with Departmental FOIA Officers, and improved information sharing with requesters.

The OIG is also supporting Open Government activities by improving the Records Management policies and processes to manage records and by reviewing OIG's records management schedules for accuracy. The OIG Records Officer conducts annual training for staff and maintains an internal website to increase awareness. This supports meeting one of the goals within M-12-18 "Managing Government Records Directive," which was to provide annual records management training to employees by December 31, 2014. Furthermore, in December 2014, OIG posted a "Request for Information" (RFI) to FedBizOpps in order to gain information on electronic records processes for email records.

The OIG plans for Open Government activities are highlighted in both the chart and the paragraphs below. To provide more insight into our other Open Government activities and plans, we are providing more details in the paragraphs following the chart below.

## **Open Data**

The OIG is complying with the Open Data Memorandum (OMB M-13-13) by developing and maintaining an “enterprise data inventory” of the OIG publically available data resources. This is our flagship initiative that supports the departmental plan and Open Government objectives established by the administration. As time permits, we are also actively categorizing and inventorying our internal digital assets. The categorization of our internal digital assets includes a review of the OIG Records Retention Schedules to ensure that the information is maintained in accordance with NARA policy. The following paragraphs demonstrate some other ways we are supporting the Departmental Open Government plan.

## **Privacy**

The OIG OCIO continues to prepare compliance reports such as those required under the FISMA. The OCIO actively participates in reviews of the Departmental Privacy Controls implementation approach in conjunction with the NIST. We continue to update standard operating procedures to improve the OIG network infrastructure and to meet Departmental requirements. The OIG Security Officer monitors and responds to incidents as needed. The OIG OCIO is also improving security by implementing the administration’s priority cybersecurity capabilities. These actions will assist in the protection of the personal information we maintain and improve services to OIG customers, both internal and external. The Office of Administration (OA) continues to provide security training to new employees during in-processing and annual computer-based training. Annually, the OIG reviews the OIG PIA to ensure compliance with departmental requirements. The PIA is also reviewed when a new information system is being designed for implementation on the network. In FY 2014, we completed an amendment to our existing SORN covering investigative records.

## **Whistleblower Protection**

In accordance with 5 U.S.C. § 2302(c), OIG informs employees of their rights and remedies under the prohibited personal practices and whistleblower retaliation protection provisions of Title 5. OIG’s website includes a separate Whistleblower Protection Program page with information and links related to the Whistleblower Protection Act of 1989, OIG’s Whistleblower Protection Ombudsman, on how to file whistleblower reprisal complaints, and whistleblower protection agency certification. The page includes the phone number and email contact information for the Whistleblower Protection Ombudsman. The Ombudsman’s role is to educate agency employees about prohibitions on retaliation for protected disclosures, and inform agency employees who have made or are contemplating making a protected disclosure about the rights and remedies against

retaliation for protected disclosures. As part of the strategy to promote awareness, the Ombudsman provides brown bags training sessions, posts informational posters at agency facilities, and develops brochures for employees as part of the orientation process.

## Websites

The OIG’s website is accessible by a link at the bottom of the Department home page and directly at [www.oig.doc.gov](http://www.oig.doc.gov). The website includes a menu at the top of the page, allowing visitors to access various topics of interest. The website provides access to downloadable PDFs of public audit and investigative reports, audits initiated, correspondence, and Congressional testimony. Information is organized by title, date, and the Department’s bureau. The website also includes a FOIA reading room, as well as information on how to make a request. The “Contact Us” page provides information for the webmaster and includes links to the FOIA Officer contact. The OIG periodically reviews the usability of its website by analyzing the results of workgroup studies and by being an active member of the Departmental Web Advisory Council.

## Transparency

To ensure transparency, one of OIG’s goals highlighted in the chart following the OIG Open Government Plan introduction is to publish an inventory of external data assets on Data.gov this FY. Recently, the OIG Office of Administration (OA) completed this inclusion of the OIG inventory of external data assets within Data.gov. The concept of transparency is established in OIG routine processes and policy. The OIG has a formal clearance process that ensures active endorsing the administration’s Open Government objectives. OIG routinely practices proactive disclosures by including a plan to issue two public investigative reports as part of the strategic goals for FY 2015. The OIG also publishes a Semi-annual report twice yearly and the “Top Management Challenges” report annually.

The OIG supports transparency of events concerning the office by sending tweets using OIG’s official Twitter account and by posting comments to its Facebook page. The OIG also participates in transparency by utilizing FOIAonline, a government partnership that provides shared services for FOIA processing. To learn how the OIG FOIA office provides public access to frequently released documents, we have included a paragraph with information on our reading room in this plan.

## Public Notice

As stated previously, OIG uses a Twitter account and Facebook page to publicize publications, activities, and job vacancies. Using these popular modes of communication helps support transparency, collaboration, and participation. OIG is increasing customer outreach to stakeholders, citizens, and the media as the number of followers to the posted tweets and Facebook posts expands. The OIG will continue to use these communication methods to inform the public. The OIG website at [www.oig.doc.gov](http://www.oig.doc.gov) is also used to provide the public notice of recently released

reports and audits. The “Recent Releases” section on the OIG Home page provides the public links to these reports, audits and other correspondence. Furthermore, the OA posted a request for information to FedBizOpps in December 2014 to pursue the goal of gaining information on records management of email. More details on this initiative are below in the section on Records Management.

## **Records Management**

The second flagship initiative is to improve records management processes by revising records management policies and OIG disposition processes. As part of this initiative, OIG posted a request for information (RFI) on FedBizOpps in FY 2015 to obtain information on records management for e-mail records in the cloud. This RFI was drafted in support of the “Managing Government Records Directive” (M-12-18, jointly issued by OMB and NARA) to meet the goal of managing all e-mail records in electronic format by December 2016. By improving the management of e-mail records and by examining the records management policies, we will improve customer service, meet one of the goals of the Presidential Records Directive, and serve the objectives of Open Government. The OIG will be continuing to improve records management policies as mentioned in the chart earlier in this document.

The OIG Records Manager routinely participates in the FRON. This activity supports the Open Government activity of collaboration. Providing records management training to OIG employees enables OIG to meet one of the goals of M-12-18, by implementing annual records management training to all employees by December 2014. As part of this action, the OIG is hiring a Records Management Specialist to coordinate with other records managers within the FRON and NARA to collaborate on an online records management course developed for Federal employees.

## **Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Requests**

Within the last two years, OIG moved primarily to electronic-based systems that has greatly improved the efficiency and responsiveness of its FOIA process. All FOIA requests are tracked in the FOIAonline system. The OIG also improved its FOIA processes by developing a more robust external FOIA reading room containing frequently requested items (serving the Open Government objective of proactive disclosure) and by revising the FOIA external website to list the exemptions to the Act. In this way, OIG is communicating with the public to provide information on the FOIA program and encouraging transparency, collaboration, and participation. FOIA responses are sent by e-mail directly to requesters in order to remain proactively engaged. The OIG website provides more information on the OIG FOIA program at <http://www.oig.doc.gov/pages/Freedom-of-Information-Act.aspx>.

## **Proactive Disclosures**

Previously mentioned, upcoming events and activities are posted OIG’s Twitter account and Facebook page to alert customers. Posting the Tweets and the Facebook comments notifies the

public of weekly activities and alerts them to job announcements within OIG. OIG also notifies the public of additions to the external website by posting notice of audits initiated and recent releases in these sections on the OIG home page. The OIG will continue to review its website to improve customer communications. The OIG FOIA Officer also routinely reviews FOIA requests to identify types of frequently requested records and other records of interest for proactive posting.

## **Congressional Requests**

The OIG has a formal process for reviewing, releasing and responding to Congressional requests. First, employees who act for the requesting official complete a clearance form requesting Office of Counsel (OC) review. The OC assesses the suitability of public release under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 5 U.S. C. § 552 and the Privacy Act of 1974, (5 U.S.C. § 552a) and then determines whether the report is appropriate for public release (with or without redactions) or must be completely withheld from public release. Once the testimony or response to the congressional committee inquiry is finalized, it is then posted to the external OIG website at <http://www.oig.doc.gov/Pages/Testimony.aspx>. Our Public Affairs Specialist actively participates in the review process and engages in proactive disclosures by announcing upcoming public interviews.

## **Declassification**

The OIG follows the Department’s “Manual of Security Policies and Procedures” for security of Commerce information. New employees receive briefings from the OSY. However, OIG does not have the authority to classify information. Some information, such as open or sensitive investigations and the related evidence, is confidential. PII and BII are protected by FOIA exemptions.

## **Participation**

In order to meet OIG’s strategic goal to “Develop A Robust Infrastructure To Support A High-Performing OIG”, and to continue the improvement of network infrastructure, OIG examined the ways to improve its services to the workforce. Some of the ways the OIG is improving its network infrastructure is to leverage technology initiatives, such as Cloud computing and collaborating with industry on improvements in information storage and information sharing. For example, OIG has improved SharePoint services by implementing SharePoint 2013, Cloud Based Email Migration in FY 2016, and improving our bandwidth capacity. Another example of improvement is OIG actively engaging in the Department’s participation of DHS’ Continuous Diagnostics and Mitigation (CDM) program, which provides federal departments and agencies with capabilities and tools that identify cybersecurity risks on an ongoing basis, prioritizes these risks based upon potential impacts, and enables cybersecurity personnel to mitigate the most significant problems first. And finally, OIG collaborates with industry experts to implement best practices by attending

open data meetings of the OCIO council and encouraging employees to attend networking opportunities to obtain guidance on similar issues that other federal agencies experience.

## Collaboration

The OIG will continue to utilize its Twitter account and Facebook page as a communication tool with members of the public and other stakeholders. The tweets invite input from the public and encourage the public to participate in idea-generation and to provide feedback on the Department’s initiatives, building an open two-way conversation. Using this method also encourages comments on OIG activities and inviting collaboration on OIG’s objectives to fulfill the mission of reporting fraud, waste, and abuse within government. The OIG also provides access to its hotline number on the OIG Twitter account and invites followers to sign up for Tweets of interest from the OIG Twitter account.

## OIG Open Government Initiatives

The table below shows a list of initiatives for *OIG*

Table 14 - OIG Initiatives

| Operating Unit | Project   | Status                 | Estimated Completion |
|----------------|---|------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>OIG</b>     | Publish an inventory of our publicly available digital assets on <a href="http://inventory.data.gov">inventory.data.gov</a>     | Completed (April 2015) | --                   |
|                | Improve OIG Records Management Policies and Processes by revising records management processes.                                 | Ongoing                | December 2016        |
|                | Continue to improve network infrastructure to ensure security of privacy information by analyzing and updating privacy controls | Ongoing/Continuous     | December 2016        |

- ***Publish an inventory of our publically available digital assets on [inventory.data.gov](http://inventory.data.gov)***

The OIG is complying with the Open Data Memorandum (OMB M-13-13) by developing and maintaining an “enterprise data inventory” of the OIG publicly available data resources. This is OIG’s flagship initiative that supports the departmental plan and Open Government objectives established by the administration. As time permits, OIG will actively categorize and inventory our internal digital assets.

- ***Improve OIG Records Management Policies and Processes by revising records management processes***

The second flagship initiative is to improve the records management processes by revising records management policies and OIG disposition processes. As part of this initiative, OIG posted a request for information (RFI) on FedBizOpps in FY 2015 to obtain information on records management for e-mail records in the cloud. This RFI was drafted in support of the “Managing Government Records Directive” (M-12-18, jointly issued by OMB and NARA) to meet the goal of managing all e-mail records in electronic format by December



## U.S. Department of Commerce – Open Government Plan



2016. OIG is in the process of hiring a Records Management Specialist to improve the record management process.

- ***Continue to improve network infrastructure to ensure security of privacy information by analyzing and updating privacy controls***

The OIG's OCIO is also improving security by implementing the administration's priority cybersecurity capabilities. These actions will assist the protection of the personal information OIG maintains and improve services to external and internal customers. In 2016, OIG made use of the Department's leveraging of the DHS CDM program and completed implementation of Bandwidth upgrade to all OIG regional offices.



## 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 U.S. Constitution to "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, the Secretary of the Department 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.

### USPTO Open Government Initiatives

The table below shows a list of initiatives for *USPTO*.

Table 15 - USPTO Initiatives

| Operating Unit | Project                       | Status                | Estimated Completion |
|----------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| USPTO          | <i>Improving Transparency</i> | On Going / Continuous | --                   |

| Operating Unit | Project   | Status                       | Estimated Completion |
|----------------|---|------------------------------|----------------------|
|                | Roundtables on AIA Trial Proceedings  | Completed<br>(May 2014)      | --                   |
|                | Roundtable on First-Inventor-to-File Anniversary  | Completed<br>(April 2014)    | --                   |
|                | Patent Litigation Toolkit   | Completed<br>(February 2014) | --                   |
|                | Data Visualization Center   | Live / Operational           | --                   |
|                | Trademark Educational Outreach Program  | Live / Operational           | --                   |
|                | Customer service enhancements related to the American Invents Act   | Live / Operational           | --                   |
|                | <b><i>Improving Participation</i></b>   | On Going /<br>Continuous     | --                   |
|                | National Trademark Expo   | Completed<br>(October 2014)  | --                   |
|                | Roundtables on Copyright Policy Issues  | Completed<br>(July 2014)     | --                   |
|                | Roundtable on Crowdsourcing Prior Art   | Completed<br>(April 2014)    | --                   |
|                | Expansion of Law School Clinic Certification Pilot Program  | On Going /<br>Continuous     | --                   |
|                | Improving the Manual of Patent Examining Procedures (MPEP) and Manual of Trademark Examining Procedures (TMEP) through an online discussion tool                              | Live / Operational           | --                   |
|                | Redesign of <a href="http://www.uspto.gov">www.uspto.gov</a>  | Live / Operational           | --                   |
|                | <b><i>Improving Collaboration</i></b>   | On Going /<br>Continuous     | --                   |
|                | Roundtable to Solicit Feedback on Guidance for Determining Subject Matter Eligibility of Claims Reciting or Involving Laws of Nature, Natural Phenomena, and Natural Products | Completed<br>(May 2014)      | --                   |
|                | Roundtable on Additive Manufacturing  | Completed<br>(April 2014)    | --                   |
|                | Multi-stakeholder Forum on Improving the Operation of the Notice and Takedown System under the Digital Millennium Copyright Act   | Live / Operational           | --                   |
|                | Satellite offices – Dallas, Denver, Detroit , San Jose  | Live / Operational           | --                   |
|                | Thomas Alva Edison Visiting Professionals Program   | Live / Operational           | --                   |
|                | Public Advisory Committees  | Live / Operational           | --                   |

## Highlights of 2015

- **Regional Offices** - When President Obama signed the America Invents Act into law in 2011, the USPTO was granted the ability to establish at least three regional offices. The first of the new offices, the Elijah J. McCoy office in Detroit, opened in 2012. Our Rocky Mountain Regional Office in Denver opened in 2014. Our Silicon Valley office opened in San Jose in October 2015, and serves the West Coast region. Our Texas Regional Office opened in Dallas in November 2015 and serves a region across the south and southwestern U.S.
- **Enhanced Patent Quality Initiative** – In February 2015, the USPTO launched its comprehensive enhanced quality initiative to bolster efforts towards enhancing patent quality. These efforts focus on improving patent operations and procedures to provide the best possible work products, to enhance the customer experience, and to improve existing quality metrics. Through an active and long-term partnership with the public, the USPTO seeks to ensure the issuance of the best quality patents and provide the best customer service possible.
- **Financial Manager and Patent Maintenance Fees Storefront** – In April 2016, the USPTO launched two new online fee payment tools to the public: Financial Manager and the Patent Maintenance Fees Storefront. These new tools incorporate feedback from customers that we received through outreach efforts, including interviews, surveys, and user design sessions. The result for users is increased efficiency, better information, and a workflow that is better streamlined to integrate with users’ business processes.
- **Copyright White Paper** - Report issued January 28, 2016 by the U.S. Department of Commerce recommends amendments to copyright law that would provide both more guidance and greater flexibility to courts in awarding statutory damages. The recommended amendments would ensure continued meaningful protection for intellectual property while preserving the dynamic innovation that has made digital technology so important to the American economy. The report is a product of the Department of Commerce’s Internet Policy Task Force (IPTF) which is made up of representatives from the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO), the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) and other Commerce Department agencies.
- **All in Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM)** - All in STEM is an initiative by the USPTO designed to encourage women at all stages – from girls to entrepreneurs – to pursue STEM degrees and work and advance in STEM fields, for the benefit of our economy and society.

The USPTO is supporting educational initiatives across the country, reaching more than 100,000 children in all 50 states, as well as resources for teachers to incorporate intellectual property and invention into school curricula. These programs are an important part of getting young people into the pipeline for studying science and technology. The USPTO is

examining the forces that are driving the gender disparity in patenting and invention. Women are named as inventors in fewer than 1 in 5 patents and addressing this disparity is fast becoming a business imperative and an issue of global competitiveness.

- **Open Data and Mobility** - Open data from the U.S. Government is an important national resource, serving as fuel for innovation, scientific discovery, and commercial activity. It is central to a more efficient, transparent, and collaborative democracy. In this vein, by scaling up the public's access to machine-readable open data, the USPTO has established a new agency-wide culture committed to creating unprecedented levels of openness of patent and trademark information. By standing up a permanent "Digital Services and Data Analytics" office, the USPTO is investing in data scientists, IT infrastructure, and analytics tools to publish USPTO data in accessible formats. This gives businesses a clearer view of the competitive landscape as they monitor technology trends and invest their precious R&D dollars. This endeavor also empowers the USPTO—for the first time in history—to leverage our vast data sets to improve performance management decisions through real time, actionable intelligence that highlights and targets areas to improve operational efficiencies, quality, training programs, and customer service.
- **Research Datasets** - To advance research on matters relevant to intellectual property, entrepreneurship, and innovation, the Office of Chief Economist (OCE) releases datasets to allow for study of the economics of patents and trademarks--an element in the USPTO economics research agenda. OCE presents these data for the first time in forms convenient for public use and academic research, consistent with the agency's responsibility to make patent and trademark information open and transparent. Furthermore, it supports White House policy championing transparency and access to government under the "data.gov" umbrella of initiatives. Since these data have not been commonly used in the research community, OCE has developed supplementary documentation providing a comprehensive description of datasets and offering initial findings.
- **Data Visualization Center** - Access to timely information and statistics is important for any business plan. For independent inventors and entrepreneurs, knowing the processing timelines for patent applications, as well seeing up-to-date statistics about other internal operations of the USPTO, helps them set reasonable expectations and business objectives.
- **Dramatic Expansion of International IP Policy Efforts** - The USPTO leads efforts to develop and strengthen international intellectual property protection. The USPTO advises the President -through the Secretary of Commerce- and all federal agencies on national and international intellectual property policy issues, including IP protection in other countries. In addition, the USPTO is authorized by statute to provide guidance, to conduct programs and studies, and to interact with IP offices worldwide and with international intergovernmental organizations on matters involving IP through such initiatives as the IP5, the IP Attaché program, and Global Dossier.

- In addition, the USPTO played a central role in a joint communique between U.S. and Brazil on patent work sharing. During President Rousseff’s visit to the United States on June 30, Commerce Secretary Penny Pritzker and the Brazilian Minister of Development, Industry & Foreign Trade (MDIC) Armando Monteiro signed a [Joint Statement on Patent Work Sharing](#). This agreement is part of broader government-wide efforts to expand trade and investment with Brazil and is something the private sector has been urging both governments to adopt for some time. The USPTO’s Office of Policy and International Affairs (OPIA) and the International Trade Administration’s Brazil Desk facilitated the completion of this Joint Statement.
- Recently, the USPTO led international copyright treaty negotiations, including the [Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons who are Blind, Visually Impaired, or otherwise Print Disabled](#) and the [Beijing Treaty on Audiovisual Performances](#).

## Status Updates on Previous Initiatives

- **Regional Offices** –With the opening of our regional office in Silicon Valley in October 2015, the USPTO for the first time in our nation’s history has offices open in all four continental U.S. zones. The offices reflect the agency’s mission to promote and foster American innovation in the global marketplace while placing agency resources and personnel directly within regional communities. These “embassies of innovation” in Dallas, Denver, Detroit, and San Jose bring USPTO officials and resources closer to home and increase opportunities to collaborate locally with incubators, startups, schools and universities. For USPTO, these offices allow us to recruit qualified examiners and judges who prefer not to relocate to the Washington, D.C. metro area, as well as receive input from a wider range of stakeholders (e.g., startups) on policies, programs and procedures.
- **Data Visualization Center** – The [Data Visualization Center](#) is a quick source of USPTO information regarding processing and quality measures in Patents, Trademarks, the Office of Policy and International Affairs, and the Patent and Trademark Trial and Appeal Boards. It is available on the USPTO [home page](#) by selecting *Learning and Resources* and subsequently choosing *Open Data and Mobility*. Once there, users have the opportunity to see “dashboards” of specific data from each business unit, updated on a quarterly basis.
- **Improving the MPEP and TMEP** – 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 [Manual of Patent Examining Procedures](#) and [Trademark Manual of Examining Procedures](#). Collected suggestions and comments are considered during the production of subsequent editions of these important publications.

- **Thomas Alva Edison Visiting Professionals Program** – In 2012 the USPTO established this new program to tap expertise of distinguished IP professionals and academics. The program enlists the services of leaders in academia and the industry who can devote up to six months of service to the agency on a full time basis. Edison Scholars continue to study ways to improve the USPTO's efficiency and performance, decrease burdens on applicants, and improve patent quality and clarity, among other topics.

## Goals for 2016–New and Expanded Initiatives

**Open Data.** The USPTO currently provides an inventory of its data assets through its [website](#) and Data.gov, and makes public datasets available through its website and bulk download through a [no-cost agreement with Reed Tech](#). The agency also provides an application programming interface access to the [Trademark Official Gazette](#) (TMOG) and the [Trademark Status and Document Retrieval](#) (TSDR) system. As part of the Agency Open Data and Mobility Roadmap, the USPTO has a number of programs underway to provide direct access to its most frequently requested data assets through application programming interfaces. Now, in the USPTO Innovation Lab the USPTO's [Open Data and Mobility program](#) is providing new platforms and sustainable ways to find, use, and manipulate data. The USPTO has addressed a [White House Executive Action to improve transparency of ownership of patents](#) with new, award winning tools. [Assignment Search](#) makes it simpler for the public to locate patent assignment information using a modernized interface that provides more searchable fields and the ability to easily filter and narrow the results. The popular new web tool, [PatentsView](#), highlighted in a [Commerce blog](#), explores nearly 40 years of research data on patenting activity with visualization tools that leverage application programming interfaces (APIs) and utilize disambiguation algorithms. This past fall, the USPTO also hosted an [iconathon](#), a crowdsourcing- based workshop harnessing the skills of students, artists, and intellectual property enthusiasts to create a set of new universal IP icons.

The USPTO modernized the [PAIR Bulk Data \(beta\)](#), now allowing customers to retrieve and download multiple records of the filing status of U.S. patent applications or patents at no cost. New features include the ability to search 27 fields, download customized bulk data results in a modern user interface, download the entire dataset in XML or JSON format API's, and empower customers to build their own customized patent data applications or mobile apps. The related [Bulk Data Storage System](#) was released last fall to provide a single master repository of public raw bulk data hosted by the USPTO, which includes patent grant data beginning in 1790, some trademark data as far back as 1884, along with patent application, patent trial and appeal decision, trademark trial and appeal data and much more.

The most innovative product to date is the [USPTO Developer Page \(beta\)](#), a platform which makes data faster and easier to use and manipulate, and features the ability to comb USPTO data with other data, such as economic data, report data on filing rates, inventorship, assignee, and location of filing, into interactive visual user stories. This site will include functionality to

create data stories as well as a community café, where anyone with modest programming experience can explore the data and share interesting findings with the online community.

## Ongoing Initiatives

**Participation in Transparency Initiatives.** The USPTO participates in Data.gov by attending monthly meetings sponsored by GSA and works with Commerce Department counterparts to update and maintain the USPTO inventory of its data assets in compliance with the metadata standards. The agency also provides monthly submissions to the IT Dashboard.

**Records Management.** Since the issuance of the Presidential Directive M-12-18, the USPTO has been working diligently to implement the Capstone Approach for managing email records agency-wide; using Office 365 as its technical solution to achieve compliance by December 31, 2016. We have also been proactive in our efforts to ensure compliance with managing all permanent electronic records in an electronic format to achieve compliance by December 31, 2019. We have conducted market research and developed a high-level architecture framework that will position us to begin piloting two or more Next Generation business systems in the upcoming fiscal year. Additionally, we are working with our critical partners to reduce the footprint of managing physical records and consider the long-term benefits of digitizing permanent records.

**Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Requests.** Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Requests. The USPTO has an excellent capacity to respond to FOIA requests in a timely manner. Almost all of the 356 FOIA requests processed in Fiscal Year 2015 were processed within 20 working days and, as a result, the USPTO does not have a significant backlog of FOIA requests. The USPTO FOIA Office continues to monitor and examine the processing of FOIA requests received each year to determine how FOIA processing can be further improved. The primary plan for improving agency FOIA performance will be to continue providing additional training to USPTO FOIA personnel, records custodians, and other agency personnel.

**Congressional Requests.** In addition to a dedicated mailbox, congressional@uspto.gov, for constituent issues, the USPTO is currently redesigning the Office of Governmental Affairs webpage to a more useful format. OGA has nine personnel, with one person dedicated to handling Congressional requests. When a request is received, staff consults with Patents or Trademarks accordingly. The OGA director reviews the Congressional query, the researched answer and responds to Congress. The requests are not made public, as they often refer to specific patent applications that are privacy-protected by law for a specific period of time.

**Participation.** The USPTO has a number of mechanisms for the public to participate in the agency's core mission. They include several major public-private partnerships with representatives of the Additive Manufacturing, Bio-Chem-Pharma, Cybersecurity, and Software industries; routine public roundtables on issues like post-grant proceedings, patent

examiner guidance in light of recent Supreme Court decisions, copyright policy, and more; as well as frequent calls for public comment through Federal Register Notices.

- One such platform is [Ask Patents by Stack Exchange](#), which allows members of the public to contribute relevant prior art that patent examiners can use in making their determinations of patentability for a proposed invention.
- The USPTO is currently developing other platforms to facilitate the “crowdsourcing” of prior art, including mobile apps.
- The USPTO holds a number of key events each year that are open to the public. Thus far in 2016 the following events have occurred: a Patent Public Advisory Committee Quarterly Meeting (Feb 4), a Patent Quality Chat Webinar (2016 Series) – First Inventor to File (FITF) Patent Prosecution webinar (Feb 9), a TTABVUE Users Forum (March 3), A Biotechnology/Chemical/Pharmaceutical Customer Partnership- (April 26), a USPTO Additive Manufacturing Partnership Meeting (May 18), and a series of webinars related to the enhanced Patent Quality Initiative.

## Collaboration

- Programs such as [Patents for Humanity](#) and the [Thomas Alva Edison Visiting Professionals Program](#)—as well as the USPTO’s partnership with Invent Now on [Collegiate Inventors Competition](#) and [Camp Invention](#)—allow the agency to obtain ideas from and increase collaboration with those in the private sector, non-profit, and academic communities.
- **TTAB Continues to Increase Efficiency:** the Users’ Forum this past March was held for the purpose of gaining public input on the “look and feel” of the TTABVUE system. Ninety individuals participated in the forum, either in person or via webinar. Representatives from such professional associations as the American Bar Association Intellectual Property Law Section, the American Intellectual Property Law Association, the International Trademark Association, and the Intellectual Property Owners Association, joined in the interactive discussion, along with numerous practitioners from around the country. Discussions during the forum focused on enhancing search capabilities, naming of documents to be filed, creating a display of deadlines established in each matter, and enabling bulk downloads of docketed documents.
- **Icons For Intellectual Property Unveiled:** The [USPTO Iconathon](#) was a workshop to create a set of icons that universally represent intellectual property. Partnering with the [Noun Project](#), we called on students, civic activists, artists, and intellectual property enthusiasts to collaborate, brainstorm, and sketch designs. The result: [19 new icons](#) that are now in the public domain, ready for use around the world. To make the language

universal, it was critical to include members of the public, not typically working in the intellectual property field, to create and select icons that would resonate with all stakeholders, including international audiences. Sitting at round tables with sketchbooks and pencils, participants tackled concepts including [infringement](#), [invention](#), [pro se](#), [patent pending](#), [STEM](#), [trademark](#), and [counterfeit](#). This type of interaction is at the root of building a culture of open government and greater understanding of government actions.

### Flagship Initiative.

- The *Enhanced Patent Quality Initiative* aims to improve agency operations through a variety of means that reflect the Open Government principles of transparency and participation.
- Continuing roundtables enable the agency to gauge public interest in the initiative and to transparently discuss additional public ideas on how to improve patent quality.
- The agency will also employ a variety of data techniques to measure patent quality and to improve every stage of the examination process, to allow for continued improvement and sustainability.

**Public and Agency Ideas.** The USPTO responds to public feedback on a routine basis, and public engagement will be an integral part of the USPTO's periodic review and modification of this plan moving forward.

