

POLICY ON PLANNED GEOSPATIAL ACQUISITIONS
September 20, 2013

SECTION 1. PURPOSE.

This Policy establishes requirements that organizations within the Department of Commerce must meet before acquiring geospatial data, affirms the Office of Management and Budget Circular No. A-16 Revised, "Coordination of Geographic Information and Related Spatial Data Activities," and establishes responsibilities and requirements for compliance with Circular A-16.

SECTION 2. BACKGROUND.

OMB Circular A-16 Revised requires federal agencies to "search all sources, including the National Spatial Data Clearinghouse, to determine if existing federal, state, local or private data meets agency needs before expending funds for data collection" (see Section 8, "What are the federal responsibilities?", item 10 of the Circular).

Further direction is provided in Executive Order 12906 of April 11, 1994. Section 3(d) of that Executive Order states:

"Within 1 year of the date of this order, each agency shall adopt internal procedures to ensure that the agency accesses the Clearinghouse before it expends Federal funds to collect or produce new geospatial data, to determine whether the information has already been collected by others, or whether cooperative efforts to obtain the data are possible."

SECTION 3. SCOPE AND AUTHORITY.

This Policy applies to all Departmental offices and operating units of the Department that expend funds to collect or produce new geospatial data.

This Policy also applies to contracts used for the collection of geospatial data.

SECTION 4. POLICY.

In order to avoid duplication of geospatial data, offices and operating units within the Department shall not expend funds to acquire or produce geospatial data, if an existing source for that data is available and meets mission requirements. Departmental Offices and operating units shall coordinate with other organizations, whether within or outside of the Department, if another organization is planning on acquiring or producing data that the Departmental office or operating unit (hereinafter "office") has determined will meet its needs.

.01 Before expending funds to collect or produce new geospatial data, each office will search the officially designated National Spatial Data Clearinghouse and any other appropriate sources to determine if existing data contained in these sources meets agency needs. The office shall also search any clearinghouse(s) approved by the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) that contain references to planned geospatial data acquisitions.

- .02 The office shall document the date, clearinghouse(s) searched, the search criteria and results of that search.
- .03 If the office discovers/identifies geospatial data from another organization that is appropriate for the office use, the office shall obtain and use that existing geospatial data.
- .04 If the office discovers/identifies that another organization has plans to acquire or produce geospatial data that is appropriate for use by the office, the office shall contact that organization and develop a plan to coordinate or partner with the other office as appropriate.
- .05 If the office does not discover/identify existing or planned acquisitions of appropriate geospatial data, the office shall create a metadata record following FGDC requirements for metadata that describes the planned acquisition. The office shall publish the metadata to the appropriate National Spatial Data designated Clearinghouse(s).
- .06 If the office is contacted by an organization that is interested in the planned acquisition for geospatial data, the office shall coordinate with the organization to avoid duplication of the geospatial data.
- .07 Upon request, the office shall report to the Department's Senior Agency Official for Geospatial Information SAOGI on activities related to this policy.

SECTION 5. DEFINITIONS.

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions from OMB Circular A-16 Revised, are included:

From Appendix D, Informative Definitions:

.01 Geospatial Data: Information that identifies the geographic location and characteristics of natural or constructed features and boundaries on the Earth. This information may be derived from, among other things, remote sensing, mapping, and surveying technologies. Statistical data may be included in this definition.

.02 Metadata: Information about data, such as content, source, vintage, accuracy, condition, projection, responsible party, contact phone number, method of collection, and other characteristics or descriptions.

From Section 2.b(3):

.03 National Spatial Data Clearinghouse: An electronic service providing access to documented spatial data and metadata from distributed data sources. These sources include a network of data producers, managers, and users, linked through the Internet and other communications means, and accessible through a common interface.

SECTION 6. RESPONSIBILITIES.

The SAOGI, or the SAOGI's designee, is responsible for implementation, monitoring and general administration of the Secretary's and the Department's responsibilities for the policy. The functions of the SAOGI, or the designee, shall include the following:

- .01 Issue guidance and procedures to the Department's operating units that outline the steps to take before acquiring or producing geospatial data, as may be necessary to carry out the Department's responsibilities under OMB Circular A-16 Revised.
- .02 Ensure compliance with OMB Circular A-16 Revised for the steps outlined in accordance with Section 6.01.
- .03 Perform periodic evaluations throughout the Department to ensure compliance with this policy.
- .04 Upon request by the FGDC, report on issues and activities regarding this policy.


Date of policy superseded: None

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9/26/2013
Date



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10/21/2013
Date