E-Gov: Securing our Government and Improving Disaster Assistance

Beginning in early 2008, additional E-Government Initiatives were introduced to help secure our government's infrastructure and improve assistance to victims of natural disasters. Using the best practices and lessons learned from the original E-Government (E-Gov) and Line of Business (LoB) Initiatives, we announced three new initiatives as part of the President's Budget for FY 2009: Trusted Internet Connections (TIC), International Trade Data System (ITDS), and Disaster Assistance Improvement Plan (DAIP).

Trusted Internet Connections

In November 2007, OMB announced the establishment of the Trusted Internet Connections (TIC) initiative in Memorandum M-08-05, *Implementation of Trusted Internet Connections (TIC)*. The TIC initiative will optimize individual external connections, including internet points of presence currently in use by the federal government. This common solution facilitates the reduction of the external connections from the current estimate of over 4,000 points of presences to a target of approximately fifty. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is leading this initiative, which involves all Federal agencies.

Per OMB Memorandum M-08-16, *Guidance for Trusted Internet Connections (TIC) Statement of Capabilities (SOC)*, agencies provided their "Statement of Capabilities" by April 2008. DHS and OMB are analyzing the SOC information and working with agencies to determine the target number of external points of presence to be reached by June 2008. Initial results of the analysis have led to a more accurate inventory of the number of external points of presences government-wide.

International Trade Data System

Executive Order 13439: Establishing and Interagency Working Group on Import Safety (EO 13439) directed the executive branch to outline preliminary steps necessary to enhance the safety of imported products. One of the immediate approved action items recommended by the interagency working group was to accelerate agency utilization of the International Trade Data System (ITDS). OMB then directed agencies to fully utilize ITDS by 2009, in OMB Memorandum M-07-23, *Requiring Agency Use of the International Trade Data System*.

ITDS is currently led by the Departments of the Treasury and Homeland Security. This system will help agencies reduce redundant information collections, efficiently regulate the flow of commerce, and effectively enforce international trade laws.

Disaster Assistance Improvement Plan

Hurricane Katrina resulted in a public mandate to dramatically improve delivery of government assistance to those affected by disaster. In the two years since Katrina, 122 presidentially-declared national disasters have caused injury and death, destroyed homes and businesses, and disrupted the lives of hundreds of thousands of people. Executive Order 13411: Improving Assistance for Disaster Victims (EO 13411) directed the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security to lead an interagency Task Force with a mission to streamline and expedite the administration of Federal assistance to disaster victims. Specifically, EO 13411 established, """It is the policy of the Federal Government to ensure that individuals who are victims of a

terrorist attack, natural disaster, or other incident … have prompt and efficient access to Federal disaster assistance". As a result of this EO, the Disaster Assistance Improvement Plan Initiative (DAIP) was developed to create an on-line disaster benefits portal.

DAIP is leveraging the demonstrated capabilities of GovBenefits.gov by eliciting information from disaster victims through a series of questions to determine the appropriate disaster assistance benefits programs for their situation. After initial screening, individuals will be presented with a list of benefit programs for which they may be eligible and offered a link to the FEMA Individual Assistance Center system to apply immediately for those programs coordinating with the single consolidated application. Individuals can follow links to the web sites with the applications for the benefit programs which have not yet been integrated into the single application, providing a consolidated "one stop shop" for disaster benefits. The Disaster Benefits Portal will be live on December 31, 2008, and more information is available at: http://www.fema.gov/about/programs/daip/

Recent Results in the Expanding Electronic Government Initiatives include:
Not to forget the great work being done by the original E-Government and Line of Business Initiatives, below we highlight some recent results:

GovBenefits
In March 2008, GovBenefits.gov launched a customized connection for the Social Security Administration's Benefits Eligibility Screen Tool (BEST). The customized connection replaced the existing BEST tool, leveraging GovBenefits.gov's powerful screening technology while preserving BEST's detailed eligibility screening for 17 different SSA related benefit programs. It also provides citizens with a list of the Social Security benefits they may be eligible to receive.

Grants Management Line of Business
In March 2008, Grants Management Line of Business (GM LoB) announced the creation of fourteen new partnerships for the Grants Management community. There are now seventeen agencies within four partnership groups. These partnerships and the GM LoB continue to work on establishing financial management interface standards; improving grants standardization and streamlining; improving service to internal and external customers; and increasing value delivered to agencies, grantees, and the public.

Federal Enterprise Architecture (FEA)
In March 2008, OMB assessed agency EA submissions against the EA Assessment Framework v2.2. OMB rated each agency in terms of completion of their EA; use of their EA; and results delivered. OMB uses these annual assessments to insure agencies are maturing, integrating and getting value from their EA activities. OMB has continued to emphasize segment architectures - an approach to focusing on core mission or business areas, or specific cross cutting enterprise services such as information sharing. In this year's assessment, 25 of 27 scorecard agencies achieved the GREEN rating on status, and 26 of 27 achieved the GREEN rating on progress.

IT Privacy and Security
Quarterly performance updates demonstrate continued progress toward achieving the IT security goals of the E-Gov Scorecard and implementing the privacy provisions of E-Gov Act and the

Privacy Act. Currently, approximately 90 percent of agency systems have identified and validated the effectiveness of security controls through the certification and accreditation (C&A). In 2007, 19 of 23 agency Inspectors General reported having its agency privacy impact assessment process as "satisfactory" or better, indicating federal agencies have a strong foundation for protecting privacy in federal information systems.