

The U.S. Office of Government Ethics
E-Government Act Report
FY 2006
October 20, 2006

The E-Government Act of 2002 (Act) requires agencies to submit annual reports as directed by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget. This report is the fourth annual submission under the Act and is submitted in accordance with instructions dated August 28, 2006, from the Office of E-Government and Information Technology (M-05-25) and related guidance.

1. Provide a brief overview of your agency's implementation of the Act, including a description of an internal, agency-specific E-Government initiative.

Overview

OGE is an independent micro (less than 100 people) agency, established by the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, and charged with providing oversight, policy and guidance to the Executive Branch departments and agencies on matters relating to preventing conflicts of interest on the part of Government employees, and to assist them in resolving those conflicts of interest that do occur. As such, most of OGE's transactions are between OGE and Federal employees and departments and agencies' ethics officials. Government to citizen transactions are primarily those involving a private individual's or an organization's request to inspect or receive copies of Executive Branch Personnel Public Financial Disclosure Reports (SF 278) filed with OGE by those Presidential Appointees nominated by the President and subject to Senate Confirmation, and certain other statutorily-defined positions.

OGE is committed to using information technology to enhance its mission effectiveness and efficiency, and to unify and simplify its transactions with its customers.

As part of this effort, OGE maintains a continuing dialogue with agency ethics officials through periodic meetings and conferences. At these meetings we invite suggestions of how we can improve our interaction with this community. We also invite comments on our web site to improve our Internet based customer information delivery services, i.e. web site and listserve.

Agency-specific initiative.

Web site enhancement

As a result of comments received and discussions with agency ethics officials, OGE assembled an intra-office web redevelopment team. This team has been tasked to review and revise the format and content of OGE's public web site to make it more interesting and effective in disseminating information to those within Government as well as those in the private sector. The team is also reviewing the process of managing the content of the site to ensure consistency, currency, and relevancy, and to develop procedures to streamline the flow of documents from author to web.

Enhance teleworkers' productivity

In FY2006, OGE enhanced the capabilities of its teleworkers by providing them with a secure Intranet portal that gives them access to their network drives, the ability to make and receive telephone calls, an enterprise instant messaging system, and remote video conferencing capability, using an OGE provided notebook computer. This allows our teleworkers to be as productive at home as they are at the office, while increasing employee morale and meeting the Government's commitment to increased the use of teleworking.

Our primary measurement of success with these projects will be statistical information gathered on the frequency of use of our website, as well as periodic surveys of DAEOs and OGE staff to determine the utility of these systems. Adjustments to form and content will be made accordingly.

2. Describe your process for determining which information will be made available on your agency's public website and the Internet as required by section 207(f)(2) of the Act.

Section 207(f)(2) of the E-Government Act of 2002 requires federal agencies to develop an inventory of information to be published on their websites, establish a schedule for publishing information, make those schedules available for public comment, and post the schedules and priorities on the website.

OGE's web publication policy, which was posted on our site in December, 2004, http://www.usoge.gov/pages/about_oge/web_content_pub_sch.html and noted in the agency's [Information Resources Management \(IRM\) strategic plan](#), is to put all publicly available information on its website. As new information becomes available at OGE that is important to the public, we make every effort to put it on our website as quickly as possible. OGE will, at least annually, require each of the program offices to review and amend the above schedule as appropriate. This requirement will be made part of the agency's annual internal management controls evaluation. If our web site visitors have suggestions for additional information they think we should have on our website, they can call us at 202-482-9300, or E-mail us at usoge@oge.gov or by write to us at U.S. Office of Government Ethics, 1201 New York Ave., NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20005.

Categories of Information Disseminated by OGE

- **Column 1** lists the categories of information OGE disseminates.
- **Column 2** indicates the priority OGE assigns to publication of each category.
 - **Priority 1:** Required by law, regulation, Presidential directive or other directive.
 - **Priority 2:** Time-sensitive information.
 - **Priority 3:** Information of interest to a broad spectrum of audiences.
 - **Priority 4:** Other information.
- **Column 3** indicates the publication schedule for the category.

OGE'S WEB CONTENT PUBLICATION SCHEDULE

Category	Priority	Publication Date
General agency information, such as mission and function statements, staff directory, vacancies, and FOIA.	4	As available, unless otherwise required by law
Archive of ethics related laws, regulation and legal guidance provided to assist agencies and other interested parties in understanding the requirements of an executive branch ethics program.	4	As available, unless otherwise required by law
Ethics training related information, such as notices of upcoming ethics conferences, training workshops and seminars, available training materials including computer and web-based resources and videos.	2	As available, unless otherwise required by law
Ethics forms, publications and other ethics program administration documents, including disclosure forms, model trust documents.	3	As available, unless otherwise required by law
Programmatic and administrative information and guidance, including agency best practices, tips and guidelines on preparing for and conducting an ethics program review.	3	As available, unless otherwise required by law
Reports to Congress and OMB as required by statute or memoranda, including budget and performance information.	4	As available, unless otherwise required by law
International activity information intended as a resource for persons interested in learning more about certain ethics and anticorruption topics.	4	As available, unless otherwise required by law
Ethics advisory memoranda aimed at agency ethics officials.	2	As available, unless otherwise required by law

3. Describe how your agency's information dissemination activities are coordinated with its FOIA operations in order to improve both access to and dissemination of government information to the public. Your description must include a link to your agency's Information Resources Management (IRM) Strategic Plan and FOIA Improvement Plan. You must also describe specifically how you are fulfilling your responsibilities under [certain] provisions of the Act:

*** Section 207(d), "Categorizing of Information;" and**

*** Section 207(e), "Public Access to Electronic Information."**

***Section 207(g), "Access to Federally Funded Research and Development."**

FOIA.

OGE's information dissemination activities are closely coordinated with its FOIA operations to improve access to and dissemination of government information to interested members of the public. To improve both the scope and convenience of information disseminations, OGE has developed a comprehensive FOIA webpage that is accessible directly from its public website.

OGE maintains a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) section of its website at http://www.usoge.gov/pages/about_oge/foiaguide.html. The FOIA section describes OGE's FOIA operations as a small agency, and includes a Guide to FOIA & Public Records, which is periodically updated. That Guide explains this Agency's activities and how the public can seek access to OGE records by filing a FOIA request (generally in writing, by FAX or via E-mail to usoge@oge.gov) or by just going to OGE's website, where much Government ethics information is already posted online. Further, the Guide summarizes the FOIA, including certain exemptions that prevent public access to some more sensitive documents. There are also electronic links to this Agency's annual (fiscal year) FOIA reports for the past decade, FOIA and Privacy Act rules (& Privacy Act records systems notices), a list of frequently requested documents, advisory letters and memorandums, various Federal Register issuances, and other informational materials.

The OGE FOIA Improvement Plan includes specific milestones for FOIA improvements over the next several years, which include ensuring that this Agency does not develop any backlog of FOIA requests (or to promptly resolve any that does), maintaining a high on-time response rate (OGE has exceeded its goal so far this year by responding to all requests on time), and providing customer friendly service. Among the milestones for 2007, OGE will review its FOIA website to determine if any update or improvement is needed in the presentation of information for the public. In 2008, OGE's milestones include making an online FOIA request form available, considering permitting online submission of requests, and determining if additional records should be disclosed/linked on the website (proactive/affirmative disclosures). Website access helps OGE electronically disseminate information about its FOIA and general operations to the general public. The web link is: http://www.usoge.gov/pages/laws_regs_fedreg_stats/lrfs_files/exeorders/eo13392.html.

Section 207(d) – Categorizing of information.

Guidance for implementing section 207(d) requires agencies to organize and categorize information intended for public access, making it searchable across agencies and using formal information models when necessary to enhance certain types of dissemination activities. Consistent with this guidance, OGE has in place procedures that include (a) publishes all of its information directly to the Internet for the public-at-large as well as specific identifiable groups, such as agency ethics officials and federal employees.

As previously noted, OGE's web publication policy, as noted in the agency's [Information Resources Management \(IRM\) strategic plan](#), is to put all publicly available information on its website.

Publishing information to Internet. OGE created its public website in 1996 and since then it has been the cornerstone of its information dissemination efforts and the primary vehicle for

providing information to the public-at-large. Since its inception, the site's usage has steadily increased to an average of more than 1,500,000 "hits" per month.

Information on the OGE website is categorized by the subjects that are of greatest interest to agency ethics officials, federal employees, and members of the public. These categories include "What's New at OGE," "About OGE," "Laws & Regulations," "Advisory Opinions," "Daeograms," "OGE Conference," "Training Workshops & Seminars," "Computer & Web-based Training," "Forms, Publications & Other Ethics Documents," "OGE 450 FAQs," "Videos & Software," "Office of International Assistance and Governance Initiatives," "Common Ethics Issues," "Agency Best Practices," and "Other Links." Quick access to the information is provided by links to the area of interest. There are numerous subcategories of information with links that support the main categories.

OGE's public website is hosted by the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO), and as such, makes use of the same state-of-the-art search engine technology that GPO uses for other agencies whose websites it hosts.

Section 207(e) – Public access to electronic information.

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) has provided federal agencies with information and guidance on how to improve the management of electronic records, including website records, as required by section 207(e). NARA's guidance primarily outlines the major responsibilities that federal agencies currently have for preserving electronic records. As discussed below, OGE substantially complies with all existing electronic-records requirements identified by NARA.

OGE has well-established processes and procedures to ensure the proper management, scheduling, and disposition of OGE records in existing and legacy systems, including records in electronic formats or systems. OGE's inventory of records serves as the foundation for the current records schedules. These schedules and recordkeeping procedures are generally kept up to date through periodic records-management evaluations of OGE's divisions. OGE also regularly audits the sufficiency of existing electronic systems for the recordkeeping purposes under reviews for compliance with the Federal Information Security Management Act of 2002.

Section 207(g) - Access to Federally Funded Research and Development.

OGE does not fund federal research and development activities with the meaning of section 207(g), "Access to Federally Funded Research and Development."