

DATE: October 26, 2006

TO: Allison Zaleski, foiareporting@omb.eop.gov, Policy Analyst, Office of Management and Budget

FROM: Kimberly Hancher, Deputy Chief Information Officer for Electronic Government, Federal Communications Commission

RE: 2006 E-Government Act Reporting,

Dear Ms. Zaleski:

Consistent with the OMB 2006 reporting instructions on the E-Government Act, I am sending you the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) report via electronic mail. It includes a brief description of an internal agency-specific E-Government initiative, a description of our process for determining Internet availability of agency information, and an explanation of how the FCC's information dissemination activities are coordinated with our FOIA operations. If there are any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Kimberly Hancher
Federal Communications Commission
Deputy Chief Information Officer for E-Government
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554
Phone: 202-418-2022
Email: Kimberly.Hancher@fcc.gov

Attachment (MS Word file)

CC: Anthony Dale, Fatina Franklin, Joseph Hall, Mindy Ginsburg, Donald Hartline, Mary Maldonado, Mark Stephens, Mark Stone, Rodger Woock

Federal Communications Commission

E-Government Act Reporting Update FY06

Part 1– Highlight of one E-Gov Project (FCC-NTIA Frequency Assignment Coordination):

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is working with the Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) to automate and improve the process for coordinating frequency assignments between the two agencies. The FCC is responsible for the management of non-government spectrum while the NTIA is responsible for the management of most government spectrum. In order to perform these functions, the FCC and the NTIA coordinate frequency assignments before issuing licenses to other parties.

- **Transforming agency operations**

By automating as much as possible of the coordination processing, we expect to reduce the need for manual intervention by FCC staff. The current process is highly manual, prone to errors, and labor intensive. By automating the frequency assignment coordination process with NTIA, the FCC expects to be able to issue licenses more quickly.

- **Maintaining an ongoing dialogue with interested parties to find innovative ways to use information technology for the initiative**

The FCC has coordinated closely with NTIA, meeting on at least a monthly basis during FY 2006. Because issuing licenses involves coordination among the FCC's Bureaus and Offices, the FCC has maintained continual internal coordination during this time.

- **Identification of external partners (e.g., Federal, State, or local agencies, industry) who collaborate on the initiative**

Our key external partners include:

- National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)
- Interdepartment Radio Advisory Committee (IRAC), which consists of several Federal agencies
- Department of Defense/Joint Spectrum Center
- Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)

- **Identification of improved performance (e.g., outcome measures) by tracking performance measures supporting agency objectives and strategic goals**

This initiative is linked to two of the agency's strategic goals/objectives: Spectrum and Modernization. The agency's Strategic Plan for 2006-2011 lays out a vision and objectives for Spectrum Management that rely heavily on advanced electronic filing and electronic information access systems:

- updated and improved electronic filing systems to streamline and harmonize licensing and coordination processes;
- more reliance on automated business processes and less reliance on staff resources;
- enhancements to provide online information on existing licenses, pending application status, and licensing procedures;
- increased sharing and online coordination with NTIA, the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), Canada, and Mexico; and
- become an easier organization to do business with by integrating systems, processes, and interfaces.

The specific benefits that will accrue from the Office of Engineering and Technology (OET) Frequency Assignment Coordination System (OFACS) initiative include:

- Improved management of the frequency coordination process, including monitoring of status on coordination query requests and measuring performance at resolving license coordination;
 - Faster processing of frequency assignment coordination requests;
 - Improved quality of the data submitted to the FCC and then to the NTIA;
 - Reduced vulnerability of relying on Microsoft windows folders, text files, as well as email and email/folders for storing and transmitting frequency assignment coordination requests; and
 - Greater ability to collaborate on work requiring joint effort.
- **Quantification of the cost savings and cost avoidance achieved through implementing the initiative (e.g., reducing or eliminating other investments in information technology)**

This project is expected to reduce the administrative burden associated with processing applications and reviewing spectrum files. The Bureaus and Offices of the FCC all will have access to the OFACS system without having to send separate files between them that may not follow standardized format conventions. They will be able to access the same information on-line and make informed decisions more quickly. Currently, these bureaus and offices do not enjoy access to a single shared application. Another related result will be reduced duplication of information and processing errors. Furthermore, the FCC and NTIA will enjoy a seamless exchange of information between the two agencies.

The OFACS system will make the information and data more accessible, thus speeding up the application and approval process between government agencies for frequency assignments. All involved will see reduction in the administrative burden associated with the spectrum coordination and approval process.

- **The availability of Government information and services for those without access to the Internet and for those with disabilities**

The FCC is committed to making its web sites accessible to all FCC customers and employees. All of the agency web sites are undergoing review and redesign as necessary to improve accessibility. Furthermore, the OFACS system, when complete, will be compliant with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and have the features and functions that a government system should have.

For those without access to the internet, the FCC's Reference Information Center allows the public to request information, access FCC online systems, and make photocopies of documentation.

Part 2 - Information made available on the Internet

• Determining Internet Availability of Agency Information

The FCC determines which Government information we make available and accessible to the public on the Internet through a combination of methods designed to identify the information requirements of the widest possible public audience, and to maximize the amount of information that we provide. In preparing our inventory, we identify our audience and the type of information they want through a review of citizen emails; website statistics; search requests; requests received under our Information Quality Guidelines process; feedback from news media inquiries; Quarterly Inquiries and Complaints Reports processed by the Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau; Freedom of Information Act requests; and reports and recommendations from a variety of technological, consumer, disability and industry related federal advisory committees.

We also identify information that, as a regulatory agency, we are required by law or official directive to make available, plus other information whose dissemination is crucial to ensure public safety, national security or the implementation of our mission-critical operations. We post information and list it on the inventory if it is of interest to the general public, provided that there are no national security, law enforcement, legal or privacy issues that prohibit its publication.

• Priorities and Schedules

All of our content identified for public access as described above is currently available on our public website. Revisions to this existing information are scheduled and implemented as soon as new information becomes available – there are currently no specific schedules outstanding.

When new or additional content becomes available, we publish it on our agency website in the order of the following publication priorities: 1) required by law, regulation, Presidential directive, or other official directive or to ensure national security; 2) mission-critical and essential for program operations, but not required by law, regulation, or Presidential directive, that is, information or services that are directly tied to our agency's mission and/or strategic plan; 3) frequently requested information or services that would improve our business processes and/or customer service to the public - for example, most commonly used forms, documents, applications, transactions, etc.; 4) all other information. If information fits in two or more priorities, we assign it priority 1.

A listing of our web content inventory, priorities and schedules was first posted in January 2005, and is available on our principal agency public website for public review and comment at:

<http://www.fcc.gov/webinventory>

- **Providing a Search Function:**

The FCC provides on-line tools that allow the public to search, at various levels of complexity, through all of the information that is on the agency's public website to quickly find the information and services that they want and need. The main FCC Search tool uses a fast, commercial search engine with intuitive, familiar functionality that displays results in order of relevancy to search criteria. Effective searches on the FCC website begin with the quick-search box and search-page link located at the same familiar place on every page of the agency's website. From there, users can perform quick or advanced full-text searches of our web pages, or select one of our customized tools that search specific e-filing systems, databases or selected areas of the site for items such as comments, rules and regulations, officially released documents, and licenses. A full suite of search help pages provides tips, examples and instructions that visitors can use to increase the effectiveness of the searches that they perform. Visitors to the site can also find information or augment their search results by exploring our sitemaps and subject indexes.

Part 3 - Information Dissemination Activities and FOIA

In regard to fulfilling the Commission's responsibilities under Sections 207(d) and (e) of PL 107-347 (E-Government Act of 2002), the Commission is in compliance with current requirements and is beginning its efforts to integrate the requirements of the Records Management Profile. Section 207(g), Access to Federally Funded Research and Development, is not applicable to the FCC.

- **Categorizing of Information**

The FCC has worked diligently to provide relevant, effective, comprehensive information using modern web search capabilities to locate and pinpoint information about our agency on our Internet web site. The information that is placed on the FCC website is placed with various "tagging techniques" so that it will be easily accessed when searches are requested. Information is disseminated by topic and by FCC organization.

- **Public Access to Electronic Information**

The FCC's information dissemination activities and its FOIA operations are well coordinated and the public has significant access to Commission information. The Commission makes available to the public many of its records and extensive information about its operations through its website (www.fcc.gov) and its public Reference Information Center. These sources facilitate access to information required by 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(2) and keep the public informed about the activities of the FCC. The Commission utilizes modern web search capabilities to locate and pinpoint information about our agency on our Internet web site.

Copies of the Commission's final opinions, statement of policy and interpretations, and administrative guidance are posted to the Commission's website and are easily accessible through the Commission's Internet-based Electronic Document Management System (EDOCS). EDOCS was implemented in 2000 and allows the public to conduct interactive online research and obtain documents from the web site. *The Daily Digest*, which is accessible through the Commission's main Internet page and through EDOCS, provides a brief, daily synopsis of Commission orders, news

releases, speeches, public notices and other FCC documents that are released each business day. The FCC's website also allows electronic filing of comments in rulemaking proceedings, and public access to those comments, through its Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS).

The Commission also has multiple, publicly-searchable databases on its web site that allow individuals to find out information about licensees and permittees of the Commission. For example, the public may generate tailored lists of AM, FM, and TV stations, view electronic applications for construction permit or license as well as Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and ownership reports, locate some historical documents pertaining to radio stations, find mailing addresses, and view a summary on the process of applying for a radio broadcast station. Various reports, citations, notices of apparent liabilities, etc., are posted on FCC's web site and accessible for viewing and downloading without having to file a FOIA request.

Members of the public seeking access to records that are not routinely made available have several options. They can submit requests via the Commission's Electronic FOIA (EFOIA) Request Form, found at <http://www.fcc.gov/foia> or they can e-mail their FOIA request to the Commission at foia@fcc.gov or they can fax the request to (202 418-0521); or they can send the request via surface mail.

Information about filing a FOIA request is easily available to members of the public directly from a link on the FCC's main web page, or by searching the Internet with the common terms "FOIA" and "FCC", or by referencing the Commission's rules (47 C.F.R. §§0.445-0.470) on the Internet, at a library, or by visiting the Commission's various physical facilities. In addition, persons calling the FCC's Consumer Call Center may receive information about how to file a FOIA request. The Commission's FOIA program is also linked from the Department of Justice's web pages at <http://www.justice.gov/oip/foiacontacts.htm> and the FirstGov web site links individuals directly to the Commission's FOIA web pages. Various industry and advocacy groups also advise their memberships on how to file FOIA requests with the Commission.

The FCC FOIA Improvement Plan is located at:
http://www.fcc.gov/foia/2006improv_disclosure_report.pdf

Links to both the FCC's Information Technology Strategic Plan and the FCC 2006 E-Government Act Report are at: <http://www.fcc.gov/omd/strategicplan#itsp>