



Commerce & Transportation



What is requested? NOAA's Commerce and Transportation Goal requests \$169.6 million in FY 2006, reflecting a net increase of \$20.0M over the FY 2006 base level. This increase will fund improvements which directly support safe, efficient and environmentally sound intermodal transportation.

What are the benefits? The U.S. intermodal transportation system is a connected system of ship, rail, highway and air transport - it is the backbone of the Nation's economy. NOAA has clear mandates to support water, air and surface transportation with navigational information and accurate and timely weather forecasts. This information is crucial to sustaining and improving the Nation's economy; for example, supplying better water level and navigation information in the Marine Transportation System (MTS) will support the \$811B and 2.3B short tons of international trade cargo moving on our waterways and in our seaports (2003 Bureau of Transportation/Army Corps of Engineers Waterborne Commerce Statistics).

Why do we need it? NOAA seeks to protect lives, economic investment and environmental integrity by providing critical support to the Nation's intermodal transportation network. Funding for Electronic Navigational Charts (ENC) and for accurate currents and water level data is essential to the safe and environmentally sound transport of goods in the MTS. As an example, confirmation of exact water depths can allow a ship to load valuable extra cargo - just one inch of additional draft can increase revenues up to \$50,000. Improving aviation ceiling/visibility forecasting will result in an estimated savings of \$250M a year in reduced fuel costs to U.S. airlines.

What will we do? The requested amount for Commerce and Transportation includes an increase of +\$1.9M for NOAA to continue to build and maintain ENCs, the digital charts that mariners need for more accurate navigation. NOAA will add 145 ENCs in FY 2006, reaching a total of 670. NOAA can achieve complete coverage for the nation by the end of FY 2008. NOAA also requests \$2.0M to implement the National Vertical Datum Transformation Tool, or VDatum, to resolve the problems that exist between geospatial data sets collected at different reference levels. For example, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) receives funding to collect shoreline data for coastal erosion mapping (\$200M in 2004). But without the ability to correct the reference datum, NOAA cannot use this wealth of information in its nautical charts or other coastal mapping products.

A \$1.5M increase for the National Current Program will ensure that NOAA's Annual Tidal Current Table predictions are accurate by systematically updating potentially dangerous tidal current predictions based on old or insufficient data. In addition, NOAA requests \$1.0M to continue a 10-year plan to improve U.S. aviation safety and economic efficiencies by procuring, installing and operating 50 aircraft-based water vapor data systems. Water vapor information is critical to depicting weather hazards and reducing forecast errors. Finally, NOAA requests an increase of \$0.3M to study the socioeconomic value of its products and services. This information will assist in the validation of requirements and responsibilities, articulation and quantification of program benefits, and more effective prioritization of NOAA's resource investments.

NOAA FY 2006 Budget (\$ in Millions)		
	Current Program	Program Change
ORF	\$149.6	\$20.0
PAC	\$0.0	\$0.0
TOTAL	\$149.6	\$20.0

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