

## *The Federal Geographic Data Committee*

# **Charter for the Standards Working Group**

## **I. PURPOSE**

The Standards Working Group is established by the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) to promote the development and implementation of standards in support of the National Spatial Data Infrastructure.

## **II. MEMBERSHIP**

The Standards Working Group shall consist of representatives designated by the FGDC Steering Committee member agencies; FGDC subcommittees and working groups. Other Federal, State, and local agencies; professional organizations; private companies; and U.S. citizens may be admitted in accordance with established Standards Working Group membership policy.

Agency representatives are expected to be responsible for standards policy related to the production and use of geospatial data sets within their organization. FGDC subcommittee or working group representatives are expected to be familiar with the standards work of their subcommittees or working groups and authorized to represent the views of the subcommittee on standards issues before the Standards Working Group.

Each FGDC subcommittee, working group, and member agency are automatically members of the Standards Working Group and shall designate a representative and, if desired, an alternate.

The Standards Working Group shall be chaired by the member from the Department of the Interior.

## **III. RESPONSIBILITY**

Responsibilities of the Working Group include the following:

- ? Assist the FGDC Coordination Group in promoting the development, maintenance, and management of a National Spatial Data Infrastructure.
- ? Coordinate the maintenance of FGDC-endorsed standards with the designated maintenance authorities.
- ? Coordinate the standards activities of the subcommittees and other working groups of the FGDC. This includes approving the standards projects proposed by member agencies, reviewing the proposed scope of each project, assigning projects to the appropriate subcommittee or work group, reviewing proposed time lines for standards development, maintaining a register of FGDC standards activities and their status, providing guidance on FGDC standards development

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- policy and procedures, assuring consistency of FGDC standards, facilitating coordination between subcommittees and working groups with overlapping standards activities, reviewing standards for compliance with FGDC policy and procedures, reviewing standard drafts and recommending final publication as FGDC standards, and recommending to the Coordination Group and the Steering Committee any actions necessary to accomplish the standards goals of the FGDC.
- ? Develop the methods and working arrangements for interacting with the subcommittees and working groups of the FGDC for the purpose of coordinating their standards activities. This includes developing the procedures for resolving conflicts in data content and between data standards.
  - ? Promote and coordinate the elevation of FGDC standards to national standards, as appropriate.
  - ? Promote and coordinate the expanded use of metadata.
  - ? Facilitate and coordinate the evaluation of geospatial data definitions and standards of other organizations, especially other national and international standards bodies and, when appropriate, incorporating these definitions and standards into FGDC standards or standards activities according to FGDC established procedures.
  - ? Identify and report to the FGDC membership standards and specifications not necessarily specific to spatial data (for example, conversion to metric units) that might impact spatial data.
  - ? Assist the FGDC Secretariat in facilitating and coordinating education about and implementation of standards for which the FGDC serves as maintenance authority, such as the Content Standard for Digital Geospatial Metadata.
  - ? Assure that the standards developed are coordinated with State, local, and tribal governments, the private sector and academic community, and, to the extent feasible, the international community and that the needs of data producers and users are addressed.

### **IV. PROCEDURES**

Standards Working Group meetings shall be held at the call of the Standards Working Group Chair, and shall be held at least twice a year. Notification of meeting and an agenda will be distributed to members of the Standards Working Group and to the FGDC Secretariat in advance of the meeting.

All decisions shall be on the basis of consensus<sup>1</sup>. When consensus is not reached, the issue will be promptly referred to the FGDC Coordination Group for resolution.

The Standards Working Group Chair shall report to (brief) the Chair of the Coordination Group when there is a need for further coordination prior to implementing Standards Working Group decisions that impact the FGDC Steering Committee or FGDC subcommittees or working groups.

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<sup>1</sup> Consensus is considered to have been reached when the majority, though not necessarily a simple majority, have agreed on a matter. Consensus does not imply support for the decision as the best or most desirable by those voting, only that it is acceptable.

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The Standards Working Group may establish additional rules and procedures for conducting business.

## **V. SUBGROUPS**

The Standards Working Group may create task groups or subgroups, or further subdivisions, at the discretion of the Chair, as appropriate to carry out its activities and meet its responsibilities. The establishment of subgroups that operate more than 12 months and the abolishment of any such subgroup requires the approval of the FGDC Coordination Group.

## **VI. COORDINATING MECHANISMS**

The Standards Working Group will employ those mechanisms that are best suited to meeting its responsibilities, such as meetings, national user forums, annual requirements solicitations, user surveys and analyses, geospatial data user workshops, research initiatives, and cooperative ventures with the Federal and non-Federal sectors. The Standards Working Group will take special care to employ those mechanisms that engage those outside the Federal sector in the standards work of the FGDC. This involvement is necessary to ensure that the standards requirements of producers and users are included in the National Spatial Data Infrastructure.

The Chair will coordinate the Standards Working Group's activities with other FGDC subcommittees, working groups, and other FGDC components. The coordination activities do not need the prior approval of the FGDC Coordination Group, but the FGDC Coordination Group will be kept informed by the Chair's participation in that group.

## **VII. REPORTS**

The Standards Working Group Chair shall submit a NSDI Implementation Report every year, at the request of the FGDC Executive Secretary. This report shall describe the activities of the Standards Working Group and contain accomplishments for the year, a brief discussion of problems encountered, and other items that might be of value for inclusion.

The Standards Working Group Chair shall submit a work plan for the upcoming year to the FGDC Executive Secretary.

The NSDI Implementation Report and work plan shall be prepared in consultation with the members of the FGDC Standards Working Group.

The FGDC Standards Working Groups shall prepare special reports and technical papers describing special projects, coordination with other subcommittees, and the development of status graphics or catalogs and informational or educational brochures on the use and availability of standards information, at the request of the FGDC Secretariat.

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The Standards Working Group Chair shall provide a draft report of Standards Working Group meetings, including Standards Working Group recommendations and action items, to all Standards Working Group members for review prior to approval.

The Standards Working Group Chair shall provide the final report of Standards Working Group meetings to all Standards Working Group members, the Executive Secretary, and the chairpersons of the FGDC Coordination Group, subcommittees, and working groups.

**VIII. TERMINATION**

The Standards Working Group shall remain in existence until terminated by the FGDC Steering Committee. At that time, a new exhibit shall be developed by the Department of the Interior describing how the coordination of standards will be undertaken.