

# **National Geospatial Advisory Committee Bylaws**

## **(as adopted – June 3, 2008)**

### **Section I: Purpose**

The purpose of the National Geospatial Advisory Committee (NGAC) is to provide advice and recommendations related to management of Federal and national geospatial programs, the development of the National Spatial Data Infrastructure, and the implementation of Office of Management and Budget Circular A-16 and Executive Order 12906. The Committee will review and comment upon geospatial policy and management issues and will provide a forum to convey views representative of non-federal stakeholders in the geospatial community.

As deemed necessary, the NGAC Chair and Designated Federal Official (DFO) may convene subgroups to support NGAC functions.

### **Section II: Authority**

The Secretary of the Interior has determined that the establishment of the NGAC is in the public interest. The NGAC is subject to the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), as outlined in its Charter.

### **Section III: Membership Selection and Appointment**

Members of the NGAC are appointed by the Secretary of the Interior consistent with the terms of the NGAC Charter. Members have been selected based on specific needs of the NGAC in order to provide a balance of viewpoints. The Secretary of the Interior reserves the ability to replace any member as needed. Membership includes the responsibility to attend NGAC meetings personally.

### **Section IV: Meeting Procedures**

The NGAC will likely meet 3-4 times per year. The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) will provide appropriate support for NGAC meetings and activities. Meetings will be called by the DFO in consultation with the NGAC Chair according to the following considerations:

**A. Agenda:** The NGAC Chair and Vice-Chair will develop meeting agendas with input from NGAC members. The DFO will approve the agenda for all meetings. The DFO will distribute the agenda to the members prior to each meeting and will publish an outline of the agenda with the notice of the meeting in the Federal Register. Items for the agenda may be suggested to the DFO or the Chair by any member of the NGAC. Items may also be suggested by non-members, including members of the public.

**B. Member Participation:** Members are expected to make a good faith effort to attend all NGAC meetings in person. Under exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of the Chair and DFO, members may be allowed to participate in meetings via conference call.

**C. Minutes and Records:** The DFO will prepare minutes of each meeting and will distribute copies to each NGAC member. Minutes will be reviewed and approved by the NGAC. Minutes of NGAC meetings will be available to the public upon request. The minutes will include a record of the persons present (including the names of NGAC members, names of staff, and the names of members of the public from whom written or oral presentations were made) and a complete and accurate description of the matters discussed and conclusions reached, and copies of all reports received, issued or approved by the NGAC.

The NGAC will comply with all applicable FACA and Department of the Interior records retention policies and requirements.

**D. Open Meetings:** Unless otherwise determined in advance, all meetings of the NGAC will be open to the public. All materials brought before, or presented to, the NGAC during the conduct of an open meeting, including the minutes of the proceedings of an open meeting, will be available to the public for review or copying at the time of the scheduled meeting.

Members of the public may attend any meeting or portion of a meeting that is not closed to the public and may, at the determination of the Chair and DFO, offer oral comment for a set period of time at such meeting. The Chair and DFO may decide in advance to exclude oral public comment during a meeting, in which case the meeting announcement published in the Federal Register will note that oral comment from the public is excluded and will invite written comment as an alternative. Members of the public may submit written statements to the NGAC at any time.

**E. Administrative Meetings:** The Chair and DFO may convene administrative meetings for the limited purposes of discussing administrative, operational, or logistical issues. Administrative meetings may be closed to the public. During such meetings, only administrative, operational, or logistical issues may be discussed.

## **Section V: Decision Making**

Consensus is the preferred decision making model for the NGAC. When consensus cannot be achieved, the Chair may request a motion for a vote when a decision or recommendation of the NGAC is required. A quorum of members and a balance of viewpoints must be present for any vote at an NGAC meeting. A quorum will consist of two-thirds of the voting members. Each NGAC member is entitled to one vote. Votes will be decided by a simple majority of votes cast. When a decision or vote is scheduled for an NGAC meeting, members may authorize the Chair to cast proxy votes, with or without instructions, on their behalf. The proxy vote must be submitted in writing to the Chair and DFO in advance of the meeting.

At the discretion of the Chair and the DFO, minority opinions may be included with NGAC decisions and recommendations. Requests for NGAC studies or reviews will be transmitted through the DFO, and NGAC recommendations or decisions will also be transmitted through the DFO.

## **Section VI: Role of Board Officials**

**A. Chair:** The Chair works with the DFO to establish priorities, identify issues which must be addressed, help determine the level and types of support required, and will chair NGAC meetings. In addition, the Chair is responsible for certifying the accuracy of minutes developed by the NGAC to document its meetings.

**B. Vice-Chair:** The Vice-Chair works with Chair and DFO to establish priorities and issues for consideration by the NGAC. The Vice-Chair assumes the duties of the Chair in NGAC matters when the Chair is not available.

**C. Designated Federal Officer:** The DFO serves as the government's agent for all matters related to the NGAC's activities. The DFO (or designee) must: (1) approve or call the meetings of the NGAC; (2) approve agendas; (3) attend all meetings; and (4) adjourn the meetings when such adjournment is in the public interest.

In addition, the DFO is responsible for ensuring adequate staff support to the NGAC, including the performance of the following functions: (1) notifying members of the time and place for each meeting; (2) maintaining records of all meetings, including subgroup or working group activities; (3) maintaining the roll; (4) preparing the minutes of all meetings of the NGAC's deliberations, including subgroup and working group activities; (5) attending to official correspondence; (6) maintaining official NGAC records and filing all papers and submissions prepared for or by the NGAC, including those items generated by subgroups and working groups; (7) acting as the NGAC's agent to collect, validate and pay all vouchers for approved expenditures; and, (8) preparing and handling all reports, including the annual report as required by FACA.

The DFO will approve the NGAC bylaws and any amendments to the bylaws.

## **Section VII: Expenses and Reimbursement.**

Approved expenses related to the operation of the NGAC will be borne by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). Expenditures of any kind must be approved in advance by the DFO. Federal government employees serving on the NGAC are not eligible for any form of additional compensation. The USGS will pay approved travel and per diem expenses for non-federal members while attending committee meetings at a rate equivalent to that allowable for federal employees.