A Geospatial Profile for Enterprise Architecture

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Overview

Enterprise architecture is a planning practice that documents the business activities performed by an organization in fulfilling its mission and goals, and identifies the information technology and other resources needed to support those activities. The identification and deployment of common architectural elements across partnering organizations will facilitate the sharing of information and services and enhance overall mission effectiveness.

The Federal Enterprise Architecture (FEA) is a business-based framework for government-wide improvement that is being developed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to transform the Federal government to one that is citizen-centered, results-oriented, and market-based. The FEA includes reference models focusing on business processes, performance, technology, services and components, and data as key areas of interest.
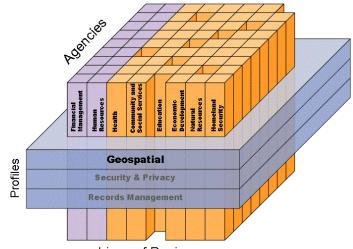
Development of a Geospatial Profile

Across all levels of government, geospatial capabilities are being discussed and implemented in many different ways and with varying degrees of progress and consistency. These capabilities exist in most organizations and yet have not been documented and implemented in systematic ways, leading to breaks in potential interoperability.

To remedy this, the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) and the Federal Chief Information Officers (CIO) Council, in concert with key collaborating non-federal partners, are developing the Geospatial Profile of the FEA as guidance for use by planners at all levels of government. This effort is identified in the OMB FEA Program Management Office's 2005-2006 Action Plan. The FEA PMO Action Plan communicates a clear set of integrated initiatives to the members of the EA community who are critical to the success of government transformation.

Enterprise architecture profiles describe cross-cutting capabilities that are common to multiple lines of business and apply across agencies. FEA profiles have also been developed for Security and Privacy and for Records Management (See figure 1).

The Geospatial Profile document highlights geospatial patterns in each of the FEA reference models and instructs agency architects on best practices in building interoperable geospatial capabilities. Through application of this Geospatial Profile in the design and execution of business practices, organizations have the opportunity to improve information exchange across – and beyond – the federal government.

Figure 1 - Context of the Geospatial Profile

The Geospatial Profile is one of three FEA profiles that describe cross-cutting capabilities that are shared by multiple agencies and lines of business. By identifying the common geospatial characteristics for activities across all, or most, lines of business, organizations will be able to exchange information more readily and develop compatible processes, services, and information.

The contents of the Geospatial Profile guidance document include:

- Introduction to geospatial principles, context, scope, audience, applicability
- Guidance on geospatial considerations in each of the reference models (Business, Performance, Technical, Services, and Data)
- An application scenario that is presented across, and in the context of, all reference models
- Supplemental annexes with extensive background and reference materials
- Terminology and references

Applicability

Although linked to key elements of the FEA, the scope and relevance of the Geospatial Profile guidance is applicable to all types of organizations that are interested in developing a consistent geospatial capability within their business activities – inside and outside the federal government.

By embracing the multi-jurisdictional and pervasive nature of geospatial capabilities, this profile is intended to promote broad use of common geospatial information and services among governmental partners at all levels of government.

The Executive Office of the President will use the FEA Geospatial Profile to ensure that all Federal agencies **architect, invest, and implement** geospatial capabilities in a coordinated way that works in partnership across federal, state, local, and tribal governments, as well as with other data and services sharing partners.

Many organizations are looking for help in guiding their business planners and information technologists through the world of geospatial tools and capabilities. The Geospatial Profile provides a much needed blueprint to help them invest and build together, promoting common data and service availability and interoperability.

For more information

Please visit the Geospatial Community of Practice – http://colab.cim3.net/wiki/
Select: GeoSpatialCommunityofPractice

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