

Geospatial Data Act of 2018

What is it?

The Geospatial Data Act of 2018 (GDA) became law on October 5, 2018. The GDA was included as a component of the FAA Reauthorization Act (P.L. 115-254, Subtitle F). The GDA codifies the committees, processes, and tools used to develop, drive, and manage the National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI) and recognizes responsibilities beyond the Federal government for its development. The GDA reflects growing recognition of the essential role of geospatial data and technology in understanding and managing our world and highlights the need to support their continuing development as critical investments for the Nation.

What does it do?

The GDA formalizes governance processes related to geospatial data, provides policy and guidance to empower the use of geospatial data and technology, and facilitates broad cooperation between the public and private sector. Specifically, the GDA:

- Codifies the role and authorities of the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC)
- Directs the FGDC to lead the development and management of the NSDI Strategic Plan
- Establishes the National Geospatial Advisory Committee (NGAC) as a statutory advisory committee
- Provides policy and guidance to empower the use of geospatial data and technology
- Establishes Federal agency responsibilities
- Recognizes the NSDI as the framework to ensure geospatial data from multiple sources are available, accessible, and easily integrated
- Recognizes the GeoPlatform (www.geoplatform.gov) as an important tool for accessing and managing geospatial data
- Establishes requirements for stewardship of geospatial assets
- Identifies budgeting and reporting requirements



Why is it important?

This legislation fosters efficient management of geospatial data, technologies, and infrastructure by enabling better coordination among Federal, state, local, tribal governments, the private sector, and institutions of higher education. The GDA reduces duplicative efforts and facilitates the efficient procurement of geospatial expertise, technology, services, and data from the rapidly growing geographic community in the United States. The GDA:

- Aligns business strategies and technology
- Ensures that resources are managed in accordance with the Nation's needs and priorities
- Ensures that all technology resources and employees are utilized in a manner that provides the best value for the Nation

What are the benefits, expected results, or outcomes of the GDA?

The GDA recognizes the critical role of non-Federal partners, including the private sector and state, local, and tribal governments in contributing to the national economy, advancing the NSDI, and supporting the missions of Federal agencies. In doing so, the GDA promotes greater access and use of government information and data, which in turn, is expected to spark innovative products and services, spur economic growth, advance scientific research, and improve public health, environmental protection, and other services. The GDA optimizes resources, improves business processes and communication, and promotes best practices.



What is its relationship to other data initiatives?

The GDA is closely linked to other current data initiatives including the Federal Data Strategy (FDS) and the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policy Making (Evidence Act). Together, these new data initiatives will...

- Promote and improve access to data for public health, economic growth, environment and other purposes
- Promote use of quality scientific and other data to improve policymaking
- Spark public-private partnerships, new innovative start-ups and services
- Enhance data usability and value by increasing interoperability between spatial and non-spatial data

Approach

The FGDC community is leading efforts to mobilize for implementation of the GDA.

Key Activities	Timeframe
Conduct initial analysis	FY 2019 Q1
Identify key issues & clarify requirements	FY 2019 Q2/Q3
Mobilize for implementation: develop implementation roadmap	FY 2019 Q3/Q4
Issue OMB guidance	FY 2020 Q1
Initiate GDA implementation strategy & Develop NSDI strategic plan	FY 2020 - 2021

Resources for more information

Resources, updates, and information about the GDA will be posted at www.fgdc.gov/gda as the FGDC community works to implement the Act.