

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
Annual E-Government Act Report
FY 2008
October 7, 2008

1. Provide one or two examples of an E-government application that could be submitted to OMB and showcased on the [E-Government link](#) from the Commerce Home Page. Do not include projects related to any of the Presidential E-Government Initiatives or Lines of Business, or one that has been provided in previous E-Government Act Reports. For each example, the following information is required:

Physical Oceanographic Real-Time System PORTS ®
<http://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/ports.html>

- A. Describe how the initiative is transforming operating unit operations;

PORTS ® is a decision support tool that improves the safety and efficiency of maritime commerce and coastal resource management through the integration of real-time environmental observations, forecasts and other geospatial information. PORTS ® turns operational oceanographic data into meaningful information for the Nation. It provides accurate real-time oceanographic and meteorological data to mariners that can significantly reduce the risk of vessel groundings and increase the amount of cargo moved through a port. The system measures, integrates, and disseminates observations of water levels, currents, salinity, wind, and bridge clearance. Knowledge of environmental conditions can significantly reduce the risk of vessel groundings and increase the amount of cargo moved through a waterway by enabling mariners to safely utilize every inch of dredged channel depth.

- B. Explain how your operating unit maintains an ongoing dialogue with interested parties to find innovative ways to use information technology for the initiative;

The PORTS ® program has ongoing, continuous partnerships with private industry groups, and national port and harbor authorities to deploy, operate, and improve the PORTS ® system.

- C. Identify external partners (e.g., federal, state or local agencies, industry) who collaborate with your operating unit on the initiative;

External partners include the U. S. Coast Guard, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Navy port authorities, vessel pilots, state and local agencies, the shipping industry, and other maritime transportation industries, commercial fisherman, as well as other small and recreational boaters, coastal managers, environmental organizations and academia.

- D. Identify improved performance (e.g., outcome measures) by tracking performance measures supporting the operating unit's objectives and strategic goals.

The NOAA Strategic Goal supported by PORTS ® is "Enhance the conservation, and management of coastal and marine resources to meet America's economic, social, and environmental needs". The program objectives for PORTS ® are improved economic efficiency, navigational safety, and coastal resource protection. The outcome measures are reducing the risk of vessel groundings, increasing the amount of cargo moved through our nation's ports, and providing information to mitigate damages should a maritime accident occur. The prevention of maritime accidents is the most cost effective measure that can be taken to protect fragile coastal ecosystems. These program objectives and outcome measures are achieved through critical performance targets. These targets include: 1) Customer Results (% of real time data accessible via the web), 2) Mission and Business Results (number of National Water Level Observation Networks Stations), 3) Technology (number of Xpert data Collection platforms), 4) Processes and Activities (percent of water current survey data processed and analyzed via an automated system).

- E. Quantify the cost savings and/or cost avoidance achieved through implementing the initiative (e.g., reducing or eliminating other investments in information technology)

Annual estimates of economic benefits directly attributed to PORTS ® range from \$7 million to \$16 million per location.

- F. Explain how the initiative ensures the availability of government information and services for those without access to the Internet and for those with disabilities.

PORTS ® is accessible to maritime users in a variety of user-friendly formats, including telephone voice response and Internet.

- G. Explain how the project applies effective capital planning and investment control procedures.

The PORTS ® program develops quarterly and annual Operational Analyses that focus on its operational state for the reporting period. Each analysis integrates program management and risk management, from a perspective of past performance. Operational analyses are focused on performance criteria that specifically address the following four overarching criteria: A. Financial performance, B. Customer results, C. Business and strategic results, and D. Innovation. The PORTS ® program is reviewed once every three years by the NOAA IT Review Board.

- H. Describe the established business process your operating unit has in place for the continued ongoing process of identification of initiatives.

NOAA uses a business practice known as “PPBES” which is an integrated, requirements-based Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution System. PPBES provides a systematic approach to allocating resources optimally and maximizing programmatic impact that is designed to: 1) Achieve NOAA strategic priorities, 2) Prioritize resources, 3) Develop and select the best options and initiatives for meeting Strategic Plan goals, 4) Focus budget expenditure and program results and accountability, 5) Manage project cost, schedule, and performance, 6) Adjust resource requirements relative to execution performance, and 7) Evaluate overall effectiveness of the NOAA Program.

2. The Commerce Web site contains a [Web Publication Schedule](#) listing Commerce operating units’ information release and update schedules to the public. Please provide updates and additions to this list; include the frequency of release, the title of the information, and the URL for new entries.

Line Office	Title of the Information (Data Type)	Frequency of the Release	URL
NOAA/NWS	National Maps	Updated twice daily (**)	http://www.weather.gov/outlook_tab.php/
NOAA/NWS	National Radar Mosaic Sectors	Available on a real time basis (**)	http://www.weather.gov/radar_tab.php
NOAA/NWS	Preliminary Climate Data	Daily (!!)	http://www.weather.gov/climate/
NOAA/NWS	Hydrologic Observations and Forecasts	Available on a near real-time basis (!!)	http://www.weather.gov/ahps/ and http://water.weather.gov

** - Change in frequency of update !! - New