

FGCS' ORGANIZATION AND PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITIES  
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Abstract

The Federal Geodetic Control Subcommittee (FGCS) of the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) exercises governmentwide leadership in coordinating the planning and execution of geodetic surveys, in developing standards and specifications for these surveys, and in the exchange of geodetic survey data and technical information. FGCS coordinates Federal agencies' aspects of surveying that are governmental responsibilities.

These responsibilities include standards setting, testing new geodetic instrumentation and operational systems, coordination of user agency requirements, and dissemination of government data to user agencies. The FGCS acts to ensure that the Global Positioning System (GPS) will continue to meet the positioning and timing needs of the Federal civilian community and works to strengthen the ties between the GPS positioning and navigation communities. This responsibility will be implemented through its role as GPS Interagency Advisory Council (GIAC) to the Department of Transportation PosNav Executive Committee and subsequent reporting of activities to FGDC. The FGCS partnership activities, including GIAC, will be presented.

THE FEDERAL GEOGRAPHIC DATA COMMITTEE

The Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) was established by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in its 1990 revision of Circular A-16, "Coordination of Surveying, Mapping, and Related Spatial Data Activities."<sup>1</sup>

Circular A-16 defined specific coordination responsibilities for the FGDC including:

- Promoting the development, maintenance, and management of distributed data bases of geospatial data that are national in scope.
- Encouraging the development and implementation of standards and exchange formats.
- Interacting with other Federal coordinating bodies that deal with geospatial data.

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<sup>1</sup>Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget, Washington, D.C. 20503, October 19, 1990

-Publishing technical and management reports.

To extend the scope of Circular A-16 in support of the National Information Infrastructure, President Clinton issued Executive Order 12906 "Coordinating Geographic Data Acquisition and Access: The National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI)."<sup>2</sup> In the Executive Order, the FGDC was given an expanded role in coordinating the NSDI with a mandate to involve State, local, and tribal governments, academia, and the private sector.

Through its subcommittees and working groups (see figure 1), the FGDC supports activities crucial to the NSDI which include establishing a National Clearinghouse for spatial data and providing standards for the exchanging of geospatial data in order to "recreate" a national digital geospatial data framework of basic data themes to promote cooperative ventures inside and outside the Federal sector.

#### Federal Geodetic Control Subcommittee

Under the above mentioned OMB Circular A-16, revised 1990, responsibility to coordinate geodetic data-related activities is assigned to the Department of Commerce (DOC).

The National Geodetic Survey (NGS) within DOC has the lead agency responsibility to coordinate geodetic control and other related surveying activities to support the geodetic control networks as well as lower order surveying for cadastral, topographic, hydrographic, bathymetric, and related resource and facility mapping activities of all Federal agencies, and for establishing a mechanism for the coordinated development, use, sharing, and dissemination of these data.

In order to coordinate this Federal responsibility, a subcommittee of the FGDC on geodetic data (hereafter called the Federal Geodetic Control Subcommittee, FGCS) was established with member agencies (see figure 2) to promote standards of accuracy and currentness in geodetic data financed in whole or part by Federal funds; to exchange information on technological improvements for collecting geodetic data; to encourage the Federal and non-Federal community to identify and adopt standards and specifications for geodetic data; and to collect and coordinate the processing requirements of Federal and non-Federal organizations for geodetic data submissions to the NGS data base and, in turn, the NSDI Clearinghouse.

The FGCS consists of representatives designated by the Federal agencies that collect or finance the collection of geodetic data as part of their mission or have direct application of these data through legislated mandate and is chaired by the Director, NGS, who presently is Captain Lewis A. Lapine, NOAA. Each member agency of the Subcommittee designates its representative, and alternate, if necessary, and changes thereto, by memorandum from that agency to the FGDC

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<sup>2</sup>Executive Order 12906, published in the April 13, 1994, edition of the Federal Register, Volume 59, Number 71, pp. 17671-17674.

Chairperson, who presently is Secretary Bruce Babbitt of the Department of the Interior.

### Responsibility

Responsibilities of the FGCS include the following:

-Facilitate the coordination of agencies' activities and the exchange of geodetic data, by formal and informal means.

-Collect and compile information on Federal agencies' geodetic data activities and determine which categories of geodetic data are to be included in the National Spatial Data Infrastructure and recommend additional categories of geodetic data not currently being collected.

-Participate in the development and evaluation of geodetic data definitions and standards to be used by the Nation and by other international organizations.

-Develop, adopt, publish, and promote common standards of content, format, and accuracy for geodetic data for use by all Federal agencies and to encourage use by non-Federal organizations, to increase its interchangeability and enhance its potential for multiple use.

-Assist in the establishment of surveying specifications to support geodetic data standards and assist in establishing priorities for testing and publishing same.

-Promote governmentwide use of defined and published spatial data transfer standards for geodetic data.

-Establish metadata standards to enhance data exchanges and maintain mechanisms and reports to interface with data bases of other agencies participating in the National Spatial Data Infrastructure Clearinghouse.

-Facilitate the economic and efficient application of geodetic data through the sharing of experiences involving applications in support of member agencies' mandates or crosscutting partner activities established or recognized by the FGDC.

-Ensure that the disposition of geodetic data is carried out in coordination with the National Archives and Records Administration in order to provide for the permanent preservation of historically valuable data and timely disposal of data lacking historical value.

-Ensure that the Global Positioning System (GPS) will continue to meet the positioning and timing needs of the Federal civilian community and work to strengthen the ties between the GPS positioning and timing communities and their relationships with the navigation communities. This responsibility will be implemented by FGCS through its role as the GPS Interagency Advisory Council (GIAC) to the Department of Transportation

PosNav Executive Committee and subsequent reports to the FGDC Steering Committee.

To accomplish this plethora of responsibilities, the FGCS has assigned these tasks to its GPS Interagency Advisory Council (GIAC) and its five following work groups:

- Fixed Reference Stations Work Group
- Geodetic Control and Surveying Requirements Work Group
- Instrument Work Group
- Methodology Work Group
- Vertical Reference System Work Group

#### FGCS HOME PAGE

The charters of the GIAC and the above five FGCS Work Groups are provided as part of the FGCS Charter which will be discussed and made available during the presentation at the technical session. This information is also available on the FGCS Home Page at the following INTERNET address:  
<http://www.ngs.noaa.gov/FGCS/fgcs.html>.

The FGCS' organizational and partnership activities are exemplified in these charters. The plans and accomplishments of these FGCS organizational components are provided over the above FGCS Home Page in the form of meeting minutes, action items, and reports. Future meetings and instrument tests, publications of technical reports and standards, member agency contacts, and activities pertaining to geodetic control and surveying requirements are provided as well.

If you have questions, or need additional information about FGCS, contact the authors at the above address.