Comprehensive Assessment of Public Information Dissemination Reforms

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Introduction

NCLIS is an Advisory Agency

- NCLIS Charter is to Advise the President & the Congress on the Information Needs of the American People

Chronology

August 1999 - Commerce Proposed to Close NTIS & Transfer Its Collections & Operations to the Library of Congress

Fall 1999 - Senate & House Oversight Committees Held Hearings

October 1999 - NCLIS Began Its Independent Assessment of NTIS

March 2000 - NCLIS Issued Its "Preliminary Assessment" Available at http://www.nclis.gov/govt/ntis/ntis.html

Recommendations Re NTIS

The Commission Recommendations to Congress & the Administration Were:

- Retain NTIS in Commerce Through FY 2001 to Allow Further Study
- Appropriate Sufficient Funds to Cover Inherently Governmental Activities of NTIS
- Authorize NTIS to Continue To Offer Other Services on a Cost-Recovery Basis in Compliance With OMB Circular A-130
- Appropriate Funds to Defray the One-Time Costs for NTIS to Offer Full Service to Federal Depository Libraries
- Restore NTIS to a Satisfactory Level of Capacity, Staffing & Service

Current Situation

- Congress Has Not Introduced Legislation to Close NTIS
- NTIS Continues to Operate With an Anticipated Surplus of $1.3 Million for FY 2000
- Hiring Freeze is Still Imposed But Contractors Supplement NTIS Staff

Current Study

June 2000 - Senate Commerce Committee Requested Additional Independent Study by NCLIS

- To Be Completed by December 15, 2000
- Review Broad Reforms Necessary for Federal Government Information Dissemination Practices
- Proposing New or Revised Laws, Rules, Regulations, Missions & Policies
- Modernizing Organization Structures & Functions
- Revoking NTIS Self-Sufficiency Requirement
- Strengthening Key Components of the Federal Information Dissemination Infrastructure

July 2000 - Senate Governmental Affairs Committee Joined the Commerce Committee Request

- Make PRA 2001 Reauthorization recommendations
- Consider Viability of NTIS as Centralized Fully Electronic Repository of Federal STI

August 2000 - Representatives Morella & Davis Request GAO Study of NTIS

- Size, Age, Demand for NTIS Holdings
- Extent of NTIS Holdings Available from Other Sources
- Federal Agency Compliance With Laws Requiring Deposit of STI
- NCLIS Consultants Woody Horton & Sarah Kadec Are Co-Coordinators of the NCLIS Study
- Study Plan & Outline Are on the NCLIS Web site at:
  http://www.nclis.gov/govt/assess/assess.html

Current Study Process

4 Study Panels

1. NTIS Business Model (Peter Urbach)
2. Federal Agency Service Bureau Requirements (Kurt Molholm)
3. External Users of Government Information Services (Miriam Drake)
4. Public Sector/Private Sector Roles in Government Information (Wayne Kelley)
o Republish 1982 NCLIS Report on Public Sector Private Sector Interaction in Providing Information Services
o Establish a Board of Experts on IT, Economic, Librarianship & Legal Matters (in Addition to Public Comment)
o Coordinate With Other Legislative & Judicial Branch Entities
o Coordinate With CIO Council & Other Executive Branch Entities
o Continue Liaison With Interagency Groups (CENDI, FLICC, FPC, IACSP, ICPPS, etc.)
o Continue Dialog With Stakeholders Including Library Associations
o Conduct Other Research Activities (e.g., Analysis of Information Laws, Public Information Resources Map)
o Solicit & Publish White Papers With New Ideas & Unique Perspectives
o Continue to Solicit, & Evaluate Public Comments Throughout the Process
o Post Relevant Materials on the NCLIS Web site at:
  http://www.nclis.gov/govt/assess/assess.html

Current Study Schedule

October 20, 2000

- Complete Information Resources Map White Papers & User Group Surveys
- Complete Panel Reports

November 15, 2000

- Complete Board of Experts Reviews
- Commission Meeting to Review Findings

December 15, 2000

- Issue Final Report & Recommendations to Congress & the President

December 18, 2000 & Following

- Conduct NCLIS Presentations & Briefings for Interested Stakeholders

Panel 1: NTIS Business Model

7. Reject Commerce proposal to close NTIS & transfer collection to LC
8. Continue NTIS as an agency within Commerce
9. Support NTIS with a mix of sales income, agency reimbursements & appropriations
10. NTIS should receive appropriations for "public good" functions
11. NTIS scope should continue to include information for business and industry
12. NTIS charges should be based on incremental cost of dissemination
13. NTIS should change from image scanning to full test scanning
14. NTIS should obtain electronic files for new documents whenever possible
15. NTIS should link from its database records to documents on agency Web sites
16. NTIS should develop PURL system to track documents on agency Web sites
17. Reports not available free on agency Web sites should be free on NTIS Web site, except older reports & reports that require high cost handling
18. NTIS should provide permanent public access & charge incremental cost for copies of, or access to, older reports
19. NTIS should continue to sell paper, microfiche & electronic formats at incremental cost, as long as demand for the format justifies its use
20. Commerce should lift hiring freeze on NTIS, especially for professional, direct hire information experts
21. (a) Consideration should be given to consolidation of Superintendent of Documents & NTIS to create a more effective central information service, reduce duplication & simplify public access

> (b) NTIS should explore ways of joining Superintendent of Documents in cooperative programs that will make public access less duplicative & more seamless

Panel 2: Federal Agencies

22. (a) Institutionalize interagency cooperative efforts for information sharing, for R&D, decision-making & record keeping

> (b) Establish & implement policies to ensure privacy, confidentiality, security & authenticity of shared information

23.   Clarify "life-cycle planning" concept from OMB Circular A-130, improving documentation of data elements & establishing a registry of data elements
24.   Data elements should be reported in XML
25.   (a) Agencies should provide NARA metadata for records series to improve searching & acquisition

            (b) Agencies should consult stakeholders concerning needed information taxonomies

26.   Need comprehensive analysis of currently non-digital Government information that should be converted, & the cost to convert it
27.   Need comprehensive analysis of steps needed to ensure permanent public access to Federal digital publications
28.   Establish interagency committee to develop a Government-wide, authoritative information taxonomy
29.   Establish interagency committee to determine how Federal identifiers can be used to assist agencies & the public in obtaining information across agencies
30.   Need a comprehensive analysis of efficient ways to translate & coordinate state & local identification numbers with Federal identifiers
31.   Establish IT research program for long-term Federal information content needs (security, integrity, privacy, etc.)
            32. (a) OSTP should assume legally- mandated leadership responsibility for oversight & management of STI

            (b) Consider formation of COSATI-like group with members from public & private sectors

Panel 3: External Users

33.   Need new program for Government information dissemination to increase quantity & quality of available information & improve access
34.   (a) Need sustainable easy to use systems that ensure authenticity, integrity & preservation

            (b) Establish standards for agency publishing, cataloging, metadata, abstracting, indexing & inter-operability

35.   (a) NARA lead effort to establish an interagency council to set standards, share expertise & provide infrastructure to assist all agencies with information dissemination

            (b) Establish a smart portal with infrastructure & financial support for a sustainable system of access

36.   Federal commitment to provide information to the public should include training for librarians
37.   Partnerships with private sector can increase availability & ease of finding Government information & expand choices for consumers
38.   Private sector should have access to all raw data & information provided to the public by agencies
39.   Congress should make a commitment to develop & implement online systems that disseminate, archive & preserve Government information to benefit all citizens

Public Sector/Private Sector

40.	Federal Government should continue to have primary responsibility for the entire life cycle of electronic Government information, including dissemination & permanent public access

41.	(a) Private sector & libraries play a crucial role in dissemination of & access to Government information

(b) Federal Government has an obligation to facilitate a diversity of sources for dissemination of & access to Government information

42.	Consider applying basic provisions of PRA (44 USC 3506(d)) to Legislative & Judicial Branches

43.	Create realistic enforcement provisions, with real consequences, to assure compliance with Government information laws, including FDLP

44.	Establish an effective means for consultation & collaboration among the 3 branches of Government to assure dissemination of, & access to, all Government information in a manner most effective to meet the needs of the American people

Current Study Information

NCLIS Web site Is a Dynamic "Bulletin Board" for Information Dissemination to Encourage Public Awareness & Participation by Stakeholders

- Timetable for Comments on Posted Documents Is Very Short
- Check the Web Site Frequently

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