

GDA Reporting Subcommittee Update

Mark Meade / Chad Baker
National Geospatial Advisory Committee Meeting
April 11, 2023



GDA Reporting Subcommittee

Membership:

- Mark Meade (Chair), Chad Baker, Lynn Dupont, Bobbi Lenczowski, Cy Smith, Gary Thompson

Subcommittee Role:

- Work with FGDC OS staff & NGAC leadership to plan and coordinate NGAC's submission of comments as part of the GDA reporting process
- Identify areas of focus for NGAC review and assess the utility of the reports
- Collect/synthesize NGAC's comments on the GDA reports
- Document and communicate lessons learned and recommendations for improving the process for future reports.

FY 2022 GDA Annual Reports – Status

- FGDC agencies used common criteria, reporting templates, and processes – including agency self-assessments of performance – to complete the 2022 GDA annual reports
- All 2022 annual reports completed and posted on FGDC website, along with covered agency and NGDA dashboards
- FGDC submitted Summary of FY 2022 GDA Annual Reports to NGAC for review and comment on February 27, 2023
- NGAC GDA Reporting Subcommittee requested comments from NGAC members, met with FGDC team, and compiled consolidated set of NGAC comments

FGDC Responses to FY 2021 NGAC Comments – Summary

- FGDC discussed NGAC comments with GDA working group and NGDA Theme leads
- FGDC team reviewed NGAC comments as plans for FY 2022 GDA reports were developed
- FGDC team has documented responses to NGAC comments in spreadsheet distributed to NGAC GDA Reporting Subcommittee

FGDC Responses to NGAC Comments on FY2021 GDA Summary Report FINAL						
NGAC Comment	Report Section	Report area	Positives, Improvements, or Recommendations	Type of Change/Suggestion	NGAC Comment (Original)	FGDC Comment (Consolidated/Summarized)
3.1.1	1.0	Introduction	Areas Needing Improvement	Report Format	Future reports should begin with an Executive Summary that addresses the health of the national geospatial program relative to the GDA reporting requirements, rather than a description of the reporting process. As the reports evolve, the process will become boilerplate and will no longer need to be featured at the front in the report.	This is a helpful comment and the suggestion makes sense. FGDC is currently developing the template for the FY2022 report and will look to incorporate this suggestion into the Summary Report.
3.1.2	1.1 - 1.4	Introduction	Areas Needing Improvement	Report Format	1.1 through 1.4 should be an appendix to the report, rather than part of the report itself. Having these sections at the beginning of the report can derail readers before they get to the key part of the report.	This is a helpful comment and the suggestion makes sense. FGDC is currently developing the template for the FY2022 report and will look to incorporate this suggestion into the Summary Report.
3.2.1	Table 1	Table 1	Areas Needing Improvement	Reporting Agencies	Additional agencies with geospatial responsibilities, such as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), should be included in the reporting requirements as both a Covered Agency and Lead Covered Agency. This recommendation was also made last year, but the EPA is still not described in the GDA as a covered agency.	The GDA defines covered agencies and the EPA is not included. Congressional action would be required as FGDC does not have the authority to designate additional covered agencies.
3.2.2	Table 1	Table 1	Areas Needing Improvement	Report Format	Footnote 3 appears twice at the bottom of page 3.	Comment noted, will address in future reports.
3.3.1	Table 2/3	CA Table 2/ LCA Table 3	Areas Needing Improvement	Additional summary explanation	The results in Table 2 and Table 3 should be expanded upon by descriptive or summary information discussing progress. The report should include highlights of achievements, progress toward goals, and deficiencies reported out by agencies with related explanations.	FGDC will work to include additional descriptive and summary information in future reports in an executive summary. FGDC has updated the FY 2022 template to include an optional opportunity for agencies to "briefly highlight a key achievement in making progress towards meeting GDA requirements or advancing geospatial activities. This submission will be considered for use in the upcoming FGDC Summary Report or the Report to Congress. Please note that this achievement may have already been highlighted in your Brief Summaries or your optional 2-page PDF submission."
3.3.2	CA Summary	General Comments	Areas Needing Improvement	Self-Assessment Approach	Even when reading actual report submissions, it is unclear how the change in self-assessment rating is determined. It would be helpful to understand the circumstances and rationale behind changes in self-assessment ratings.	The self-assessment rating is currently based on a key that is included in the final agency reports. We will work to make a more clear explanation of the self-assessment process in future reports. The noted change in the self-assessment rating is based on the previous year's annual report.
3.4.1	Overall	General Comments	Areas Needing Improvement	Self-Assessment Approach	The agencies' self-assessment approaches need to be better explained and better documented.	Agency self-assessments are currently based on responses to the suite of questions included in the final agency reports. Agencies also provide brief summaries for each requirement as described above. It would be helpful to receive specific recommendations from NGAC for improvements that may help explain or document agency achievements.

2022 GDA Audits

- Covered Agency Inspectors General completed biennial audits of agency compliance with GDA requirements in 2022
- FGDC staff has coordinated with Inspectors General council (CIGIE) to provide information on GDA reporting approach
- Key points:
 - CIGIE indicated that standards were a focus area for the 2022 audits
 - Each agency IG has discretion in determining focus of audit, approaches varied from agency to agency

FY 2022 REPORTS AND REPORT TO CONGRESS 2023- DRAFT TIMELINE

2022 Covered Agency & Lead Covered Agency Annual Report Timeline			Draft Timeline		
Deliverable	Activity	Actions	Timeframe	Start Date (Monday)	Due Date (Friday)
Update Templates and Surveys & Testing	Update FY2022 Template and Survey	GDA WG and Theme Leads need to review and modify FY2021 template for any major revisions.	7.5 weeks	17-Aug	14-Oct
		Update Survey 123; Refresh Accounts for SAOGI and Agency POCs	15 weeks	1-Aug	10-Nov
	SC Approval of Draft FY2021 Template	Approval of Word template by Steering Committee (in parallel with survey development)	2 weeks	24-Oct	4-Nov
	Survey Testing & Training	Agency testing and training for Survey123.	2 weeks	14-Nov	25-Nov
Finalize Agency Reports & Dashboards	Agencies generate final draft CA Reports using Survey123	Distribute spreadsheet with Survey123 Questions and response options for agency use in survey preparation	4.5 weeks	31-Oct	30-Nov
		Agency POCs populate CA & LCA report surveys and receive auto generated draft report for use in agency review. Agency POCs can make changes and obtain updated drafts through survey close date. Report content is final at survey close: January 13	7 weeks	28-Nov	13-Jan
	FGDC OS Generates Final Draft CA Report	FGDC OS finalizes CA & LCA Reports based on final draft from survey output.	3 weeks	16-Jan	3-Feb
GDA Summary Reports	FGDC OS Generates Summary Report	FGDC OS generates the Annual Summary Report	3 weeks	6-Feb	24-Feb
	NGAC / FGDC Review and Comment Process	FGDC OS: Distribute Summary Report to SC & NGAC. End date: Comments due from NGAC	7 weeks	27-Feb	14-Apr
		FGDC and Agencies Respond to any requested NGAC Comments	3 weeks	17-Apr	5-May
Report to Congress 2023	Finalize RTC	FGDC OS Incorporates Summary Reports and Comments into RTC, FGDC OS finalizes RTC Draft	4 weeks	8-May	2-Jun
		Final approval of RTC by the Steering Committee	2 weeks	5-Jun	16-Jun
		FGDC OS Finalizes RTC 2023	2 weeks	19-Jun	30-Jun



GDA Report to Congress 2023

Report to Congress 2023	Finalize RTC	FGDC OS Incorporates Summary Reports and Comments into RTC, FGDC OS finalizes RTC Draft	4 weeks	8-May	2-Jun
		Final approval of RTC by the Steering Committee	2 weeks	5-Jun	16-Jun
		FGDC OS Finalizes RTC 2023	2 weeks	19-Jun	30-Jun

2023 Report to Congress will include:

- Summary and highlights from FY2021 & FY2022 GDA annual reports
- Key GDA-related agency achievements
- NGAC comments and recommendations
- Key FGDC messages for Congressional Committees

FY 2022 GDA Report - NGAC Comments

Focus areas for NGAC comments on 2022 GDA Report Summary:

1. Positive elements

- What was successful in the initial GDA report summary?

2. Areas needing improvement

- What areas need improvement?

3. Recommendations for future reports

- What can FGDC do to improve future versions of the GDA annual report summaries?

4. Other Comments

- NGAC members provided high-level comments, under the focus areas above, to the GDA Reporting Subcommittee

NGAC Review & Comment

Positive Elements

- **FGDC Reporting Approach**
 - Improvements to reporting processes through standardized criteria and online tools.
- **Summary of Results**
 - Appreciate that NGAC feedback was directly incorporated in this year's report.
 - Continue to support and see value in the dashboards and appreciate progress made to make status easy to read and understand.
- **Overview**
 - Cross agency efforts to analyze GDA requirements and collaborative work between agencies was noted as an important accomplishment.

NGAC Review & Comment

Areas Needing Improvement

- **Executive Summary**

- With 14% of lead agencies meeting expectations, there is still plenty of work to do.

- **Changes to GDA Annual Reporting**

- Dashboards are very helpful but need additional usability refinements.

- **General Comments**

- Valuable to compare the percentages of meet/pass/fail in the executive summary to the 2021 values (they are indicated as +/- in the table later in the report, but it would be good to have that info as a percentage comparison up front in the executive summary).

NGAC Review & Comment

Recommendations for Future Reports

- **Executive Summary**
 - In the future, it would be helpful if commentary was provided on the covered agency self-evaluations that have ratings inconsistent with the Inspector General reports. To be specific, in several cases, the IG finds that meeting the 13 requirements is "making progress" and the covered agency acknowledges and concurs with the IG findings and yet its report to FGDC often claims that it "meets requirements."
 - The Executive Summary describes changes in the reporting process and the results of the performance and statistical accomplishments of meeting the requirements for reporting but does describe why that is important. Adding the benefit of this information for Congress to understand the value of geospatial information could be impactful for future requests of assistance, responding to audits, and so forth.

NGAC Review & Comment

Recommendations for Future Reports

- **Changes to GDA Annual Reporting**
 - If a self-evaluation with a "-" indicates a lower rating than in the past year, it would help to know why an "M" was replaced with a "P" or why an "F" was introduced. The covered agency summary reports did not include an explanation. Having some insight into the cause of the decrease in the rating would be helpful.

NGAC Review & Comment

Other Comments

- **Key Observations**

- While the dashboards present the reporting information in a simple manner, they do not clearly convey the status of the effort due to subjectivity in how ratings are defined and applied. Further, the ratings should be evaluated to see if a change is needed to improve the effectiveness of conveying status of requirements for the themes.

- **Challenges and Observations**

- Suggest adding language to the Challenges section to discuss the need for a 'standards baseline' in order to effectively measure progress of GDA Implementation. Consider adding a section focused on FGDC Challenges to advance the GDA.

GDA Reporting – Next Steps

NGAC:

- **Action: NGAC approval of NGAC comments on 2022 GDA Report Summary**
- **Action:** In 2023/2024, the GDA Subcommittee will review and provide comments on the individual covered agency and NGDA data theme annual reports

FGDC:

- Incorporate NGAC comments into 2023 GDA Report to Congress
- Review and address NGAC comments on 2022 GDA Report
- Develop plan & timeline for FY 2023 GDA Reports
- Continue coordination with IG offices in preparation for 2024 GDA audits