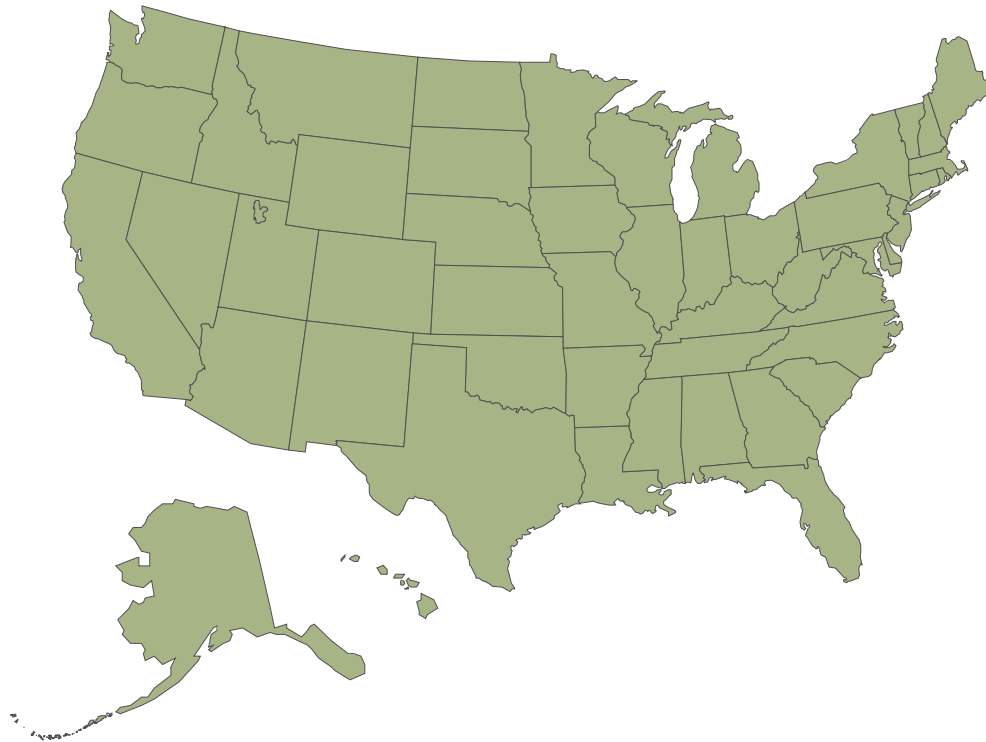


State Model for Coordination of Geographic Information Technology

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State Model for Coordination of Geographic Information Technology (GIT)

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State Model for Coordination of Geographic Information Technology (GIT)

Background

In the fall of 2002, the National States Geographic Information Council (NSGIC) began to focus on the level of coordination between state and federal government. States have significant geospatial needs, requiring coordination between federal, state and local governments (i.e. emergency planning and response). Each State is unique, with differing governing structures, relationships with governmental entities and their interaction, and all are in various stages of Geographic Information Technology (GIT) coordination.

However, there are commonalities between the States and especially the demands on state government. Recently, each state has wrestled with responding to requests for information (i.e., Homeland Security, National Map, TIGER Modernization, etc.) and the need to coordinate these requests at both the state and local government level. These requests are not trivial; they are time consuming and are significantly impacting and in some cases, re-prioritizing state and local government geospatial initiatives. The most disturbing pattern is that the information collected is not always shared to maximize the benefit or minimize the next information gathering initiative.

States need to establish strong coordination efforts to minimize costs, the impact on existing efforts and ensure that opportunities are leveraged to benefit all levels of government. Significant cost savings can be realized through coordinated efforts using the “Collect Data Once and Use It Many Times” approach employed by many states and endorsed by NSGIC. Additionally, if the federal government places demands on local governments, independent of the states, there are no assurances that the needs of the states will be met and significant collaborative assets may be misdirected or inefficiently utilized. At best, a significant opportunity will be lost.

State Model for Coordination Survey

To better support interaction and coordination between all levels of government, NSGIC began to identify fundamental characteristics of effective statewide coordination of GIT. The end result was a listing of critical factors for measuring performance objectives and the criteria needed for an effective statewide GIT coordination program. These critical factors identified in the state model for coordination were intended as guidelines to be considered in the development and administration of any statewide GIT coordination.

Coordination Criteria

- A full-time, paid coordinator position is designated and has the authority to implement the state’s business and strategic plans.
- A clearly defined authority exists for statewide coordination of geospatial information technologies and data production.
- The statewide coordination office has a formal relationship with the state’s Chief Information Officer (or similar office).
- A champion (politician or executive decision-maker) is aware and involved in the process of coordination.
- Responsibilities for developing the National Spatial Data Infrastructure and a State Clearinghouse are assigned.
- The ability exists to work and coordinate with local governments, academia, and the private sector.
- Sustainable funding sources exist to meet projected needs.
- Coordinators have the authority to enter into contracts and become capable of receiving and expending funds.
- The Federal government works through the statewide coordinating authority.



State Model for Coordination of Geographic Information Technology (GIT)

State Model for Coordination Survey (continued)

These critical factors were presented to the NSGIC Membership at the 2003 Mid-Year Conference in Denver, Colorado and the concept was well received. The NSGIC Board approved and endorsed coordination guidelines on May 6, 2003 and presented these to NSGIC members during the state caucus at the 2003 Annual Conference in Nashville, Tennessee for approval. The model supports increased coordination and provides direction to States with clear measurable success criteria. The criteria for the coordination model was approved by the membership and sent to each NSGIC state representatives for a self-assessment. State representatives provided their responses to NSGIC in late 2003. This information has been compiled in this report. Individual state responses are available upon request.

We believe the information reported is accurate but it is important to note that information included represents a quick snapshot of each state and was provided by the NSGIC representative with limited validation of provided information. Also note that this is an evolving document and recognize that some answers will change over time.

Findings

General Observation

The following information is a high level analysis of responses from NSGIC representatives from 50 states. These states responded to a survey of nine questions [see diagram] providing NSGIC with a reliable snapshot of coordination characteristics across the nation. Interestingly, no real regional patterns are apparent, but the results show that we are doing much better than originally thought regarding Statewide GIT coordination. However, a separation between states begins to appear after seven positive responses. Using this stratification, thirty-two (32) states meet six or more of the coordination criteria, while eighteen (18) of the responding states meet five or less of the coordination criteria for this model.

One clear differentiator between states was the existence of a sustainable funding source to support geographic information technologies. Only 14 states responded that a sustainable funding source existed for GIT in their state. Twenty-nine (29) states have a paid full time coordinator with twenty-five (25) of them having contracting authority. Thirty-seven (37) of the responding states also have a formal relationship with the Chief Information Officer (CIO). The majority of states (40) have defined authority for GIT coordi-

Questions

Question #	Questions	Positive Results
1	Has your state designated a full-time, paid coordinator position that has the authority to implement the state's business and strategic plans?	29
2	Does a clearly defined authority exist for statewide coordination of geospatial information technologies and data production?	40
3	Does your statewide coordination office have a formal relationship with the state's Chief Information Officer (or similar office)?	37
4	Do you have a champion (politician or executive decision-maker) that is aware and involved in the process of coordination?	35
5	Does your state have assigned responsibilities for developing the National Spatial Data Infrastructure and a State Clearinghouse?	39
6	Does your state have mechanisms to work and coordinate with local governments, academia, and the private sector?	44
7	Does a sustainable funding source exist to meet projected needs?	14
8	Does your state GIS Coordinator have the authority to enter into contracts, and receive or expend funds?	30
9	Does the Federal government work through your statewide coordinating authority?	41



Findings (Continued)

nation. Forty-one (41) states responded that the federal government coordinates activities through the state's coordinating body. Additionally, forty-four (44) states responded that they have existing mechanisms to work and coordinate with local government, academia and the private sector.

Thirty-two (32) states meet or are positioned to meet the Coordination Model Criteria (see page 7) for statewide coordination. All of these 32 states had defined coordinating authority with thirty-one (31) of them working closely with their CIO's Office. Thirty (30) states interact with local government, academia and the private sector and reported that the federal government is working through their state's coordinating body. Of these 32 states, twenty-nine (29) have contracting authority, twenty-eight (28) are responsible for NSDI and clearinghouse activities and twenty-seven (27) have a full-time paid coordinator with an identified GIT champion.

Of the eighteen (18) states meeting five or less criteria, all reported no sustainable funding. Of these, 16 states did not have contracting authority and only two of these states have a full-time paid coordinator. There were eight states with defined coordinating authority and reported a clear GIT champion; however only six states have a formal relationship with the CIO's Office.

Specific Observations

Nine states (KS, MI, NJ, NY, OR, UT, VT, VA, and WI) fully meet the criteria presented in the coordination model. This is not too much of a surprise. These model states have had strong leadership and well established GIT programs in place for many years. Twelve other states (AZ, AR, IN, KY, ME, MN, MT, NC, SD, TN, TX and WA) satisfied all but one criterion with seven states identifying the lack of sustainable funding as being an issue. These states are also recognized for long standing programs and sound leadership with flagship states such as Arizona, Maine, Minnesota, North Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Washington to name a few. Arkansas, Indiana, Montana and South Dakota should be recognized for having made great strides regarding statewide GIT coordination in a relatively short timeframe.

States meeting all but two criteria (DE, ID, MO, and OH) cited no sustainable funding as an issue as well. This represents twenty-five (25) states that met seven or more coordination criteria. All twenty-five (25) had defined coordination authority, CIO interaction, interaction with local government, academia and the private sector and twenty-four (24) responded that their state had an identified champion, contracting authority and that the federal government coordinates activities through the state's coordinating body. Twenty-three (23) of these twenty-five (25) states have assigned NSDI responsibilities; twenty-one (21) have a paid GIS coordinator and fourteen of these twenty-five (25) states have a sustainable funding model.

Meeting all but three criteria (GA, HI, LA, MA, ND, PA and WV) seven states identified the issues above as well as the lack of an identified champion, not having authority to contract, with two states responding they had no defined individual responsible for NSDI or clearinghouse activities and other states stating they had limited or no interaction with local government, academia or the private sector. In addition, one state reported that the federal government does not coordinate through their coordinating body.

The common theme in the remaining 18 responding states were no sustainable funding, no full time coordinators, no contracting authority, they did have coordinating authority and the federal government was coordinating through their coordinating bodies.



Conclusions

As a nation, we are performing at higher degree of GIT coordination than previously thought. More than half of the states are satisfying over six of the nine model criteria. Increasing the number of positive responses to the coordination model is well within our grasp. The federal government appears to be coordinating through the appropriate statewide coordinating bodies and there is significant coordination occurring between state and local government, academia and the private sector.

Sustainable funding is an issue that should be further researched. This is clearly a differentiator between the model states and the others. It is also apparent that having a full time coordinator may not be critical in and of itself, but coupled with several other critical success factors, like sustainable funding, contracting authority, CIO interaction and a defined coordinating authority, the success of statewide coordination is limited.

NSGIC continues to focus efforts on strengthening coordinating activities across the United States. Coordination creates more opportunities for partnering and provides the ability to react to situations in a more timely fashion. Partnering at all levels of government for integrated solutions is critical to our future and provides mechanisms for a more focused expenditure of taxpayer’s dollars.

About NSGIC

The National States Geographic Information Council (NSGIC) is an organization committed to efficient and effective government through the prudent adoption of geospatial information technologies. NSGIC members are actively involved in the coordination and application of geospatial technologies in their States, creation and management of geospatial data as well as information technology policy. Membership consists of senior state geographic information system (GIS) managers and coordinators, representatives from federal agencies, local government, the private sector, academia and other professional organizations.

NSGIC promotes geospatial information integration and systems development, positive legislative actions, and provides input and advice to public and private decision-makers on national issues impacting the States. Today, there is an additional emphasis on the value of the NSDI for emergency preparedness functions including planning, mitigation, response and recovery activities to effectively minimize loss of life and property from natural and man-made disasters.

More than 85% of information collected and used by government is location based or geographically referenced. Location is the single thread common to all data. NSGIC advocates the benefits of geospatial technologies and data that can only be realized through intergovernmental and private sector cooperation, coordination, collaboration and partnerships.

NSGIC Board Members (2003-2004)

- William Johnson, NY President
- Zsolt Nagy, NC President-Elect
- Gene Trobia, AZ Past President

Directors

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- Stu Davis (OH) Director
- Shelby Johnson (AR) Director
- Ted Koch (WI) Director
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- Tony Spicci (MO) Director

State Model for Coordination of Geographic Information Technology (GIT)

Critical factors for measuring performance objectives

- Geospatial data will be available in a form that is usable to the public, private sector and government.
- The business requirements of all participants are met through coordination activities.
- Efficiencies can be demonstrated from coordination activities.
- All levels of governments are engaged.
- The statewide coordinating authority is a first point of contact for Federal grants, programs and initiatives.
- There is good coordination and communication between neighboring states.
- Duplication of effort and waste are eliminated.

Model States Coordination Survey Results, 2003

