

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT

**Information Technology Management**

**Part 274 Data Management**

**Chapter 2 Establishing Service Data Standards**

**274 FW 2**

**2.1 What is the purpose of this chapter?** This chapter describes how we establish data standards.

**2.2 What is the Service's policy on data standards?**

**A.** Managers must ensure that the data their programs and Regions use comply with Service and Departmental data standards (see 274 FW 1).

**B.** We designate data stewards to document and manage approved data standards, including standards that are defined primarily by external organizations, such as the Federal Geographic Data Committee, National Institute of Standards and Technology, or vendor associations.

**C.** Employees must use the formal process for establishing data standards, which includes procedures for modifying, terminating, or rescinding standards.

**2.3 What is the scope of this chapter?** This chapter applies to all Service employees who collect, create, procure, or use data, including data captured and stored in automated information systems.

**2.4 Why are data standards important?** Standards improve our work by:

**A.** Providing a way to seamlessly exchange data;

**B.** Making data easier to understand, interpret, and use;

**C.** Reducing the costs for creating new systems that use existing data; and

**D.** Meeting the increasing demands for mission-related information and fiscal accountability.

**2.5 What are the authorities for this chapter?** See 274 FW 1 for a list of the authorities for the chapters in Part 274.

**2.6 What terms do you need to know to understand this chapter?** See 274 FW 1 for definitions of terms we use in Part 274.

**2.7 Who is responsible for our data standards?**

**A.** The **Director** distributes proposed Servicewide data standards for review.

**B.** The **Assistant Directors and Regional Directors** are responsible for:

**(1)** Ensuring that their staff members implement the policy and procedures in this chapter, and

**(2)** Appointing data stewards for the data sets that their programs/Regions use.

**C.** The **Chief Information Officer (CIO)**:

**(1)** Is the Assistant Director – Information Resources and Technology Management;

**(2)** Coordinates information technology (IT) issues on a Servicewide basis;

**(3)** Ensures our IT resources support our strategic missions;

**FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT**

**Information Technology Management**

**Part 274 Data Management**

**Chapter 2 Establishing Service Data Standards**

**274 FW 2**

- (4) Leads the data standardization effort in the Service;
- (5) Approves the process for establishing, modifying, and terminating data standards, including changes to format and content;
- (6) Approves and distributes the standards we adopt; and
- (7) Ensures that our data standards comply with Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and Departmental policies, directives, and guidelines.

**D. The Bureau Data Architect/National Data Administrator**, Information Resources and Technology Management:

- (1) Coordinates and implements data standardization procedures in the Service;
- (2) Updates and maintains the step-by-step procedures for establishing data standards Servicewide, including the definitions of terms and phrases we use within the data standards;
- (3) Ensures that data stewards have a thorough knowledge of the subject matter described in the standards for which they are responsible;
- (4) Assists data stewards with:
  - (a) The review process for adopting, modifying, and rescinding national data standards;
  - (b) Managing and maintaining adopted data standards;
  - (c) Locating and sharing data; and
  - (d) Improving the quality and accuracy of data.
- (5) Manages the repository of adopted and proposed data standards and maintains the list on the [Service's Data Standards](#) Web site; and
- (6) Promotes and coordinates the implementation of OMB and Departmental data policies, procedures, and standards within the Service.

**E. Data Stewards** are responsible for:

- (1) Developing, maintaining, and documenting their data standard(s) and associated data set(s), if applicable;
- (2) Addressing comments received during review of the standard;
- (3) Providing guidance to personnel on how to collect, create, acquire, and use data; and
- (4) Modifying their standards to:
  - (a) Ensure their usefulness, accuracy, and integrity; and
  - (b) Comply with OMB and Departmental policies, procedures, and standards.

**FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT**

**Information Technology Management**

**Part 274 Data Management**

**Chapter 2 Establishing Service Data Standards**

**274 FW 2**

**F. Information System Owners and Managers** are responsible for:

- (1) Ensuring we apply the Department's data standards in information systems design, development, modification, and improvement efforts for which they are responsible (see 274 FW 1);
- (2) Implementing approved Service data standards in systems for which they are responsible;
- (3) Identifying data under their management for which official standards are necessary;
- (4) When an information system must satisfy more than one requirement in a user community or line of business, ensuring that the data requirements are identified, reconciled, and described; and
- (5) Working directly with the Service Data Architect, Business Data Stewards, and Database Administrators to implement accepted business rules, best practices, standards, quality control procedures, and security requirements for all data.

**G. Service employees** are responsible for:

- (1) Following the policy and procedures in this chapter;
- (2) Using the Service's data elements, layers, sets, procedures, and exchange formats according to the instructions provided in each data standard; and
- (3) Complying with data-related Federal mandates such as the Freedom of Information Act, the Privacy Act, and the Information Quality Act.

**2.8 How does a Program or Region create a data standard?**

**A. Determine whether a standard already exists.** Employees who need a particular standard should check the [Service's Data Standards](#) Web site to determine if a standard has been adopted or is in the process of receiving approval.

**B. Contact the National Data Administrator.** If a desired standard does not exist, contact the National Data Administrator for advice and assistance in establishing a standard. The Data Administrator will explain the process for establishing your specific standard. (Step-by-step procedures are summarized below and can be found on the [Service's Data Standards](#) Web site.)

**C. Establish clear ownership and authority.** Each standard must have a data steward who is responsible for determining when the standard needs to be adopted, revised, or rescinded. To have a focal point for resolving conflicts constructively, the person or office requesting the standard must propose the data steward at the start of the process. For example, standards adopted for one process or program area may have impacts on another (especially standards for data that different programs use, such as "organization code" or "vegetation type"). See Exhibit 1 for a sample memorandum designating a data steward for a proposed standard.

**D. Circulate the proposed standard for review.**

- (1) The data steward prepares a draft standard with assistance from the National Data Administrator. The steward then prepares a transmittal memorandum from the Director to the Directorate asking the Directorate to review the draft. See Exhibit 2 for a sample note to reviewers and memorandum requesting review of a proposed standard. The memorandum should include:

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT

- (a) A time frame for review, usually 45 calendar days;
  - (b) Any other items reviewers should consider, such as estimated benefits and impacts on programs, Regions, partners, or customers; and
  - (c) The name of the person to whom the Directorate should send comments.
- (2) The steward sends the proposed standard and memorandum requesting Directorate review:
- (a) Through his/her chain of command,
  - (b) Through the CIO, and
  - (c) To the Director for signature.

**E. Incorporate feedback and finalize standard.** The data steward must consider all feedback and, if appropriate, incorporate it into a final standard.

**F. Obtain the CIO's signature.** After revising the standard to incorporate feedback, the data steward must obtain the CIO's approval to adopt the standard. The data steward then prepares a memorandum from the CIO to the Directorate announcing the formal adoption of the data standard for Servicewide use. See Exhibit 3 for a sample note to reviewers and memorandum announcing adoption of a Service data standard.

**G. Revise or rescind the standard.** The steward must revise the adopted standard whenever necessary and rescind it when it is no longer needed. The steward should contact the National Data Administrator for help with the review process for revising or rescinding a standard.

**2.9 How does a data steward format the text when writing a data standard?** Exhibit 4 is a Microsoft Word template that you may use to develop a new data standard. Refer to the list of Definitions of Terms and Phrases available [online](#) to determine which ones to use for the proposed standard. The Division of Information Resources and Technology Management's Branch of Data Systems and Services will reformat the standard for publication on the [Service's Data Standards](#) Web site.

/sgd/ Elizabeth H. Stevens  
ACTING DEPUTY DIRECTOR

Date: March 4, 2009

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT

Information Technology Management

Part 274 Data Management

Chapter 2 Establishing Service Data Standards

274 FW 2

- (a) A time frame for review, usually 45 calendar days;
  - (b) Any other items reviewers should consider, such as estimated benefits and impacts on programs, Regions, partners, or customers; and
  - (c) The name of the person to whom the Directorate should send comments.
- (2) The steward sends the proposed standard and memorandum requesting Directorate review:
- (a) Through his/her chain of command,
  - (b) Through the CIO, and
  - (c) To the Director for signature.

**E. Incorporate feedback and finalize standard.** The data steward must consider all feedback and, if appropriate, incorporate it into a final standard.

**F. Obtain the CIO's signature.** After revising the standard to incorporate feedback, the data steward must obtain the CIO's approval to adopt the standard. The data steward then prepares a memorandum from the CIO to the Directorate announcing the formal adoption of the data standard for Servicewide use. See Exhibit 3 for a sample note to reviewers and memorandum announcing adoption of a Service data standard.

**G. Revise or rescind the standard.** The steward must revise the adopted standard whenever necessary and rescind it when it is no longer needed. The steward should contact the National Data Administrator for help with the review process for revising or rescinding a standard.

**2.9 How does a data steward format the text when writing a data standard?** Exhibit 4 is a Microsoft Word template that you may use to develop a new data standard. Refer to the list of Definitions of Terms and Phrases available [online](#) to determine which ones to use for the proposed standard. The Division of Information Resources and Technology Management's Branch of Data Systems and Services will reformat the standard for publication on the [Service's Data Standards](#) Web site.

Date:

March 4, 2009

  
DIRECTOR



ELIZABETH H. STEVENS