

Data Standards Terminology

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The following terms relate to data standards.

| Term/Phrase | Definition |
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| Adopted | A standard is "Adopted" when it has been approved by the Associate Chief Data Officer (ACDO) and Assistant Chief Information Officer (ACIO). |
| Approval Date | The date on which the Assistant Chief Information Officer (ACIO) approved a data standard. |
| Classification System | A collection of procedures, characteristics, and definitions used to classify and/or identify, data objects or entities such as mammals, birds, wetlands, plants, insects, etc. |
| Created | A standard is "Created and Adopted" when defined by the FWS, refined by internal review and then approved by the Associate Chief Data Officer (ACDO). |
| Data Element | The smallest and simplest unit of data that imparts meaningful information. A data element can be a field in a relational database, a column in a flat file, an attribute used to describe spatial data, or a row or column in a spreadsheet. Examples of data elements are name, date, length, time, or cost. |
| Data Layer | A spatial data set used in a Geographic Information System (GIS). |
| Data Set | A data set (or dataset) is a structured collection of data. |
| Data Standard | Data standards are the guidelines by which data are described and recorded. To share, exchange, combine and understand data, we must standardize the format as well as the meaning. |
| Data Standard Steward | The person responsible for a data standard. In this role, a Data Steward is charged by his/her Management to develop and maintain the data standard and to counsel Service personnel on the proper use of the data. He/she must: have a thorough knowledge of the subject matter of the standard, provide accurate and current electronic copies of data relevant to the standard, and weigh the pros and cons of comments received during review of the standard. He/she is authorized to defend or modify the standard as necessary to ensure its proper use. More detailed responsibilities for this role are described in 274 FW 2 Table 2-1 section F . |
| Data Steward | A technical point of contact for data and related attributes who performs the oversight and maintenance functions described in 274 FW 1 Data Resource Management, Table 1-2 (3) for data under their stewardship. Also known as the data manager responsible for overseeing all aspects of the life cycle for a given set of data. In our organization, there are specific roles and responsibilities assigned to staff acting as stewards to ensure that the data can be used to draw conclusions or make decisions. A data manager or steward may also be known as a data wrangler |

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| Draft | A standard is a "Draft" until the designated Data Steward and National Data Administrator review, modify, and approve the proposed standard for internal review and comment. |
| FWS Created and Adopted | A standard is "Created and Adopted" when defined by the FWS, refined by internal review and then approved by the Associate Chief Data Officer (ACDO). |
| In Review | A standard is "In Review" when the Director has distributed the standard to the Service Directorate for review. "In Review" also includes the period of time when the Data Steward is considering the comments received from the Service Directorate. |
| Initial Approval Date | The date on which the Associate Chief Data Officer (ACDO) approved the initial data standard. |
| Open Data | Data that are freely available to everyone to use and republish for their own purposes. In the context of government open data, this means that Departments should adopt a presumption in favor of openness to the extent permitted by law and subject to privacy, confidentiality, security, or other valid restrictions. Open data are managed and provided in a way that makes it understandable and usable. The government's investment in data therefore becomes an asset that can be used and reused for maximum return inside and outside of government. Learn more and join the conversation at Project Open Data . |
| Open Data Standard | A data standard that is readily available and that other agencies and the public can access without restrictions. |
| Pending Revision | A standard is "Pending Revision" when the Director has distributed a revision of the adopted standard to the Service Directorate for review. |
| Phase | A description of where the standard is in the development process. The options are Draft, Working Draft, In Review, Adopted, and Pending Revision. |
| POC | Individual point of contact (POC), group or site for standards maintained by organizations/agencies outside FWS (<i>see also Point of Contact</i>) |
| Point of Contact | The person who is the first point of contact (POC) for questions and comments on a data standard when a Data Steward is not designated. A POC may also be identified to serve as the liaison between the designated Data Steward and Service users on all issues pertaining to the data standard. |
| Procedure | A series of defined steps to accomplish a specific task, such as creating standardized metadata for describing digital data sets or records of information resources. |
| Recommended Field Name | The recommended field name to be used in a database to facilitate data transfer between different systems and databases. |
| Retired | A standard is "Retired" when it is no longer in effect in the FWS. Its retirement was requested by the data steward and approved by the Assistant Director for Information Resources. |

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| Revision Approval Date | The date on which the Associate Chief Data Officer (ACDO) approved a revision to the adopted data standard. |
| Standard Type | Data standard types are categories of data standards. These include classification, process, data element, and data layer and represent a grouping or categorization of standards. This should not be confused with data type which refers to individual fields within a standard which may be numeric, character, alphanumeric, or similar types. |
| Syntax | Instructions describing how a data value should be coded and how long a data value may be. For example, NNN- NN- NNNN could be the syntax for coding a Social Security Number where each N represents a digit from 0 through 9. |
| Validation Date | The date the data standard was last reviewed by the Data Steward and/or POC to ensure continued utility and accuracy of the standard. |
| Voluntary Consensus Standards | A type of standard that specialist organizations (e.g., the International Organization for Standardization (ISO)) develop or adopt by using the process described in OMB Circular A-119 |
| Working Draft | A standard is a "Working Draft" when it has been reviewed by the designated Data Steward and National Data Administrator but has not yet been approved and distributed by the Director for a Service-wide review. |