

DTL July
ORG10-1



United States Department of the Interior

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
EROS Data Center
Sioux Falls, South Dakota 57198

IN REPLY REFER TO:

OC 10-16
OPBA 10-45

MEMORANDUM

October 24, 1994

To: All EDC Employees
From: Donald T. Lauer *D. Lauer*
Chief, EROS Data Center
Subject: EDC Program Review

The 20th annual EROS Data Center (EDC) Program Review was held on October 3-5, 1994 at Spirit Lake, Iowa. Attendees were Don Lauer, Gary Metz, Wayne Rohde, Ron Parsons, Dave Ochsner, Bill Draeger, Tom Holm, June Thormodsgard, Bruce Quirk, RJ Thompson, Jim Sturdevant, Don Moore, Nick Van Driel, Donna Scholz, Doug Binnie, and Dave Hair. The purpose of this year's meeting was to review and assess the Data Center's program planning and management processes, Land Processes Distributed Active Archive Center (LPDAAC) status and plans for supporting NASA's Mission to Planet Earth Program, and several other topics including program visibility, private sector partnerships, and software distribution. As done with past Program Reviews, we also discussed strategies for dealing with anticipated challenges and opportunities.

I was pleased with the discussions and accomplishments of the meeting. Thirty action items were assigned (see attached list). Highlights of the meeting follow.

FY 1994 in Review

The meeting opened with the announcement that RJ Thompson has been selected to receive the Department of the Interior's (DOI) Distinguished Service Award, the highest award given by the Department. RJ will receive the award from Secretary Babbitt at a ceremony in Washington, DC on November 22.

Fiscal year 1994 was a year marked by many significant accomplishments at the Data Center. Cited were the successes of several projects, including the global 1-km

AVHRR, global topographic, Multi-Resolution Land Characterization (MRLC), Scientific Assessment and Strategy Team (SAST), and DLG-E projects. Other accomplishments were the conversion of Landsat MSS data to durable media, implementation of the National Mapping Division's (NMD) digital sales data base, increase in data sales, stabilizing the Center's budget, and initiating building addition construction -- to name only a few. Thanks to all Center employees for their professionalism, dedication, and hard work during the past year.

These successes and others have given the Data Center a very high profile within the NMD, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), DOI, and other Federal agencies. The USGS and NMD are restructuring their organizations, refocusing their programs, and improving management processes consistent with the administration's government reinvention thrust. The Center has an opportunity to participate in these efforts through task forces and committees. Such participation is encouraged, and we will be hearing more about these activities soon.

There were also a few disappointments last year. The management processes put forth through the Concept of Operations (CONOPS) and the Design of Operations (DESOPS) have been only partially implemented. These processes will be emphasized in FY 1995. Our role in supporting the future Landsat program changed from USGS leadership in developing the Landsat 7 data reception, processing, and archiving system to the USGS supporting NASA development of the system. The system will still be located and operated at the Data Center. We also witnessed delays in the development of the National Landsat Archive Production System (NLAPS) and in the delivery of declassified imagery to the Center -- both of which should get back on track in 1995.

Program Planning/Management Processes

The review began by discussing the main principles behind CONOPS and DESOPS, including the roles and responsibilities of the Assistant Center Chief for Programs, Branch and Office Chiefs, and Program Managers. The currently defined role of the Assistant Center Chief for Programs was reemphasized, and Program Managers will continue to report to Branch and Office Chiefs.

A review of the results of a questionnaire concerning DESOPS (completed by some Department Managers, Technical Area Leaders, and project leaders) indicated the confusion over DESOPS among Center staff. After statements supporting DESOPS by the Senior Staff, the discussion focused on identifying steps to clarify DESOPS and to make it work. The attendees divided into teams and each team provided their recommendations for the next phase for DESOPS. Two themes developed from these discussions. The first was communication. Senior Staff must communicate their commitment to DESOPS, emphasizing program management fundamentals and the

roles and responsibilities of all staff. This phase will start immediately. The second theme is the actual implementation of procedural changes. Project management, budgeting, performance evaluation, and travel authorization are a few of the procedures needing to be streamlined. Specific actions for this implementation will be forthcoming.

Improving the process of setting project priorities was explored. Program managers ranked their respective projects, and Senior Staff will collectively prioritize all Center projects soon. This ranking will be our guide for allocating resources. Also, each Branch and Office Chief presented their critical staffing needs to meet programmatic priorities. A total of 26 government and contractor positions were identified. Each member of Senior Staff has prioritized these positions, and the Office of the Chief will make final decisions regarding staffing levels in FY 1995 over the next few weeks.

A good share of the meeting was spent discussing human resource issues. A report on the activities of the continuous measurable improvement (cmi) training team, including results of the training questionnaire, stimulated a discussion on training and career development. Senior Staff praised the work of the training team, and supported the concept of a cross-sectional team that would set policy and coordinate training requirements. Also, the Data Center's Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity program was reviewed. Suggestions were made to make various activities, such as eliminating sexual harassment and improving diversity in the workforce, even more visible and pro-active. Other topics discussed were employee awards, health and safety activities, new employee orientation, cmi, and the Federal Women's Program. Human resources was held up by all members of Senior Staff as the most important "management process." The Human Resources Management position in PBA, which will be filled soon, and Tom Earley will spearhead many of these activities. However, it is the responsibility of every employee to make the EROS Data Center a productive, fair, and safe place to work.

LPDAAC Status and Plans

A draft management plan for the LPDAAC was presented. It documented EDC's approach to managing both the Earth Observing System (EOS) and Landsat 7 activities. The plan proposed that the LPDAAC program be renamed the Mission to Planet Earth Support Program. Four phases of implementation were proposed, starting in 1995 through the year 2004. For each phase, the management, engineering and development, and operations and maintenance activities were discussed. Phase I involves dedicating several additional Data Center staff to the program (1995). Phase II proposes a fourth branch at EDC, the EOS Systems Branch (1996-1997). In the third and fourth phases, significant numbers of staff are added to support the program as it grows and matures. The management plan will be finalized in the next few weeks and be available to Data Center staff for further review and analysis. The future of the

Satellite Data Systems Office will also be evaluated over the next several weeks.

Recognition/Visibility of EDC Programs

Visibility of activities, both internal and external, is critical to the success of the EDC. The importance of making EDC programs visible in the current budgetary environment can not be overemphasized. Several actions were identified to increase program visibility. USGS fact sheets will be prepared and videos will be produced. Both will highlight key programs and projects. The resurrection of a technical newsletter was also supported by Senior Staff. Program Managers and Branch and Office Chiefs must work with PBA to make these things happen. The community outreach program is important and should continue, yet be balanced by a program of outreach to our technical and scientific customers.

Role of the Private Sector in EDC Programs

This discussion started with a definition of the private sector as any non-federal entity such as industry, universities, etc. A review of the historical role of the private sector was followed by a discussion on Cooperative Research and Development Agreements (CRADAs). CRADAs are agreements between a Federal agency and one or more representatives of the private sector to conduct research and development that are consistent with the mission of the Federal agency involved. The NMD has several active CRADAs and EDC has initiated one. The use of CRADAs at EDC will be expanded.

Policy on Software Distribution/Support

The policy for handling external requests for EDC developed software was discussed. The EDC receives inquiries for LAS/XID, ADAPS, TIEPTS, GLIS, and DORRAN. A procedure for handling requests for LAS has developed over the past several years. Interested parties submit a formal request for LAS to the Center Chief. Approved requests are sent the installation package which includes a disclaimer minimizing the EDC obligation for software support. We are currently supporting 20 external LAS sites. Supporting these sites and fielding requests from other groups requires approximately 1 FTE. The recommendation that was adopted stated the current procedure will remain for the LAS package, but that we will not generally distribute the other software packages.

I invite each of you to bring your comments or questions about these topics to any member of Senior Staff. I expect each of you to hold Senior Staff accountable to carry out the actions and implement the decisions made at the Program Review.

Attachment

Senior Staff Program Review (10/3-5/94)

October 28, 1994

Action Item Number	Action	Person(s) or Organization	Due Date
1	As the Division restructures its organization, work with headquarters on who, currently C&R, has oversight for the LPDAAC Program.	RJ Thompson	In next 6 months
2	Update "EDC Information Systems Development Plan" and convene a Senior Staff briefing on GLIS/DORRAN development and re-engineering.	Donna Scholz	12/15/94
3	Develop a requirements document for future Automated Data Processing (ADP).	Ron Parsons	Draft by 1/15/95
4	Prepare letter to NBS Information Systems Manager with an invitation to visit the EDC.	June Thormodsgard	11/30/94
5	Prepare EDC instruction that addresses the administration and management of Field Offices.	Bruce Quirk	12/15/94
6	Review the requirements and status of the NMD Data Grant Project and provide report to Senior Staff.	June Thormodsgard, Tom Holm	11/30/94
7	Prepare letter from Don Lauer to Gary North, cc. to Al Watkins, discussing the publication review process.	Jim Sturdevant, Nick Van Driel	11/15/94
8	Convene a session(s) to discuss alternatives for securing funding for data management activities (revised pricing policies, "earmarked" funding from Production Office, etc.).	Bill Draeger, Tom Holm	In next 2 months
9	Brief Senior Staff on Alternate Work Environment implementation plans.	June Thormodsgard	11/30/94
10	Provide list of prioritized projects, including ranking criteria and FTEs, to the ACC for Programs.	Program Managers	10/31/94
11	Each Program Manager schedule a Senior Staff briefing including FY95 plans, staffing, etc.	Program Managers	Complete all briefings by 12/1/94
12	Articulate to EDC staff our systematic process for setting priorities for EDC resources.	Senior Staff	On-going
13	Develop a strategy for the next phase of DESOPS, including written operations and implementation plans.	Office of the Chief	11/15/94

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14	Communicate (via memorandums, briefings, etc.) to EDC staff our commitment to DESOPS and the implementation details.	Senior Staff	On-going
15A.	Provide Senior Staff with complete list of new positions for permanent staff.	Office of the Chief	ASAP
15B	Prioritize top 10 positions from list.	Senior Staff	10/12/94
15C	Prepare strategy/Center plan for short-term staffing.	Office of the Chief	10/31/94
16	Work with Branch Chiefs on staffing for Phase I (FY95) for LPDAAC Program including 32 FTEs, 6 - 10 of which are dedicated 100%.	SDS Office	10/31/94
17	Continue to develop management plan for Mission to Planet Earth activities including a concept of operations.	SDS Office	11/30/94
18	Prepare briefing on development of an EDC EOS Systems Branch for Don Lauer to present at the National Mapping Managers Conference.	RJ Thompson	By National Mapping Managers Conference in November
19	Review status of the training program.	Jim Sturdevant	Senior Staff retreat in 1995
20	Prepare a one page handout on the Federal Women's Program to be distributed to all employees.	PBA	11/15/94
21	Post rules for holding meetings in all meeting rooms.	Bill Draeger, Jim Sturdevant	10/31/94
22	Establish "dress down" day at the EDC. Talk with HSTX office and establish every Friday as dress down day starting on 10/14.	Office of the Chief	10/13/94
23	Develop 15 new 1 page "fact sheets" covering such topics as EDC, MRLC, topographic data sets, NALC, DLG-E, and the sales data base.	PBA coordinate with Program Managers	next 6 months
24	Commitment to make 4 videos over the next year, potential topics are the International, NSLRSDA, IDS, and Research Programs, and MRLC.	PBA coordinate with Program Managers	Next 12 months
25	Write procedure for releasing new products.	DSB	11/30/94
26	Setup meeting to check progress being made on visibility.	Don Moore	In 3-4 months.

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27	Provide ideas on next Pecora, new building dedication, and 25th anniversary to Don Lauer.	All	10/17/94
28A	Provide 1 name to Don Zoller of an individual to be involved with CRADAs.	Branch and Office Chiefs.	In 2 weeks.
28B	Convene a meeting(s) to identify 1 or 2 activities that we are already working for potential CRADAs.	Don Zoller	In 3 weeks
29	Initiate the development of a strategic plan for the EDC.	Office of the Chief	11/30/94
30	Write a memorandum from Don Lauer to Al Watkins identifying administrative activities that EDC will discontinue under the President's Reinvention of Government. Senior Staff provide inputs to Jim Sturdevant by end of October.	Jim Sturdevant	10/31/94