February 3, 2011

Mr. Patrick Gallagher,
Director, National Institute of Standards and Technology
Co-Chair, National Science and Technology Council's Sub-Committee on Technology.

Subject : Effectiveness of Federal Agency Participation in Standardization in Select Technology Sectors for National Science and Technology Council's Sub-Committee on Standardization [Docket No. 0909100442-0563-02]

Dear Mr. Gallagher,

The National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) is very pleased to provide comments on the Federal Register Announcement [DOCID:fr08de10-46] - Effectiveness of Federal Agency Participation in Standardization in Select Technology Sectors for National Science and Technology Council's Sub-Committee on Standardization [Docket No. 0909100442-0563-02].

The NGA Mission is "To Provide Timely, Relevant, and Accurate GEOINT[2] in support of National Security." In support of its mission, NGA, and its predecessor agencies; the Defense Mapping Agency (DMA) and the National Imagery and Mapping Agency (NIMA), has been a unique leader in the development and promulgation of GEOINT Standards[3] throughout the Department of Defense (DoD) Geographic Information and Geospatial data community.. Early on, the standards developed were military in nature and defense-centric and were known as Military Standards (MIL-STD). With the adoption of the National Technology Transfer and Advancement Act (NTTAA) of 1995 and Public Law 104-113, NGA leadership issued policy that directed the development, promulgation, and adoption of GEOINT standards developed consistent with NTTAA.

In 2005, NGA established the Geospatial Intelligence Standards Working Group (GWG), based on DoD Directive 5105.60 (revised July 29, 2009) & NSG[1] Directive ST 8100, to support the Director NGA's responsibilities as GEOINT FM across the National System for Geospatial Intelligence (NSG). Through these policies, the GWG is formally recognized as a Joint Technical Working Group under the DoD IT Standards Committee (ITSC) and Intelligence Community Enterprise Standards Committee (IC ESC) and recommends GEOINT standards for the DoD IT Standards Registry (DISR) and Intelligence Community Standards Registry (ICSR). The standards registered in the DISR and ICSR are acquisition binding for the DoD and IC Community. The GWG is recognized as an official DoD GEOINT standards Community of Interest (COI) and the GEOINT community forum for the coordination and development of DoD/Intelligence Community positions in GEOINT standardization. Today, the GWG membership includes 26 voting member U.S. Government Organizations (primarily the Military Services and the Commands) and 8 Associate (technical advisory non-voting) member organizations including civil government, academia and international partners.

Today, through the work of the GWG, over 80% (and increasing) of the GEOINT standards cited in the DISR and ICSR by the GWG have been developed using public/private standards partnerships with organizations such as the International Standards Organization Technical Committee 211 (ISO TC211 – www.isotc211.org) – Geographic Information-Geomatics, the American National Standards Institute International Committee for Information Technology Standards (ANSI/INCITS), and the Open Geospatial Consortium (OGC – www.opengeospatial.org). Through active participation in these organizations, NGA is able to highly leverage the knowledge, skills, and talent of the broad geospatial community for the development of standards that enable information, data, and service interoperability across today's technology. Standards developed through the public/private partnership 1) ***Reduce technology risk*** by aligning industry around standards of mutual interest, and allowing industry to develop these standards with their own resources; 2) ***Improve choice in the marketplace*** by influencing the development and adoption of standards that have been built out in the market in a growing list of commercial products. 3)

Mobilize new technologies by facilitating rapid integration of technologies and information into systems, enterprises and services via open standards. ***4) Enable the extension of legacy systems to interoperate with new technologies*** by adapting these systems to leverage standard interfaces and encodings and 5) ***Reduce overall system lifecycle costs*** by reducing or eliminating custom integration through the use of open standards Many of these ISO TC211 and OGC standards are further profiled to best fit a particular application environment or requirement by communities such as the Defence Geospatial Information Working Group (DGIWG).

In summary, standards developed through these public/private partnerships are changing, for the better in effectiveness and efficiency, the way NGA meets its mission. NGA would welcome the opportunity to brief the National Science and Technology Council's Sub-Committee on Standardization on the work of the GWG. For more information on the GWG, see (see http://www.gwg.nga.mil/).

Please do not hesitate to contact me for further information. I can be reached at email:Gregory.E.Black@nga.mil, phone: 703-814-4509

[1]National System for Geospatial Intelligence (NSG): A unified community of geospatial intelligence (GEOINT) experts, producers and users organized around the goal of integrating technology, policies, capabilities and doctrine to produce GEOINT in a multi-intelligence environment

[2]GEOINT: "The exploitation and analysis of imagery and geospatial information to describe, assess, and visually depict physical features and geographically referenced activities on the Earth. GEOINT consists of imagery, imagery intelligence, and geospatial information."

[3]GEOINT Standards: Standards that consist of technical specifications or other precise criteria to be used consistently as rules, guidelines, or definitions of characteristics of GEOINT to ensure that materials, products, processes, or services are fit for the analysis and visual representations of physical features and geographically referenced activities on the Earth.