

CHANGE MANAGEMENT POLICY FOR GEOGRAPHIC/LAND-RELATED DATA PRODUCTS AND STANDARDS

(Version 3.0 – 02-05-14)

DEFINITION

Change Management is the implementation of specified procedures for controlling, documenting and reporting change.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for managing change.

SCOPE

All geographic or land-related standards documents and related data products (including those developed under the Resources Information Standards Committee (RISC)) fall within the scope of this policy.

OBJECTIVES

1. To ensure that geographic or land-related data products have up to date reference standards.
2. To control the rate of change of both geographic or land-related data standards documents and related data products.
3. To ensure negative impact of change is reasonably minimized on the client community.
4. To ensure change is fully documented and effectively reported to the client community.

BASIC PRINCIPLES

1. It is the responsibility of custodians to manage both standards and related data (products) and to keep them up to date.
2. Custodians will be limited to managing change within their technical and budgetary constraints.
3. The client community should embrace changes that are good for business in the longer term, especially in the broader client community context.
4. Clients will be limited to adapting to change within their technical and budgetary constraints.

POLICIES

1. The Resources Information Standards Committee, as the agent for the Integrated Steering Committee, shall establish general change control policy which is published and adhered to by the custodian of each standards document and related data product. This policy will be used by the data custodians to define an update or change schedule for each standard.
2. The Custodian shall clearly document proposed changes to standards documents and related data products.
3. The Custodian before implementing major change will provide adequate notice to registered clients to allow impact of the change to be assessed and where appropriate provide sufficient lead-time for clients to address the change in a well-planned and orderly business manner.
4. The Custodian shall notify all registered clients of changes to standards documents and related data products.
5. Changes to standards documents and related data products will only be made by custodians and/or their designates.
6. The Custodian shall ensure that standards documentation is available for each data product, and that the data product is consistent with that documentation.

STANDARDS

1. **Field Season Rule:** A field inventory standard will not be changed during the field season. Consistent with this rule, is the requirement to have the field inventory standard published and made commonly available. In the case of RISC standards they will be made available via the RISC Publications WEB Site prior to start of the field season.
2. **Version Control:** Geographic or land-related data standards documents and related data products will have a method (as determined by the custodian) for identifying new versions of the document or data product. This is to ensure that data collected over time can be related to the correct version of the standard used. See Guideline 5 below.
3. **Impact of Change:** The data custodian will classify a change as either major or minor. See Guidelines 3 and 4 below. Data custodians should undertake a process for quantifying impacts of both doing the change and not doing the change based on criteria (as established by the custodian) used to determine if the change is necessary.
4. **Documenting Change:** With each revision of a standards document the data custodian will include with the revised document a summary of the changes as compared to the previous version of the document. Data custodians will ensure training materials, and in particular, RISC training materials, are kept up to date.
5. **Reporting Change:** Data custodians are responsible for notifying clients of the standard, of changes to the standard.

GUIDELINES

1. Change to standards documents should be minimized. It is reasonable for a standards document to be in effect for 2 to 5 years.
2. The frequency of updates to data products will influence the notification mechanism. If data are undergoing daily or frequent changes (this is often true of "operational" data) continual notification may be undesirable, and a log of all changes should be maintained that clients can consult to determine the extent to which the data have been modified. For more static data, more formal notification should be employed.
3. For major changes to inventory standards and/or data products adequate lead time to notify clients, address impact and provide for client adjustment to the new product might reasonably be six months to a year. Changes which would likely fall in this category are:
 - i) changes in geo-referencing, e.g. NAD shift;
 - ii) significant changes to specifications resulting in deleted, new or modified entities/attributes;
 - iii) changes in inventory process;
 - iv) changes in data capture methods; and,
 - v) in some cases changes to non-operational (relatively static) data products.Major changes to geographic or land-related data standards such as the above require resubmission of the standard to the Resources Information Standards Committee for approval.
4. For minor changes to standards documents such as:
 - i) minor changes to specifications, such as a modified attribute domain list;
 - ii) updates to administrative procedures, or;
 - iii) other small errors in the standards document;an errata sheet may be issued by the custodian after obtaining the signatures of the Resources Information Standards Committee Co-chairs.
5. Updates to a data product should be managed over time. Each product as it changes over time should be tracked using a version number. Associated with that number should be:
 - i) the last revision date;
 - ii) changes in the product from the last revision (the changes should be easily identifiable); and,
 - iii) next planned revision date (if there is one).

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. **The Resources Information Standards Committee (RISC)** will act as the agent for the Integrated Steering Committee (ISC) by:
 - establishing general change control policy; and,
 - acting as the forum within which conflicts arising between custodians and registered clients will be resolved. Conflicts, which cannot be resolved at RISC, will be forwarded to ISC for resolution.
2. **Clients** are responsible for:
 - registering interest with a data custodian, identifying the standards and related data products for which they wish to be notified of changes; and,
 - making known to the custodian, in a timely manner, the impact of planned changes to their business.
3. **Custodians** are responsible for:
 - maintaining a list of clients and the standards and/or related data products in which they have registered interest; and,
 - keeping registered clients informed and as necessary involved in the change process.