EPA Data Governance Council

Meeting Summary – November 1, 2021

General Updates

- The Chief Data Officer, Richard Allen, thanked the group for completing the Data Maturity Self-Assessment. Gartner will provide a report out on the assessment results next month.
- OMB released the [2021 Federal Data Strategy Action Plan](). The DGC will be charged with assisting in identifying data priorities for 2021, 2022, and 2023.
- The Metadata COTS Analysis Subgroup is evaluating an additional metadata management tool. Orientation sessions are this week for anyone interested in testing.

FY21 ITPR Data Discussion Takeaways

- Henry Perillo and Kristen Callahan provided an overview of the Fiscal Year 2021 Information Technology Portfolio Review (ITPR) data discussion takeaways.
- The Chief Data Officer, Chief Architect and Geospatial Information Officer conducted data discussions with EPA regions and program offices between April and July 2021.
- The analysis team reviewed information gathered from the data discussions and identified key themes to organize and orient to 'Lanes of Opportunity'.
- The summary will help EPA understand the ITPR outcomes and connect problem areas and opportunities to established initiatives.
- Data discussion key themes identified were management, governance, centralization, OMS communications, skills, SDWIS, and Superfund.
- Primary needs relating to data management include:
  - A data lifecycle management strategy.
  - Data governance and management for low code and data sharing.
  - A geo dataset on congressional districts/political representatives.
  - Facility data and mapping facilities to tribal boundary information.
- Primary takeaways relating to data governance include:
  - Comments surrounding data standards were among the most frequent.
  - Best practices were cases where certain strategies yielded success across program/office/agency levels.
  - Not as many comments/questions surrounding data policies.
  - Accessibility might have been confounded by the data storage subtheme under the centralization theme.
- Primary takeaways relating to data centralization include:
  - Despite the need by several different users for the same data, databases are often siloed.
  - There is a need for better metadata management.
  - Understanding which data systems are interconnected and bridging these gaps is crucial.
  - Some data assets are not stored on appropriate platforms (in terms of security and usability).
  - Desire to better understand data relationships, and to increase connection between data systems.
- Lanes of Opportunity

- o Effort to link issues and opportunities from the FY21 IT Portfolio Review data discussions to established initiatives.
- o Goal is to spotlight Lanes of Opportunity, or projects, tackling data challenges across the agency.
  - ▪ Data Governance Council Subcommittee on Governance and Strategy.
  - ▪ Modernization of the OARM Datamart.
- o Basic project information will be collected, and regular updates shared with the DGC
  - ▪ Project name, point of contact, description, purpose, outcomes/goals, schedule, involved Offices/Divisions, KPIs.
- Next Steps
  - o FY 22 Q1:
    - ▪ Complete ITPR Data Discussion Analysis**.**
    - ▪ Present findings to the DGC and CIO-SAC.
    - ▪ Collect information on the 'Lanes of Opportunity.'
  - o FY 22 Q2:
    - ▪ Track 'Lanes of Opportunity' and follow-up with POCs to make sure information is current.
    - ▪ Share regular Lanes of Opportunity updates with the DGC.
  - o FY 22 Q3:
    - ▪ Connect Lanes of Opportunity into FY22 ITPR data discussions.
- Discussion:
  - o How do you define a 'lane of opportunity'?
    - ▪ For the purposes of this analysis, lanes of opportunity are being used to digest the information received from the data discussions and to create a structure to link to existing efforts across EPA.

Data Governance and Strategy Discussion

- Heather Barnhart led the group in a brainstorming exercise to identify data governance and strategy threats.
- Discussion questions included:
  - o What stopped you from reaching your data goals?
  - o What would you need to get past those barriers?
  - o What is looming that could impact your goals?
- Discussion
  - o One of the biggest threats is cultural change because of drivers such as fear and inertia.
  - o Other threats include:
    - ▪ Too many priorities and a lack of resources.
    - ▪ Lack of clarity around how EPA data systems interact.
    - ▪ Lack of senior management commitment.