

MS 894 Open Data Policy

Effective Date: June 21, 2016

Responsible Office: Office of Strategic Information, Research, and Planning (OSIRP)

New Manual Section

Issuance Memo (06/21/16)

[Executive Order 13642 of May 9, 2013](#)

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this Manual Section is to describe the roles, responsibilities, and requirements related to Peace Corps information resources in order to assure that the Peace Corps publishes data in an open, efficient, and secure manner consistent with the federal open data policy.

2.0 Authorities

22 U.S.C. 2503; Executive Order 13642, May 9, 2013

3.0 Definitions

3.1 *Business unit* means a Peace Corps office that creates and maintains Peace Corps data.

3.2 *Data* means statistical or factual information that:

(a) are in alphanumeric form reflected in a list, table, graph, chart or other non-narrative form, that can be digitally transmitted or processed, including geographic information system (GIS) data; and

(b) are regularly created or maintained by or on behalf of Peace Corps and are controlled by Peace Corps. The term “data” does not include information provided to Peace Corps by other entities and does not include image files, such as designs, drawings, photos or scanned copies of original documents.

3.3 *Data set* means a named collection of related records on a storage device, with the collection containing data organized or formatted in a specific or prescribed way, often in tabular form.

3.4 *Enterprise Data inventory* means a comprehensive inventory of an agency’s data assets, as referenced in the federal open data policy.

3.5 *Federal open data policy* means the Office of Management and Budget Memorandum, M-13-13, “Open Data Policy -- Managing Information as an Asset.”

3.6 FOIA means the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552, a law that allows for the full or partial disclosure of previously unreleased information and documents controlled by federal agencies.

3.7 Metadata means data that is used to provide important context about a data set. It describes how, when, and by whom a particular set of data was collected, and how the data is formatted.

3.8 Open data advisory group means the advisory group established pursuant to this policy.

3.9 Open data coordinator means the open data coordinator designated by the Deputy Director.

3.10 Privacy Act means the Privacy Act of 1974, 5 U.S.C. § 552a, Public Law No. 93-579.

3.11 Protected data means any data set or portion to which the Peace Corps may deny access pursuant to FOIA or any other law, rule, or regulation, which may include circumstances such as:

- (a) any data or data set that reflects the internal deliberative or administrative process(es) of the Peace Corps, including, but not limited to, data on negotiating positions, future procurements or pending or reasonably anticipated legal or administrative proceedings;
- (b) any data subject to privacy laws, or to copyright, patent, trademark or trade secret protection, or to a confidentiality agreement, or that are otherwise protected by law or contract;
- (c) proprietary applications, computer code, software, operating systems or similar materials;
- (d) employee employment records, facilities data, information technology data, or other data related to the internal administration of the Peace Corps; or
- (e) any data which, if disclosed, would raise privacy or confidentiality concerns or jeopardize or have the potential to jeopardize public health, safety or welfare of Peace Corps employees or Volunteers, or law enforcement records or national security information.

3.12 Public data means any data or data set published on the Peace Corps website in machine-readable format.

4.0 Policy

4.1 Information is a valuable resource and a strategic asset to the Peace Corps, its partners, and the public. To ensure that the Peace Corps is taking full advantage of its information resources, business units must manage its data assets throughout their lifecycle. This will ensure that the Peace Corps can promote openness and accountability and properly safeguard systems and information. Timely and consistent publication of Peace Corps' public information and data aligns with existing agency strategies and priorities and is an essential component of an open and effective government.

4.2 Regularly publishing Peace Corps data to the public will increase operational efficiencies, reduce costs, improve services, support mission needs, and increase public access to valuable Peace Corps information. It will improve knowledge management across the agency, including the ability to capture historical data about the Peace Corps. Making data resources accessible, discoverable, and usable by the public can help fuel entrepreneurship, innovation, and discovery – all of which improve the lives of the individuals and communities supported by the Peace Corps.

4.3 Each Peace Corps business unit, to the extent practicable and in consultation with the open data advisory group, should work to make available online, through the Peace Corps website, all non-protected data sets and associated metadata under their control.

4.4 For purposes of identifying data sets for inclusion on the Peace Corps website, a Peace Corps business unit should consider whether the information contained in the data set:

- (a) is generally reliable and accurate;
- (b) is frequently the subject of a written request for public records of the type that a federal agency is required to make available for inspection or copying under FOIA;
- (c) increases agency accountability, efficiency, responsiveness or delivery of services;
- (d) improves public knowledge of the Peace Corps and its operations;
- (e) furthers the mission of the Peace Corps; and/or
- (f) creates opportunities for innovation and entrepreneurship.

4.5 The Peace Corps is committed to the proactive release of agency data, even if it is not the subject of a FOIA request. To determine which agency data is a priority for proactive disclosure, each business units should review its FOIA, media and congressional inquiries, and web traffic and search statistics to determine which datasets are of highest interest to the public.

4.6 Each Peace Corps business unit should make reasonable and appropriate efforts to update its public data on a regular basis to the extent that the business unit regularly maintains or updates its data sets.

5.0 Roles and Responsibilities

In order to ensure that Peace Corps meets its open data obligations in an efficient and responsible manner requires coordination among various stakeholders. The following offices have key roles to play in supporting Peace Corps' open data policy and ensuring that datasets are adequately reviewed and approved prior to release.

5.1 Peace Corps business units: Each Peace Corps business unit, to the extent practicable, is responsible for making available online, through the Peace Corps website, all appropriate data sets and associated metadata under their control, excluding protected data as defined above.

5.2 Privacy Officer: The agency Privacy Officer is responsible for consulting with agency business units to ensure any disclosure of public data conforms with the Privacy Act and any other applicable privacy-related laws or regulations.

5.3 Office of Strategic Information, Research, and Planning (OSIRP): OSIRP is responsible for consulting with offices across the agency to collect and analyze data to improve agency operations and to ensure the consistency, currency, completeness, relevance, reliability, and validity of data shared with the public via Congressional Relations, Communications, Press Relations, and other Peace Corps offices. This office oversees data governance, establishes data standards, and provides oversight regarding data methodology and collection.

5.4 Deputy Director: The Deputy Director is responsible for ensuring that the agency meets its obligations for open data and open government, including publishing of the agency's Open Government Plan. When there is a question about whether to release public data that cannot be resolved by the open data advisory group, the Deputy Director will be responsible for making a final determination about whether and how to release the data.

5.5 Office of General Counsel (OGC): OGC is responsible for determining if there are any legal, ethical, or confidentiality considerations for releasing Peace Corps data, and if so, working with the responsible business unit to address those considerations.

5.6 Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO): OCIO is responsible for determining if there are any technology-related security considerations for releasing public data, and if so, working with the responsible business unit to address those considerations. OCIO is also responsible for ensuring that agency technology systems support the timely and efficient publishing of public data in machine-readable formats and making the data as accessible as possible using the latest technological advancements.

5.7 Office of Communications: The Office of Communications is responsible for ensuring the timely publication of datasets, provided in a machine reliable format, to the Peace Corps website and communicating externally to the Peace Corps the availability of datasets not previously available on the website.

5.8 Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO): OCFO is responsible for ensuring that technology-related procurements support the provisions of Peace Corps' open data policy.

5.9 Open data advisory group: This group will be composed of representatives from the offices identified in 5.0, supplemented by additional members as needed. The group will provide consultation to individual Peace Corps business units that release public data and will meet as needed to address agency-wide open data policy issues. The group will also be responsible for preparing the agency's biannual Open Government Plan, pursuant to the federal Open Government Executive Order, and the agency's enterprise-wide data inventory. The group will be chaired by the open data coordinator. It will work with agency business units to compile, publish, and maintain an enterprise data inventory. The inventory will:

- (a) Provide a robust and usable inventory of Peace Corps' data assets.

(b) Create a process to engage with customers to help facilitate and prioritize release of public data.

(c) Document if certain datasets cannot be released to the public.

The group must conduct a full analysis of privacy, confidentiality, security, and other valid considerations as part of its process of publishing and maintaining the inventory.

6.0 Procedures

The open data advisory group is authorized to adopt procedures implementing this Manual Section.

7.0 Effective Date

The effective date is the date of issuance.