

CoCom Report: Issues and Action Requests
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The following is a report of items discussed during the November 1-2, 2012 Program Coordinating Committee (CoCom) face to face meeting at IRIS headquarters in Washington, DC. Overall, the meeting was extremely productive, focusing on a broad range of topics including stressors on the system, governance, and a number of miscellaneous items CoCom wishes to bring to the Board's attention. Presented below is a summary of these items, divided into major issues and a compilation of minor issues that CoCom wants the BoD to either be made aware or request action. These will be discussed during the BoD meeting.

1. There are a number of ongoing stressors within IRIS programs.

- a. There are *frequent requests to add scope to programs*. Some of these come with increased budgets; others do not. A major issue at present is that scope is broadened without increasing the number of staff FTE (either on a permanent or transient basis).
- b. A good example of a) is related to *program managers who serve in multiple leadership positions* for more than just a single program, and are also involved in other large-scale projects. The most striking example of this issue at the moment is Polar Programs, where the role of a full-time manager is very likely in order, but at present, Kent Anderson fills that role, the PM of the GSN, and works on the GLISN project as well.
- c. As the IRIS website retooling proceeds, *filling the IRIS website with content will continue to be difficult* and expensive in terms of time. As we all know, redesigning a website is the easy part of the operation; reworking content is time-consuming and painstaking. This effort will require significant portions of staff time to complete in a timely fashion.
- d. *Customs compliance in PASSCAL field experiments* has resulted in some "near-miss" situations that could have led to a customs "strike". No formal penalties have yet been applied. This issue could have ramifications beyond the PASSCAL program, including New Mexico Tech, GSN, IRIS, and even NSF, since all are involved in some way in IRIS-related customs issues.
- e. The *aging of the PASSCAL portable pool continues to present challenges* to the program's ability to support field experiments. More detailed data have been requested of the PASSCAL program, but anecdotally the number of instruments currently out of service continues to increase.

2. The standing committees and programs are concerned about the status and plans for IRIS governance changes.

- a. Under separate cover, we provide a *report on governance concerns and discussions* that occurred during the CoCom meeting.
- b. Of primary concern is the *unique role that CoCom plays* in the complex interplay between management and governance.
- c. *CoCom requests that the BoD deliver a development plan/timetable* to the standing committees as soon as possible. The standing committees need to see how they fit into the overall plan to develop a new governance model.

3. Budget and carryover discussion.

- a. Under separate cover, a *proposal for the use of carryover funds* has been provided and will be discussed during the BoD meeting.
- b. *CoCom requests that the BoD decide soon on future meeting dates for the upcoming year, since most components of budget preparations fall from the BoD meeting schedule.*

4. CoCom recommends that IRIS develop a strategic plan for IRIS and programs.

- a. A strategic plan, developed in concert with programs, *would enable IRIS to build and evolve for growth* across programs, initiatives, and projects.
- b. During the budget planning process, CoCom finds itself working on a year-to-year basis. Among many other advantages, *more informed decisions regarding targets for carryover funds* could be made with a strategic plan in place for IRIS and programs.

5. Miscellaneous items and requests.

- a. CoCom wants to highlight to the BoD *the important and unique relationship between IRIS and the USGS*, as well as international partners. This issue is of particular relevance as we move forward with a new governance model. These partners must have an appropriate seat at the table and be involved in
- b. PASSCAL requests a *response to the FA/PASSCAL pool merger memo*, which was submitted to the BoD for response several months ago.
- c. PASSCAL requests that the *BoD craft a Large N Working Group charge*.