

Elevation Specifications Requirements Review Board Charter

01/10/2018

Document Change History

V0.1	Charter reviewed by a Elevation Specifications Review Board.	December 10, 2017
V0.1	To be presented in initial form to full NGP LT by Vicki Lukas.	May 7, 2018
V0.2	Charter updated to reflect comments from NGP LT	May 22, 2018
V1.0	Charter approved by NGP LT	June 14, 2018
V1.0	To be presented in final form to Sandra Cooper, Bureau Approving Official	June 22, 2018

Authority

The Elevation Specifications Review Board (ESRB) of the National Geospatial Program (NGP) is granted authority by the NGP Leadership Team to: 1) make decisions on proposed requirements for acquired elevation data and associated specifications; 2) solicit and evaluate proposed updates from the 3DEP Working Group; 3) make decisions on proposed changes to the information content of SpecX, including changes to database content, update policies, revision cycles and standards referenced; and 4) Deliver the official Lidar Base Specifications through a public facing website.

Summary of purpose:

Purpose of Charter

This charter describes the functioning of the National Geospatial Program (NGP) Elevation Specifications Review Board (ESRB). The ESRB will participate in approving non-interpretive information for dissemination on a public facing website, so this charter will also serve as documentation of compliance with USGS Science Publishing Network policies and USGS Fundamental Science Practices.

Purpose of Board

The purpose of the ESRB is to analyze and adjudicate changes requested to the content of the Lidar Base Specification and other elevation data acquisition requirements and specifications to

ensure compliance with the NGP mission, 3DEP Program Strategic Plan, performance metrics, annual plan, and to facilitate collaboration with the 3DEP Working Group. The ESRB will help to streamline updates to the Lidar Base Specification and other elevation data acquisition requirements and provide those updates more quickly to the public.

Scope

The ESRB will: 1) make decisions on proposed requirements for acquired elevation data and associated specifications; 2) solicit and evaluate proposed updates from the 3DEP Working Group; 3) make decisions on proposed changes to the information content of SpecX, including changes to database content, update policies, revision cycles and standards referenced; and 4) maintain the official Lidar Base Specifications public facing website.

Relationships to Other Program-level Governance Processes

The ESRB will coordinate with the Cartographic Governance Board, the Data Model Change Control Process (DMCCP), and the Technology Review Board by providing supporting information on proposed changes as needed. The ESRB will work with the Data and Product Review Board (DPRB) on any updates that may impact NGP data and products; a representative from the DPRB will be a non-voting member of the ESRB to help assess when DPRB collaboration is necessary. The ESRB will also collaborate with the Systems Design Board (SDB) regarding potential impacts proposed updates will have on NGP systems. The primary interaction with the SDB occurs through the NGTOC Standards Specialists and the specifications database (SpecX) team.

Objectives

The ESRB will:

- Solicit recommendations for updates to the Lidar Base Specification from the 3DEP Working Group as well as propose updates internally
- Prioritize the proposed updates and determine which updates should be included in the LBS version associated with the Broad Agency Announcement for lidar acquisition (see explanation of 3DEP WG and BAA below)
- Research the proposed update
 - Each board member will write a case brief and justification for stance on the proposed update.
 - Each board member will review the case briefings of other board members.
- Vote on final wording and NGP stance on the update.
- Present final wording and NGP stance with justification to 3DEP working group for a comment period (no comment within period of time allocated indicates agreement).
- If update is approved, will move to SpecX for publication on webpage.

3DEP Working Group and Broad Agency Announcements

The primary goal of 3DEP is to systematically collect 3D elevation data in the form of high-quality light detection and ranging (lidar) data, and/or other high quality system data, over the conterminous United States, Hawaii, and the U.S. territories (IfSAR in Alaska), in a cooperative effort with Federal, state, and local entities. The 3D Elevation Program (3DEP) releases Broad Agency Announcements (BAA), which provide detailed information on how to partner with the USGS and other Federal agencies to acquire high-quality 3D elevation data.

Membership

Standing principal members are drawn from staff directly working in the Elevation Program Area and include the following:

- Executive sponsor - Chief, Topographic Data Services who oversees the Elevation Program Area. Role is to facilitate discussion with NGP Leadership Team and appoint and supervise Chairperson
- Voting board members:
 - Chairperson: 3DEP Chief Scientist - Role is to lead the board, break voting ties, and liaison with 3DEP Working Group.
 - Representatives from USGS - Roles are to suggest changes, shepherd changes through update process, and adjudicate external comments and suggested changes:
 - EROS: One or two staff members funded by the Elevation Program Area for research and support related to 3DEP products and specifications.
 - CEGIS: One staff member involved with elevation research.
 - NGTOC: Staff who execute the annual program of work for the Elevation Program Area. Specifically, NGTOC staff shall represent the Commercial Partnerships Team, the Senior Elevation Project Lead, and Elevation Operations.
 - NGP headquarters: TDS staff who provide guidance and direction for the Elevation Program Area.
- Non-voting board members
 - Executive Secretary: NGTOC Standards Specialist for elevation. Role is to assist chairperson with board facilitation and management of board documents and processes.
 - DPRB representative: will help assess when proposed specification updates need to be reviewed for impact by the DPRB.
 - NGTOC Topographic Applied Research Section staff: Roles are to support and assist in decision making processes of the voting members

Voting board members will be responsible for ensuring their organizations are represented during critical discussions and decisions. Principal members or their delegates must be government employees.

The Executive Secretary and non-voting board members will assist in the meetings with logistics, information reporting, technical consultation, and research for case briefings. Staff participants may be government or contract employees of the NGP. Contractor employees may be required to sign non-disclosure agreements.

Decision Authority

Decision authority rests with the Chairperson for all issues under the purview of the ESRB.

Should the ESRB require additional managerial input for decisions of significant magnitude, or where significant difference of opinion exists within the ESRB membership, the Chairperson will brief the Executive Sponsor and the NGTOC Director for adjudication. If a decision still cannot be reached at this level, or where significant difference of opinion still exists, the Executive Sponsor will present the issue to the NGP Leadership Team for discussion and final decision by the NGP Director. It is anticipated that such occasions will be the exception.

Operating Procedures

The Chairperson will work with the ESRB membership to thoroughly vet all issues and attempt to achieve consensus on the best direction forward.

Board members will prepare case briefs/opinions with justification on proposed updates before voting on whether updates will be included in LBS.

All proposed changes must be submitted via the appropriate templated form. The form must be completely populated before any considerations by the board will be made.

Board members will review case briefs/opinions of other board members before voting on issues.

Meetings will typically be convened by phone/web conference to accommodate the distribution of members at different locales. Travel may be required for some meetings.

Meeting dates and times shall be determined by the ESRB Chairperson or Executive Secretary in consultation with the ESRB membership. The ESRB will establish a regularly scheduled date and time for the meetings, with ad-hoc meetings as necessary.

Presentations, meeting notes, supporting documentation, and decisions will be posted in a central repository accessible to all members and other interested NGP staff. Any information that is proprietary will not be made public.

The Chairperson will preside at all meetings and represent the ESRB to senior management on required briefings. The ESRB Executive Secretary will set the agenda and help facilitate all meetings.

Requests to add topics or proposals to the ESRB agenda shall be submitted to the ESRB Chair or Executive Secretary in writing. A note taker will be present at all meetings to capture a record of all transactions. This record will be posted at the ESRB's central repository. The record will include all decisions made by the Board.

ESRB meetings are not generally open meetings. It is anticipated that proposals will be submitted and presented by a variety of USGS staff, as well as members of the 3DEP Working Group. Presenters and subject matter experts related to a specific proposal would be expected and encouraged to attend ESRB meetings related to a proposal. Other key stakeholders may also attend the meetings; however, in order to ensure business is conducted efficiently, the meetings generally will not be open. Some Board deliberations may require that non-board members be excluded from the meeting.

Voting

Voting on items to be included in updated versions of the Lidar Base Specification will be accomplished by electronic polling, with the goal to achieve unanimous agreement on an item. If unanimous agreement is not achieved, a second round of voting will be held where simple majority will apply, with an additional tie-breaking decision by the chair as needed. For other board-related matters where voting is necessary, a simple majority will apply with an additional tie-breaking decision by the chair as needed.

Rules for engagement:

The conduct of the board members must be of the highest standards and follow all applicable USGS guidelines. Membership includes bearing the responsibility for successful meetings and accomplishment of the board goals. Participation requires agreement to productive, positive and respectful communication, and members agree to the following rules.

- Debate and differing points of view are encouraged. Members agree to discuss topics with appropriate (non-offensive) language and respect for the opinions of other members.
- Speak one at a time and do not interrupt each other.
- Actively listen to and participate in discussions and decisions.
- Off-topic items and sidebar discussions are to be avoided and the facilitator will table items and reset the discussion where such topics are introduced.
- Support one another, do not speak poorly of other members or allow others to do so (in and outside of board activities).
- Input from the 3DEP community is expected. Members will discuss input and the submitters with the same care and respect as with all other board topics and members.
- Support schedules and deadlines.
- Communicate in a professional manner.

The focus of this board is a high priority for the organization. Members agree to the following conduct for meetings.

- Attend meetings unless out of the office (travel, leave or illness) or dealing with an urgent matter that cannot be avoided. Members should provide the facilitator advanced notification if they cannot attend the meeting.
- Meetings will start and end on time. Participants will notify the facilitator if they will be late or leave early in advance of the meeting.
- It is understood that members and meeting participants are not co-located. Where members are co-located, they are strongly encouraged to attend meetings in conference rooms. When not participating in person, members are encouraged attend via video conference (turn on your camera). When attending meetings in groups, members agree not to bring laptops and phones to avoid distractions.
- Members agree not to conduct other business or tasks during meetings.
- Rules for ethics as defined by the USGS ethics guidelines.
- Issues that cannot be solved will be tabled.

Specification Proposal Reviews

ESRB will provide a form template to be completed for update proposals, which will be submitted through a USGS shared email address (3DEP ESRB, GS <3dep_ESRB@usgs.gov>) or online. Proposals for requirement updates may include, but are not limited to, the following information:

- Overview
- Objective
- Current Applicable requirement or specification (if one exists)
- Proposed Change (e.g., new requirement, change in wording, recommendation for deprecation of current requirement)
- Rationale or motivation for change
- Alternative Analysis
- Timeframe for proposed implementation
- Organizations impacted (if known)

Considerations for evaluating update decisions may include the following:

- Business Driver: Alignment with strategic objectives and the NGP
- Community of Use Priority: Alignment with documented requirements of one or more COUs.
- Alternative Analysis: Impact of not investing, alternative strategies
- Cost/Benefit Analysis: Return on Investment, Total Cost of Ownership
- Acquisition Strategy
- Risk Management: Identification of risks
- Impact on Workforce
- Funding Source
- Data Quality and Science Integrity

These considerations, or others depending on the topic, will be formally assessed by the ESRB through review of case-briefings and justification write-ups. The ESRB will document all decisions, including the rationale used to make those decisions, and make that information available to the NGP.

Modifications to Charter

Major changes in the ESRB role in modifying the requirements and specifications for elevation acquisition and how it works with the 3DEP WG will require modification to this charter under the direction of the NGP Leadership Team.