

POLICY GUIDANCE TO THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE (NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS) IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PUBLIC LAW 89-306

*Basic Policy.*—The provisions of P.L. 89-306 will be administered in a manner that is consistent with the prime objective of encouraging the use of ADP by Government agencies to achieve greater productivity and reduced costs in the discharge of their respective agency program responsibilities.

P.L. 89-306 provides that the Secretary of Commerce is authorized (1) to provide agencies, and the Administrator of General Services in the exercise of the authority delegated, with scientific and technological advisory services relating to automatic data processing and related systems, and (2) to make appropriate recommendations to the President relating to the establishment of uniform Federal automatic data processing standards. The Secretary of Commerce is authorized to undertake the necessary research in the sciences and technologies of automatic data processing computers and related systems as may be required.

Responsibility for carrying out these functions for the Secretary has been assigned to the Center for Computer Sciences and Technology, an organization within the Institute for Applied Technology, National Bureau of Standards.

In carrying out its responsibilities, the Center should maximize the utilization of existing capabilities and facilities even when they reside in agencies not specifically identified in P.L. 89-306.

The interrelationships among the central management agencies identified in P.L. 89-306 and the using agencies, coupled with the dynamic nature of the ADP technology, require that a special effort be made to expedite policy development and implementation. Therefore, direct working relationships will be maintained among the Center, the ADP Management Branch of the Bureau of the Budget, and the Office of Automated Data Management Services of the General Services Administration. Among the means to be employed for extensive coordination with the using agencies are the Federal ADP Advisory Council and the Interagency Committee on ADP.

*Initial Guidelines.*—Initial guidelines for specific actions to be taken in certain areas are:

A. *Advisory and consulting services*

The Center will provide scientific and technological advisory and consulting services to executive agencies on automatic data processing. Upon request of Federal agencies, the Center will, to the extent possible, provide direct assistance on specific projects and monitor the technical performance of commercial consulting contracts. In addition, the Center will—

- (1) Provide guidelines for use by agencies in conducting systems studies, including consideration of systems interrelationships;
- (2) Provide guidelines and methods for monitoring the performance of systems studies and for implementing the results of such studies;
- (3) Provide criteria to assist in evaluating software and hardware developments that may be considered during the systems studies;
- (4) Provide technical guidelines for preparing solicitations of proposals, including the specification of system requirements;
- (5) Provide guidelines, criteria and techniques for evaluating and selecting equipment and related software, giving priority emphasis to criteria for measuring the effectiveness and efficiency of software. Data on this subject will also be furnished to GSA for consideration in the procurement of computers;
- (6) Maintain a reference index of computer programs to minimize the need for the development of programs already developed, tested and in use elsewhere; and
- (7) Provide guidelines for evaluating installation and systems performance on a continuing basis.

The Center will keep abreast of the state-of-the-art developments in ADP equipment, techniques and languages and will evaluate these developments in terms of their current or potential impact upon the Government's use of equipment and software and its ADP management policies. Findings in this regard will be made known promptly to the Bureau of the Budget.

It is essential for NBS staff who are consulting with agencies in system design to be fully aware of on-going system developments, whether performed in-house or under contract for other Government agencies. In this connection, a study should be made and reported to the Bureau of the Budget soon after January 1, 1967 to explore the feasibility of developing a system by which each