

provides a one-stop submission of data that is then distributed to participating agencies. Data metrics using different definitions is automatically changed to the metric required by each agency and results in an estimated 25,000 hours saved. As the project has been progressing, agencies have begun to look at streamlining definitions, reporting periods and the need for the information in the first place.

Developing the Profiler: This tool allows the user to provide information based on a profile of factors such as location, size, industry and type of business entity and business life cycle as well as desired assistance. Based on specific answers, the tool then refers the user to compliance assistance resources from five major Federal Regulatory Agencies.

Trucking One-Stop Portal: Trucking is an important industry, contributing one out of every 12 jobs. We have completed the project plan for building an integrated state and federal one stop for trucking, offering an example of how using harmonized data capture, electronic forms and transactions, and offering web services for both Federal and state requirements can work for a specific industry.

The BCOS offers businesses a significant reduction in the Regulatory Information Burden. Estimates of annual savings show savings have already been realized. Examples include:

- The *BusinessLaw.gov* portal reduces the time for users to find, understand and comply with regulations. Estimated annual savings: \$56 million.
- The Profiler provides estimated savings of \$62 million.
- Each compliance guide provides an estimated savings of \$10 million to businesses and \$400,000 in agency administrative costs.
- The harmonized coal mine reporting system will reduce the regulatory information burden in half or about \$1 million.
- The Integrated State registration and Federal Employer Identification Number Application has estimated savings of \$96 million.
- The Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services interactive I-9 electronic tool offers an estimated savings of \$12 million.
- The planned Trucking one stop industrial portal will have estimated savings of \$400 million.

More information on BCOS is provided in Appendix 6.

Recommendations

The team presents the following primary recommendations:

1. Consistent with the President's budget, fund the BCOS as a platform for the Federal government's cross-agency paperwork reduction initiative, focusing on creation of e-forms solutions, additional interactive expert tools, intelligent agent profilers, innovative navigation aids and search engines, and online transactions specific to various industries.

2. Work with industry to develop standards for information collection and dissemination.

3. Work with industry trade associations to determine fruitful areas for streamlining and harmonization of data requirements and look for ways that associations can become viable trusted collection and dissemination points. This includes determining specific forms or industries where the return on investment for using interactive electronic transmission of information is high (e.g., the IRS 2290 for truckers).

4. Implement demonstration projects for these identified high burden areas where Internet technology is used, expert tools are integrated with electronic forms, and business models are developed including the concept of intermediaries or collection/dissemination points (e.g., extend the coal miner application to all miners; implement portals that reduce the information burden for different industries).

5. Partner with the private sector to develop online tools that will do the following:

- Help specific industries simplify their recordkeeping and extract data to satisfy the demand for regulatory information.
- Enable electronic transmission of compliance information.

The team has suggested a number of additional activities that, taken together, will help reduce the regulatory burden. They include:

Approach Change Incrementally.

Select each year a limited group of stakeholders to provide input on reducing information collection burdens. For example, one could approach reducing the information burden industry-by-industry with clearly established goals set for improvement. Start with the five major industry clusters the first year, and then address the next five industries the following year. This process could involve setting up panels with members from the affected industries to assist in identifying information requirements, as well as members from State governments, other affected stakeholders, the general public, and Federal agencies.

Industrial Classification. BCOS needs to promulgate, in coordination with the regulatory agencies and private sector, an industrial classification nomenclature that will accurately describe the target regulated industries in ways that reflects the structure of regulatory programs and without the detailed complexity of NAICS.

Using BCOS to Identify Duplication.

The PRA requires agencies to self-certify that existing and proposed information gathering systems do not duplicate or overlap those of other systems in the same agency/department. Agencies should participate in the BCOS initiative to provide a common front end for regulatory requirements industry-by-industry.

Study Organizational Data Collection Approaches. The ideal organizational system for collecting and disseminating regulatory information among federal, state and local levels is not yet clear. Steps should be taken under the aegis of BCOS to partner with state and local government as well as the private sector to explore innovative approaches to information collection and dissemination industry by industry. New technology holds promise for facilitating collection and transfer of information. Best practices should be studied in industry as well as Federal, state, and local levels and demonstration projects should be carried out and evaluated.

Raise Awareness among Government Employees. All changes in culture and attitude and all transformations of process require training. One cannot simply assume that government agencies will suddenly discover how to do things differently. Sharing best practices and developing good practices would be part of a training effort. Part of this training would include the ways in which small businesses are different from larger businesses and how this affects regulatory compliance.

Develop a Cross-Agency Initiative.

Pattern this initiative after the successful E-government initiatives where the significant information gathering agencies would work together to reduce the information required, streamline the collection and dissemination of information, and share best practices.

Provide List Of Laws, Regulations And Compliance Assistance Tools on BusinessLaw.gov. Require Agencies to post and maintain list by industry of applicable regulations and laws as well as compliance assistance tools and publications on *BusinessLaw.gov*.

Publish standards for Electronic Data Streams. Harmonize data elements, business rules and XML standards. In