

CFTC E-Government Report for FY2006

1. Provide a brief overview of your agency's implementation of the E-Government Act including a description of an internal agency-specific E-Government initiative.

The CFTC oversees the futures industry, one of the world's largest and fastest growing markets. The futures markets depend heavily on electronic trading. The CFTC must use technology effectively and efficiently to meet its mission of protecting market users and the public from fraud, manipulation, and abusive practices related to the sale of commodity and financial futures and options, and to foster open, competitive, and financially sound futures and option markets. Meeting the mandates of the E-Government Act in many cases provides direct support for the CFTC in meeting its mission.

The CFTC's Web Presence Initiative provides an example of an internal agency-specific E-Government initiative that is transforming agency operations. The Web Presence Initiative will culminate in the launch of a new external website for the agency. The CFTC's website, CFTC.gov, is the agency's primary means of communicating agency mission, actions, and events to all its stakeholders.

Implementation of the CFTC's new content management system, a necessary prerequisite to a successful launch of the redesigned website, requires a major change in agency operations through the use of new ways to manage the flow of information and documents from inception through publication on the website. Based on a new governance structure for the agency's web presence, new review and approval workflows are being developed.

Throughout the Web Presence Initiative the agency has maintained close communication with its stakeholders to ascertain their needs and insofar as possible meet those needs through the newly redesigned website. The new CFTC.gov will reflect the input and feedback of external users of the website, including representatives from the futures industry, self-regulatory organizations, the public, and CFTC staff.

The website is closely aligned to the mission of the CFTC and its strategic goals. Improved review and approval processes, document and information management and control, will enable the agency leadership to ensure the website supports agency goals. Improved workflow management and publication processes will reduce staff time necessary to support the website and improve its quality. An improved information architecture, search, and email subscription service will improve the quality and usability of CFTC.gov and significantly enhance the Commission's ability to meet the needs of website visitors. A new calendar of events will provide access to information regarding Commission meetings and other events, industry training and conferences, and deadlines for submitting public comments.

An unquantifiable saving is achieved when, for example, an incorrect piece of information or document is not published. An unquantifiable saving is achieved when participants in the futures markets are able to quickly and easily find critical information.

All information on the new Commission's website will meet the requirements of Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, as amended. Those users without access to the Internet are able to telephone, using TTY lines if necessary, the Commission's Office of External Affairs which will make every effort to provide them with the information they need.

2. Describe your process for determining which information will be made available on your agency's public website and the Internet as required in Section 207(f)(2) of the E-Government Act.

In FY 2006 the Commission continued to make progress toward implementation of Section 207(f)(2) of the E-Government Act of 2002. The Commission implemented a new governance structure for its web presence and constituted a Content Steering Group made up of senior staff from the agency. The Commission's Office of External Affairs working with the Content Steering Group manages a content review and approval process applicable to all information published on the agency's public website,

ensuring that all content meets the broad mandates laid down by the Content Steering group. The CFTC has a long-standing policy of publishing as much information as possible and practicable on its website.

The CFTC's priorities and schedule for making information available and accessible is published in the [web content inventory of information](#), which has been available to the public for notice and comment since December 6, 2004. The public is encouraged to make suggestions about additional information that the agency should make available. The CFTC made available to users of its website a survey which provided valuable information on user needs and behaviors.

All files published on CFTC.gov are searchable by the public. CFTC.gov provides an entry point to its search function from every main page on the website. All files are fully searchable and search results are displayed in order of relevance to the search criteria used. Response times are equivalent to industry best practices.

3. Describe how your agency's information dissemination activities are coordinated with its FOIA operation in order to improve both access to and dissemination of government information to the public.

The CFTC's information dissemination activities at all times are coordinated with agency FOIA operations. The Office of External Affairs works closely with the FOIA office directly and through the Content Steering Group to ensure that the public's access to information is enhanced. Specifically, throughout the Web Presence Initiative, project staff has worked closely with all agency staff, including FOIA operations, to ensure that the public has access to agency information.

The number of FOIA requests to the agency has decreased from 402 to 220 per year over the last five years. Agency staff believes this drop is directly attributable to the increased availability on the website of information that once was available only through a FOIA request. For example, the posting of FCM financial data on CFTC.gov led to a drop in the number of requests for Form 1-FRs. As required, the FOIA office makes available on the website any [records frequently requested under FOIA](#) and interprets this requirement liberally, making records available on the website that have been requested more than once. The [FOIA Improvement Plan](#) is available on CFTC.gov.

The CFTC is meeting its responsibilities under Section 207(d), Categorizing of Information, to organize and categorize its information in ways that are searchable electronically and interoperable across agencies. Specifically, all content on the agency's new website will use standard metadata based on the Interagency Committee on Government Information's best practices. This metadata is designed to help the public locate and use government information efficiently and quickly.

The CFTC is fulfilling its responsibilities under Section 207(e), Public Access to Electronic Information, by working to implement processes and procedures to manage existing electronic records. As the agency implements its new web content management system and prepares to launch its newly redesigned website, processes and procedures for electronic records management are being developed.