

## **DRAFT**

### **USEITI MSG Endorsement of Open Data<sup>1</sup>**

Information is a valuable national resource and a strategic asset to the Federal Government, its partners, and the public. In order to ensure that the Federal Government is taking full advantage of its information resources, USEITI must manage information as an asset throughout its life cycle to promote openness and interoperability, and properly safeguard systems and information. Managing government information as an asset will increase operational efficiencies, reduce costs, improve services, support mission needs, safeguard personal information, and increase public access to valuable government information.

In May 2013, the President issued the Executive Order -- Making Open and Machine Readable the New Default for Government Information. The Executive Order, requires the Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), in consultation with the Chief Information Officer (CIO), Chief Technology Officer (CTO), and Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA), to issue an Open Data Policy to advance the management of Government information as an asset, consistent with the January 21, 2009 Transparency and Open Government Memorandum. The policy requires that agencies open up new data and information, making them available in machine-readable formats. The Executive Order also directs Federal Agencies to implement the requirements of the Open Data Policy and when implementing the Open Data Policy, agencies shall incorporate a full analysis of privacy, confidentiality, and security risks into each stage of the information lifecycle to identify information that should not be released.

In the December 2013, Second Open Government National Action Plan for the United States, the Federal Government sought input from the general public, a broad range of civil society organizations, academia, and the private sector to refine the commitments to build a more open, transparent, and participatory United States Government. Working toward Candidate Country status, the Administration committed to, among others, unilaterally disclosing all payments received by the U.S. Department of the Interior and promoting the development of innovative open data tools that make extractive data more meaningful for and accessible to the American people.

The USEITI first Annual Report is an innovative, interactive online website. USEITI works with publicly available datasets from many different approved Federal, State and local government sources. Each is unique and must be handled differently. To better understand the “shape” of each set, the website is supported with a data catalog that breaks each dataset down to understand where it comes from, what it tells us, and how it’s reported. More specifically, the data catalog is the organizing information about the data. For example, there is a section for each data set that lists: what the data is: a brief description, units, etc.; its source (either one or more URLs or the name and email address of whoever sent it to us); a list of source columns; any geographical hierarchy contained in the data; and any gotchas or other weirdnesses with the data.

---

<sup>1</sup> Background: The requirement for MSGs to “Agree a clear policy on the access, release and re-use of EITI data” (requirement 7.1.b) will come into force on 31 December 2016.

USEITI - The Contextual Data Work Group of the Implementation Subcommittee, with representatives from all three sectors was responsible for clarifying standards for what qualifies as a 'credible data source'; identifying data challenges and needs (e.g., interoperability of data, how are queries structured, who houses / owns and maintains that datasets, confidentiality issues re/ tracking users, etc.) and developing a good system for handing data tasks and assignments back and forth with the Independent Administrator. At the February 17, 2015, Contextual Data Work Group Meeting the Work Group discussed and confirmed Open Government Data principles as the standard for contextual data in the USEITI Reports. The model to follow was - complete; primary; timely, accessible; machine “processable”; non-discriminatory; non-proprietary; license-free.