

NIST Response to FY 2004 VCAT Annual Report Recommendations

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Visiting Committee on Advanced Technology
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VCAT Recommendations

- The VCAT provided NIST with 12 specific recommendations grouped in 4 categories
 - Budget
 - Outreach
 - Strategic Direction and Performance
 - Organizational Excellence

Budget

VCAT Recommendation

- Immediately increase NIST budget to fund strategic initiatives and to compensate for unfunded Congressional mandates, inadequate adjustments to base, and unfunded salary increases.

Current Status

- The President's budget request for FY 2006 supports this objective while balancing other national priorities including cutting the budget deficit. Final budget for FY 2006 awaiting Congressional appropriations.

Budget

VCAT Recommendation

- Continue to invest in core competencies required to provide measurement and standards capabilities for the future.

Current Status

- Strategic planning is a key focus area for the new Director. A list of top level NIST core competencies and newly funded competence projects was provided in the September NIST Update presentation. Clearer alignment between critical areas and investment decisions will be made.

Budget

VCAT Recommendation

- Obtain budget increases to equip the AML, improve the NCNR, and modernize Boulder labs.

Current Status

- Plans are being developed for the N³F and AML to maximize usage and impact on the nation. This may include increasing their priorities within existing budgets.
- The FY 2005 budget included \$6.9M CRF to fund the current phase of the Boulder Central Utility Plant (CUP) upgrade.
- The FY 2006 Presidential budget request includes:
 - \$9.4M CRF to complete CUP upgrade
 - \$6.5M CRF for Boulder Building 1 design
 - \$4M CRF for Boulder Building 4 design & renovation
 - \$8.1M increase to SCMMR base

Budget

VCAT Recommendation

- Stabilize funding for MEP and ATP.

Current Status

- This is an ongoing issue and is subject to FY 2006 Congressional appropriations.

Outreach

VCAT Recommendation

- Develop a longer-term comprehensive plan for marketing capabilities to key customers and stakeholders.

Current Status

- NIST is working on refining a common “NIST message” to use in outreach activities.
- NIST SMB has established a “key customer” outreach program.
- The Director has been reaching out to major manufacturers, customers of NIST services, and agencies responsible for addressing national priorities. Examples include Boeing, Ford, and USCAR.
- OU Directors have been charged with doing the same, by sector.

Outreach

VCAT Recommendation

- VCAT will continue to advise NIST's stakeholders on the strategic direction and value of NIST.

Current Status

- Thank you for your commitment and success in advising NIST's stakeholders. Your work to advise NIST's stakeholders including DOC, OMB, OSTP, and Congress is very much appreciated.

Strategic Direction and Performance

VCAT Recommendation

- Develop specific short-term and long-term metrics and other quantitative data consistent with the Baldrige Framework. Reflect this in the 2005 Balanced Scorecard.

Current Status

- The “Building the Next Generation Leaders” leader program established a Baldrige at NIST study group that is working with Harry Hertz. They have developed a draft Organizational Profile, the first step in the Baldrige process.
- Technology Services has also begun implementing the Baldrige process to improve their services.
- David Spong gave a talk to NIST staff about Baldrige.
- The FY05 Balanced Scorecard (provided to the VCAT in June) was improved with the addition of a new section on programs based on your recommendations and aligned with OMB and Commerce metrics.
- The *NIST Performance Measurement and Evaluation System* overview was distributed at this meeting.

Strategic Direction and Performance

VCAT Recommendation

- Expand efforts in the Strategic Focus Areas. In particular, closely examine NIST's role in biosciences and the pharmaceutical industries.

Current Status

- The Nano and Bio SWG has been tasked with developing a list of high priority options to consider for budget initiatives.
- NIST has carefully cataloged its research activities related to Biosystems and Health.
- NIST has developed a fact sheet to inform the pharmaceutical industry about NIST's research and services.

Strategic Direction and Performance

VCAT Recommendation

- Continue to explore opportunities for extensive collaborations and partnerships to take advantage of expertise outside of NIST. Update the strategic plan to include strategies for identifying where partnerships should be appropriate, targeting specific partnerships, and achieving these partnerships.

Current Status

- NIST is developing an internal document to enunciate our strategy and to guide our strategic planning on partnerships.
- We are evaluating strategies for using MOUs as part of this effort.
- An example of the kind of successful partnership relationship NIST plans to develop is USCAR.

Strategic Direction and Performance

VCAT Recommendation

- Integrate the analysis of NIST's role in the National Measurement System into the next version of the Strategic Plan.

Current Status

- USMS is one component of our strategic planning efforts for identifying national needs and NIST's role. The planned series of targeted workshops will provide critical outside input to our strategic planning process.

Organizational Excellence

VCAT Recommendation

- Continue to upgrade aging buildings and facilities.

Current Status

- The highest priority items for facilities are renovations in Boulder.
- Longer term priorities are renovations in Gaithersburg.
- Details from the FY 2006 budget request are presented in an earlier slide.

Organizational Excellence

VCAT Recommendation

- NIST's Safety Council should benchmark safety practices with other organizations and seek additional advice from VCAT members with expertise in this field.

Current Status

- This comparison data was presented in the NIST update presentation.