

Report of Office of Program Performance  
on LSC Technology Grants Designed to  
Enable Grantees to Use GIS Mapping in a  
Cost-Effective Manner - Glenn Rawdon

CHAIR WATLINGTON: Next is the report by Michael Genz and Glenn Rawdon.

MR. RAWDON: Good morning. Mike has deferred to let me do the presentation here by myself. What we are going to brief you on very briefly is the involvement of the technology section of the programs on what we have been doing on mapping as it coordinates with what you just heard from the IG's office.

And you have many other presentations today that are much more scintillating than perhaps this one is going to be. So I have been asked to be fairly brief. So instead of doing this live presentation that I had, I have passed it out and it should be in front of each of you.

I know that you just won't be able to tear yourselves away from the discussion in here on spacial locations and digitizing polygon themes. I did want to share another kind of light-hearted moment I had this week as I was working on the DTD for the XML CMS.

I was asked what the TLA was for a certain term and I said, "TLA?" And they said, "Yes, the three letter acronym." So I want you to know that we now have an acronym

for acronyms.

We had a small grant that we did this year, as one of the TIG projects with Orange County, to work on kind of an overview in education of mapping for projects managing attorneys for anyone within legal services that would really like to learn more about what this tool is, so that they can see how they might be able to utilize it in their program as a management tool, as an access issue.

Mike and I, and Randi, and other staff have worked very closely with the IG to be briefed on this, to see what they're doing, and to see the potential for this with our programs. So we did this small grant in last year's TIG grant, and what you'll see before you is an overview of the presentation that we're preparing for the grantees.

Now what we have done is we had a focus group in southern California back in November -- I think it was late in November, or early in December -- where we had all the project directors from the three programs, or staff at least, from the three programs in southern California, plus San Diego, and Inland County come in and look at the presentation.

The presentation was put together by Kristin Kerwin, who is with Carnegie Mellon University, and George Teata, who is also with California University at Irvine.

They have been worked with Bob Cohen for a long time.

Bob was one of the first directors that I know of to actually use mapping to help him identify underserved populations in his area. And so, Bob was the logical choice to start putting together these education materials.

What we're going to do is as soon as the changes are made -- and you'll notice the later slides talk about changes that were suggested, or are going to be incorporated from the focus group.

We wanted to present what is actually useful. So that's why we did a sample presentation and are making changes. Once that's done, we will make this available through some online trainings, and some personal trainings that we're doing.

If you remember, we had another grant this last year for technical skills training for people in technology that were going to be using many of the electronic media that we've set up including legal meetings, another grant that we did n Lone Star Legal Services, so that online or in-person project grantors will be able to start getting an overview and learning about mapping.

Now one other thing that we've done -- and we talked to you a little bit about the XML grant, and I promise not to say XML too many times. I'm already over the

limit.

So to remind you, we use XML so that different databases can talk to each other, so that we define terms, and then that way when one program needs to communicate with another, and they have called last name, L name, and the other program is called last name, last name, they will know what they're talking about.

This is going to be very important to mapping. We will be able to use these XML tools with the tools that the IG is talking about developing, so that our grantees will be able to take information for their case management systems whatever information they want to map, and then use it with any mapping tools that are created so that they will be able to communicate with each without a lot of this work going on.

As you pointed out quite -- you know, you observed here very well, it is expensive when you start doing this, and the things that you begin to learn. But with the tools that we have been planning for with the TIG grants, we hope to be poised to be able to take advantage of anything that the IG comes up with, so that without a lot of expense this will be made available to our grantees, so that if they want to use it, and after the education if they see the value they'll be able to use these tools.

But, certainly, nothing that we're doing here is going to make the grantees do any type of mapping. We're just simply giving them the tools so that if they want to do this, they'll be able to. And so, that's what we've been doing so far to be ready to do -- to link in with what the OIG has been doing, so that the programs will be able to take advantage of it.

MR. ASKEW: Glen, other than Bob Cohen, what have you perceived the level of interest to be among program directors in this sort of thing because I assume there is a cost to this?

And in doing a cost benefit analysis with their limited funding, what do you think their interests would be in doing this?

MR. RAWDON: Bucky, as they have been exposed to what they can get out of it, I have seen a lot of interest. I know particularly the focus group that we had in southern California, the report I got back from them was they were very enthusiastic about what they could learn from this.

We have all looked at charts and graphs. And one of the slides in here just shows you a whole bunch of numbers on a page. And that's not very interesting to anybody.

Another thing that they might -- that I have heard

interest from is for fundraising. Because if they can go in and show, like what the map has showed you of Atlanta, if they can show how they're covering Atlanta -- but they have got areas that they're not able to reach because of funding.

They can go to funders like local United Ways and say, "We've got a lot of need here in this area," or they might be able to go to some members of the Hispanic community and say, "We had an underserved here. We need more funding for this." If you can see it on a map, it's much easier to show them than if you show them an Excel spreadsheet.

So I have seen a lot of interest from people as they have begun to learn about it. We had a presentation at the TIG conference in Chicago on mapping, and I got lots of people coming up to me commenting and asking questions about what we were doing on that so.

MR. EAKELEY: Was that presentation in English?

MR. RAWDON: Yes.

MS. BATTLE: It had subscripts for us.

MR. ASKEW: What does the TOA and GIS stand for?

MR. RAWDON: It's the Geographical Information Systems. You don't want to hear about digitizing polygons?

MS. BATTLE: But to follow up to Bucky's question of Len just before, is the corporation doing anything to

look at ways of using mapping at the level of the corporation?

MR. RAWDON: There has been some discussion on that. But, as far as -- I mean and Randi would be better qualified to answer that than I. But I don't know of any current initiative that we have right now to do this on a global scale.

MR. EAKELEY: It seems to me we're spending corporation resources developing tools for grantees that could also be used to facilitate management decision-making. So I think we ought to at least keep an open mind about the possibilities represented by this.

MR. RAWDON: And I also see for the state planning body this to be valuable.

MR. EAKELEY: Sure.

MR. RAWDON: Not just individual programs --

MR. EAKELEY: Absolutely.

MR. RAWDON: -- that as we go into a state planning group, they should be looking at maps like this as they come up with their plan for the state justice community.

MR. ASKEW: My question was directed actually more as a warning than a -- that you could use a map to draw conclusions that are inappropriate. And that was my

concern. We can say Iowa is doing a bang up job, and Nevada is doing a disastrous job based on this amount.

And yet there are thousands of reasons why those numbers are what they are. And so I am saying these raise lots of questions that are very useful from a management perspective, but they may not give you answers from a compliance perspective or an evaluation perspective, that sort of thing. And I think Glenn addressed that pretty nicely, so I didn't --

MR. RAWDON: And that's the other thing, Bucky, is that these show you the questions. They don't give you the answers. That still takes the project directors, the staff, and everybody analyzing it. Because just like they showed on that one map, this one area, they had the PAI involvement.

Now maybe what that tells you is you want to come in and see if you can encourage PAI involvement in other places because it's a very effective tool for improving access. But it doesn't tell you if you just look at the map why that's happening.

MR. EAKELEY: That is worth raising those questions.

A PARTICIPANT: Oh, yeah.

MR. RAWDON: Oh, yes. I mean that's why we're

doing this, is because we want project directors to be able to see what the questions are, so they can be addressed.

CHAIR WATLINGTON: Okay. There are no more questions. We'll go into the state planning evaluation. That's the next --

MR. RAWDON: Thank you.