



NOAA's Commerce and Transportation Goal



What is requested? NOAA's Commerce and Transportation Goal requests a total of \$252.1M in FY'05, reflecting a net decrease of \$3.4M over the FY'04 Omnibus bill. This will fund improvements which directly support safe, efficient and environmentally sound intermodal transportation.

What are the benefits? The intermodal transportation system is a connected system of ship, rail, highway and air transport - it is the backbone of the U.S. economy. NOAA has clear mandates to support water, air and surface transportation with navigational information and accurate and timely weather forecasts. This information is crucial to sustaining and improving the Nation's economy. For instance, there is an estimated \$600-800M savings per year to the economy by reducing weather delays by 10%. The requested funding level supports the transition of data from satellites to weather warnings and forecasts, reducing the time between data availability and operational use. The increase will also allow NOAA to complete Electronic Navigational Chart (ENC) coverage for the nation by the end of FY 2007 or early FY 2008, and provide real-time water level information to the top 150 seaports, which moved over \$2.3 billion short tons of cargo in the year 2001.

Why do we need it? NOAA seeks to preserve lives, investments, and environmental integrity by providing critical support to the Nation's intermodal transportation network. Funding for ENCs and for real-time distribution of water level information is essential for the safe and environmentally sound transport of goods through the Marine Transportation System. This information, combined with accurate satellite and weather forecast products, can save U.S. businesses millions of dollars a year. Confirmation of exact water depths can allow a ship to load valuable extra cargo - just one inch of additional draft can yield increased revenues of up to \$50,000. Another example of cost savings comes from improved ceiling/visibility forecasting, which can result in estimated savings of \$250M a year in reduced fuel costs to U.S. airlines.

What will we do? The requested amount of \$2M will allow NOAA to add 120 ENCs in FY 2005, reaching a total of 580. At this funding level, NOAA should achieve complete ENC coverage for the nation by the end of FY 2007 or early FY 2008. NOAA requests \$2.7M to improve the 175 existing National Water Level Observation Network (NWLON) stations by allowing for quality controlled real time data at the top 150 U.S. seaports. To deliver this data from all NWLON stations, NOAA will improve the operational availability of NWLON from 75% to 100% by FY 2009. The requested amount also includes \$9.9M to maintain current level of program funding for other charting and positioning capabilities. This includes \$8.6M for the Vessel Time Charter.

Additionally, NOAA requests \$8.0M for satellites to increase support for NOAA's Environmental Satellite Observing Services. This support will help to ensure that the continuous operation and acquisition of data from NOAA's satellites will save lives, property and critical infrastructure. The requested amount will enhance NOAA's warning and forecast efforts, such as tracking hurricanes, winter storms, flash flood warnings, and tracking volcanic ash clouds and severe winds that threaten aviation safety. Commerce and Transportation also requests \$300K to support NOAA's Weather Forecasting Offices as they provide the main field forecast support for the marine and aviation weather programs which are crucial to safe and efficient transportation.