The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA): An Overview of Programs and Funding

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Summary

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), a bureau of the Department of Commerce, is the executive branch's principal advisory office on domestic and international telecommunications and information policies. Its mandate is to provide greater access for all Americans to telecommunications services; support U.S. efforts to open foreign markets; advise on international telecommunications negotiations; and fund research for new technologies and their applications. It is also responsible for managing spectrum use by federal agencies.

The NTIA plays an important role in representing U.S. interests in the Internet internationally, including an active role in the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN). ICANN is an international entity that develops policies to support the Internet worldwide. NTIA actively participates in ICANN as a member of the Governmental Advisory Committee, which provides advice to ICANN. NTIA also currently contracts with ICANN to manage the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA) and to perform other duties. In March 2014, the NTIA announced its intention to relinquish its authority over ICANN to a multi-stakeholder community when its current contract expires in September 2015. Subsequently, the NTIA extended the contract through FY2016. A report assessing the IANA transition proposal was released by the NTIA on June 9, 2016. On June 8, legislation (S. 3034) was introduced that would prevent the NTIA from disengaging from its role unless statutory authority to do so is established by Congress. A companion bill (H.R. 5418) was introduced June 9, 2016.

Title VI of the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012 (P.L. 112-96) gives the NTIA responsibilities for improving public safety communications. It is required to assist the development of the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet), created by Congress to deploy a nationwide public safety broadband network. It is also required to assist in planning for Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG 9-1-1) services, which refers to the transition to digital, Internet-based systems to replace existing analog systems, the 9-1-1 technology currently prevalent throughout the United States. The act, sometimes referred to as the Spectrum Act, also gave the NTIA new responsibilities and requirements for spectrum management, especially as regards the reallocation of federal spectrum. The Spectrum Pipeline Act of 2025 (P.L. 114-74, Title X) added further requirements for actions by the NTIA.

Between FY2010 and FY2011, the NTIA's budget for administration, salaries, and expenses more than doubled from $20 million to $41.6 million. This increase was largely attributed by the NTIA to its responsibilities in administering grants for broadband network deployment, as required by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA, P.L. 111-5). Enacted amounts remained above $40 million until FY2015.The Administration's budget request for FY2015 was $51.0 million. The enacted amount for FY2015 was $38.2 million. This amount was supplemented by unobligated balances carried forward from the previous year, allowing for a FY2015 budget of nearly $42.9 million.

For FY2016, the enacted budget amount for the NTIA was $39.5 million, compared to a request for $49.2 million. The Administration's budget request for FY2017 is $50.8 million. The Senate committee-reported amount for appropriations is $39.5 million (S. 2837); the House committee-reported amount is $36.3 million (H.R. 5393).

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Overview

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) is a bureau in the U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC). The NTIA frequently works with other executive branch agencies to develop and present the Administration's position on key policy matters. It represents the executive branch in both domestic and international telecommunications and information policy activities. Policy areas in which the NTIA acts as a representative of the Administration include international negotiations regarding global agreements on the Internet and spectrum management, and domestic use of spectrum resources by federal agencies.

NTIA is headed by the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information, who is appointed by the President and acts as a principal advisor to the President on telecommunications and information policy matters; is the principal executive branch spokesman to Congress, the industry, state and local governments, and the public on such matters; is the key coordinator of the federal government's own communication systems; and is responsible for the formulation of the nation's overall telecommunications and information policy.[1]

For budget purposes, the NTIA organizes its programs into four broad categories for salaries and expenses: Domestic and International Policies, Spectrum Management, Advanced Communications Research, and Broadband Programs. Its budget report to Congress also includes information about NTIA obligations to support public safety, notably for the administration of the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet), an entity established by Congress to operate within the NTIA.

Domestic and International Policies

The FY2017 budget request for Domestic and International Policies is $15.832 million for salaries and expenses. This amount is comparable to the FY2016 request of $15.227 million. The enacted amount for FY2016 was $9.093 million.

In its FY2017 budget request, the NTIA asks for an increase in funding of $6.607 million and an increase in staff from 35 FTE to 45 FTE, notably to deepen expertise for initiatives in Internet policy and the digital economy.

Uses of the requested funds include supporting the Administration's Digital Economy Leadership Team; international negotiations regarding the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN); the formulation of domestic Internet policy; and facilitating the transition of federal communications networks to technologies using the Internet Protocol (IP).

The Digital Economy

The term digital economy, alternatively the Internet economy, refers in general to the impact of digital technologies and communications on business and the economy.[2] The Department of Commerce has established a Digital Economy Agenda that focuses on four areas:

- Promoting a free and open Internet worldwide;

[1] Duties of the Assistant Secretary as described in a job posting for Executive Director of FirstNet on USAJobs, https://www.usajobs.gov/GetJob/ViewDetails/389363200.

[2] Department of Commerce, "The Commerce Department's Digital Economy Agenda," November 9, 2015, https://www.commerce.gov/news/blog/2015/11/commerce-departments-digital-economy-agenda.

- Promoting trust online;
- Ensuring access to fast broadband for all;
- Promoting innovation.

In support of this agenda, the Department has created a Digital Economy Board of Advisors, with members of the inaugural board announced on March 29, 2016.[3] The NTIA will provide assistance to the board, benefitting from its participation in the Digital Economy Leadership Team (DELT)—created in 2015 by the Secretary of Commerce—and a Digital Federal Advisory Committee.

On April 6, 2016, NTIA initiated a request for public comment on "The Benefits, Challenges, and Potential Roles for the Government in Fostering the Advancement of the Internet of Things."[4] After analyzing the comments, the NTIA intends to issue a ''green paper'' that identifies key issues impacting deployment of these technologies, highlights potential benefits and challenges, and identifies possible roles for the federal government to partner with the private sector to foster the advancement of IoT technologies.

Internet Leadership

Along with the Executive Office of the President, the Office of the Secretary of Commerce, the National Institute for Standards and Technology (NIST), and the International Trade Administration (ITA), the NTIA participates in the Internet Policy Task Force, created in 2010 by the Secretary of Commerce.[5]

Since 1998, the NTIA has played a key oversight role in ICANN, an international, not-for-profit entity that develops policies to support the Internet worldwide, notably through its coordination of the Internet naming system: the Domain Name System (DNS).[6] ICANN is currently under contract to NTIA to manage the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA) for DNS and to perform other duties. In March 2014, the NTIA announced its intention to relinquish its existing authority over ICANN, complying with an executive order to privatize the Internet over time, from President William Jefferson Clinton.[7] The current contract is renewed on an annual basis with the option of extending the contract through 2019.The NTIA later extended the contract through FY2016[8] while a full proposal to transition stewardship of IANA functions was developed by global Internet stakeholders convened by ICANN. According to the NTIA, the

[3] Department of Commerce, "U.S. Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker Announces Appointees to Inaugural Digital Economy Board of Advisors," March 29, 2016, https://www.commerce.gov/news/press-releases/2016/03/us-secretary-commerce-penny-pritzker-announces-appointees-inaugural.

[4] *Federal Register*, Vol. 81, No. 66, April 6, 2016, "Notices," p. 19956, https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2016-04-06/pdf/2016-07892.pdf. Filed comments are at https://www.ntia.doc.gov/federal-register-notice/2016/comments-potential-roles-government-fostering-advancement-internet-of-things.

[5] See the Department of Commerce, Internet Policy Task Force, *Commercial Data Privacy and Innovation in the Internet Economy: A Dynamic Policy Framework*, http://www.commerce.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2010/december/iptf-privacy-green-paper.pdf.

[6] For a discussion of ICANN and related issues, see CRS Report R42351, *Internet Governance and the Domain Name System: Issues for Congress*, by (name redacted) . Also, see CRS Report R44022, *The Future of Internet Governance: Should the United States Relinquish Its Authority over ICANN?*, by (name redacted) .

[7] The White House, "Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies," July 1, 1997, http://clinton4.nara.gov/WH/New/Commerce/directive.html (archived).

[8] For a discussion of ICANN and related issues, see CRS Report R42351, *Internet Governance and the Domain Name System: Issues for Congress*, by (name redacted) . Also, see CRS Report R44022, *The Future of Internet Governance: Should the United States Relinquish Its Authority over ICANN?*, by (name redacted) .

resulting report meets the stated "criteria to complete privatization."[9] The report will be sent to ICANN and to Congress, triggering congressional review.

Legislation (S. 3034 and H.R. 5418) has been introduced that would require explicit statutory authority for the NTIA regarding the functions covered by IANA "to terminate, lapse, expire, be cancelled, or otherwise cease to be in effect.... "[10] Also, the bill would require the NTIA would to certify to Congress that it has secured sole ownership of .gov and .mil domains, in perpetuity.[11] Concerns about the transition process are expressed in both the Senate and House Committee Reports.[12] The House report would prohibit use of appropriated funds for the transition during FY2017, continuing a ban for the use of funds for this purpose during FY2016.

Spectrum Management

To meet growing demand for wireless connectivity, the Administration and Congress have taken steps to increase the amount of radio frequency spectrum available for mobile services such as access to the Internet.[13]

As part of President Obama's Wireless Initiative, the NTIA is charged with identifying electromagnetic spectrum that might be transferred from the federal sector to commercial wireless use.[14] This spectrum might be auctioned as licenses for exclusive commercial use, made available for sharing between federal and commercial users, or repurposed in some other way that meets the stated goal of the Wireless Initiative to add 500 MHz of spectrum for wireless broadband.[15]

Congress also has required the NTIA to take actions to release spectrum from federal to commercial use and to ensure the efficient use of federal spectrum. Title VI of the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012 (P.L. 112-96), generally referred to as the Spectrum Act, requires the NTIA to identify federal spectrum that may be released for commercial use and to manage the transfer process. The Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015 (P.L. 114-74) adds additional requirements in Title X, Spectrum Pipeline Act of 2015.[16]

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[9] NTIA Press Release, "NTIA Finds IANA Stewardship Transition Proposal Meets Criteria to Complete Privatization," June 9, 2016, https://www.ntia.doc.gov/press-release/2016/iana-stewardship-transition-proposal-meets-criteria-complete-privatization; the full report is at https://www.ntia.doc.gov/report/2016/iana-stewardship-transition-proposal-assessment-report.

[10] S. 3034, Sec. 3.

[11] S. S034, Sec. 4.

[12] For example, House Committee Report 114-605: "... any such transition represents a significant public policy change and should be preceded by an open and transparent process." Senate Committee Report 114-239: "The Committee continues to be concerned about this process and the security of the .gov and .mil domains."

[13] For a discussion of spectrum demand, technology, innovation, and competition, see CRS Report R43595, *Mobile Technology and Spectrum Policy: Innovation and Competition*, by (name redacted).

[14] The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, "Presidential Memorandum: Unleashing the Wireless Broadband Revolution," June 28, 2010, http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/presidential-memorandum-unleashing-wireless-broadband-revolution. See also "President Obama Details Plan to Win the Future Through Expanded Wireless Access," Fact Sheet, February 10, 2011, http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/02/10/president-obama-details-plan-win-future-through-expanded-wireless-access; and "Presidential Memorandum: "Expanding America's Leadership in Wireless Innovation," June 14, 2013, https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/06/14/presidential-memorandum-expanding-americas-leadership-wireless-innovatio.

[15] Spectrum is segmented into bands of radio frequencies and typically measured in cycles per second, or hertz. Standard abbreviations for measuring frequencies include kHz—kilohertz or thousands of hertz; MHz—megahertz, or millions of hertz; and GHz—gigahertz, or billions of hertz.

[16] The provisions in these laws and the actions of the NTIA are discussed in CRS Report R44433, *Framing Spectrum*
(continued...)

Proposals from policymakers to use federal spectrum to provide commercial mobile broadband services include the following:

- Clearing federal users from designated frequencies for transfer to the commercial sector through a competitive bidding system.
- Sharing federal frequencies with commercial users.[17]
- Improving the efficiency of federal spectrum use and management.[18]
- Using emerging technologies that allow multiple users to share spectrum as needed.[19]

To support spectrum clearing, the NTIA, with input from the Policy and Plans Steering Group (PPSG),[20] has produced a 10-year plan and timetable that identifies bands of spectrum that might be available for commercial wireless broadband service. As part of its planning efforts, the NTIA prepared a "Fast Track Evaluation" of spectrum that might be made available in the near future.[21]

Many decisions regarding the use of federal spectrum are made with the participation of the Interdepartmental Radio Access Committee (IRAC).[22] IRAC membership comprises representatives of all branches of the U.S. military and a number of federal department agencies affected by spectrum management decisions.[23] The NTIA is also advised by the Commerce Spectrum Management Advisory Committee (CSMAC). The committee was created by the Department of Commerce in 2004 and is composed of experts from outside the federal government.[24] Both IRAC and CSMAC address spectrum-clearing and shared-spectrum solutions, and technology research through their committees. The Office of Management and Budget also influences agency spectrum management through budget planning and recommendations.

The enacted budget for spectrum management was $8.488 million in FY2016. The FY2017 budget request is $8.884 million, reflecting the additional requirements of the Spectrum Pipeline Act of 2015. FTEs would increase from 39 to 40.

(...continued)

Policy: Legislative Initiatives, by (name redacted).

[17] The Government Accountability Office (GAO) provided testimony on the topic of sharing: *Spectrum Management: Federal Government's Use of Spectrum and Preliminary Information on Sharing,* September 13, 2012, GAO-12-1018T; and a report: *Spectrum Management: Incentives, Opportunities, and Testing Needed to Enhance Spectrum Sharing*, November 14, 2012, GAO-13-7.

[18] The Government Accountability Office (GAO) issued a report: *Spectrum Management: NTIA Planning and Processes Need Strengthening to Promote the Efficient Use of Spectrum by Federal Agencies*, April 2011, GAO-11-352.

[19] The NTIA has made the development of spectrum-sharing methods a priority. Information on specific actions is at NTIA, "Spectrum Sharing," http://www.ntia.doc.gov/category/spectrum-sharing.

[20] Created in response to Department of Commerce recommendations to improve spectrum efficiency through better management, see http://www.ntia.doc.gov/legacy/reports/specpolini/factsheetspecpolini_06242004.htm.

[21] NTIA, "An Assessment of Near-Term Viability of Accommodating Wireless Broadband Systems in the 1675-1710 MHZ, 1755-1780 MHz, 3500-3650 MHz, and 4200-4220 MHz, 4380-4400 MHZ Bands (President's Spectrum Plan Report)," November 15, 2010, http://www.ntia.doc.gov/report/2010/assessment-near-term-viability-accommodating-wireless-broadband-systems-1675-1710-mhz-17. See also NTIA, "Fourth Interim Progress Report on the Ten-Year Plan and Timetable and Plan for Quantitative Assessments of Spectrum Usage," June 2014, http://www.ntia.doc.gov/files/ntia/publications/fourth_interim_progress_report_final.pdf.

[22] See http://www.ntia.doc.gov/category/irac.

[23] Members are listed at http://www.ntia.doc.gov/page/irac-functions-and-responsibilities.

[24] See http://www.ntia.doc.gov/category/csmac.

Advanced Communications Research

NIST and the NTIA have jointly established a Center for Advanced Communications, in Boulder, CO. A key focus of the center is to promote interdisciplinary research, development, and testing in wireless technology and spectrum sharing for public safety and commercial broadband communications. The Center will also provide test beds for advanced communications technologies.

The Institute for Telecommunication Sciences (ITS), located in Boulder, is the research and engineering arm of the NTIA. ITS provides core telecommunications research and engineering services to promote enhanced domestic competition and new technology deployment; advanced telecommunications and information services; foreign trade opportunities for American telecommunication firms; and more efficient use of spectrum.

The FY2017 budget request is for $13.212 million, compared to the enacted amount of $10.075 million in FY2016. The FY2016 budget recommendation for Advanced Communications Research was $12.555 million, including an increase of $4.828 million and 8 FTE new employees for the Center for Advanced Communications Research. Total FTEs would increase from 50 to 58.

Broadband Deployment

Managing broadband programs and grants required by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA, P.L. 111-5) has been a major thrust of the NTIA's broadband deployment programs since the law was enacted in 2009.[25] ARRA (notably BTOP) grants must be closed out and uncommitted funds returned to the U.S. Department of the Treasury by September 30, 2015. Ongoing program features include outreach to improve digital literacy; maintaining a map of broadband availability nationwide (Broadband Map); research; and the development of case studies for deploying broadband in communities.

In January 2015, the NTIA announced that it will consolidate its efforts to assist community broadband deployment under a new program, BroadbandUSA.[26] This supports new initiatives for expanding and improving broadband deployment, announced by the White House on January 13, 2015.[27] Among other steps, the NTIA also released a public-private partnership primer, which provides a basic introduction to a variety of partnership models for communities considering new broadband projects.[28]

The FY2017 budget recommendation for broadband programs is $12.913 million for salaries and expenses. This would be an increase of approximately $1 million over the FY2016 enacted amount for these programs. The increase would go primarily to enlarge the BroadbandUSA

[25] For a discussion of grant programs and broadband deployment, see CRS Report R41775, *Background and Issues for Congressional Oversight of ARRA Broadband Awards*, by (name redacted) .

[26] NTIA Blog, "NTIA Announces BroadbandUSA Effort to Assist Communities with Broadband Plans," January 13, 2015, http://www.ntia.doc.gov/blog/2015/ntia-announces-broadbandusa-effort-assist-communities-broadband-plans.

[27] The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, *Fact Sheet: Broadband That Works: Promoting Competition and Local Choice in Next-Generation Connectivity*, January 13, 2015, http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/01/13/fact-sheet-broadband-works-promoting-competition-local-choice-next-gener.

[28] U.S. Department of Commerce, NTIA, "BroadbandUSA: An Introduction to Effective Public-Private Partnerships for Broadband Investments," January 2015, http://www.ntia.doc.gov/files/ntia/publications/ntia_ppp_010515.pdf.

program, which would also benefit from $3.178 million redirected from the BTOP grant program. The number of FTEs would remain constant at 36.

Public Safety Trust Fund

Proceeds from auctions of spectrum licenses as specified in the Spectrum Act are directed first into a Public Safety Trust Fund, created by the act. Some revenue in the Public Safety Trust Fund is designated for specific purposes, primarily public safety.[29]

The Spectrum Act gives the NTIA responsibilities to support the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet) in planning, building, and managing a new, nationwide, broadband network for public safety communications. The law provides for specific transfers from the Public Safety Trust Fund to be used for FirstNet.

All of the funding obligations of the Spectrum Act have been met with proceeds from auctions held in 2014-2015. Balances remaining in any fund created by the act are to revert to the Treasury in 2022 to be used "for the sole purpose of deficit reduction."[30]

Appropriations and Budget Request History

The FY2017 budget request for the NTIA is $50.841 million for salaries and expenses. For FY2016, the Administration had proposed $49.2 million; Congress appropriated $39.5 million.

In FY2010, the Public Telecommunications Facilities Program (PTFP) represented half of the NTIA's budget appropriations. In FY2011, funding for the PTFP was eliminated, but the total enacted budget appropriations amount for the NTIA increased by 4% to $41.6 million, entirely for administrative expenses and salaries.

According to the NTIA, the increase of $21.6 million from FY2010 to FY2011 in funding for salaries and expenses was largely attributable to the costs of administration of a $4.7 billion program for broadband deployment, as required by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (P.L. 111-5).[31] In FY2012 requests for funding to administer grant programs totaled $32.3 million, 70% of the fiscal year budget request. For FY2013, $25.8 million in funding was designated to administer the remaining broadband grant programs, primarily BTOP. The FY2014 request for broadband grant program oversight was for $24.7 million, roughly 40% of the total budget request. For FY2015, the requested appropriation for broadband programs was halved to $12.241 million, in a total proposed budget of $51.0 million.

The FY2015 request of $51.0 million would have been an increase of $5 million over the enacted FY2014 budget amount of $46 million. The increase was attributed by the NTIA to an increased focus on policy oversight in two key areas: formulating domestic and international policies and expanding the availability of broadband communications. New programs identified in the budget request included a Center for Advanced Communications, a cooperative effort with NIST to advance spectrum sharing and innovation. Further, for FY2015, the NTIA proposed $7.5 million to fund an Internet Policy Center to provide analysis and recommendations related to all aspects of the Internet. For FY2015, Congress appropriated $38.2 million for NTIA salaries and expenses.

[29] P.L. 112-96, §6413, 126 Stat. 235.

[30] P.L. 112-96, §6413, 126 Stat. 236.

[31] This amount was later reduced by Congress to $4.4 billion.

Significant increases were also proposed for Advanced Communications Research and for Domestic and International Policies in the FY2016 and FY2017 budget recommendations. The FY2017 budget request for Advanced Communications Research is for $13.212 million, compared to the enacted amount of $10.075 million in FY2016. The $12.555 million proposed for FY2016 included an increase of $4.828 million and 8 FTE new employees for the Center for Advanced Communications Research.

The FY2017 budget request for Domestic and International Policies is $15.832 million for salaries and expenses. This amount is comparable to the FY2016 request of $15.227 million. The enacted amount for FY2016 was $9.093 million.

In FY2015, the number of FTE employees in programs requiring appropriations was 121; in FY2016 the number had increased to 160 FTEs. The requested budget for FY2017 for salaries and expenses includes 177 FTEs. The rate of increase in FTEs suggests a reduction of non-salary costs covered by appropriations.

Table 1. NTIA Fiscal Year Enacted or Requested Appropriations 2010-2017

(in millions of dollars)

	FY2010	FY2011	FY2012	FY2013[a]	FY2014	FY2015[b]	FY2016	FY2017[c]
NTIA total	$40.0	$41.6	$45.6	$42.8	$46.0	$38.2	$39.5	$50.8
Administration, salaries and expenses	$20.0	$41.6	$45.6	$42.8	$46.0	$38.2	$39.5	$38.2
PTFP	$20.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Source: Annual Reports, Department of Commerce and Congressional Appropriations, as enacted.

a. Total budget authority.

b. The enacted amount for FY2015 was supplemented by $4.7 million in unobligated balances carried forward from the previous year, allowing for a FY2015 budget of nearly $42.9 million.

c. Requested.

In addition to appropriations, the NTIA also receives funding from sources such as fees charged to federal agencies for spectrum management services and reimbursable projects in telecommunications technology research. Reimbursable funding for FY2015 is reported as $36.1 million (139 FTEs), with $29.3 million for spectrum management fees. FY2016 estimates for reimbursable funding total $57.7 million (160 FTEs) with almost $47.0 million from spectrum management fees. Projected amounts for FY2017 are for a total of $44.1 million (170 FTEs), with $35.6 million provided by spectrum management fees. The Senate committee report on appropriations for FY2017 would require the NTIA to submit a report to the committee "detailing the collection of reimbursements from other agencies"

Projected employment for all programs, using both appropriated funds and fees, for FY2017 would be 347, if fully funded. In FY2015, the FTE total was 260.

NTIA Programs and Policies

The NTIA fulfills many responsibilities for different constituencies. As the agency responsible for managing spectrum used by federal agencies, the NTIA often works in consultation with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) on matters concerning spectrum access, technology, and policy. The FCC regulates private sector, state, local, and tribal spectrum use. Because many spectrum issues are international in scope and negotiated through treaty-making, the NTIA and

the FCC collaborate with the Department of State in representing American interests. The NTIA also participates in interagency efforts to develop Internet policy and to ensure that Internet-focused initiatives across the government are coordinated. The NTIA and NIST have adjoining facilities on the Department of Commerce campus in Boulder, CO, where they collaborate on research projects with each other and with other federal agencies, such as the FCC.

The NTIA worked with the Rural Utilities Service in coordinating grants made through BTOP. The NTIA collaborates with NIST, the FCC, and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in providing expertise and guidance to grant recipients using BTOP funds to build new wireless networks for broadband communications.

As described by the NTIA,[32] its policies and programs are administered through

- The Office of Spectrum Management (OSM), which formulates and establishes plans and policies that ensure the effective, efficient, and equitable use of the spectrum both nationally and internationally. Through the development of long-range spectrum plans, the OSM works to address future federal government spectrum requirements, including public safety operations. The OSM also handles the frequency assignment needs of the federal agencies and provides spectrum certification for new federal agency radio communication systems.
- The Office of Policy Analysis and Development (OPAD), which is the domestic policy division of the NTIA. OPAD supports the NTIA's role as principal adviser to the executive branch and the Secretary of Commerce on telecommunications and information policies by conducting research and analysis and preparing policy recommendations.
- The Office of International Affairs (OIA), which develops and implements policies to enhance U.S. companies' ability to compete globally in the information technology and communications (ICT) sectors. In consultation with other U.S. agencies and the U.S. private sector, OIA participates in international and regional fora to promote policies that open ICT markets and encourage competition. It supports the Department of Commerce's Internet Policy Task Force and NTIA's participation in ICANN and the Domain Name System (DNS) and other Internet policies with international scope.
- The Institute for Telecommunication Sciences (ITS), which is the research and engineering laboratory of the NTIA. ITS provides technical support to the NTIA in advancing telecommunications and information infrastructure development, enhancing domestic competition, improving U.S. telecommunications trade opportunities, and promoting more efficient and effective use of the radio spectrum.
- The Office of Telecommunications and Information Applications (OTIA), which administers grant programs that further the deployment and use of technology in America, and the advancement of other national priorities. In the past, the OTIA has awarded grants from the Public Telecommunications Facilities Program, which was terminated by Congress in FY2011. The OTIA has administered BTOP grants since 2009.
- The Office of Public Safety Communications, which was created by the NTIA at the end of 2012 to administer some provisions of the Middle Class Tax Relief

[32] See http://www.ntia.doc.gov/about.

and Job Creation Act of 2012, Title VI, also known as the Spectrum Act. It also provides administrative and other support functions for FirstNet.

Termination of the Public Telecommunications Facilities Program

Effective FY2011, Congress terminated grant funding for the Public Telecommunications Facilities Program (PTFP). In FY2010, the program received $20 million in funding to support broadcast and non-broadcast projects. Approximately half of the grant monies went to public radio and television stations to replace equipment. Another 25% of grant funds were awarded to bring radio and television services to unserved or underserved communities. Other awards included grants to 16 public television and radio stations to cover costs of converting from analog to digital broadcasting. These grants helped the Public Broadcasting Service to maintain and improve its critical role in the current Emergency Alert System (EAS) and new initiatives for Wireless Emergency Alerts (also known as commercial mobile alerts).[33] For example, the satellite communications network that supports EAS is operated by the National Public Radio, public television stations provide backup for Wireless Emergency Alerts to mobile devices, and public television and radio stations provide emergency alerts and information to otherwise unserved communities.

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[33] Background information on FEMA and FCC websites, such as http://www.fema.gov/emergency-alert-system-eas.

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