

tion Service may enter into multiyear agreements necessary to carry out the strategy developed under this subsection.

(c) Pilot program

(1) Criteria

Not later than 30 days after April 18, 2017, the Under Secretary shall publish data and metadata standards and specifications for space-based commercial weather data, including radio occultation data, and, as soon as possible, geostationary hyperspectral sounder data.

(2) Pilot contracts

(A) Contracts

Not later than 90 days after April 18, 2017, the Under Secretary shall, through an open competition, enter into at least one pilot contract with one or more private sector entities capable of providing data that meet the standards and specifications set by the Under Secretary for providing commercial weather data in a manner that allows the Under Secretary to calibrate and evaluate the data for its use in National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration meteorological models.

(B) Assessment of data viability

Not later than the date that is 3 years after the date on which the Under Secretary enters into a contract under subparagraph (A), the Under Secretary shall assess and submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives the results of a determination of the extent to which data provided under the contract entered into under subparagraph (A) meet the criteria published under paragraph (1) and the extent to which the pilot program has demonstrated—

- (i) the viability of assimilating the commercially provided data into National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration meteorological models;
- (ii) whether, and by how much, the data add value to weather forecasts; and
- (iii) the accuracy, quality, timeliness, validity, reliability, usability, information technology security, and cost-effectiveness of obtaining commercial weather data from private sector providers.

(3) Authorization of appropriations

For each of fiscal years 2019 through 2023, there are authorized to be appropriated for procurement, acquisition, and construction at the National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service, \$6,000,000 to carry out this subsection.

(d) Obtaining future data

If an assessment under subsection (c)(2)(B) demonstrates the ability of commercial weather data to meet data and metadata standards and specifications published under subsection (c)(1), the Under Secretary shall—

- (1) where appropriate, cost-effective, and feasible, obtain commercial weather data from private sector providers;

- (2) as early as possible in the acquisition process for any future National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration meteorological space system, consider whether there is a suitable, cost-effective, commercial capability available or that will be available to meet any or all of the observational requirements by the planned operational date of the system;

- (3) if a suitable, cost-effective, commercial capability is or will be available as described in paragraph (2), determine whether it is in the national interest to develop a governmental meteorological space system; and

- (4) submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives a report detailing any determination made under paragraphs (2) and (3).

(e) Data sharing practices

The Under Secretary shall continue to meet the international meteorological agreements into which the Under Secretary has entered, including practices set forth through World Meteorological Organization Resolution 40.

(Pub. L. 115–25, title III, §302, Apr. 18, 2017, 131 Stat. 103; Pub. L. 115–423, §7(b), Jan. 7, 2019, 132 Stat. 5461.)

AMENDMENTS

2019—Subsec. (c)(3). Pub. L. 115–423 substituted “2019 through 2023” for “2017 through 2020” and inserted “the” before “National”.

§ 8533. Unnecessary duplication

In meeting the requirements under this subchapter, the Under Secretary shall avoid unnecessary duplication between public and private sources of data and the corresponding expenditure of funds and employment of personnel.

(Pub. L. 115–25, title III, §303, Apr. 18, 2017, 131 Stat. 105.)

SUBCHAPTER III—FEDERAL WEATHER
COORDINATION

§ 8541. Environmental Information Services Working Group

(a) Establishment

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Science Advisory Board shall continue to maintain a standing working group named the Environmental Information Services Working Group (in this section referred to as the “Working Group”)—

- (1) to provide advice for prioritizing weather research initiatives at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to produce real improvement in weather forecasting;

- (2) to provide advice on existing or emerging technologies or techniques that can be found in private industry or the research community that could be incorporated into forecasting at the National Weather Service to improve forecasting skill;

- (3) to identify opportunities to improve—

- (A) communications between weather forecasters, Federal, State, local, tribal, and other emergency management personnel, and the public; and