



Federal Maritime Commission

Open Data Plan – FY 2025–2027

Federal Maritime Commission
Open Data Plan

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1. Purpose

This plan satisfies the requirement in § 3506(b)(2)(B) of Title 44, United States Code, and the implementing guidance in OMB Memorandum M-25-05, which direct every agency to maintain an **Open Data Plan** as part of its Information Resources Management (IRM) Strategic Plan. The plan explains how the Federal Maritime Commission (FMC or Commission) will make its data *findable, accessible, interoperable, and reusable* (FAIR) while safeguarding privacy, confidentiality, and national security.

2. Background

The Commission protects the public from unfair and deceptive practices in international ocean transportation. The agency's data holdings are of high-value for researchers, shippers, and the public. Title II of the Evidence Act, the OPEN Government Data Act, establishes that Federal data should be **open by default** and cataloged in Data.gov. M-25-05 further details requirements for comprehensive data inventories, open formats, and public engagement. This plan adopts these requirements and others outlined in M-25-05.

3. Commission Open Data Goals

- **Transparency & Trust** – Increase public insight into liner-shipping markets and regulatory actions.
- **Operational Efficiency** – Empower staff with modern data tools and metadata standards.
- **Evidence & Innovation** – Enable external researchers and innovators to reuse Commission data for economic analysis, compliance tooling, and Artificial Intelligence.

4. Agency Data Requirements

Section 6 of Memorandum M-25-05 lists nine topics that every agency's Open Data Plan must cover.

a. Data-Collection Processes for Open Formats – All new electronic submissions will be captured in open, machine-readable formats that can be reused between applications and use cases. Older filings that arrived in other formats will be converted by in-house tools into structured data files. In fiscal years 2025 and 2026, the Chief Data Officer will publish a brief intake guide outlining the preferred formats and will oversee a targeted project to digitize historically significant complaint decisions and add them to the agency's central data repository.

b. Data-Usage Information – Each spring the Commission will publish a one-page "By the Numbers" brief on fmc.gov/data, summarizing dataset downloads and application programming interface (API) calls from the previous fiscal year; the underlying CSV will be provided for independent analysis.

c. Collaboration with Data Users – Stakeholder engagement will be handled through the Office of the Secretary at Inquiries@fmc.gov, which will engage with Commission technical components, to include the Office of Information Technology (OIT). Members of the public can use this channel to ask questions or offer feedback.

d. Open Data Point of Contact – The Office of the Secretary is the designated point of contact. The office's phone number and email address are (202) 523-5725 and Secretary@fmc.gov. The contact information is also posted on the agency's website at: [Office of the Secretary - Federal Maritime Commission](https://www.fmc.gov/office-of-the-secretary).

e. Improvement Processes – Before any dataset is made public, the Commission will complete a quality checklist to ensure the file is current, accurate, and in an open, machine-readable format. On a frequent basis, the data catalog at Data.gov will be reviewed to fix outdated links, update metadata, and retire superseded files.

f. Open Data Goal Requirements – The Commission will lead steady, practical improvements that keep agency data accurate, timely, and easy to access. Progress and priorities will be reviewed by the agency's Data Governance Committee (DGC), chaired by the Chief Data Officer, to ensure program offices stay engaged and to coordinate resources, privacy safeguards, and publication schedules. Additionally, training opportunities will be coordinated by the Chief Data Officer with the Training Officer.

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g. Prioritizing Public Data-Asset Review – The Commission will rank unreleased datasets by public impact, demand, and mission relevance and then process them in manageable batches.

h. Compliance Status – All releases will conform to 44 U.S.C. § 3511 and the open-data requirements described in M-25-05. A comprehensive inventory at **fmc.gov/data.json** will refresh regularly and feed Data.gov automatically.

i. Updating the IRM Strategic Plan – This open-data appendix will be refreshed each fiscal year as part of the IRM Strategic Plan update, noting progress and new priorities. The update will be made publicly available on the FMC website no later than 5 days after completion.

5. Appendix A – Key Definitions

- **CDO** – Chief Data Officer
- **Data Asset** – a collection of data elements or data sets that may be grouped together.¹
- **Metadata** - structural or descriptive information about data such as content, format, source, rights, accuracy, provenance, frequency, periodicity, granularity, publisher or responsible party, contact information, method of collection, and other descriptions.²
- **Open Format** – a file format for storing digital data where that format is platform independent and machine readable, and is maintained: (A) at no cost to the public; and (B) with no restrictions on copying, publishing, distributing, transmitting, citing, or adapting such format.
- **Open Government Data Asset** – a public data asset that is -(A) machine-readable; (B) available (or could be made available) in an open format; (C) not encumbered by restrictions, other than intellectual property rights, including under titles 17 and 35 [of the U.S. Code], that would impede the use or reuse of such asset; and (D) based on an underlying open standard that is maintained by a standards organization.³
- **Public Data Asset** – a data asset, or part thereof, maintained by the Federal Government that has been, or may be, released to the public, including any data asset, or part thereof, subject to disclosure under [5 U.S.C. § 552].⁴

¹ 44 U.S.C. § 3502(17).

² Id. § 3502(19).

³ Id. § 3502(20).

⁴ Id. § 3502(22).