Mobile Application Release Checklist

This checklist refers to installed mobile applications – applications compiled for and/or deployed on a mobile device (iPhone/iPad, Android phone or tablet, etc.) – and is **advisory** only.

The checklist has three sections:

- software practices – this applies to any organization that develops mobile applications
- federal requirements – this applies to any federal organization that develops mobile applications
- USGS requirements – this applies to USGS projects that develop mobile applications

Software Practices

Checklist Item	Definition	Example	Rationale
Code Repository	Identify the code repository	GitHub, myUSGS BitBucket	Provides reviewer with endpoint to evaluate code
Required Device Permissions	Document the permissions the user must allow the application to operate	Location, Contact	Allows reviewers to assess what the user faces during the install
Application Framework	Document the technology used to develop the application	HTML5/Cordova, Swift	Helps potential reviewers determine if they have the right skill sets to assess the app
Security Assessment	Document the application-level vulnerability assessments and security tests done before release	XSRF attack results	While a reviewer will run their own security tests, this provides some background that can save the reviewer some time
Functional Test	Document the functional tests done before release	list of unit tests	Provides reviewer with areas to assess
Secure Transmission Protocols	Document the protocols used to move data back and forth to the application	TLS	
User Test	Document comments from beta/test users	list of comments	For non-technical review
Feedback Workflow	Diagram or document describing how users will provide feedback and get responses	diagram	For non-technical review
Data Management Plan	Document describing the collection data lifecycle, including backend capture, processing, distribution options, and archiving	data management plan using your organizational template/model	Allows reviewers to see how the data flow will work beyond the mobile app itself
APIs Used	Document remote APIs used by the app	Google Maps	Provides project management with a view into dependencies
License Usage/Attribution	List of licenses	OpenStreetMap	Provide licenses used so reviewer can verify the app correctly attributes sources and conforms to license conditions

Federal Requirements

Checklist Item	Definition	Example	Rationale
Personal Information	Identify what types of PII are collected and used by the application	email address, user name	Provides an external reviewer information on whether a Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) is necessary
Paperwork Reduction	Identify the number of non-federal users will be submitting information through this app if less than 10, or the OMB PRA number if more than 10	locations, images, field notes	Provides an external reviewer information on whether an OMB PRA number is necessary
Section 508	Identify Section 508 adaptations implemented	visually impaired access example	Provides an external reviewer information on whether Section 508 issues were considered
Terms of Service	Identify all third party software and platforms used in the development and release of the app, along with links to the ToS that allows use of these items	Apache Cordova, Apple App Store	

USGS/DOI Requirements

The USGS adds some steps to the process. Mobile software is still software, and as such must conform to all USGS Software Release Instructional Memos and Policies. That means IPDS review and approval. In addition, mobile applications are still news-worthy, and as such may need a press release. This gets coordinated through one of several USGS Communications Teams. At some point the USGS ***may*** implement an App Review Board. This team would be comprised of policy specialists from OSQI, CSS, EI, OCAP, and a representative who can speak to copyright, trademark, and tech transfer issues, and would likely involve itself in the following manner:

- A charter will be written and approved to solidify the App Review Board as a requirement for all mobile app reviews.
- The App Review Board will set a review schedule so that application developers, as well as the BAO, will know when to expect reviews to be conducted and submitted.
- After each member of the team has reviewed the documentation and app for their policy area responsibility, the team recommendation for approval will be passed onto a BAO for their sign-off. This sign-off should be fairly easy since the BAO will primarily be ensuring that the App Review Board has done its due diligence in reviewing of the documentation and app submitted.
- IPDS ***may*** be updated to add a specific workflow for mobile applications (as opposed to other software products).
- Mobile apps were initially identifies as either "science support" or "outreach". This distinction is no longer appropriate, since applications have a tendency to leak from one realm to another. There will be a single review process that is hopefully speedy, efficient and thorough that addresses critical concerns (copyright, Visual identity, Privacy, PRA, 508, etc.)
- The FSP Review piece of application review will be complete by the time the software gets to the Review Board. The Board serves as one final check that all app is in compliance with all policies and requirements related to app.

Checklist Item	Definition	Example	Rationale
FSP Review			
DOI Privacy Policy	Ensure that the app conforms to all DOI privacy policies	True	DOI published OCIO Directive 2016-003 in November 2016. All PMs must ensure their apps conform to this policy.
IPDS Approvals	USGS Publication workflow, captures review/approval signatures	True	For USGS products, the software and security reviewers would have their signatures/dates captures for later audit purposes
BAO Approval	Bureau Approving Official	True	The BAO ensures the application has completed all appropriate science and security reviews.
OCAP Coordination	Verify that the Office of Communication was informed of the release date	OCAP contact	Ensures USGS OCAP is in the loop on new product release and is ready to register the new app on http://apps.usa.gov. This may also include a press release. Check with your Center, Regional, and/or Mission Area Communications Team.
Information Sheet	A Web-based information sheet posted on https://TBD.usgs.gov/apps describing the application, written for the public	TBD	Gives OCAP and endpoint that describes the app to the public
Visual Identity	Verify that USGS Mobile VisID was implemented for the app (see Visual Identity, below)	True	Ensures USGS OCAP that mobile apps have consistent visuals
USGS Public Registry Listing	Provides a link to the information sheet for public access	True	Ensures the public can find app metadata/information; "public" includes PMs from other agencies who may want to learn more about the app
USGS Internal Registry Listing	Internal link to project and application metadata	True	Ensures USGS management has visibility into mobile projects

Visual Identity

Standard USGS Web Site Visual Identity rules do not apply to mobile applications. Instead, all released applications must have a splash screen is required that shows the USGS Visual Identity for a length of at least 2 seconds
before switching to the application function. The Visual Identity can be centered in the middle of the screen and can appear as black on white, white on black, or white on blue.

Beyond that, applications should conform as closely as possible to the deploy platform's icon standards. These icons include, but are not limited to:

- Home screen icons allow for easy discovery and identification of application functionality.
- Navigation icons provide ways for users to move through the application.
- Functionality icons identify different application capabilities built on the native platform APIs (photo, voice recording, ...)

As much as possible, developed apps should follow standards defined by the mobile platform requirements and use icons familiar to users of that platform.

USGSWEBVISID_draft.pdf
Vis ID draft, recently had Scott Horvath review and confirm (Feb 2015)

2 26, 2015 by Hines, Megan K.