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Department of Defense  
OFFICE OF PREPUBLICATION AND SECURITY REVIEW

# U.S. Department of Defense Chief Information Officer

Annual Report on the Progress to Implement the  
21st Century Integrated Digital Experience Act,  
Public Law 115-336

Prepared for the Office of Management and Budget and the public per the requirements of  
section 3(d) of Public Law 115-336.

November 30, 2023

**The estimated cost of this report or study for the Department of Defense is approximately \$2,200.  
This includes \$1,500 in expenses and \$700 in DoD labor.**

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# 1 Background

Section 3(d) of Public Law 115-336, the 21st Century Integrated Digital Experience Act (21st Century IDEA) requires the head of each Federal executive agency to report annually (through 2023) to the Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the public on the agency's progress towards implementing the requirements of the Act regarding website modernization.

This report summarizes the 2023 efforts of the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) to improve DoD public-website modernization and meet requirements therein of the 21st Century IDEA.

## 1.1 Sec. 3. Website Modernization – Implementation Activities

### 1.1.1 Web Enterprise Business (WEB)

The Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs (ATSD(PA)) promulgated responsibility to the Defense Media Activity (DMA) on June 15, 2021, through a Directive-type Memo (DTM)<sup>1</sup> for the establishment and responsibility of DoD public-website modernization. DMA has drafted a DoD Instruction (DoDI 5400.CF), which is currently undergoing formal coordination within the Department.

The DoD Defense Media Activity (DMA) consolidates policy, management, and governance of the Department's public-facing website hosting service to leverage enterprise-level purchasing power and efficient business operations, and make secure, compliant content available to the DoD and public. DMA provides the Web Enterprise Business (WEB), which is to become the DoD public-website enterprise hosting solution and robust distribution system that meets all DoD standards for information security. This solution is built with the Public Affairs mission in mind to professionally create websites for public viewing.

Establishment of WEB as the DoD's centrally managed enterprise-wide service provides a common framework across the DoD to enable the Department to focus resources to achieve the requirements of the 21st Century IDEA for public websites. DMA continues collaboration with other DoD Components and industry via a Request for Information published October 28, 2022.

In addition, DMA collaborated with the Office within the General Services Administration (GSA) 18F, which is a Federal-wide technology and design consultancy. GSA's 18F provided an external assessment of the current WEB program, and DMA has taken actions in alignment with recommendations in the areas of planning, technical approach, and manpower.

DMA maintains the existing American Forces Public Information Management System (AFPIMS) content management system, servicing more than 1,000 public-facing DoD websites. The increase shows that AFPIMS continues to grow in terms of number of websites, number of customers, and public usage. DMA is working to identify the total number of in-scope public-facing websites across the Department for future aggregation and WEB administration.

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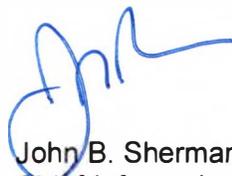
<sup>1</sup> <https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dtm/DTM-21-001.PDF>

DoD Instruction (DoDI) 8170.01, "Online Information Management and Electronic Messaging," January 2, 2019, as amended – directs DoD personnel to ensure that public DoD websites are operated in compliance with the laws and requirements cited in Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Memorandum M-17-06, "Policies for Federal Agency Public Websites and Digital Services," November 8, 2016, which include secure connections (HTTPS), and analytics & user feedback. WEB has implemented, per direction in the DoDI 8170.01, the Digital Analytics Program (DAP) code on all public DoD websites currently hosted with DMA in accordance with OMB M-17-06.

DMA is seeking to implement a new next generation platform to facilitate modernized, cloud-based public website capabilities for DoD, which are compliant with 508 accessibility and scale to meet 21st Century IDEA requirements out-of-the-box. A dedicated team has been established to work on enhancing the WEB program, to include the addition of two highly qualified experts (HQE's) – one tasked with analyzing and developing a new cost model, which will make the program a "fee for service" self-sustaining in future years; and the other to focus on customer experience.

### 1.1.2 Progress in 2023

- DMA concluded an Analysis of Alternatives of the top three content-as-a-service providers and selected Adobe Experience Manager as a pilot platform. The pilot will measure costs and capabilities, including ease of implementing the 21st Century IDEA.
- DoD continues to make significant progress in Section 508 accessibility compliance. The Department tested the Military Services' public websites in Calendar Year (CY) 2021, CY 2022, CY 2023 and remediated many accessibility barriers within the AFPIMS framework. A recent audit of Office of the Secretary of Defense public websites found overall standards conformance to be at 83.5%.
- DoD CIO and DoD Components continue to monitor DoD public website compliance with Section 508 requirements, performing manual tests of web pages using the Department of Homeland Security Trusted Tester test method and certified testers. Department Reported Trusted Testers are given direct access to DMA WEB's trouble ticket system to report Section 508 issues directly and track resolution.
- DMA continues to work with GSA to allow them to scan .mil website domains for accessibility conformance.
- DoD CIO continues to promote electronic document accessibility and provides electronic content accessibility guides and resources. DoD CIO also hosts monthly electronic document accessibility training for content creators.



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