

## Technology

## NOAA Abandons BlackBerries for iPhones, iPads



By Judi Hasson



The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration will save thousands of dollars by trading its fleet of BlackBerries for iPhones and iPads in the next few months.

CIO Joseph Klimavicz told AOL Government the change, expected to take place by June 1, would save substantial costs associated with managing BlackBerry devices. He declined to specify savings other than to say it would be "thousands of dollars" now spent on managing close to 3,000 devices.

"With the implementation of the Unified Messaging Service, NOAA has the ability to securely manage a broader array of mobile devices, smart phones and tablets, with more capability than offered by BlackBerry devices," he said.

Currently, iPhones and iPads are the only devices that NOAA can securely manage, but NOAA hopes to expand to Android-based devices in the near future.

An estimated 3,000 NOAA employees have mobile devices, mostly BlackBerries and a few iPhones, but Klimavicz expects the number of mobile tools to grow dramatically for NOAA's 13,000 employees.

The end of BlackBerries at NOAA is just one of many innovations that Klimavicz is undertaking.

"I've been trying to push enterprise-wide solutions that are cost effective," Klimavicz told AOL Government. "OMB is pushing the same thinking. We've come together in the past year with cost-effective solutions."

He outlined others:

- Launched [www.geoplatform.gov](http://www.geoplatform.gov) in November 2011 with the Interior Department and the Environmental Protection Agency to deliver user-friendly, integrated, federal data collections on common geographic maps. This prototype site combines map-based data and tools with the latest internet technologies to deliver geospatial information in a simple, understandable package with federal data collections on common geographic maps.
- In February, NOAA will launch its own geospatial site – "A federal sandbox where we want to bring together information from different agencies," Klimavicz said. "Just about everything can be geospatial referenced."
- Used a phased-in approach to switch NOAA to Google apps. Klimavicz turned it on for NOAA agencies one step at a time. He turned on video chats for every division except NOAA's Fisheries Service and Office of Marine and Aviation Operations because video wasn't a tool they needed. Klimavicz said no one was moved to Google's calendar because it was an all or nothing proposition, and he didn't want to commit the entire agency to the tool without testing it out first.
- In December, he completed migration of 25,000 NOAA email addresses to Google apps in the cloud, eliminating 19 legacy systems. The migration included 36 terabytes with 150 million emails. "Google apps are working great. There was an unbelievable response. There are really no issues," he said.
- Investigating other cloud initiatives besides Google apps. "We're pushing more things to the cloud. We want to look at other services around Google apps," Klimavicz said. "There are plenty of challenges going to the cloud. Security is one of them. Another is you need a robust connection to go to the cloud."
- A mobile device pilot is underway with iPhones and iPads transitioning NOAA away from BlackBerries. "Google allows us to manage mobile devices from an enterprise perspective," Klimavicz said. "It's very secure. We can now have the ability to broadly manage smartphones. This will allow us to reduce operating costs longterm and provide a broader array of mobile devices."
- Two new supercomputers, at a total cost of \$170 million, were brought online in Oakridge, Tenn. and Fairmont, W.Va., for climate weather analysis. They are being used for research and will translate into better forecasting for weather, tsunamis,

earthquakes and underwater typography.  
Klimacvitz said there are more opportunities for better computing and saving money.

"The future is shared services whether cloud or not," he told AOL Government. "With the budgetary pressures, people are going to have to share some more. With technology the way it is now, it makes sharing services much easier."

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