# NOAA/NESDIS

## NESDIS

## OSPO RETIREMENT AND DIVESTURE OF ENVIRONMENTAL SATELLITE PRODUCTS

**August 15, 2016**

**COMPLIANCE IS MANDATORY**

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# Chapter 1: Purpose

1. 1 Purpose

To establish guidance and standards for the termination and/or divestiture of environmental satellite products and broadcast services provided by the National Satellite and Information Service (NESDIS). Contents of this policy directive are intended to ensure the effective management of Federal Government fiscal, personnel and information resources used in the processing and distribution of environmental satellite data, generation of higher level satellite products and the operation of satellite broadcast services used for the provision of environmental satellite information. These NESDIS products and services are provided through the shared efforts of intra-agency, inter-agency and intergovernmental partners in response to the validated requirements of authorized Government users.

# Chapter 2: Retirement and Divesture Policy

## 2.1 Background

NESDIS recognizes that NOAA environmental satellite systems and the resulting data and products are important elements of the international Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS) and are used for the benefit of society in nine areas including disasters, health, energy, climate, water, weather, ecosystems, agriculture and biodiversity. NESDIS operates environmental satellite data processing and distribution systems in support of federal statutes, NOAA mission and other agreements. NESDIS provides level-0, level-1 calibrated and navigated environmental satellite data, level-2+ automated environmental satellite products and interpretative satellite-based environmental analyses in support of the NOAA Programs, other Federal Government agencies, international and intergovernmental organizations, state and local governments, commercial organizations and the general public. NOAA Program satellite observational requirements are defined in a NESDIS Consolidated Observational User Requirements List (COURL) data base. The Satellite Products and Services Review Board (SPSRB) manage and administer lifecycle decisions on NESDIS satellite products. Authorized user requests submitted to the SPSRB, that are supported by the COURL requirements, result in the expenditure of considerable resources by NESDIS to develop, transition and maintain new and existing satellite products in operations. To allow the effective use of resources, this NESDIS policy will be used by the SPSRB to manage decisions to transfer or retire satellite products deemed to be of little or no value to the user or are cost prohibitive for the NESDIS Office of Satellite and Product Operations (OSPO) to continue production or the Office of Satellite Ground Services (OSGS) to sustain while still fulfilling the expectations of authorized Government and non-Government users. Decisions regarding transfer or retirement of products will be based upon results of OSPO and OSGS audit procedures.

## 2.2 Rescissions

None

## 2.3 Authorities

- Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. §§ 3501-3520) - requires that agencies ensure the public has timely and equitable access to their public information and that agencies not, except where authorized by statute, establish exclusive or restricted distribution arrangements; restrict or regulate use, resale or re-dissemination of information by the public; charge users fees or royalties for resale or re-dissemination of public information; or establish user fees for public information that exceeds the cost of dissemination .

- Office Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-130 (61 FR6428) - Management of Federal Information Resources: establishes policy for the management of Federal information resources throughout the information lifecycle to minimize cost and maximize usefulness to users; requires agencies to consider the effects of decisions on the public and state/local governments and maintain an information dissemination system that promotes free and open access to the public.

OMB A-130 Appendix III also requires the Federal Government agencies to establish interconnection agreements and obtain written management authorization before connecting their IT systems to other systems, based on an acceptable level of risk.

- NOAA Administrative Order 212-15 (2008) - Management of Environmental and Geospatial Data and Information: This Order establishes a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) policy for acquiring, integrating, managing, disseminating, and archiving environmental and geospatial data and information obtained from worldwide sources to support the mission of NOAA.

- NOAA Administrative Order 216-112 (2006) - Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Environmental Information: recognizes that the nation's environmental information enterprise consists of services provided by the government, academic and private sectors; commits NOAA to give due consideration to the capabilities of these sectors and consider the effects of its decisions on these entities.

- Rules Schedule for Fees for Access to NOAA Environmental Data (15 CFR Part 950) (2009): Defines rules for users to have the ability to access data offline, online and through the NESDIS eCommerce System (NeS) online store. Ability to provide these data, information and products and services depends on user fees.

- Clinger-Cohen Act (1996): provides guidance on how the Federal Government can improve how it acquires, uses and disposes of Information Resources. The goal of the Act is: to improve the productivity, efficiency, and effectiveness of Federal programs; require Government to use the budget process to analyze, track, and evaluate risks, results, and benefits of all major capital investments for the life of information systems; determine whether the function to be supported by the system should be performed by the private sector; provide the means to evaluate the progress of an investment in an information system including measurement of schedule, cost and the capability of the system to meet specified requirements, timeliness, and quality.

- Presidents Management Agenda (2001): requires the Federal Government to address specific areas of improvement including becoming more citizen-centric and customer-focused via increased E-government initiatives and competitive out-sourcing of federal functions to private industry.

## 2.4 Applicability and Scope

This policy directive, to be used in information lifecycle management decisions, applies to the termination or divestiture of operational environmental satellite products provided by the NESDIS Office of Satellite and Product Operations (OSPO) and sustained by the Office of satellite Ground Services (OSGS). NESDIS operational environmental satellite data and products are provided in support of the core NOAA mission to understand and predict changes in the Earth's environment and in a manner consistent with the NOAA Administrative Order 216-112 Partnership Policy, OMB Circular A-130 and oversight guidance from the NESDIS Satellite Products and Services Review Board (SPSRB). The NOAA/NESDIS SPSRB manages all

aspects of the NESDIS satellite product lifecycle. More information relating to the SPSRB and its charter can be found at http://projects.osd.noaa.gov/SPSRB/index.htm .

This policy directive applies to the following types of product divestiture and retirement requests:

- Operational environmental satellite data and higher level products provided by the NESDIS Office of Satellite and Product Operations (OSPO) and sustained by the Office of Satellite Ground Services (OSGS).
- 3rd party NON-NOAA satellite data and products that are processed and distributed by NESDIS/OSPO.
- Satellite data and products that are considered experimental and/or pre-operational and being processed and distributed by NESDIS/OSPO and sustained by NESDIS/OSGS.

This policy directive does not apply to the following types of product divestiture and retirement requests or under the following circumstances:

- Experimental satellite products still under development and testing on IT systems operated by the NESDIS Center for Satellite Applications and Research (STAR), their research partners, Cooperative Institutes and NESDIS program managers such as the NESDIS Office of Projects, Planning & Analysis (OPPA) and Office of Satellite Ground Services (OSGS). Guidelines for interacting with the NESDIS research community and program managers are contained in their websites at http://www.star.nesdis.noaa.gov/star/index.php and http://www.osd.noaa.gov.
- NOAA's National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI) archive products such as climate data records or products that require reprocessing of long-term temporal data and thus are not deemed an operational product by NESDIS/OSPO. Guidelines for interacting with the NESDIS NCEI communities are contained in their websites located at https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/

## 2.5 Definitions

Authorized user – NOAA line offices, NOAA programs and/or other Government agencies and their representatives that are recognized by NOAA/NESDIS to have valid mission requirements for satellite data and services

Divestiture – transfer of the responsibility for the production and dissemination of a satellite product to another organization.

Experimental satellite data and products – new or enhanced satellite data and products that are in the research and development phase of the satellite product lifecycle. These products are maintained by best effort only.

Interpretative satellite-based analyses – satellite analysis products, generated by humans that are tailored to improve accuracy and value to the user.

Level-0 – reconstructed unprocessed instrument data at full resolution; and any and all communications artifacts (e.g., synchronization frames, communications headers) removed.

Level-1a – level-0 data with all supplemental information appended for use in subsequent processing

Level-1b – level-0 data with radiometric and geometric correction applied to produce parameters in physical units

Level-2 – derived environmental variables (e.g., sea surface temperature, surface winds, snow cover) at a comparable temporal and spatial resolution to the Level 1 source.

Level-2+ – all level 2 and higher products

Level-3 – data or retrieved environmental variables which have been spatially and/or temporally re-sampled. Such re-sampling may include averaging and/or compositing.

Level-4 – model output or results from analysis of lower level data (data that are not directly measured by the instruments, but are derived from these measurements)

Data Access Request Policy - Policy establishing guidance and standards for setting priorities and managing user access to and distribution of operational environmental satellite data and products provided by the National Environmental Satellite Data and Information Service (NESDIS) through the Office of Satellite and Product Operations.

Long-term archive – satellite data and products that are acquired and stored for extended periods of time. Users, without stringent timeliness requirements, can obtain satellite data and products from NOAA/NESDIS Center for Environmental Information (NCEI) and other facilities.

Operational satellite products – production and distribution of near real-time satellite data and products that are maintained 24 hours a day and 7 days per week.

Pre-operational satellite data and products – new or enhanced satellite data and products that have been promoted from the research and development phase and are in the process of being evaluated by users. Pre-operational data and products are maintained by best effort and are expected to achieve operational status within 12 months.

Product – collection of one or more geophysical variables derived from remotely sensed data that is uniformly packaged, processed and formatted and made available to a user with associated ancillary data. Products may be classified as Level 0, 1a, 1b, 2+, 3 or 4 depending on their degree of processing.

Product Lifecycle – the requirements, research and development, pre-operations, operations and retirement and/or divestiture of a satellite product.

Resources - fiscal, personnel and information technology assets

Retirement - termination of the production and dissemination of a satellite product

Satellite broadcast services – transmission of satellite data and products directly from satellites in orbit to receiving ground stations. Any user with the appropriate ground station equipment can acquire the signal and receive the broadcast.

Satellite Products and Services Review Board (SPSRB) – a NESDIS executive decision board that manages the lifecycle of new or enhanced satellite products from research and development to implementation into operations and retirement.

Third party satellite data and products – data and products obtained from non-NOAA satellites via agreements with other satellite data providers. 3rd party data are often not processed by NESDIS/OSPO and simply distributed, as it is received, from interagency or international partners. In some cases, OSPO processing may tailor the data or products before sending it to secondary users.

User requests - the process for users to request specified data and products from NOAA/NESDIS.

Validated Requirements – documented and approved needs of NOAA, U.S. Government agencies and other authorized users for satellite data and products.

## 2.6 Policy

NESDIS will implement the standards and principles described below in the manner prescribed. OSPO will review the standards on an annual basis and make modifications to the policy as appropriate.

**Product Divestiture and Retirement Policy Standards and Principles:**

a) In accordance with the authorities referenced in section 2.3 above, NESDIS recognizes the need for the management of Federal Government information technology resources throughout the satellite product lifecycle to minimize cost and maximize usefulness to users.

b) Satellite products no longer meeting the original requirements of authorized users as determined by OSPO audit procedures will be divested or retired from operations.

c) Satellite products deemed to be used only by user applications that do not require real-time operational satellite data, such as long-term climatology-based observational records, will be candidates for divestiture to a government or commercial partner for continued production or will be retired from operations.

d) Replacement satellite products, generated from new satellites and/or instruments, deemed to be of equivalent or superior quality, better maintainability and produced with higher efficiency will be assigned a higher priority for continued operations.

e) Satellite products that are used by other applications or observing systems as input and thus creating a dependency on that product will be assigned a higher priority for continued operations.

f) Lower priority products, as determined by user feedback and audit results, will be candidates to be divested to a government or commercial partner for continued production or will be retired from operations.

g) Audit criteria and detailed procedures governing satellite product divestiture and retirement decisions will be maintained by OSPO in coordination with OSGS.

## 2.7 Roles and Responsibilities

NESDIS OSPO will be responsible for maintaining and proposing updates to this product divestiture and retirement document. OSPO will develop and maintain procedures for implementing this policy, and coordinate those procedures with OSGS. OSPO shall work with the SPSRB to finalize and notify all users of decisions on all product retirement and divestiture requests.

## 2.8 Inquiries

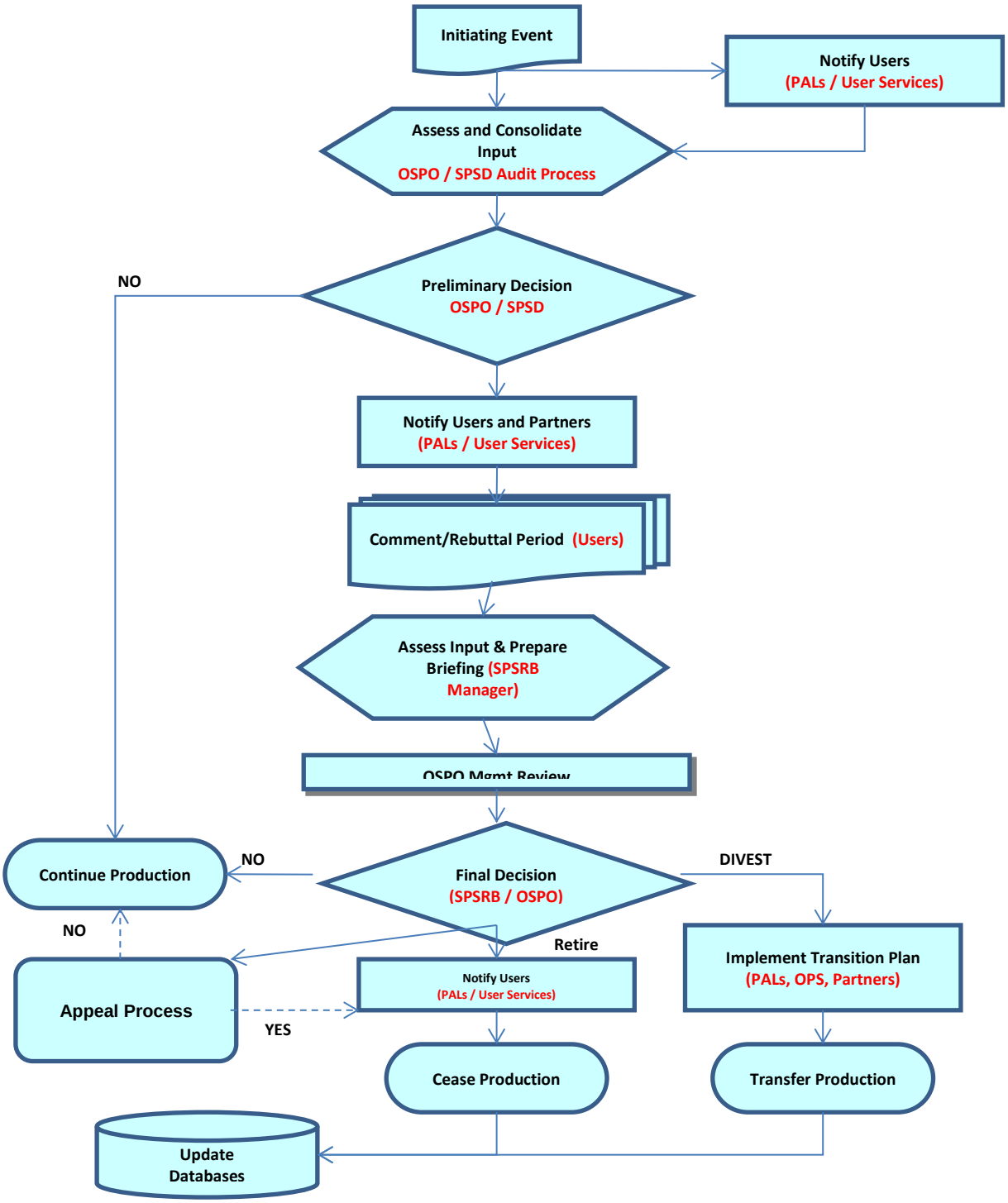
All questions and inquiries should be sent to spsd.userservices@noaa.gov or to the NOAA Center for Weather and Climate Prediction, Satellite Products and Services Division, User Services Team, 5830 University Research Court, Room 3600, College Park, MD 20740. Telephone: (301) 683-3248 or (301) 683-3242.

# Chapter 3: Satellite Products and Services Review Board (SPSRB) Process

## 3.1 Product Divestiture or Retirement Phase

The purpose of the Product Retirement or Divestiture phase is to identify products that are no longer needed and can be terminated or the responsibility for production can be divested or transferred to another organization. This process provides for the opportunity to obtain user feedback and for the evaluation of that input by several levels of management at key decision-making points leading either to the termination or transfer of the production of that product or service.

3.2 Diagram of Divestiture or Retirement Phase



3.3 Initiation of the Retirement/Divestiture Process

There are three broad categories of initiating events that may lead to a recommendation for product retirement or divestiture. These include: system-driven, user-driven, and fiscally-driven events. System-driven events include the failure, upgrade, or replacement of a satellite platform, satellite instrument or IT system. User-driven events result from evolving or new user requirements. Fiscally-driven events are those that necessitate ceasing or transferring production based on limited resources or changing organizational missions. It is recognized that for each initiating event, there must be a responsible party and criteria for initiating a product retirement or divestiture process. OSPO as the owner of the retirement process, may receive recommendations for product retirement and/or divestiture from any entity in the SPSRB process including the user, Product Oversight Panels (POPs), Product Area Leads (PALs) and scientists, program managers, NESDIS NCEI, STAR, OSPO, OSGS management and internal or external oversight boards. Descriptions of initiating events and responsible parties can be found below in Table 1.

| Initiating Event | Initiating Criteria | Responsible Party |
|---|---|---|
| System-driven | | |
| Satellite instrument failure | Degradation or unavailable data | OSPO; STAR; OSPO |
| Satellite platform failure | Unavailable data | OSGS; OSPO |
| New satellite instrument/ platform | New and possibly improved data | OSGS; STAR; OSPO |
| New, improved product | Improved quality; new algorithm; new parameter | OSPO; STAR |
| New IT systems | New production system | OSPO; OSGS |
| User-driven | | |
| Quarterly product audit and re-validation of user requirements | Revalidate original user requirement; continuous customer satisfaction plan | OSPO |
| Quarterly product audit and objective product-use metrics | Metrics indicate no interest in product by user; continuous customer satisfaction | OSPO |
| Established decommissioning date | Agreement with user for divestiture or retirement | OSPO |
| Fiscally-driven | | |
| Reduction in fiscal or personnel resources | Annual ORF or PAC funding not adequate; automation of products realized | OSPO; OSGS |
| User ceases funding for production | PPBES or external product development/implementation funding not realized or | OSPO; OSGS |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | terminated | |
| Not part of mission | Re-focus of assets; identical product produced by other agency | OSPO |

**Table 1**

In response to the User-Driven and Fiscally-Driven initiating events, OSPO defined and documented product audit criteria and procedures in "Environmental Satellite Product Audit Procedures" (ver3.2 Jan, 2014). OSPO executes performance audits at regular intervals during the lifecycle of all operational satellite products. One of the principal objectives of the audit is to determine whether the product still meets the original user requirements and performance specifications. Feedback on the importance of various products will be obtained through direct but informal correspondence between PALs, the OSPO/SPSD User Services Team and the users. The outcome from a performance audit will be a preliminary recommendation by the independent audit review team to either continue production or to proceed with the retirement or divestiture of the product.

## 3.4 Preliminary Decision on Suitability for Retirement/Divestiture

Once a product is identified as a candidate for retirement or divesture from the results of the audit, OSPO will make a preliminary decision on whether to proceed with the recommended retirement/divestiture or continue production. If OSPO determines that there is sufficient justification for retirement or divestiture, then OSPO will move forward to the next step of formally notifying users/partners and gathering comments during a defined rebuttal period.

## 3.5 User Notification and Impact Assessment

Feedback will be obtained from two groups of users: primary and secondary users. Primary users are those customers that are well-known to the Product Area Lead (PAL) and may very well be the originator of the product's User Request. Primary users will be NOAA or other Government organizations. Secondary users are those users who utilize the product but may not be known as users by the PAL. This lack of awareness is often attributable to distribution methods such as web pages or ftp sites that lack accountability. Notification of user of the intent to retire a product will be accomplished via two methods including: (1) a broadcast e-mail notification from the ESPC help Desk and from the PAL and (2) the announcement of the retirement via the NESDIS Partnership Policy website at http://www.nesdis.noaa.gov/PartnershipPolicy.html. These notifications will inform the users that they have 30 days to provide feedback on the impact of the proposed retirement on their applications. Typically, if no input is received by the end of that time period, it is construed as consent to retire or divest the product. In order to ensure notifications

reach secondary users, an announcement of intent to retire/divest the product will be placed on the appropriate OSPO product web pages. In the case of divestiture, the PAL will liaise with the identified operational partner who has agreed to assume responsibility for the production of that product. The PAL will inform them of the intent of NESDIS to cease production of the product and will inform the operational partner that they also can provide information on the impact of the product retirement if they desire. In most cases, the coordination to transfer production responsibility to another agency should have already occurred by this time in the process. At the conclusion of the 30-day comment and rebuttal period, feedback on user impacts will be consolidated along with any supporting information, into a Final Product Retirement/Divestiture brief for final review by OSPO management.

## 3.6 Final Decision on Retirement and/or Divestiture

The decision to retire or divest a product will reside with the SPSRB based on the recommendation and presentation by OSPO management. The SPSRB will decide to either continue production or retire/divest the product. A consensus vote is required for the final decision to retire or divest a product. The SPSRB voting membership is the appropriate body for making this decision since feedback will be considered from representatives of all the NESDIS satellite service organizations, the NWS, NOS, NMFS and the NCEI. The NWS, NOS, NMFS and NCEI are the foremost consumers of NESDIS satellite data and, therefore, have the greatest stake in the continued production or retirement of a product. One possible outcome from the SPSRB voting membership could be that they require additional information to make a decision. In this case, the SPSRB Manager will solicit this additional information from the necessary source. The SPSRB Manager will have 30 days to obtain this information and deliver it to the SPSRB. With the additional information in hand, the SPSRB should make all efforts to render a decision within 10 working days by proxy vote, if necessary.

## 3.7 User Notification and Implementation of Decision

The decision of the SPSRB will be carried out during the Notification and Implementation Phase. If the Board decides that the product in question should stay in production, the SPSRB Manager will close the action and notify all parties of the decision.

If the decision of the Board is to RETIRE the product, the implementation of this retirement will occur within 30 days of the SPSRB decision. There may be exceptions to the 30-day retirement mandate. In those cases, the final termination of the processing and distribution of a product will not take place for up to but not exceed a 12 month grace

period, thereby allowing users to terminate any dependence and switch to other product alternatives. During this 30-day period, three actions must be completed.

- First, the SPSRB will notify all users, including pertinent NOAA Program managers, of the decision to retire the product. This notification will take two forms. First, within 5 working days, the SPSRB Manager shall notify the appropriate PAL of the decision to retire the product. The responsibility for notifying primary users will then shift to the PAL. The PAL will also ensure that an announcement is posted to the appropriate OSPO web pages that informs secondary users of the plan to retire the given product on a specified date.
- Second, the PAL will initiate a Configuration Change Request (CCR) and receive approval from the ESPC Configuration Change Board (CCB) to formally "turn off" the processing and distribution of the product.
- Third, the PAL will update all necessary databases (e.g. PATRON CM data base and SPEEDS) regarding the retired status of the product. This step will occur on the specified retirement date.

If the decision of the Board is to DIVEST a given product, the implementation of this divestiture will also involve three actions that need to be completed. Two of the three will be similar to the retirement actions: the notification process and updating of databases. The actual divestiture will be more complicated as it will involve an organization outside the NESDIS umbrella. The responsible parties within NESDIS for coordinating the divestiture process will be the applicable PAL and an appropriate point of contact within the OSPO operational organization. The SPSRB Manager will notify these individuals within 5 working days of the Board's decision to divest the product. This notification will include applicable information on the organization who is assuming production responsibilities. The PAL and OSPO individuals will assume responsibility for ensuring a smooth transition of production to the new, external partner. It is assumed that the product transition plan, previously approved by both organizations, will specify a time period to complete the product divestiture. It is recommended, however, that all parties strive to carry out the process with a goal of completing the transition within 90-180 days of the SPSRB decision.

## 3.8 Appeal of SPSRB Decision or SPSRB Non-Consensus Vote

An appeal of the SPSRB consensus decision or non-consensus vote of the SPSRB on a product retirement can be made to the NESDIS Deputy Assistant Administrator. A non-consensus vote may occur in cases where the product retirement is fiscally driven and continuation of the product may adversely impact the capability of OSPO to ensure the continuous and successful operation of NESDIS satellite processing and distribution systems. Appeals can be submitted only by the SPSRB principals from OSPO, STAR and/or OSGS. If desired, SPSRB principals could represent the concerns of major user

organizations or interagency partners. The appeal process must be initiated by the concerned party within 30 days of the SPSRB decision by notifying the SPSRB Manager. The SPSRB Manager will then facilitate discussion with the SPSRB voting membership who has 30 days after the appeal is filed to present their case to the DAA. During this time, all retirement and/or divestiture activities will cease until a decision is rendered by the NESDIS DAA. The appeal process would involve taking the same information and briefing that was given to the SPSRB voting membership and have a designated member of the SPSRB present that information to the NESDIS DAA. The NESDIS DAA is charged with deciding whether to uphold the SPSRB decision or overturn it. The NESDIS DAA decision will be final and binding. All comments, discussion, and votes shall become a part of the permanent SPSRB record.

## 3.9 Simplified Retirement Process

The retirement process can be tailored in situations when product retirement does not require user feedback. The purpose of simplified retirement process (Figure 4) is to speed up product retirement. A simplified retirement process can be triggered when either of the following events occurs:

(1) Sensor/Instrument failure
(2) Satellite failure (no immediate replacement)
(3) Product without an identified operational user from Product Audit

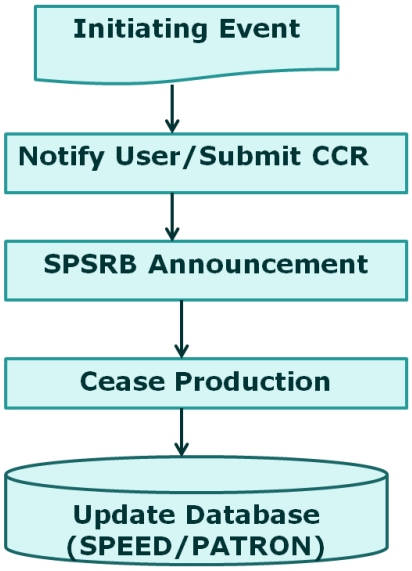



**Figure 4 – Simplified Product Retirement Process**

The implementation of the simplified retirement will be completed within a month from the occurrence of any of the events listed above. During this 30-day period, the following actions must be completed:

- Notification to users of the intent to retire a product will be sent from the ESPC help Desk. The PAL will ensure that an announcement is posted to the appropriate OSPO web pages including NESDIS Partnership Policy website at http://www.nesdis.noaa.gov/PartnershipPolicy.html informing all users on the impending change of the product status.

- The PAL will initiate a CCR and receive approval from the ESPC Configuration Change Board (CCB) formally to "turn off" the processing and distribution of the product.

- OSPO management will make an announcement of the product retirement at the next available session of the SPSRB.

- The PAL will update all necessary databases (e.g. PATRON CM data base and SPEEDS) regarding the retired status of the product. This step will occur on the specified retirement date.

# Appendix: Acronyms

| | |
|---|---|
| CCB | Configuration Change Board |
| CCR | Configuration Change Request |
| COURL | Consolidated Observational User Requirements List |
| DAA | Deputy Assistant Administrator |
| GEOSS | Global Earth Observation System of Systems |
| NCEI | National Centers for Environmental Information |
| NESDIS Service | National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information |
| NMFS | National Marine Fisheries Service |
| NOAA | National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration |
| NOS | National Ocean Service |
| NQP | NESDIS Quality Procedure |
| NWS | National Weather Service |
| OMB | Office of Management and Budget |
| OPPA | Office of Projects, Planning & Analysis |
| OSGS | Office of Satellite Ground Services |
| OSPO | Office of Satellite and Product Operations |
| PAL | Product Area Lead |
| PATRON | (Product, Anomaly, Ticket, Related user Organization, and Notification tool |
| POP | Product Oversight Panel |
| SPSD | Satellite Products and Services Division |

| | |
|---|---|
| SPEEDS | Satellite Product End-to-End Documentation System |
| SPSRB | Satellite Products and Services Review Board |
| STAR | The Center for Satellite Applications and Research |