

Grain Monitoring Program (GMP) (rev 2020)

1. OBJECTIVE

The objectives of the GMP are:

- a) To qualitatively and quantitatively analyze the performance of the GHTS and its stakeholders (e.g., producers, shippers, railways, ports) by developing key indicators and providing time series data that allow for a robust assessment of performance; (see <http://www.grainmonitor.ca> for examples)
- b) To provide timely public reporting on the performance of the GHTS and changes in its structure;
- c) To develop relationships with stakeholders, both government and industry, for the purpose of gathering and sharing data and information on issues; and,
- d) To undertake supplemental studies, at the request and direction of the Project Authority.

The GMP will be based on four principles to meet its objectives: transparency of information, data reliability, neutrality and stakeholder engagement.

2. BACKGROUND STATEMENT

The federal government's Grain Monitoring Program (GMP) was initiated in 2001 to facilitate collection of data and the development of detailed, relevant, and effective measures to assess the performance of Canada's Grain Handling and Transportation System (GHTS). The data and information collected through the GMP supports the Government's policy agenda and cross departmental decision-making by providing unbiased quantitative and qualitative evidence about the performance of the GHTS. It also provides for additional transparency to the GHTS and is used by industry to assess performance and identify issues.

The GMP was one of the measures announced in 2000 by the Minister of Transport and the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, to give industry better tools to interact commercially in the GHTS.

Under the *Transportation Information Regulations* enacted pursuant to Section 50 of the *Canada Transportation Act* (CTA), the Minister of Transport has the authority to collect information on key metrics from all modes of transportation. The CTA also authorizes the Minister to share confidential information collected under these regulations with the Contractor for the purposes of the monitoring the GHTS.

Since the introduction of the GMP, there have been a number of changes in the GHTS (e.g., changes to crop production methods and crops produced, rationalization of country elevators and railways, commercialization of the Canadian Wheat Board, increased use of containers to ship grain). As well, transportation delays in the 2013-2014, 2017-2018 and 2019-2020 crop years underlined the continued need to have access to nimble analysis.

Over the years, the GMP has become a trusted source of information and an asset to the grain sector. The GMP analyzes and reports on key indicators and events to help inform industry stakeholders, the government, and the general public on the performance of the GHTS. The Contractor must accomplish this through the collection and analysis of data and other relevant information, and provide assessments, advice and reports to the Project Authority to be shared with Transport Canada (TC) and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC).

The Contractor will develop and maintain working relationships with industry stakeholders and attend and present at relevant meetings and conferences to complement its knowledge of the performance of the GHTS. The Contractor will organize other learning opportunities for federal officials, such as tours of key facilities within the GHTS or other opportunities designed to enhance industry and government stakeholder knowledge of the GHTS.

3. REQUIREMENT DESCRIPTION

3.1. Scope

The Grain Monitor will provide all stakeholders with a reliable means of assessing how the GHTS is functioning. The main focus of GMP reporting will be indicators measuring operational and management performance of the system as a whole and of each of the major participants, including producers, grain shippers, railways and ports.

These indicators will provide quantitative data on grain production, storage, transit and delivery through the grain supply chain from farm to vessel in terms of speed, cost, reliability and accountability.

In addition, the Contractor will report on changes to the GHTS including, but not limited to:

- Impact of significant events resulting in delays and or lost capacity;
- Integration and consolidation of Canada's GHTS with the North American and global grain marketing and transportation system;
- Shifts in competitive forces due to changes in participants including consolidation or new entrants;
- Changes in infrastructure, crop production, technology or commercial practices;
- Increased use of containerized shipments; and,
- New regulatory frameworks.

The Contractor will report on initiatives taken by the supply chain participants related to the handling, storage, or transportation of grain and on the impacts of changes on the GHTS.

Assessments and reporting will concentrate on operational and financial impacts connected with the movement of grain over time, and will include the identification of any issues with or opportunities for improving the performance of the system.

This work will include:

1. Collecting information and data from government and industry stakeholders in accordance with the program parameters;
2. Fostering and maintaining collaborative relationships with industry stakeholders;
3. Compiling, validating to the best extent possible, and assessing the information and data provided by government departments, agencies and stakeholders;
4. Developing and maintaining the necessary physical and information technology systems for collecting, analyzing and maintaining the data and information in a secure manner, consistent with the monitoring design;
5. Assessing and reporting on developments in the GHTS that have an impact on system performance and stakeholders that would be of interest to the Ministries of Transport and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada;
6. Preparing concise weekly, monthly and quarterly reports that highlight key quantitative observations and commercial developments. The quarterly reports will provide a statement of

- the key current events and metrics including but not limited to: the volume and movement of major grain and specialty crops by rail from country elevator to terminal elevator at port; the system efficiency and performance of supply chain stakeholders and the system in general;
7. Preparing an annual report and making it available online;
 8. Preparing an annual data set and making it available online;
 9. Providing timely updates to online datasets that could be used by stakeholders;
 10. Participating and presenting at industry meetings and conferences related to grain transportation;
 11. Making suggestions to the Project Authority on ways to improve the grain monitoring design (deletion, modification or creation of new indicators, such as: railway car order fulfilment; impact of innovation of supply chain performance; distinguishing bulk grain shipments from processor shipments; movement of grain by trucks from producer to primary elevator and primary elevator to destinations in Western Canada; movement of grain by containers whether source loaded or transloaded; forward ocean vessel orders; grain farmer impact); and,
 12. Making suggestions to the Project Authority on any identified need for ad hoc studies, presentations, or special reports.

The Contractor will perform these duties in an independent, neutral, and timely manner. The Contractor will not have authority to direct industry stakeholders with regard to policies, practices or procedure, will not act as a facilitator or mediator to resolve disputes among industry stakeholders, nor will it set performance targets or benchmarks for the industry.

The Contractor will be required to establish agreements for the preservation of the historical data set and for developing data for comparison purposes and ongoing reporting. The Contractor will be responsible for developing this data for continuity and comparison purposes.

Examples of GMP weekly, monthly, quarterly, and annual reports delivered under historic contracts can be found at <http://www.grainmonitor.ca/>.

3.2. Deliverables

The Contractor must provide the Project authority with the following deliverables:

1. **Weekly Report:** A weekly report shall be submitted to the Project Authority each Tuesday covering the previous grain week (a grain week is Sunday to Saturday, and the crop year commences on August 1, before being made available to the public on the Contractor's website. This report will provide a concise snapshot of the following themes and indicators:
 - a. Production and Stocks in Storage
 - b. Railway Performance
 - c. Port Performance

This will include a summary page, where key metrics and analysis will be included, followed by more detailed metrics, tables and time series graphs.

2. **Monthly Report:** Monthly reports shall be submitted to the Project Authority two weeks following the end of the month, before being made available to the public on the Contractor's website. A concise Quarterly Summary Report (including at a minimum the sections listed under the Quarterly Report section below) will be included in the monthly report at the end of every quarter.

Refer to www.grainmonitor.ca for examples. The Contractor will report concisely on, and is encouraged to suggest new data measures in the following areas:

Monthly Dashboard:

- Western Canadian GHTS Performance (days)
- Total Traffic
- Railway Performance
- Port Performance

Monthly Report:

- Overview
- Highlights for the given month
- Production and Supply for Western Canada
- Traffic and Movement
- System Efficiency and Performance

Quarterly Report:

- Highlights for Quarter
- Commercial Relations
- Commercial Developments
- Infrastructure
- Producer Cars
- Container movement
- Quarterly themed content: harvest/yield summary, railway performance in winter months, seeding, weather etc.

The monthly reports will include an overview of the key metrics and a narrative that describes progress of the crop year, with more description, as well as appropriate issues of interest for that particular month.

The quarterly add-on to the monthly report will provide key metrics and a more detailed narrative that describes, where appropriate, issues of interest over that quarter. For example, the first quarter should focus on production, quality and ramping up of transportation, while the second and third quarters will report on fall and winter slow down, weather conditions, spring seeding intentions, and grain movement during peak period. The fourth quarter reporting should provide a crop update, potential carry-over forecast. The fourth quarter report should also include a brief summary of key indicators for the performance of the GHTS over the course of the crop year.

3.) **Annual Report:** The annual report shall be submitted by the last weekday of February of the following crop year. The annual report will provide high level commentary on system performance consisting of a narrative section highlighting major changes that have taken place over the past year and discusses multi-year trends. The report should address what is happening in the overall system, costs and grain logistics cycles, key changes and trends in infrastructure, industry structure and system reliability, changes in commercial relations and impact on stakeholders. The narrative report will be accompanied by charts, tables and appendices to provide more detailed information.

4. **Timely Publication and maintenance of Applicable Datasets in an online platform:** The Contractor must provide up to date statistics online through a website portal either maintained and/or operated by the contractor. These tables must be publicly available, interactive, and allow users to add and remove data sets (i.e. crops, provinces, etc.), and look at some data over different frequencies (i.e., monthly, quarterly, yearly).