

<filename: POD 2 Agent Agreement announcement.doc>

## **REQUEST FOR COMMENTS AND SOURCES SOUGHT**

The Office of Coast Survey, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) makes the official nautical charts for the United States. These charts are used aboard all commercial vessels, federal vessels, and many recreational boats to enhance the safety and efficiency of navigation, and for other purposes. The printed, paper version of the nautical charts is manufactured using large-format inkjet printers and Print-on-Demand (POD) technology and, in a separate process, using lithographic printing. This announcement deals only with charts printed using POD technology.

For Print-on-Demand nautical charts, NOAA compiles digital images of the nautical charts that are updated weekly, and maintains digital files of metadata. The digital files are provided to a private sector partner who manages the files, assembles them into complete chart images, prints or has printed the results using inkjet printers, and sells the charts through its own network of retailers and distributors. The private sector partner is compensated by its sales of the POD nautical charts. No funds are provided by the government.

NOAA intends to accept a limited number of additional private sector POD partners. These partners would, of necessity, have to develop sufficient software to manage, assemble, and print the NOAA digital chart files. These partners would also have to establish a successful sales effort in order to be compensated. The Agent Agreement governing these public/private partnerships and additional information is posted on the Internet at <http://www.ocsdev.noaa.gov/PODagent/Index.htm> (case sensitive).

NOAA is soliciting questions and comments on its intention, on the Agent Agreement, and is also soliciting non-binding statements of interest from entities interested in becoming a POD partner. Respond by e-mail to [PODagent@noaa.gov](mailto:PODagent@noaa.gov); by fax to 301-713-4019; by letter to Director, Office of Coast Survey, NOAA (N/CS), 1315 East West Highway, Silver Spring, MD, 20910; or by phone to David Enabnit, 301-713-2770 x132 or Richard Sillcox, 301-713-1968 x105.