Data Task Force
June 30, 2025, Meeting Minutes - Approved
Remote Meeting via Interactive Conference Technology
1151 Punchbowl Street, Conference Rm. 410, Honolulu, HI

Meeting was held via Microsoft Teams (videoconference interactive conferencing technology).
Physical location: 1151 Punchbowl Street, Conference Room 410, Honolulu, Hawai'i

Members Present
Rebecca Cai, Chair, Office of Enterprise Technology Services (ETS)
Representative Amy Perruso, State House
Lisa Watkins-Victorino, Department of Education
Mai Nguyen Van, Judiciary
Steve Sakamoto, Department of Health
Dr. Thomas Lee, Hawai'i Data Collective
Torrie Inouye, Bank of Hawai'i

Members Excused
Dr. Eugene Tian, Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism
Kaimana Walsh, Hawai'i Green Growth
Phan Sirivattha, Department of Human Services
Sandra Furuto, University of Hawai'i

Other Attendees
Candace Park, Deputy Attorney General
Department of Health: Derek Vale, Dulce Belen
ETS: Christine M. Sakuda, Javzandulam Azuma, Bradford Baris, Joanna Lee, Lisa Huang

I.   Call to Order; Roll Call

        Roll call was taken. With quorum established, the meeting was called to order at 3:05 p.m.

II.   Public Testimony

        None.

III.   Review and Approve the March 17, 2025, Meeting Minutes.
        There was no public testimony, nor any member's comment. Representative Amy Perruso
        made a motion to approve the minutes as presented; member Mai Nguyen Van seconded
        the motion. A vote was taken, and the minutes passed unanimously.

IV.   FY2025 Updates

        a. Status update on Data/ AI Guidelines for state departments approved at the
            December 16, 2024 Data Task Force meeting

Chair Cai pronounced the status update on the Data and AI Guidelines for state departments. Seven (7) Data and AI Guidelines were approved by the Data Task Force last December. The General AI Assistant Technology Guideline was sent out to all department heads by DAGS' Comptroller through a memo. For all the Guidelines, ETS had reviewed them and would publish them on the website shortly.

b. Data & AI Summit was held on May 14, 2024, Focusing on:

- AI and related technologies, such as machine learning, neural networks, and text analytics, creating new and powerful opportunities for businesses;

- Innovative uses of language models integrated with generative AI, holding enormous promise for positive change within enterprises; and

- Learning Summit of a 1-day immersion into the possibilities inherent in an AI driven future, offering the opportunity to seize the opportunity to harness AI & machine learning's transformative potential.

Chair Cai expressed her excitement at the huge success of the Data & AI Summit. This year's event had 30 more people attending than the 2024 event. We had a general session on Hawaiian Data Task Force and received overwhelmingly positive feedback after the Summit. For example, the Department of Health and Members Steve Sakamoto, Tori Inouye, Thomas Lee commented that it was very helpful to learn about the existence of the Task Force and kind of questions and issues they were working on.

Chair Cai analyzed the difference between the two summits. At the first summit, people were more cautious about data and AI, especially AI; while at the second summit, people were eager to improve government operational efficiency using AI. While Chair Cai acknowledged that we all together did a good job on educating and sharing information about data and AI in the past year, she appreciated the support from all the Data Task Force members.

c. Update on AI Training for State Employees

Chair Cai mentioned that she and the State's CIO, Christine Sakuda, worked closely with DHRD by adding AI training from different vendors to state employee training catalog as well as AI literacy training on our website where we used Google AI essential training and Google prompting essential training. State government employees could register free to a Google form, then we would validate their e-mail address being government employees. After successful registration, this free training would be offered by Google through Coursera.

d. Update from Department of Health on Ethnicity Data Disaggregation

Chair Cai shared onscreen the 2024 SPD 15, *U.S. Office of Management and Budget's Statistical Policy Directive No.15: Standards for Maintaining, Collecting, and Presenting Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity*. Chair Cai introduced Member Derek Vale from the Department of Health to provide an update on it. Member Vale stated, the 21st Century Data Governance Task Force had met over the last year based on the Legislature's request to look at race and ethnicity standards across different state agencies including DOH, ETS, DHS, also planning UH and DOE at the minimum, and some other outside stakeholders.

Member Vale continued, we looked at what the potential issues were, trying to come up with standards, in particular for race and ethnicity, but also for other social determinants of health. In particular, we focused on Statistical Policy Directive (SPD) No. 15 from U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB), which was a required standard in pace for a long time, but was updated last year 2024. They issued new guidance that was required to be carried out by all federal agencies, which then impacted all states due to challenges in getting additional funding for this initiative to go through ETS. We really limited our final recommendations to SPD 1 5 because it was a very big task to carry out standardization of this kind of data. Member Vale appreciated all the committee members who had participated.

Member Vale continued, the final conclusions were to make a series of recommendations to the agencies to focus on SPD 15 because that was the federal standard for race and ethnicity, which was more inclusive now with the revolving guidance and different federal agencies implementing this with associated timelines that required us as state agencies; in particular, the agencies he named that had a significant amount of federal funding to comply with SPD 15. He reminded us to best meet the needs of our residents and should not collect different data sets in different ways.

Chair Cai commented, this update/ movement was pushed by the Hawaiʻi Legislature for this change at the federal government level because we disaggregated ethnicity and the race information that could benefit our citizens a lot, and because we had such a diverse population. This website page of SPD 15 had detailed information about what should be entailed in the future for compliance. Chair Cai ensured that we would share this information with departments, but each department might need to assess their current systems and the current data collection process, or how many systems would be impacted, or more disaggregated and recent ethnicity information should be collected, or any resource requirement would there be. Hopefully, we could finish that assessment and propose for resource request in the upcoming budget year.

Member Vale concurred with Chair Cai's proposal and summary. He pointed out, because there were significant potential resource requirements specific to each agency, and because this would impact each of the large systems that had person data within each agency, there would be issues around data collection, standardization, or alignment of those data sets and reporting out. There would be a series of next steps for each agency to go through and report back to this committee. We would see what potentially additional resources could be provided either to the agencies or through ETS to work more on it in the future.

Member Vale introduced Member Lisa Watkins-Victorino to speak up. Member Watkins-Victorino agreed on the potential issues and suggested that we take into consideration, the minimum level of data to collect under the OMB guidance, the categories in the census form under larger category such as a breakdown for Asian ethnicity. She predicted that the State could actually do more than the minimum, but was concerned if state departments did more, how and what would they collect; especially in Hawaiʻi, what data we would be allowed to collect, or if we could select multiple races. Different departments in different programs may have different approaches because our population was very diverse and multiracial.

Representative Perruso inquired if these OMB guidelines applied to all departments and agencies, and if they could determine the extent to which they were going to follow these guidelines. Member Vale clarified the federal agencies that were

funding some of our programs identified how they applied and there may be differences such as DOE versus DOH or DHS. Representative Perruso wondered if this also applied to HPD in gathering their data to the City and County level. Member Vale affirmed that it would definitely apply to them if they received federal monies or grants.

Representative Perruso then asked if we should consider the legislation in conversation with these federal guidelines to establish our state expectations. Member Vale replied that ideally, we would love to be able to do that to better collect the data in the same way across state agencies and start to standardize it. There would be a cost to try to align these data sets. We wanted to find a better way to help our residents. Representative Perruso agreed that we wanted to set a model and extend out as the efficacy was proven.

Representative Perruso would like to discuss more about the legislative piece at some point. Member Vale expressed his pleasure to meet to discuss it. Chair Cai appreciated this discussion and mentioned that we already had such a discussion during the 21st Century Data Governance Task Force Meeting. Member Vale affirmed so. Chair Cai agreed that it would be ideal to have a statewide way of collecting such information and each resident would be reached only once by the State to provide that information instead of duplicate efforts by different programs within each department to provide additional detail about his/ her ethnicity. But we needed resources to do that.

Member Vale remarked that the potential approaches we were discussing on the committee might reduce the burden on residents if the data were able to be collected once, on the way to contact them, their resident city, and their preferred language. It would be inappropriate to reach them multiple times. Chair Cai concluded that in the meantime, we could save costs for the State if we would do it once to update our programs to start collecting additional information. Then we would share the information with each program. Member Vale suggested we should pilot one or two agencies to show how it could be most effective for the community. Chair Cai added that the compliance requirement for the federal would be five (5) years from this past March and we would have four (4) years to accomplish that.

e. Update on FY2025 Data and AI bills: Senate Bill 742 and Data & AI Budget

Chair Cai continued that Senate Bill 742 on data sharing was discussed during the last Data Task Force meeting, which was signed by the Governor in June and became Act 154. It was established from the workforce development perspective and a working group for data sharing which was separated from the Data Task Force, to discuss the action and plan for statewide data sharing. Chair Cai pointed out that this was not a permanent working group and should cease to exist on June 30, 2027. ETS had provided testimony to this Bill, and we requested two resources to facilitate this discussion which did not exist in the final Act. Chair Cai urged that we needed to work out several things: 1) how we could get this work done without additional resources; and 2) how we could collaborate with this temporary working group and this Data Task Force.

Chair Cai hoped that we could have a plan for collaboration for the future. In addition to this bill, there was our budget request. On June 6th, the Governor submitted a notice of intent to veto the entire state budget probably because of the potential federal budget cut. Therefore, we requested four (4) resources and the tools for master data management for data governance which would improve privacy protection, the classification of the data as

well as the quality of the data management in addition to a data sharing platform where people could securely share data with alignment to all the federal and state laws and compliance requirements with transparency on why we could not share certain data. The tools, the resources for the tools and for the four (4) team members were part of this budget. We hoped in the fall we could find out whether we would be able to get it or not.

V.   FY2026 Data & AI Planned Focus Areas

a. Update the State Data and AI Strategy for FY2026

▪ Data Strategy: A comprehensive plan that outlines how the State will collect, manage, govern, utilize, and derive value from its data; and

▪ AI Strategy: A comprehensive plan that outlines how the State will leverage artificial intelligence (AI) to achieve its business objectives.

b. Support departments on AI use cases, including AI-powered self-service, intelligent chatbots, automation of workflows, and predictive analytics to improve efficiency, enhance customer experience, and enable more proactive support.

Chair Cai emphasized the update of the State Data and AI Strategy with more flavor of the AI because of the education and acceptance of AI, the use cases of AI, availability of AI agents to automate a certain process and to improve operational efficiency with the process. We could have the AI that played a bigger role in this overall Data and AI Strategy. We would like to work with the Data Task Force to review it and update it this year. We would like to support departments on AI use cases including AI, empowered self-service, intelligent chatbots, conversational AI, automation of the workflows, and predictive analysis to improve efficiency, enhance our service to our residents, and enable more proactive support for our case managers and our workers who worked to support the residents, which would be the bigger theme during this year's Data and AI Summit.

Chair Cai informed that we were currently working with departments on pilots including conversation AI so that we could quickly answer questions from our employees and improve the response time to our employees when they had questions, so that employees did not have to dig through all the documents, watch all the videos in order to figure out how to perform one task as the AI chatbot would be able to provide the needed information. Besides, we would look to automate processes including using paper documents that AI agents could read through and provide feedback on what information was missing to generate a draft email for our government workers. The decision was always on the government workers; humans were always in the loop. The government worker would review the email content and send out the email. Once the document was completed, the AI could help. AI agent could help the government worker process this document. We would be tracking the impacts created by each use case. For example, it could be the processing time of certain document like invoice and application from seven (7) days to seven (7) minutes. We would be looking for those proofs with the pilots so that we could show the actual impact and return on investment.

Member Lee appreciated Chair Cai's update of the AI technology we were working on and expressed his eagerness to work with the team on the update of FY26 data strategy. Member Lee asked a question on the website. He remarked, it's really a good job that user

could scroll through the strategy, but he wondered if it was just an interactive version or if there was a hard copy or PDF version of the strategy that people could download and disseminate. Chair Cai responded that we did not have a PDF version, but we could add it. Chair Cai appreciated Member Lee's great suggestion and ensured we would do it so that the website could always have an up-to-date data strategy and the PDF version of all history, all the strategies from 2025 to 2026.

    c.   Create data and AI tool evaluation template for departments

    d.   Create guidelines on data sharing and data/ AI equity/ accessibility for departments

Chair Cai updated that we were working on creating a data AI tool evaluation template for departments. Because we received questions from departments about how to use AI tool, we needed to create a decision tree to give departments guidelines, the safety of using AI, privacy protection, data protection, the value and the return on investment on this tool. We would be also working on data sharing this year, which was in our original plan last year. Chair Cai informed us of recruiting Data and AI Accessibility and Equity Manager who would help to lead accessibility and equity for departments. Because we had a diverse population from the data point of view, we could view where our population were, we needed certain language accessibility and equity for different age groups to ensure that we had an informed way of approaching accessibility and equity in the State of Hawaiʻi.

    e.   Execute new budget upon approval

Chair Cai hoped that the next plan was to get budget approval and then execute on it, which included master data management, data sharing, data confidence, cataloging all the data, classifying the data, and supporting departments. Chair Cai reminded members to email her if they had any suggestions about the focus or the most important issues on FY2026. Member Watkins-Victorino inquired if any training would be available for state employees before we proceeded with collecting data and information so that employees would feel more comfortable about the basic evaluation methods. Chair Cai confirmed that AI literacy training and different trainings would be provided on data@hawaii.gov. In addition, analysis and report would be assessed to adjust our plan as needed so that we could outreach more state and government employees.

Member Vale proposed that data literacy was as important in those standards as AI literacy for the general state workforce and asked if the curriculum including both data literacy and the AI literacy was being developed. Chair Cai stressed that we did have data literacy and some contents on the website, very basic short videos from YouTube that we had obtained approval from the owners. Chair Cai proposed to the members to work together to do more comprehensive ones. Member Vale echoed and said he would be happy to work on it.

VI.   Good of the Order

    a.   Announcements

None.

    b.   Next Meeting: September 15, 2025

Chair Cai asked members to email her suggested agenda topics one month before the next meeting. Chair Cai would email her proposed agenda to the members so that they could provide their advice and feedback. Chair Cai estimated, by then we should be able to have the updated Data and AI Strategy for review by the Data Task Force members.

VII.   Adjournment

Chair Cai proposed to adjourn the meeting. Representative Amy Perruso made the first move and Member Mai Nguyen Van seconded. There was no objection and the meeting adjourned at 3:48 p.m.