

Other Departmental Programs

OFFICE OF INSULAR AFFAIRS

The mission of the Office of Insular Affairs is to promote the economic, social, and political development of the insular areas. Throughout most of 1995, the functions and responsibilities of the Secretary of the Interior for U.S. affiliated insular areas were delegated to the Assistant Secretary Territorial and International Affairs. These insular areas include the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), the Republic of Palau, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Federated States of Micronesia.

On August 4, 1995, Secretary Babbitt signed an order eliminating the Office of the Assistant Secretary - Territorial and International Affairs and transferring delegations and responsibilities for the insular areas to a new Office of Insular Affairs. The new office is significantly streamlined from the previous organization, with the number of positions reduced from 45 to 25.



An Office of Insular Affairs grant provided \$2 million to renovate the Myrah Keating Smith Health Center on St. John, Virgin Islands. Photo credit - Office of Insular Affairs.

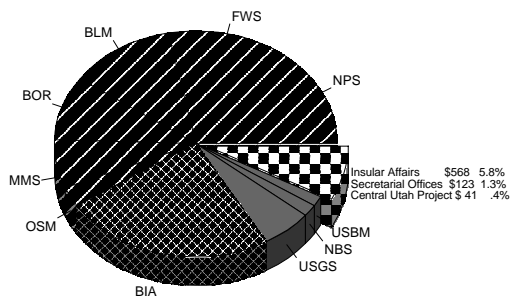
Technical assistance is provided to insular areas and covers all aspects of government operations. Program and policy coordination is carried out with Congress and virtually every Federal department and agencies. Insular issues are often complex and politically sensitive.

Grants are provided to the insular areas to promote the goals of the Office of Insular Affairs. The grants range from small technical assistance projects to major construction projects and require continuous management and monitoring. Specific examples of grants provided include: grants for construction of hospitals, sewer systems, water systems, power systems, roads, ports, airports, and school systems; grants for anti-drug activities and crime control; grants to enhance health care and public safety; grants to improve education; and grants to assist the governments in becoming self-sufficient.

In terms of performance, the Office of Insular Affairs is very proud of the small percentage of its total budget which is devoted to administrative costs. In 1995, the ratio

Figure 31

1995 Other Program Budget Authority
(\$ in millions)



Total DOI Budget Authority - \$9,744 million

was less than one percent. This rate is expected to continue in fiscal year 1996.

OFFICE OF THE SOLICITOR

The Office of the Solicitor provides legal advice and counsel to the various offices and bureaus within the Department. The Solicitor advises, represents, and assists the Secretary, his staff, and the bureaus and offices in accomplishing their statutory obligations and the goals of the Administration. Specific services include representing the Department in administrative and judicial litigation, preparation of legal opinions, legal review of legislation, regulations, contracts and other documents, and provision of informal legal counsel.

The Solicitor's Office is headquartered in Washington and is organized into divisions which are structured to serve specific program areas. Legal support for field activities is provided throughout the United States by the Solicitor's regional and field offices.

Accomplishments during 1995 reflect advice and counsel on Secretarial priorities including Indian self-determination and self-governance, rangeland reform, National Park Service concessions reform, and the implementation of the Endangered Species Act. In addition, the Solicitor's Office played a key role in negotiating a number of important settlements, including a 54-year old tribal claim relating to the construction of the Grand Coulee Dam on the Colville reservation and the multimillion dollar claims of several major oil companies growing out of Congressional moratoria on development of their oil and gas leases for the Outer Continental Shelf. The Office also helped win several significant court cases, including a landmark Endangered Species Act case in the Supreme Court, a successful defense of the reintroduction of wolves into Yellowstone and Idaho, and several cases involving mineral royalty recovery, mining law patent



Wetland planning. Photo credit - Fish and Wildlife Service.

processing, and coal surface mining regulation. Also during 1995, the Office made significant management improvements, including a dramatic reduction in internal regulations, restructuring four regions and two divisions to streamline operations, and installing computer networks linking all employees nationwide.

OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

The Office of the Inspector General provides policy direction and conducts, supervises, and coordinates all audits, investigations, and other activities in the Department designed to promote economy and efficiency or to prevent and detect fraud and abuse of public lands.

The mandate to detect and prevent fraud, waste, and abuse and to promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in the operations and activities of government agencies is a broad and extremely challenging one. It is also a particularly important mandate, especially in view of the public's current demands for greater accountability, economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the operations of government. As "agents of positive change" whose mission is to promote precisely the type of government that the public is demanding, the Office of the Inspector General, through audit and investigative activities, has the

potential to play a critical role in responding to the public's demands and in reinventing and improving operations.

In the insular areas of Guam, American Samoa, the Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands, the Office of the Inspector General performs the functions of government comptroller through audits of revenues and receipts and expenditure of funds and property pursuant to the Insular Areas Act of 1982.

The Office of the Inspector General also reviews existing and proposed legislation and regulations, and makes recommendations to the Secretary and Congress regarding the impact such initiatives will have on the economy and efficiency of the Department's programs and operations and the prevention and detection of fraud and abuse in such programs; keeps the Secretary and the Congress fully informed about fraud, abuses, and deficiencies in Department programs and operations and other serious problems; and recommends corrective action and reports on the progress made in correcting problems.

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

The Office of the Secretary provides executive level leadership and direction, coordinated policy development, and oversight and guidance to the diverse programs and bureaus that comprise the Department. In so doing, the Office attempts to ensure that the missions of its constituent bureaus are addressed in a coordinated manner. In addition, guidance and support are provided to program and bureau operations to reduce redundancy of effort throughout the Department, thereby reducing costs and contributing to the efficiency and effectiveness of the bureaus in meeting their program objectives.

Selected 1995 accomplishments of the Office of the



Family fun at Great Sand Dunes National Park. Photo credit - Gary Halvorson.

Secretary include:

- Maximizing use of the Office's aircraft to support wildfire suppression, natural resource management, law enforcement, seismic monitoring, and emergency search and rescue operations;
- Improving the effectiveness of Indian programs, such as those related to economic development on reservations, education, social services and self-governance by assisting in the development of policy;
- Commencing use of the Micro-Computer Assisted Rating System, which cuts job application and review processes from weeks to days with dollar savings of almost \$6 million a year;
- Coordinating Departmental efforts to reduce the number of Departmental positions by over four thousand; and
- Instituting a Departmental Environmental Achievement Award to recognize and promote exceptional achievement and contributions by bureaus, offices, employees and contractors in pollution prevention, recycling, waste reduction and

acquisition of environmentally preferred products and services.

POLICY, MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET

The Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget is the Chief Financial Officer of the Department of the Interior. The responsibilities of the Chief Financial Officer include providing detailed and objective advice on program planning, budget, and policy matters; overseeing compliance with environmental statutes and standards; developing and maintaining internal administrative policy, standards, objectives, and procedures for use throughout the Department; overseeing the administrative appeals process; and undertaking special analytical and administrative support services for the Office of the Secretary. Selected highlights for several components of the office are provided below.

Office of Financial Management

The Office of Financial Management (PFM) has taken a proactive approach to providing high quality financial and performance information to the public and maintaining the financial integrity of Department operations. The focus of the Department's financial management is four-fold:

1. Develop a forward-looking strategic plan to enable the Department to successfully meet the current and future financial management challenges and improve coordination with the bureaus.
2. Meet the requirements of the Chief Financial Officers (CFO) Act and Government Management Reform Act (GMRA) to ensure the publication of timely and useful financial and operating performance information.
3. Streamline financial operations through improved financial management systems and processes for greater efficiency and cost savings while improving accountability.
4. Improve management controls and audit follow-up activities to promote and encourage excellence in program results and support requirements of the CFO Act and Government Performance and Results Act.

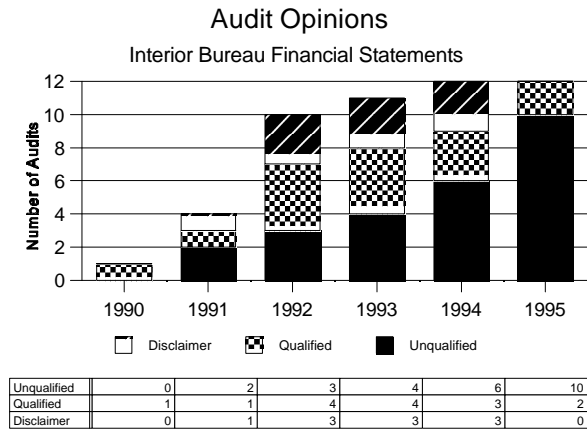
Selected 1995 accomplishments of the Office of Financial Management include:

- Worked with Interior bureaus and offices to expand electronic commerce in procurement and payment functions.
 - Worked with Interior bureaus and offices to generate cash management savings by using state of the art techniques such as electronic funds transfers, plastic card technology for travel, purchase cards for goods and services, and third party drafts.
 - Worked with Interior bureaus and offices to expand use of Automated Teller Machines for official travel which reduced outstanding travel advance balances by 25 percent.
 - Worked with Interior bureaus and offices to reduce unemployment compensation claims by over \$2 million in 1995 through the use of a contractor to monitor claims.
 - Worked with Interior bureaus and offices to improve debt management by using the Internal Revenue Service program to offset business tax refunds against delinquent debts.
 - Worked with Interior bureaus and offices to reduce the number of reported material weaknesses by 25
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percent leaving an ending balance of 21 material weaknesses.

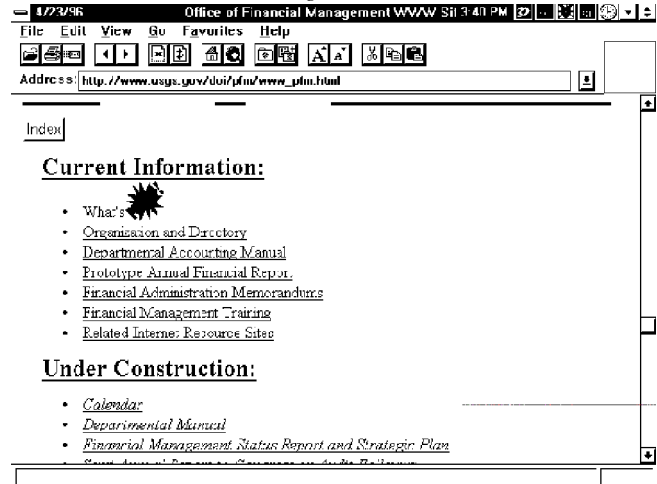
- Worked with Interior bureaus and offices to improve Financial Statement Preparation and Audit results. In 1995, the Department received 10 unqualified opinions and 2 qualifications for financial statements prepared by Interior entities. In fiscal year 1994, the Department received 6 unqualified opinions, 3 qualifications and 3 disclaimers. Figure 32 displays the number and types of financial statement audit opinions received by Interior since fiscal year 1990.

Figure 32



- Established a collaborative working relationship with bureau financial and program managers. Examples of this effort include the Department's Chief Financial Officer Council and the Finance Officers Partnership.
- Worked with Interior bureaus and offices to improve the collection and offset of disallowed costs. The Department closed 27 of the 40 audits with disallowed costs in tracking, or 68 percent. The 27 audits closed had total disallowed costs of \$5.4 million, of which \$5 million was collected or offset.

Figure 33



- Used electronic technology to disseminate information to internal and external customers. The PFM Home Page on the Internet (Figure 33) can be accessed at URL http://www.usgs.gov/doi/pfm/www_pfm.html

Information Resources Management

The Office of Information Resources Management promotes the use of appropriate information technology in support of the Department's missions and administrative management. The office assists the bureaus in acquiring and implementing effective information systems, ensuring that bureau Information Resource Management investments are consistent with Administration policies, within budget, and on schedule. These efforts are performed in partnership with the Department's bureaus and offices to plan, guide, and evaluate Information Resource Management investments.

During 1995, the office achieved progress on the following projects:

- Implemented a Department-wide data communications network (DOINET) to replace costly parallel communications circuits. Connectivity is

provided to the Departmental administrative systems, Internet, geographic information systems, and e-mail.

- Provided management and technical assistance to system developers in implementing major information systems, such as the Bureau of Land Management's Automated Land and Mineral Record System and the Interior Department's Electronic Acquisition System (IDEAS).
- Reduced the costs of acquiring and maintaining information technology by extensively promoting the use of existing contracts and negotiating Department-wide software licensing contracts.
- Improved communications and reduced costs associated with paper processes through the installation of an electronic mail capability throughout the Department. Approximately 50,000 Interior employees are currently using e-mail and several thousand more will be using it by the end of 1996.
- Delegated authority to the bureaus by eliminating regulations and reducing reporting requirements.
- Implemented the Department's Government Information Locator System that identifies the Department's automated information systems and information dissemination products and facilitates access for our public and private sector customers.
- Developed, in partnership with the Minerals Management Service, a Department-wide contract for encryption products to ensure appropriate security for DOINET customers.

Office of Acquisition and Property Management

The Office of Acquisition and Property Management provides Department-wide leadership through activities that streamline procedures, promote greater efficiencies, incorporate innovative automation improvement, and strengthen workforce resources in the areas of acquisition, property management, grants, and energy management. During 1995, the office devoted significant resources to developing regulatory changes for the procurement system as part of implementing the Federal Acquisition Streamlining Act of 1994. Specific 1995 accomplishments include:

- Implemented electronic commerce and the IDEAS small purchase module in six additional locations, for a total of eleven in five bureaus.
- Became the first agency to certify its Federal Acquisition Computer Network (FACNET) capability.
- Doubled the number of purchase cards to 9,800 and increased the total dollars expended with purchase cards by 140 percent to \$68 million.
- Increased the personal property accountability level from \$300 to \$5,000, thus eliminating labor-intensive and costly inventory requirements.
- Reduced property management and energy management regulations by over 50 percent and eliminated several annual reports to the General Services Administration.