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May 16, 2008

MEMORANDUM

To: All Employees - Indian Affairs
All Employees - Bureau of Indian Affairs
All Employees - Bureau of Indian Education

From: Carl J. Artman, Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs

Subject: Court Order Permitting Internet Reconnection

We are now on the path to full reconnection to the Internet. In a major development with regard to the Cobell v. Norton litigation, the United States District Court for the District of Columbia Circuit on May 14, 2008, granted defendants' motion to vacate the December 17, 2001, Consent Order Regarding Information Technology Security and has given its permission for the information technology systems of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), the Office of Hearing and Appeals (OHA), the Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians (OST), and the Office of Historical Trust Accounting (OHTA) to be reconnected to the Internet. A copy of the Court Order is attached.

The Department, and Indian Affairs in particular, has worked long and diligently to resolve the IT security issues that have concerned the Court with respect to the Department's systems housing Individual Indian Trust Data (IITD). I am pleased that the Court has given us this opportunity to improve our level of service to the tribes and individual Indian trust beneficiaries and to demonstrate our commitment to the protection and preservation of the IITD.

It is incumbent upon all of us to do our part to ensure that Indian Affairs' information systems, and the data they contain, continue to be properly protected. It will therefore remain a requirement of all Indian Affairs employees to complete Internet Awareness Training and IT Security Training when the programs are offered. The availability of the 2008 IT Security Awareness Training component will be announced shortly. You will be kept informed of further developments as the Department moves closer to full reconnection to the Internet.

The Court's decision is available at <http://inside.bia.gov/broadcastmessages/cobell.cfm>.

Attachment