Trust Matters

Trust Reform Training Debuts

Coming soon, to a location near you, trust management training!

OST is sponsoring an exciting opportunity for Departmental and Tribal personnel to participate in specialized training courses on Indian trust management issues.

Starting in late January 2001, this unique training opportunity will be available to all trust management employees. This training program is one of the efforts underway to implement and sustain wide-scale reforms of the Indian trust asset management system.

Many DOI bureaus and

offices are responsible for the proper management of the approximately 56 million acres of land held in trust, and the revenue generated from the use of this land, on behalf of some 315 Indian tribes and over 260,000 Individual Indians.

The responsibilities for the various trust management functions cross bureau and office boundaries and are also performed by compacting and

contracting Tribes. This training will ensure that the Department and Tribal personnel who manage these important assets do so in a coordinated and consistent fashion. The utmost care in the management of these assets is required to provide high quality services to the Indian trust beneficiaries.

Trust reform training courses will include discussions on the different trust management functions, as well as the common issues and themes among the bureaus, offices and Tribes managing these assets. The courses will focus on the entire trust management process including the (*continued on inside front cover*)

Three of the Trust Trainers. From left: Dr. Joel Orona, Rebecca Stone, and Carleton Palmer.

Special points of interest:

- THE NEWSLETTER HAS A NEW NAME. "TRUST MATTERS" WON THE MOST ENTRIES IN THE NAME OUR NEWSLETTER CONTEST.

- THE FOURTH QUARTERLY REPORT TO THE COURT WAS PUBLISHED DECEMBER 1, 2000. READ IT ON OUR WEB SITE: WWW.OST.DOI.GOV

- TRUST TRAINING HAS BEGUN. SIGN UP FOR CLASSES ON OUR WEB SITE: WWW.OST.DOI.GOV. SEE BACK COVER FOR THE TRAINING LOCATIONS.

Inside this issue:

Indian Affairs Records Management– One Year Later

The Indian Affairs Records Management (IARM) program has now been fully operational for one year. This program is responsible for devising a Department-wide Indian trust records management plan and for implementing a uniform and comprehensive records management

program for BIA and OST.

RECORDS SCHEDULE
A comprehensive records schedule is the heart of any records management program. Records schedules provide mandatory instructions for what to do with records (and non-record materials) when

no longer needed for current Government business. They also ensure that important records are organized and maintained in such a way as to be easily retrieved and identifiable as evidence of the program activities (especially in the event of an audit, a FOIA request, or discovery for a lawsuit); and help preserve (*continued on page 3*).

Announcing . . . Trust Training!
(cont'd. from cover)

(*continued from front*) management of the trust lands, the investment and disbursement of trust funds, probate administration, and the importance of keeping proper records.

Consistent with the Department's overall fiduciary responsibility, trust training will be available to <u>all</u> DOI employees who perform trust-related functions, as well as to all compacting and contracting Tribal employees who manage trust assets.

> How do I sign up for training? Go to the Trust Training tab on the OST web page (www.ost.doi.gov) and follow these easy steps:
> 1. Enter your Internet email address (firstname_lastname@ios.doi.gov), <u>not</u> your Lotus Notes email address.
> 2. Enter 1234 as the password prompt (students can change their password and other information by going to the Personal Data area on the system).
> 3. Scroll to the Schedule of Classes.
> 4. Press Search.
> 5. Look for the date and location for the Trust Foundations 1 course that is closest to your duty station and, with the approval of your supervisor, enroll.
> 6. The cost for training and travel will be funded by OST.
>
> Problems? Call our training contractor staff at 1-866-426-5101.

The first training course to be offered is a specialized course that will provide students with the foundations upon which the Indian trust management process functions. This course, called "Trust Foundations" will explain, through discussions and activities, the relationships between the many Departmental bureaus and offices that have different, yet interrelating, responsibilities in the management of trust assets on behalf of the Indian beneficiaries. These interrelationships will be emphasized to enable employees to begin thinking of the trust process as an organic whole, rather than as several distinct parts.

The Trust Foundations course also will include a discussion about what a trust is, the responsibilities of a trustee, Secretarial Order Number 3215 (defining the Principles for the Discharge of the Secretary's Trust Responsibilities), the various bureau and office trust responsibilities, and how the performance of an individual's job can impact the overall trust management process. Additional components of the course will include team building and communication skills.

Additional trust training courses will be offered in the near term and will include topics such as Probate, Customer Service, and Stress/Time Management. These courses will allow employees from the various bureaus, offices and compacting and contracting Tribes to take part in additional learning opportunities that will improve services to all trust beneficiaries.

Changes in the D.C. OST Office

The new year has brought some changes to the Washington, D.C. OST office. Jim Douglas recently joined the Office as the Chief of Staff. Having already spent

Jim Douglas, OST's Chief of Staff

20 years at Interior working in a number of different offices, Jim is looking forward to using his considerable management experience and skills to ensure that OST is meeting its trust reform objectives. Jim will provide a focal point for management and administrative issues in the Office and will assist the Special Trustee with initiatives and special projects.

In December, Tom Thompson, Principal Deputy Special Trustee, relocated from the DC office to open an OST office in Phoenix, Arizona. In Phoenix, Tom continues his responsibilities overseeing both the OTFM and Office of Trust Records activities. This move allows Tom to be closer to many of the OST employees and offices with whom he will collaborate.

Successful CSS Pilot —Expanding to More Locations and Users

Customer StrataStation, or CSS, is the electronic system that allows OST TFAS users in the field to enter a number of account transaction functions directly into electronic worktickets. A successful CSS user pilot was conducted and now this capability will be expanded to other OTFM offices.

Providing CSS capability to TFAS users outside of the Albuquerque OTFM headquarters streamlines the data entry process, resulting in fewer errors and increased efficiency. Verifying the underlying documentation, however, through faxes or images, will continue to be necessary to substantiate disbursements and other account actions.

The CSS system allows streamlined cash processing so that

the person who receives a transaction request also creates it. It greatly simplifies the batching and balancing process, and provides an electronic audit of cash processing activity which allows transactions to be reviewed easily.

On May 1, 2000, the CSS pilot began in eight field locations including the Cherokee Nation, Flathead, Wyandotte, Turtle Mountain, Olympic Peninsula, Blackfeet, Great Lakes and Juneau offices. The pilot was a success from both a user and management perspective and, as a result, CSS will be rolled out for use in the remaining regions and agencies between now and April 2001. A schedule for CSS training in Albuquerque, Phoenix, Portland, Shawnee and Minneapolis has been developed and is available from OTFM.

Risk Management Handbook Published

On November 30, 2000, the Office of Trust Risk Management published the Risk Management Handbook for Indian Trust Operations.

The Risk Management Handbook gives managers within the Department an understanding of effective internal controls and how they should be applied to the trust asset management programs within their bureaus and offices.

Each bureau and agency with trust responsibility within the Department must establish and maintain internal controls to ensure the protection of Indian trust assets. This handbook offers guidance on how each bureau and agency can fulfill its obligation to safeguard these American Indian trust assets from waste, theft, fraud, misuse and other risks. The handbook also highlights the accountability necessary for the proper discharge of the Department's trust responsibilities.

This handbook can be used as a guide to assess risk and establish appropriate internal controls within DOI bureaus and offices. It is a resource each bureau and office can utilize to assess its own internal control procedures and to define the training requirements necessary for understanding risk assessment and the internal control process.

The handbook can help DOI trust employees make better decisions regarding the safeguarding of Indian Trust Assets. Call the Office of Trust Risk Management at (505) 248-5660 for a copy.

Remember:
Account balances and other account information may only be disclosed to the individual account holder who is the subject of the information, or to someone the account holder authorizes can have access to this information. Divulging this information to anyone else is strictly prohibited, as the information is protected by the Privacy Act.

Records Management Program
(cont'd. from front cover)

(*continued from front*) those records that are valuable for historical or research purposes. IARM recently implemented a number of General Records Schedules (GRS) issued by the Archivist of the United States into the BIA and OST records schedules. The GRS provides mandatory disposition instructions for common temporary administrative records relating to civilian personnel, fiscal accounting, procurement, communications, printing, and other common functions. As a result, a number of administrative records that were previously "frozen" from destruction may now be properly disposed of. In addition, IARM is aggressively working to review, revise, and implement new records schedules. The initial focus is on BIA and OST trust-related records, but records schedules for all BIA programs will be reviewed, updated, and submitted for approval.

CLEANUP
IARM has visited some 60 BIA regional and agency offices to assess records backlogs and identify records that can be transferred to Federal Records Centers (FRCs) or other appropriate storage, or can be properly disposed of. IARM is also assessing storage requirements for active records. A major emphasis has been placed on cleaning up inactive records that are stored in off-site storage facilities. Many records stored in the offices are inactive records that can, and should, be sent to a FRC.

Michelle Tenorio inventories records at the Yakama agency.

IARM has purchased lateral or space saver filing systems for some BIA locations. However, until inactive records are properly disposed of—transferred to a FRC or destroyed—IARM cannot accurately determine storage requirements for records that are needed to conduct daily work.

PAMPHLETS
Creating a uniform and comprehensive records management program requires promoting the program through education and awareness. Currently there are only a few products available advising of program requirements, responsibilities, practices, or procedures. In order to establish a practice where records management becomes a daily function, BIA, OST, and Tribal employees must be educated, made aware of, and provided technical materials on the creation, handling, maintenance, and disposition of recorded information.

IARM has developed innovative training for appropriate presentation to all staff levels—management as well as administrative staff. The training curricula include formal classroom training, awareness briefings, and technical materials associated with records management policies, procedures, practices, and general information on a variety of media. To date, over 1,200 employees have attended records training.

Students from the Eastern Oklahoma Region attend a Records Briefing.

In addition, IARM has contracted with a commercial advertising firm to design technical pamphlets that will be used, in addition to classroom training, as aids to meet the requirements of the Secretary's *High Level Implementation Plan.* The pamphlets will inform BIA and OST personnel, as well as contractors and clients, of records management program requirements, benefits, and responsibilities; internal record keeping practices; technical tips on preparing records for transfer to a FRC; and other practices associated with the records management program.

Pamphlets have been developed to date on "Personal Papers," "Managing E-Mail," and the "Indian Affairs Records Management Program." Future pamphlets will include information on how to retire records to the FRCs, do's and don'ts of imaging, and what every employee needs to know about records.

Where can I take trust training courses?

Trust Training classes begin January 29 in:

- Shawnee, OK,
- Albuquerque, NM, and
- Phoenix, AZ.

In February, classes will also be offered in:

- Denver, CO and
- Sacramento, CA.

In March classes will also occur in:

- Aberdeen, SD,
- Seattle WA,
- Bloomington, MN and
- Washington, DC.

Go to the OST "Trust Training" tab on our web-site for additional class and scheduling information.

Please sign up for the class closest to your office location. Training will occur at all of these sites on a weekly basis for your convenience.

"Trust Matters" is New Newsletter Title

The new name of the OST Quarterly Newsletter was determined after readers voted for their favorite newsletter name nominee: Trust Matters.

The contest to suggest a name for the newsletter generated several witty and thoughtful responses and the OST newsletter required the assistance of our readers to select a winning entry.

After narrowing the list of potential titles from many excellent suggestions to the five finalists, "Trust Matters" secured the most votes to be the permanent Newsletter title. This title was suggested by LeRon Bielak, who works for the DOI Policy, Personnel and Planning office in Washington, DC.

Congratulations LeRon, and thanks to everyone for your participation and votes!

To contact the OST newsletter staff, write, fax or email us at:

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Office of the Special Trustee

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Washington, DC 20240

Attention: Newsletter

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Fax: (202) 208-7545

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Email: webmaster@ost.doi.gov