

## § 900.4

## 25 CFR Ch. V (4-1-06 Edition)

In this regard, Federal laws and regulations should be interpreted in a manner that will facilitate the inclusion of those programs or portions of those programs that are for the benefit of Indians under section 102(a)(1) (A) through (D) of the Act, and that are for the benefit of Indians because of their status of Indians under section 102(a)(1)(E) of the Act.

(9) It is the Secretary's policy that no later than upon receipt of a contract proposal under the Act (or written notice of an Indian tribe or tribal organization's intention to contract), the Secretary shall commence planning such administrative actions, including but not limited to transfers or reductions in force, transfers of property, and transfers of contractible functions, as may be necessary to ensure a timely transfer of responsibilities and funding to Indian tribes and tribal organizations.

(10) It is the policy of the Secretary to make available to Indian tribes and tribal organizations all administrative functions that may lawfully be contracted under the Act, employing methodologies consistent with the methodology employed with respect to such functions under titles III and IV of the Act.

(11) The Secretary's commitment to Indian self-determination requires that these regulations be liberally construed for the benefit of Indian tribes and tribal organizations to effectuate the strong Federal policy of self-determination and, further, that any ambiguities herein be construed in favor of the Indian tribe or tribal organization so as to facilitate and enable the transfer of services, programs, functions, and activities, or portions thereof, authorized by the Act.

### § 900.4 Effect on existing tribal rights.

Nothing in these regulations shall be construed as:

(a) Affecting, modifying, diminishing, or otherwise impairing the sovereign immunity from suit enjoyed by Indian tribes;

(b) Terminating, waiving, modifying, or reducing the trust responsibility of the United States to the Indian tribe(s) or individual Indians. The Secretary

shall act in good faith in upholding this trust responsibility;

(c) Mandating an Indian tribe to apply for a contract(s) or grant(s) as described in the Act; or

(d) Impeding awards by other Departments and agencies of the United States to Indian tribes to administer Indian programs under any other applicable law.

### § 900.5 Effect of these regulations on Federal program guidelines, manual, or policy directives.

Except as specifically provided in the Act, or as specified in subpart J, an Indian tribe or tribal organization is not required to abide by any unpublished requirements such as program guidelines, manuals, or policy directives of the Secretary, unless otherwise agreed to by the Indian tribe or tribal organization and the Secretary, or otherwise required by law.

## Subpart B—Definitions

### § 900.6 Definitions.

Unless otherwise provided in this part:

*Act* means secs. 1 through 9, and title I of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975, Public Law 93-638, as amended.

*Annual funding agreement* means a document that represents the negotiated agreement of the Secretary to fund, on an annual basis, the programs, services, activities and functions transferred to an Indian tribe or tribal organization under the Act.

*Appeal* means a request by an Indian tribe or tribal organization for an administrative review of an adverse Agency decision.

*Awarding official* means any person who by appointment or delegation in accordance with applicable regulations has the authority to enter into and administer contracts on behalf of the United States of America and make determinations and findings with respect thereto. Pursuant to the Act, this person can be any Federal official, including but not limited to, contracting officers.

*BIA* means the Bureau of Indian Affairs of the Department of the Interior.