

ARS ' CSREES ' ERS ' NASS

Bulletin

Title: Facilities Construction Authorities

Number: 05-250

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Expiration: January 31, 2006

Originating Office: ARS-AFM-Facilities Division

Distribution: ARS Area Directors, Area Administrative Officers,
Area Budget and Fiscal Officers

This bulletin provides instructions on obtaining approval from Headquarters on the use of construction authorities for new small buildings or alterations to existing facilities.

A. Introduction

Area offices must obtain approval from Headquarters to use construction authorities for new small buildings or alterations to existing facilities expected to exceed \$100,000.

B. Authorities

The Agricultural Research Service (ARS) Salaries and Expenses (S&E) appropriation language contains a number of authorities either limiting the number of buildings, or the amount of program funds that can be spent on them. Funding for major planning, design, modernization, and construction of ARS facilities is provided under the Building and Facilities Appropriation Act.

The provisions addressing buildings and expenditures in the S&E Act have been historically maintained to limit funding for brick and mortar activities within the annual research program account. In recent years both the Agriculture Committees and the Subcommittees for Agriculture Appropriations have expressed interest and concern regarding the funding ARS commits under these various authorities. Currently this information is not coordinated or consolidated at the Agency level. In this regard, ARS is requesting that any plans involving these authorities be submitted to Headquarters to ensure they are applied consistently throughout the Agency; and that Agencywide commitments for such funding are identified for review and approval by the Administrator's Office.

The ARS annual appropriation provides the authority to construct small buildings or alter facilities using Agency program funds as follows:

- 1. Unlimited Small Buildings (USB)** is a construction authority to design and construct an unlimited number of small buildings at a cost not to exceed the authorized limitation identified in the applicable annual appropriation act language. Each building must serve to further enhance, pursue, and conduct immediate research program needs. *As of fiscal year (FY) 2005, this limitation is \$375,000 per USB.*
- 2. Ten Small Buildings (TSB):** This is a construction authorization to design and construct or improve not more than TSB throughout the Agency at an individual cost not to exceed the authorized limitation identified in the applicable annual appropriation act language. Each building or addition to an existing building must serve to further enhance, pursue, and conduct the immediate research program needs. *As of FY 2005, this limitation is \$750,000 per TSB.*
- 3. Headhouse or Greenhouse (HH or GH):** This is a construction authority to design and construct an unlimited number of headhouses and/or greenhouses, at a cost not to exceed the authorized limitation identified in the applicable annual appropriation act language. *As of FY 2005, this limitation is \$1.2 million per HH or GH.*

4. **10 Percent Alteration (TPA):** This is a construction authority to design and construct an alteration to any one ARS building at a cost not to exceed 10 percent of the building replacement value or the dollar limitation specified in the applicable annual appropriation act language, whichever is larger. *As of FY 2005, this limitation is \$375,000 per TPA, or 10% of the current replacement value, whichever is greater.*

Detailed descriptions of the authorities are outlined in Policies and Procedures 242-2, Facilities Construction Authorities. The limitations on alterations does not apply to modernization or replacement of existing facilities at Beltsville Agricultural Research Center.

In an effort to ensure authorities are consistently applied throughout the Agency and to provide an accurate accounting of funds spent, approval from Headquarters will be required to use any building authority in excess of \$100,000 listed above.

C. Procedures

Effective FY 2005, the following procedures will apply:

1. Areas will submit a written request (memorandum or e-mail) to the Facilities Division (FD) Director.
2. The request should include a justification; description and scope of proposed facility; the schedule; source of funds; estimated design, construction, and replacement costs; realty interest; and the accounting code that will be established for the project.
NOTE: Each facility project must be tracked in a separate accounting code.

A. The format for the accounting code is as follows:

X01LLLLR, where X = the budget fiscal year, 01 = appropriation type, LLL = the 4th level location mode code, and R = sequential number assigned by the Area Budget and Fiscal Officer (ABFO) with the “R” denoting a capitalized improved cost.

B. When establishing the accounting code, use the unique Program Type that corresponds to appropriate construction authority as follows:

<u>Program Type</u>	<u>Construction Authority</u>
71	Unlimited Small Buildings
72	Ten Small Buildings
73	Headhouse/Greenhouse
74	10 Percent Alteration

3. FD will review the Area request and provide a recommendation to the Budget and Program Management Staff (BPMS) and the National Program Staff (NPS), as appropriate.
4. The Office of the Administrator will provide FD with concurrence or nonconcurrence.
5. FD will provide Areas with the final decision/action.

A sample format is enclosed for your use in submitting a request.

The Financial Management Division will develop a standard report that can be generated from the Foundation Financial Information System Financial Data Warehouse by Construction Authority; i.e., by Program Type, and Program Class, if applicable. FD will generate these reports periodically to monitor the fund status of each project including the budgeted amount, obligations/expenditures to date, and balance.

Should you have any questions, please contact Patrick Barry, Director, FD, on 301-504-1151.

/s/ Patrick G. Barry

PATRICK G. BARRY
Director
Facilities Division

Enclosure

**SAMPLE FORMAT TO REQUEST USE OF BUILDING AUTHORITIES in
EXCESS OF \$100,000** *(CAN BE SUBMITTED VIA MEMORANDUM OR E-MAIL)*

SUBJECT: Request Approval for (Type) Building Authority

TO: FD Director

FROM: Area Office

Program Need and Justification:

Project Description and Scope:

Funding Source and Proposed Implementation Schedule:

Accounting Code (and Program Class, if applicable):

Estimated Design and Construction Cost:

Replacement Cost (for Ten Percent Alteration Authority Requests):

Realty Interest:

Point of Contact: