
Departmental Administration

**Strategic Plan
2005 - 2008**

INTRODUCTION

Departmental Administration's (DA) mission is to support the Secretary and USDA's program agencies in meeting their mission responsibilities. We do this through centralized administrative programs, policies and services. Some of our mandates result directly from statutes; others are driven from implementing regulations promulgated by organizations such as the Office of Personnel Management, the General Services Administration or the Office of Management and Budget. Other roles flow directly from the Secretary's management goals for USDA and the need for central coordination at the Department level.

DA's functions include the following: human resources management, procurement and property management, small and disadvantaged business utilization, facilities operations, crisis planning and management, governmental ethics, hazardous materials management, energy efficiency programs and administrative law.

MISSION STATEMENT

Departmental Administration will provide management leadership to ensure that USDA administrative programs, policies, advice and counsel meet the needs of USDA program organizations, consistent with laws and mandates; and provide safe and efficient facilities and services to customers.

DA functions support the USDA mission agencies by providing efficient and cost-effective administrative support and headquarters facilities for the programs to enhance economic opportunities for agricultural producers; support increased economic opportunities and improved quality of life in rural America; enhance protection and safety of the nation's agricultural and food supply; improve the nation's nutrition and health; and protect and enhance the nation's natural resource base and environment.

The mission statement of DA reflects the pride and commitment of the people who comprise the organization. These include support staffs, top managers and employees who deliver services directly to our customers or who support the operations of USDA through development of policies and procedures.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Organizationally, DA is composed of all offices that report directly to the Assistant Secretary for Administration and the offices that conduct the administrative law functions of the Department that have been placed within DA for administration.

Departmental Administration provides the Department with policy-making and oversight over a broad range of administrative management programs. These include procurement, real and

personal property management, human resources, security for facilities, personnel, sensitive information, continuity of operations, and employee ethics. For USDA's Washington area headquarters, DA provides these administrative management services directly to the Secretary, the subcabinet, and all the headquarters organizations that report directly to the Office of the Secretary. Additionally, DA directly manages many owned or leased office buildings within the National Capital Region in which many thousands of USDA employees from all mission areas work.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

In keeping with our mandates and responsibilities, we have identified an agency Goal and five agency Objectives as follows:

DA GOAL **Provide USDA leadership with the administrative tools, services, infrastructure, and policy framework to support their public service missions.**

- Objective 1** Ensure USDA has a diverse, ethical, results-oriented workforce able to meet mission priorities and work cooperatively with USDA partners and the private sector.
- Objective 2** Ensure USDA has a trained acquisition workforce, procurement policies and systems to provide responsive, quality, cost-effective, and accountable support with a diverse vendor pool.
- Objective 3** Provide the efficient and economical use of USDA's resources to support customers, promote organizational productivity and ensure accountability.
- Objective 4** Provide the policies, technical guidance, and operating environment that enhance the safety and security of USDA personnel, information and facilities, and the continuity of its vital programs.
- Objective 5** Provide formal adjudicative support.

Objective 1 – Human Capital Management

Strategies to Achieve this Objective - We will...

- Implement the Human Capital Plan and develop a Department-level workforce plan summary based on agency plans.
- In conjunction with the Mission Areas and staff offices, develop an annual USDA Recruitment Plan to more effectively and efficiently meet the hiring needs of the

Department.

- Enhance collaboration and sharing of employee development expertise among agencies; broker mentoring and detail opportunities; and support enterprise-wide efforts to increase use of learning management systems to effectively and efficiently deliver professional development.
- Establish a Department-wide Web-based clearinghouse for performance management best practices and monitor agencies' progress linking individual performance plans to organizational goals.
- Develop and implement a state of the art Enterprise Human Resources Information System to provide data on all aspects of human resources management and to promote uniform personnel practices throughout the Department to complement the Government-wide Human Resources Line of Business initiative.
- Improve human resource programs and services in Headquarters and throughout the Department.
- Ensure that Government standards of conduct are known and understood at all levels of the organizations and to provide comprehensive ethics training.
- Manage the personal financial disclosure program for all non-career appointees and all senior executives department-wide.
- Assist Presidential nominees subject to Senate Confirmation overcome any real or perceived conflicting financial interests, assist in crafting necessary ethics agreements with specific recusal commitments, and aid in meeting their information requirements for both the Executive and Legislative Branches.
- Ensure that diversity, civil rights, and equal opportunity principles are effectively synthesized into performance management and employee development programs and practices.

Objective 2 – Acquisition Management

Strategies to Achieve this Objective - We will...

- Ensure that USDA has a trained acquisition workforce and the procurement policies and systems to provide responsive, cost-effective acquisitions services.
- Complete the implementation of the Integrated Acquisition System (IAS), an automated acquisition system that is directly linked to the Department accounting system. Fielding IAS will allow USDA to take advantage of the Administration's Quicksilver Initiative integrated acquisition environment; a series of Internet-based services that can improve

business processes within the Department.

- Take advantage of other electronic commerce such as the e-Alliance initiative; e-Buy, and other Internet-based systems.
- Provide strong leadership, guidance and technical assistance to expand the number of diverse small businesses participating in USDA contracting opportunities, resulting in substantially increased small business capacity and job creation.
- Increase USDA contract dollars awarded to small and disadvantaged businesses.
- Promote the increased use of alternative fuels throughout USDA and establish a government-wide model for administering the biobased products procurement preference program to expand the use of renewable resources and protect the environment.

Objective 3 – Asset Management

Strategies to Achieve this Objective - We will...

- Provide a safe and functional USDA Headquarters workplace by providing physical security, facilities management, space planning and design, mail and printing services, warehouse and delivery services, assistance for handicapped employees and health unit operations.
- Continue implementation of the renovation of the more than seventy year-old Agriculture South Building and maintain the facilities in the Washington Headquarters Complex and the surrounding metropolitan vicinity.
- Manage five government-owned facilities and space in 15 leased locations in the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area. These buildings are occupied by many thousands of employees. We make sure buildings are safe and serve the needs of our employees and the many customers that visit USDA for their business requirements. Through the TARGET Center, we help USDA agencies with accessible technologies and reasonable accommodations for employees with disabilities or disabling conditions, serving as the resource point for the Department for alternative formatting of USDA publications.
- Make recommendations on the use of environmental clean up funds and promote the partnership with federal, state and local agencies, tribal organizations and private parties in prioritizing, planning, and carrying out environmental cleanup activities. Under this activity, DA participates directly in USDA Goal 5: Protect and enhance the Nations natural resource base and environment.
- Expand the functionality of the Corporate Property Automated Information System (CPAIS) to include not only real property, but also major pieces of equipment in inventory. We will also develop new systems and procedures to ensure that Government

property of all types is managed efficiently and cost effectively.

- Develop a USDA Real Property Portfolio Plan based on Federal Real Property Council guidance in accordance with Executive Order 13327, Federal Real Property Asset Management.

Objective 4 – Homeland Security

Strategies to Achieve this Objective - We will...

- Assess the physical security vulnerabilities of all USDA mission critical facilities and oversee the installation of appropriate access controls, perimeter security, surveillance systems, and human reliability at these facilities.
- Ensure that the USDA Headquarters complex is protected by employing a well-trained security force, improving the building surveillance, physical security measures, and coordination with Washington area first responders
- Assure that individuals who fill jobs of public trust or that require national security clearances have properly adjudicated background investigations.
- Serve as a liaison to the national intelligence community and run department-wide programs to secure classified information from improper disclosure
- Maintain a USDA Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) to enable the Department's top political leadership to carry out essential functions in times of emergencies. Coordinate with USDA program agencies on COOP Plans to ensure that disaster recovery and business continuity planning is effective at the program delivery level.
- Train and prepare employees for emergency situations by increasing the means of communicating with all headquarters employees; providing a 24-Hour Operations Center; having scheduled and unscheduled evacuation and shelter in place drills; and providing training guides and a "Be Prepared" website.

Objective 5 – Administrative Law

Strategies to Achieve this Objective - We will...

- Conduct adjudicatory and rulemaking hearings under the Administrative Procedures Act and other pertinent legislation and issue decisions in a timely, fair, and legally supportable manner.
- Review contracting decisions throughout the Department on a timely basis and grant relief as appropriate. Issue decisions on appeals of administrative determinations in certain cases under the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation.

RESOURCES NEEDED

DA will continue to strive to maximize results based on available resources. However, funding for physical and operational improvements has not been sufficient to meet expectations for improved facilities and services, especially for implementing new systems and technologies to secure Department facilities and to automate day-to-day work. Lack of resources may prevent DA from conducting program evaluations to the level needed, and in investing in training and operational improvements, especially in the human resources services.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

DA is in the process of or has developed baselines for each of the performance measures. These baselines, combined with an analysis of the gaps between baselines and goals, provide a realistic and accurate assessment of Departmental Administration. DA also conducts evaluations of agency programs to determine whether policy and procedures are applied legally and in a manner that supports accomplishment of USDA program missions. However, current USDA information systems are not capable of producing data that can be readily used in assessing the performance of administrative programs.

No non-Federal entities were used in the preparation of this Plan. Further information on DA programs and activities can be found on the Internet at www.usda.gov/da.

DA ORGANIZATIONS

The **Office of Human Capital Management (OHCM)** works with top USDA officials on all personnel management concerns. In addition to the full range of policy support in the area of human capital management, which includes workforce planning, employment and recruitment, pay and performance, training, organizational development, employee and labor relations, awards, leave, workplace programs, employee grievances and appeals.

The **Office of Ethics (OE)** works to foster an environment in which USDA decision-making is, and is publicly perceived to be, untainted by any conflicting personal interest of its staff. OE provides responsive counseling and advice to all employees; administers personal financial disclosure requirements on covered staff; and provides training to USDA staff on various rules governing employee conduct, conflicts of interest, and political activity. The ethics program is mandated by the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 as amended.

The **Office of Procurement and Property Management (OPPM)** serves the Secretary and USDA agencies with policy, advice, and coordination in acquisitions, procurement and management of real and personal property, oversight and policy in transportation, supply, motor vehicles, aircraft, recycling, and energy conservation, continuity of government planning, personnel suitability and document security, and hazardous materials management. In partnership

with other USDA agencies and the Office of the Chief Financial Officer, OPPM provides leadership in the development and deployment of modern USDA procurement systems. OPPM responsibilities in improving nationwide space management, including supporting collocation of USDA agency field offices, serves to achieve both customer service and administrative efficiencies.

The **Office of Operations (OO)** furnishes facilities management, physical security and day-to-day operational support to all USDA activities in the Agriculture Headquarters Complex; the George Washington Carver Center in Beltsville, Maryland, and at other leased facilities in the Washington Metropolitan Area. OO provides cost-efficient, centralized services, including: information technology management; space planning and design; occupational health services; emergency preparedness; interpreter services for the hearing impaired; mail, courier, copier and duplicating services; supply and personal property management; accessible technology resources and ergonomic assessment services for disabled employees of USDA and other Federal agencies; forms and publications acquisition and printing; and Headquarters personnel services. USDA is currently engaged in a ten-year project to renovate and modernize the aging South Agriculture Building, with architectural design, engineering, hazardous materials abatement and construction services managed by or directly provided by the Office of Operations.

The **Office of Planning, Coordination, and Executive Resources (OPCER)** assists the Assistant Secretary for Administration and other officials of the Department in the development and execution of administrative policies that cut across mission and functional lines. OPC provides support in strategic planning, performance management, management and program analysis, budget and financial management coordination, special initiatives, and personnel services for Headquarters executive level personnel.

The **Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU)** serves as USDA's lead agency in providing an integrated focus for programs to assist small, women and other underutilized businesses. OSDBU develops policies, standards, and programs for procurement preference programs and assists outreach efforts to involve all targeted areas in the Department's contracting and program activities. OSDBU coordinates programs designed to expand the number of USDA business opportunities available to small, women and other underutilized businesses; and identifies and eliminates barriers that prevent these businesses' access to USDA programs and activities. Through public/private partnerships with USDA agencies, other Federal departments, professional and trade associations, universities, and others, OSDBU promotes the growth and competitiveness of small, women and other underutilized businesses. We provide guidance and technical assistance to small businesses to increase the number of small firms participating in USDA contracting activities to grow small business capacity and create jobs.

The **Office of the Administrative Law Judges (OALJ)** conducts rule making and adjudicatory hearings throughout the United States in proceedings subject to the Administrative Procedure Act (APA), 5 U.S.C. 554 *et seq.* The Judges issue initial decisions and orders in adjudicatory proceedings that become final decisions of the Secretary unless appealed to the Secretary's Judicial Officer by a party to the proceedings.

The **Judicial Officer (JO)** serves as the final deciding officer in regulatory proceedings of a

quasi-judicial nature.

The **Board of Contract Appeals (BCA)** is an independent, adjudicatory body created within USDA pursuant to the Contract Disputes Act of 1978, 41 U.S.C. 601-613, to act as an appellate body, reviewing contracting officers' final decisions on Government contract matters. This Board is authorized to grant the same relief in contract matters as the United States Court of Federal Claims. Board decisions are published and establish case precedents in the field of Government contracts. Additionally, under 7 CFR 24.4(b) and 400.169, the Board has jurisdiction over appeals from final administrative determinations issued by the Risk Management Agency on behalf of the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (FCIC) arising under Standard Reinsurance Agreements involving the Federal Crop Insurance Act, 7 USC 1501, *et. seq.* The Board is funded as a reimbursable activity.