

ARS □ CSREES □ ERS □ NASS

Policies and Procedures

Title: Telecommunications--New Telecommunications Systems and Major Changes--FTS2000 or Commercial Service

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This DIRECTIVE states authorities, policies, and procedures for acquiring telecommunication systems and making major changes on FTS2000 or commercial services at ARS locations.

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1. ABBREVIATIONS

- AAO - Area Administrative Officer
- FIRMR - Federal Information Resources Management Regulation
- GSA - General Services Administration
- ISTD - Information Systems and Technology Division
- LAO - Location Administrative Officer
- OIRM - Office of Information Resources Management
- PBX - Private Branch Exchange
- TASSB - Technology Assessment and Support Services Branch
- TPD - Telecommunications Policy Division

2. DEFINITIONS

Mandatory-for-use programs. These programs are service contracts established by USDA or GSA. Some are as follows:

- FTS2000
- International Switched Voice Service (ISVS)
- GSA Consolidated Switch Service
- The Washington Interagency Telephone System (WITS)
- Voice mail

Major changes or new installations. The following are deemed major changes or new installations of telecommunication facilities:

- Installation, relocation, replacement, or removal of key systems, PBX's, or Centrex service.
- Installation, relocation, or removal of 25 or more individual business lines in association with key telephone systems.
- Installation, relocation, replacement, or removal of tie lines between key systems or PBX's.
- Liability in excess of \$100,000.

3. AUTHORITIES

- Departmental Regulation 3300-1
- FIRMR 201-39.802, Purchase of Telephones and Services (POTS) Contracts
- FIRMR Bulletin C-1, Sharing Telecommunications Resources
- FIRMR Bulletin C-15, Mandatory Local Telecommunications Services

4. POLICY

It is Federal Government and USDA policy to use telecommunication mandatory-for-use programs when the location's requirements can be met through those programs. When the mandatory-for-use programs do not meet the location's requirements, a waiver must be requested.

It is ARS policy to acquire approval for the purchase of new telecommunications hardware and major changes to FTS2000 and commercial services through ISTD's Telecommunications Specialist. The Telecommunications Specialist will request approval from OIRM and GSA, if required.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

ISTD/TASSB will have the responsibility of administering the telephone utilization and inventory programs for Headquarters.

The AAO will have the responsibility of administering the telephone utilization and inventory programs within their respective Areas.

TASSB will be available to answer any questions regarding the surveys and inventories.

6. PROCEDURES

The following procedures will be adhered to for requesting a waiver for the purchase of a PBX if currently on a GSA consolidated system.

LAO

- The LAO contacts the local GSA Zone Office to see if they can meet the location's specific requirements.
- If requirements cannot be met by GSA consolidated switch, request the local GSA representative to prepare a memo stating that it cannot meet the specific requirements. The memo and location's waiver request should be sent to the AAO. The AAO will attach an endorsement letter approving the location's request and forward it to ISTD/TASSB.

LAO/ARS Telecommunications Specialist

- ISTD/TASSB will assist the AAO and LAO with a cost/benefit analysis of current telecommunication operations, compared with the proposed replacement system. The analysis will be attached to the waiver request once received by ISTD/TASSB.

ARS Telecommunications Specialist

- Once ISTD receives the waiver request, it will be reviewed and forwarded to USDA/TPD.

OIRM/TPD

- TPD will review the request to ensure that all required information is supplied prior to sending to GSA.

GSA

- Once the request is received by GSA, they will review it and respond within 30 days. The requestor cannot purchase any equipment until a response from GSA is received.

ARS Telecommunications Specialist

- The final decision will be sent to ISTD who will notify the AAO of the decision.
- ISTD will be available to assist in the needs requirements for a new procurement.

The following procedures will be adhered to for requesting a waiver for mandatory-for-use service programs.

ARS Telecommunications Specialist/LAO

- Review mandatory-for-use service programs, such as Voice Mail, to see if it meets the location's requirements.

LAO

- If requirements cannot be met, contact the ARS Telecommunications Specialist for assistance in finding other mandatory-for-use service programs or any new updates that have been added to the programs prior to requesting a waiver.

ARS Telecommunications Specialist/LAO

- A cost/benefit analysis must be prepared comparing the service program to the use or purchase of another service. This should accompany the waiver request when forwarded to ISTD.

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- Once the waiver request is reviewed by ISTD, it will be forwarded to OIRM/TPD for review and disposition.

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