Agricultural
Research
Service

Office of the
Deputy Administrator
Administrative and Financial Management

March 2005

CARE

PROGRAM GUIDE

CONSOLIDATED ASSISTANCE,
REVIEW, AND EVALUATION

A TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT APPROACH

INDEX

ABBREVIATIONS

AAO	Area Administrative Officer
AD	Area Director
ADAAFM	Associate Deputy Administrator, Administrative and Financial Management
ADO	Authorized Departmental Officer
ADODR	Authorized Departmental Officer's Designated Representative
ADP	Automated Data Processing (Resources)
A-E	Architect - Engineer
AFM	Administrative and Financial Management
AP	Assistance Provided
APMO	Area Property Management Officer
ARMPS	Annual Resource Management Plan System
ARS	Agricultural Research Service
AT	Administrative Technician
ATCA	Assistance Type Cooperative Agreement
AWE	Assistance with Exception
BDN	Bureau of Drugs and Narcotics
BPA	Blanket Purchase Agreement
CARE	Consolidated Assistance, Review, and Evaluation
CAS	Central Accounting System
CBD	Commerce Business Daily
CDSO	Collateral Duty Safety Officer
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
COM	Commendation
CRP	Consolidated Review Program
CRIS	Current Research Information System
CRAS	CRIS Resource Allocation Schedule
DAAFM	Deputy Administrator, Administrative and Financial Management
DR	Departmental Regulation
EFT	Electronic Funds Transfer
EO	Executive Order
ENR	Emergency Needs Request
FHCP	Federal Hazard Communication Program
FMD	Financial Management Division
FMFIA	Federal Manager's Financial Integrity Act
GAO	General Accounting Office
GSA	General Services Administration
GPO	Government Printing Office
HQ	Headquarters (ARS)
HCA	Head of Contracting Activity
HHS-PMS	Health and Human Services' Payment Management System

HPRL	High Priority Requirements List
IMOU	Individual Memorandum of Understanding

LC	Location Coordinator
LAPC	Local Area Program Coordinator
LAO/T	Location Administrative Officer/Technician
LOTS	Location Obligation Tracking System

MCO	Management Control Officer
MMOU	Master Memorandum of Understanding
MMR	Monthly Management Report
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding

NA	No Assurance
NFC	National Finance Center
NPS	National Program Staff

OFM	Office of Financial Management
OJT	On The Job Training
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
OO	Office of Operations (USDA)
OPM	Office of Personnel Management

PAL	Pesticide Applications License
PM	Program Management
PROP	Personal Property System

REWO	Real Estate Warrant Officer
RL	Research Leader
RMIS	Research Management Information System
RSA	Research Support Agreement
RSS	Radiation Safety Staff

TQM	Total Quality Management

USDA	United States Department of Agriculture

VXP	Vendor Express Program

KEY AREA/LOCATION PERSONNEL

Area Director (AD) - Individual at the Area level who is responsible for providing leadership and direction on all Program Management matters within the Area, including all Centers, laboratories and Locations.

Area Administrative Officer (AAO) - Individual at the Area level who oversees the administrative functions at the Area level, i.e. Budget, Human Resources, Procurement, Engineering, Safety and ADP. Also provides technical guidance and leadership within the Area to the administrative field structure.

Area Office Section Heads - Individuals at the Area level who report to the AAO and are responsible for providing technical support/guidance to the field in their particular sections, i.e. Budget, Human Resources, Procurement, Engineering, Safety and ADP. May have staffs they supervise.

Institute/Center Director (ID/CD) - Individual responsible for supervising Research Leaders and directing the research effort in a laboratory.

Laboratory Director (LD) - Research Scientist who is responsible for supervising the Research Leaders and directing the research effort in a laboratory.

Location Coordinator (LC) - Laboratory Director or Research Leader who, in addition to their research duties, coordinates the administrative operations at the Location and work sites. Supervises the LAO/T.

Research Leader (RL) - Research Scientist who is responsible for the overall operation of a Management Unit, which could comprise multiple research efforts (CRIS projects).

Lead Scientist (LS) - Research Scientist who is responsible for providing technical leadership to a group of scientists and support staff to accomplish a defined mission within a Research Management Unit. Supervised by the RL.

Location Administrative Officer/Technician/Clerk (LAO/T/C) - Individual who has responsibility for the overall administrative operations at the Location and its work sites. Provides supervisory/technical supervision to a staff consisting of one or more of the following: Budget Assistant, Accounting Technician, Purchasing Agent, Personnel Clerk, Administrative Clerk, and/or maintenance personnel. The specific functions of the individual staff members vary from Location to Location.

Location Radiation Protection Officer (LRPO) - Individual who, in addition to their regular duties, coordinates the Radiation Safety Program at each ARS Location that uses x-ray producing devices or radioactive materials.

Cluster Environmental Protection Specialists (CEPS) - Individuals who are supervised by the Area Office, but are located at field sites. Responsible for managing Environmental Program at more than one Location.

Collateral Duty Safety Officer (CDSO) - Individual who, in addition to their regular duties, coordinates the implementation, administration and operation of the Safety and Health Program at the Location.

INTRODUCTION

For years ARS has measured "quality" management with a concentration toward "conforming to requirements." This "quality measure" was and continues to be a basic threshold of quality that is established by Congress, defined by legal or subject matter experts, and interpreted through administrative policy.

Through the use of Management Reviews, Mutual Assistance Reviews, Verification Audits, and Compliance Reviews, ARS established "quality measures" relating to "conforming to requirements" and tracked and reported findings and accomplishments under the Procurement Certification Program, Vulnerability Assessment Program, and the Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act. This tracking and reporting was carried out as separate programs under the USDA umbrella of the Management Control Program.

Concurrent with this Management Control Program, ARS was carrying out the Productivity Improvement Program. Under this Program, ARS made major quality improvements as was reflected in the ARS Productivity Improvement Efforts report of September 1986. These efforts continued in 1987, 1988, and 1989, through the Location Support Study, LAO/T Training Program, Location Automated System Task Force (LOCFORCE), Automated Procurement System Task Force, and the Personnel Demonstration Project.

In 1989, the Management Control Program and Productivity Improvement Program were moved into the stages of a Consolidated (Management) Review Program (CRP) and Total Quality Management (TQM) Program. With this move, "conforming to requirements" was de-emphasized while "meeting customer expectations" became the focused aim of TQM. This provided ARS with the opportunity to consolidate review/quality programs and focus on internal quality concerning how the customers and providers of administrative operational services interact, and what is the actual administrative operational services delivery.

Within this setting, ARS Administrative and Financial Management (AFM) has seized the opportunity to consolidate its review programs and implement a TQM approach. Recognizing that TQM results from "people" (customers and providers) who care, ARS opted to call this program CARE - "Consolidated Assistance, Review and Evaluation."

The CARE Program includes the major strategy areas for TQM. These areas are:

-    Top Management Support and Direction: the Deputy Administrator's implementing memo, the signed Charter, and appointment of the Contracting and Assistance Division Director for leadership, subsequently reorganized under the Office of Deputy Administrator.

-    Employee Involvement: the CARE Management Team makeup (Locations, Areas, and HQ); planned interaction with Locations, Areas, AFM Divisions and customers/providers of administrative support services; and, liaison between AFM and PM.

-    Communications: announcing and promoting the CARE Program; input from all levels; direct interaction during reviews (two-way street); and, reporting/keeping all informed.

- Standards and Measures: Areas/AFM Divisions recommendation of sites/functions; Assurance Statements under the USDA CRP; use of existing review guides and questions; and, development of quality measures against administrative functions.

- Training: TQM training for Areas/AFM Divisions; CARE Management Team building; OJT by Management Team.

- Rewards and Recognition: recognition of quality work being done at Locations; rewarding those noted; using quality techniques to assist others.

The following approaches for the CARE Program have been selected:

- Use Team Building techniques to establish a cohesive/sharing group.

- Review each Location once approximately every 8 years.

- Use Review Teams that:

  - Are composed of individuals who represent the three organizational levels, (Locations, Area, and Headquarters) and are from Areas other than the one being reviewed.

  - Are led by a selected member.

  - Represent all selected functional areas.

Because the CARE Program is aimed at quality through "people," the critical element of its success is the members of the CARE Management Team pool. These members must possess the following qualities:

- They must care about the quality of the administrative operational services provided and the programs/clientele supported.

- They must have a "proven track record" for providing quality administrative operational services/support.

- They must be considered experts in their functional areas by their peers, clientele, and management.

- They must be willing to share their skills and techniques with others.

- They must be open and willing to recognize quality administrative operational services being provided and techniques being used.
- They should have knowledge/ability in the overall administrative management functions of ARS.

While the CARE Program consolidates ARS internal reviews, it is recognized that some external reviews/audits and some internal special interest reviews will continue. To the degree possible CARE review findings will be used to supplement these reviews. The following are not fully covered by the CARE Program:

  - GAO Audits
  - GSA Space Utilization Surveys

- USDA Procurement Management Reviews
- ARS Special Interest Reviews
- ARS Imprest Fund Audit

Findings and recommendations of the CARE Program will be used to support the:

- USDA Consolidated Review Program
- USDA Procurement Management Reviews
- USDA Productivity Improvement Program

In addition the CARE Program will be used to develop quality measures for administrative operations/management in the true spirit of TQM.

The following Charter, Organizational Chart, and Review Process has been established to implement and guide the CARE Program.

BACKGROUND REFERENCES

- EO 12637 and OMB CIRCULAR A-123, Internal Control System

- OMB CIRCULAR A-127, FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

- OMB CIRCULAR A-130, MANAGEMENT OF FEDERAL INFORMATION RESOURCES

- FEDERAL MANAGERS' FINANCIAL INTEGRITY ACT (FMFIA) OF 1982

- EO 12352, FEDERAL PROCUREMENT REFORM

  - Management Control over Government Procurement

- 29 CFR 1910.1200, FEDERAL HAZARD COMMUNICATION PROGRAM (FHCP)

- USDA's MANAGEMENT CONTROL PROGRAM

- OMB CIRCULAR A-132, FEDERAL PRODUCTIVITY AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT IN SERVICE DELIVERY which incorporates:

  - DR 1132-1, Productivity Improvement Program (PIP)

  - Total Quality Management (TQM)

CHARTER

CONSOLIDATED ASSISTANCE, REVIEW & EVALUATION (CARE) PROGRAM

I.   PURPOSE

The primary goal of the CARE Program will be to concentrate on assisting those reviewed to understand what can be done to improve their operations and how to actually make the necessary changes to improve. While accomplishing this objective, CARE Teams will perform a limited review of administrative and financial activities in accordance with requirements of the Federal Managers Federal Integrity Act and Departmental Regulation No. 21000-001.

The CARE Program includes the review of all operational/management activities of an organizational unit through a consolidated approach that will provide sufficient assurance about the effectiveness and efficiency of administrative and financial management activities performed.

The CARE Program will meet the minimum assurance requirements of OMB Circular A-123 (Internal Control Systems), A-127 (Financial Management Systems), A-130 (Management of Federal Information Resources), and applicable Executive Orders. These Circulars and Executive Orders and other Federal regulations provide the policies and guidance Federal employees are to follow in successfully performing their duties.

The objectives of the CARE Program will be to:

-       Assist, in a helpful and proactive way, those being reviewed to understand what can be done to improve their operations.

-       Help those being reviewed to interpret and understand current policy and procedure guidance.

-       Identify gaps in available guidance/policy/procedures that require attention in order to meet the needs of Location activities.

-       Promote efficiency, economy and responsiveness to program needs through the identification of trends and the sharing of ideas and techniques for improving administrative processes.

-       Assure compliance with Federal policies and regulations by officially designated employees.

II.   COORDINATION AND INTERACTION

The Deputy Administrator, Administrative and Financial Management (AFM) will provide leadership in coordinating the CARE Program. The DAAFM Management Analyst will serve as the CARE Coordinator.

The Deputy Administrator, AFM, and the CARE Coordinator will interact with the AFM Divisions, Area Directors (ADs) , Area Administrative Officers (AAOs), and Location managers through meetings, reports, and requests.

The CARE Coordinator will report any material weaknesses as defined in OMB Circular A-123, to the appropriate AFM Division and ARS Management Control Official located in FMD.

III.   MEMBERSHIP

Members of the CARE Team will be selected from Area and Location level administrative offices, and branches of the AFM Divisions. Individuals selected will be those who have successfully demonstrated the knowledge, skills and abilities required to be a member of the CARE Program. These qualities include: aptitude and willingness to learn outside of one's functional expertise, demonstrated teamwork and communication skills, objectivity, and adaptability to a dynamic environment. CARE Team members serve for three-year terms, resulting in one-third of the CARE Program membership changing yearly.

Each CARE Team typically consists of eight members, organized as follows:

-       Two Location Administrative Officers/Technicians.

    -   Four functional experts, chosen from the following areas of expertise:

        •   Information Technology
        •   Human Resources
        •   Facilities (Safety and Health)
        •   "New Initiative" - a functional expert who can provide assistance regarding a new system or initiative within the Agency. For example, in FY 2002 and FY 2003, this would be an FFIS expert.

    -   Two additional members, chosen from the following groups:

        •   Location Administrative Officers/Technicians
        •   Research Leader Secretaries
        •   Extramural Agreements functional experts
        •   Budget and Fiscal functional experts
        •   Procurement and Property functional experts

The goal of CARE Team composition is to achieve as much balance between Headquarters, Area and Location representation as possible without compromising functional specialties or the issues and needs of the Locations being reviewed. In addition, the CARE Coordinator reserves

the right to increase or decrease the size of the CARE Team sent to a particular Location, depending on the size and geographic dispersement of the Location, and the identified issues to be resolved there.

IV.   RESPONSIBILITIES

Deputy Administrator	• Provide leadership in coordinating the CARE Program. • Provide resources in the form of a Program Coordinator and clerical support.
CARE Coordinator	• Establish CARE Program Management Plan and Schedule. • Coordinate and interact with Area/Location Program Managers, DAAFM, AFM Divisions, Area Directors, and Area Administrative Officers. • Evaluate and select CARE Team members. • Recommend and select CARE Team leaders. • Provide leadership and guidance to the CARE Teams through: - Team building - Objective/goal setting - Established review procedures - Resource allocation - Consolidation of findings. • Report accomplishments/findings/and trends to the DAAFM, ADs, AFM Divisions and AAOs. • Keep AFM Division Directors and AAOs informed on progress. • Report limited reviews assurances to FMD and responsible AFM Division. • Represent the CARE Program at conferences and meetings.
AFM Division Directors/AAOs .	• Nominate CARE Team members • Provide functional expertise to CARE Teams. • Provide reference material (regulations, policy, procedures, etc.). • Incorporate changes in P&P's consistent with findings regarding gaps. • Provide assistance to resolve issues identified in CARE reports.
AAOs	• Develop consolidated Action Plan to address report findings. • Follow-up on report findings to ensure that action items are resolved.

CARE Team Leader	• Provide on- site leadership to review team members.
	• Lead opening and exit review conferences.
	• Consolidate review findings and report accomplishments/findings to the CARE Coordinator.
CARE Team Members	• Actively participate in CARE Team meetings.
	• When selected, actively participate in on-site reviews.
	• Willingly share techniques, processes, and ideas on accomplishing quality administrative support.
	• Actively recognize and document best practices for improving administrative processes.
	• Provide advice and assistance to those reviewed.
	• Suggest changes to processes that will improve the quality of administrative support.
	• Draft appropriate sections of the report.

V.   REVIEWS

Reviews will be scheduled every year. Each review will be performed by a group of members selected from the CARE Team resource pool. No member of a CARE Team shall be from the Area in which the Location for review is located. CARE Teams will be led by a member of the resource pool.

A report of the findings/recommendations will be completed and submitted to the AAO and Location management through the DAAFM within 6-7 weeks of the on-site review.

VI.   RESOURCES

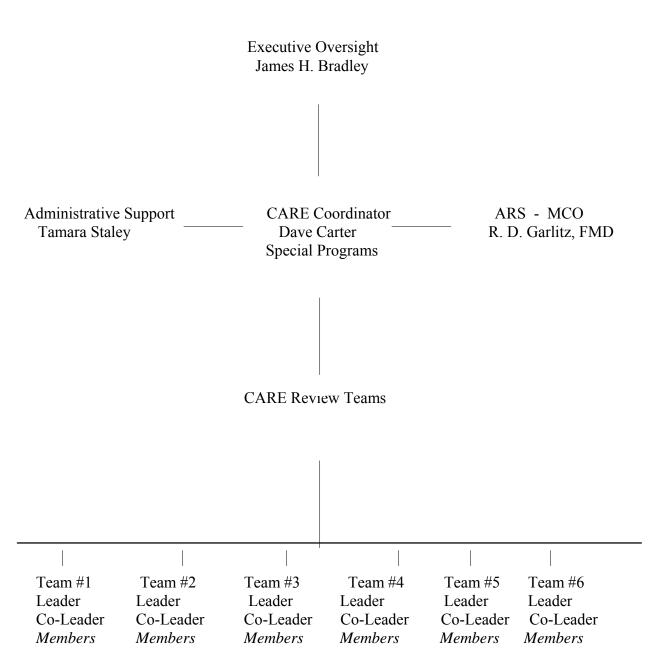The AFM Divisions and Area Administrative Offices shall provide travel and support services for their respective representatives.

Travel expenses for Location representatives and the cost of meeting facilities will be from funds made available by the DAAFM

_____   _____
James H. Bradley   Date
Deputy Administrator, AFM

CONSOLIDATED ASSISTANCE, REVIEW, AND EVALUATION PROGRAM

CARE Organization FY2003

Executive Oversight
James H. Bradley

Administrative Support	CARE Coordinator	ARS - MCO
Tamara Staley	Dave Carter	R. D. Garlitz, FMD
	Special Programs	

CARE Review Teams

Team #1	Team #2	Team #3	Team #4	Team #5	Team #6
Leader	Leader	Leader	Leader	Leader	Leader
Co-Leader	Co-Leader	Co-Leader	Co-Leader	Co-Leader	Co-Leader
Members	*Members*	*Members*	*Members*	*Members*	*Members*

REVIEW PROCESS

I. PRE-REVIEW ACTIVITIES

A. Review Team Selection : The CARE Management Team pool consists of employees from all levels of the AFM organization who represent all disciplines involved in administrative operations/management. This pool consists of review teams equally representing all levels and disciplines. The review team selected to review sites within an Area will consist of Area and Location members from Areas other than the one selected for review. The CARE Management Team will select sites for review on a cycle basis and review teams for each cycle.

B. CARE Management Team Site Scheduling : Based on Area and AFM Division input on recommended sites or DAAFM directed sites, the CARE Management Team will establish a schedule for review of a selected number of sites within each Area. Sites where the LAO/T has been in place for less than one year are usually not reviewed, but may be reviewed in certain circumstances. The ultimate goal of the CARE Program is to review all ARS sites approximately every 8 years.

C. Review Site Characteristics : The characteristics of the review site will be identified. Identification of these characteristics can be made through review of the ARMPS input for the current year; reports from the procurement reporting system, NFC-CAS, previous reviews/audits, real and personal property, and interest penalty; knowledge of the CARE Management Team; and, through contacts with AAO's or AFM Divisions. A generic characteristics package will be prepared (see Part II, A) to facilitate the actual review.

D. Coordinate Review Dates/Scheduling Letter : At least 4 weeks prior to the planned start of the review, a scheduling letter (see Part II, B) will be sent to the Location management, with copies to AFM Divisions, AAO's, Area Directors, and ARS Management Control Officer. The Team Leader's Checklist (Attachment III-A) will assist Team Leaders with assuring that all pre-review procedures have been accomplished.

II. PREPARATION FOR CARE REVIEW

A. Site Characteristics : The CARE Coordinator will develop a characteristics package for each Location to be reviewed. This package will include:

- Summary characteristics cover sheet (see Attachment I-A)
- Current year ARMPS Summary reports for the Location
- Current year position staffing plans
- Prior FY Procurement Report
- Real and Personal Property Report
- Any previous (last 3 years) review/audit reports
- Prior FY Interest Penalty Report
- AFM Functional Questions
- Functional comment sheets from Area and AFM Divisions

B. Scheduling Letter : The CARE Review Team Leader will contact Location Coordinator and Location Administrative Officer/Technician to issue a joint scheduling letter announcing the CARE Program intent, planned Location review dates, and selected Review Team Leader. A copy of the CARE Charter and Personnel Interview Questionnaire (see Attachments II-D) will be sent with the letter for distribution at the Location. At a minimum it is suggested that the Personnel Interview Questionnaires be distributed to the LC and LC Secretary, RL's and their Secretaries and all Location administrative support personnel. This questionnaire is used to form the basis of the interview discussions, but is not intended to limit areas of discussion.

A copy of the scheduling letter will be sent to the Area Director, Area Administrative Officer, and AFM Division Directors. The scheduling letter will be formatted according to Attachment I-B.

C. Telephone Contacts :

The Area Administrative Officer and the CARE Review Team Leader will personally contact the Location Coordinator and the Location Administrative Officer/Technician to discuss the review and any areas of emphasis the Location personnel would like the review team to assist them with.

III. REVIEW PROCEDURES

A. Introductions/Opening Conference : The CARE Review Team Leader will introduce the Review Team Members to the Location Support Staff (LSS). After the introduction to the LSS, the Team Leader and Co-Leader will meet with the Location Coordinator and the LAO/T to discuss the goals of the program. An opening conference will be scheduled for the LC, RL's, and their Secretaries, Location Administrative Officer/Technician and staff, and other Location personnel. The opening conference has a dual purpose: 1) to introduce the CARE Program and Review Team members to Location personnel; and 2) to get an understanding of the Location characteristics along with any areas the Location wants addressed. The Review Team Leader should take the lead by introducing the team members and providing a brief introduction of the CARE Program. The team should solicit concerns the Location wants addressed. The agenda should be reviewed with notations of any needed changes. A sample Opening Conference Notes (Attachment II-E) will assist Team Leaders with the opening conference.

B. Tour of Facilities : A one to two hour tour of the facilities should be conducted to offer the CARE Team a glimpse of the research conducted at the Location and to become familiar with the facilities at the Location.

C. Interviews/Reviews : The reviews should be a combination of interviews and document reviews. Keep in mind the main goals of the CARE Management Team. The AFM functional questions should be answered to the maximum extent possible. Actual review of functions should incorporate the guidelines contained in the USDA Procurement Management Review Handbook; ARS' Mutual Assistance Review Guide for the Financial Management Program; Area developed guides; and CARE Management Team Guides.

Interviews of individuals shall be conducted to determine customer expectations and to bring to light concerns regarding administrative processes. These interviews should include the LC and Secretary; RL's and their Secretaries; and the administrative support personnel. Interviews should take place before functional reviews are performed.

Attachment II-D, Location Personnel Interview Questionnaire, is to be used for interviewing both Program and Administrative personnel.

D.   Documentation : All activities of the Review Team shall be documented. To the degree possible, all functional questions must be answered either through interviews or review of files and documentation should be coded according to the AFM Functional Codes (Attachment II-A). Functions/processes not clearly falling within a code should be noted for later addition to the coding. As interviews are conducted, clear and concise notes should be made on the interview sheets by one of the interviewers and coded appropriately. (normally two CARE members conduct interview--one to ask questions, one to record responses). As review of files is conducted, clear notes on findings should be recorded either in the functional code section of the manual or on paper by code. The CARE Team Leader is responsible for assuring that documentation is copied and provided to each member of the team so they can assess any issues, concerns, or exemplary practices during the review and also to write their section of the review closeout and report.

E.   Assessment : The Review Team should set aside a portion of time to meet, discuss findings, and consolidate documentation. Questionable areas should be verified. The team should outline the "Exit Conference" presentation. Special attention should be given to positive findings. Any follow-up guidance/help/assistance should be noted. Major non-conformance which will be referred for action should be noted.

F.   Management Briefing : The Team Leader will provide the opportunity for a separate discussion with the Location Coordinator and LAO/T prior to the Exit Conference to discuss the review. During the review, the Team Leader will also provide a briefing to the AAO and CARE Coordinator.

G.   Exit Conference : An Exit Conference will be scheduled for the Location Coordinator, RL's and their Secretaries; LAO/T and staff; and, other Location personnel. The Review Team Leader should solicit comments on the team's activities, compliment commendable Location activities, offer assistance/advice, and cover noted concerns about areas that could be improved. Sample Closing Conference Notes (Attachment II-E) will assist Team Leaders with the exit conference. All significant findings (No Assurance, Assurance with Exception, Commendation, and Assistance Provided) must be documented and a written copy provided to the Location prior to Team departure.

IV.   DOCUMENTATION OF CARE REVIEWS/ TRACKING AND REPORTING

Tracking and Reporting of CARE activities will support the management controls consolidated under the CARE Program. Reports generated will provide supplemental information to support ARS Internal Management, USDA Management Control Program, USDA Consolidated Review Program, and the USDA Productivity Improvement Program (TQM). To the degree possible, relational database programs will be used to track and record CARE findings, recommendations, and follow-up actions taken.

A.   CARE Review Report : At the completion of reviews at a Location a consolidated report utilizing the format in Attachment II-B will be developed and signed by the Review Team Leader, reviewed and signed by the CARE Coordinator and Deputy Administrator AFM, and distributed electronically within 6-7 weeks to:

Deputy Administrator
AFM Division Directors
Area Administrative Officer
Location Coordinator
Location Administrative Officer/Technician
CARE Review Team members
ARS Management Control Officer

B.   Assurance Statements : At the completion of reviews at a Location, an Assurance Statement for each AFM Main (first digit) Functional Code utilizing the format in Attachment II-C will be developed and signed by the Review Team Leader, reviewed and signed by the CARE Coordinator and Deputy Administrator for Administrative and Financial Management, and electronically distributed to:

Affected AFM Division Director
ARS Management Control Officer

D.   Report Recommendations : After the CARE Review report is finalized and signed, the CARE Coordinator will abstract resulting recommendations and transmit these to the affected ARS Management Official at the Location, Area, or Headquarters. Recommendations to external organizations (i.e., NFC, GSA, OO, etc.) will be developed by the CARE Coordinator after consultation with affected ARS Management Officials and transmitted via the DAAFM. An annual report of recommendations made and actions taken will be provided to the ARS Management Control Officer.

E.   Tracking Locations Reviewed : A relational data base has been established to identify all ARS Locations and indicate those reviewed by a CARE Review Team and dates of the reviews. This tracking will be aimed at assuring that all ARS Locations are reviewed within a reasonable amount of time. ARS Locations will be those identified in the Human Resource Division's annual update of ARS Research Locations.

F.   Tracking Recommendations : The tracking of actions against recommendations has been established to identify the AFM function, affected Location, functional measurement, recommendation and actions. The CARE Coordinator will be responsible for tracking recommendations and exceptions and reporting open items to the Deputy Administrator, AFM Division Directors, and Area Administrative Officers until all items have been reported or corrected.

G.   AFM Functions Reviewed : A method for tracking those AFM functions reviewed at Locations has been established. As a minimum this tracking will include the AFM function, Location reviewed, dates reviewed and functional measurement.

REFERENCES

- ARS Field Acquisition Technical Manual

- ARS Research Leaders Handbook

- NFC External Procedures Manual

- The ARS Resource Management System (ARMS) Manual

- The Automated Annual Resource Management Plan System (ARMPS) Users' Manual

- LAO Personnel Desk Reference Manual

- ARS Facilities Construction Manual

- SAMS Manual

- LOTS Manual

- PC-TARE Manual

- How to Develop Quality Measures that Are Useful in Day-to-Day Management

- USDA Consolidated Review Program Guide

- OMB Circular A-123

- USDA Procurement Management Review Handbook

- ARS Mutual Assistance Review Guide for the Financial Management Program

- ARS Guidelines for Imprest Fund Verifiers (Manual 303.4A)

- ARS Guidelines for Imprest Fund Auditors (Manual 303.4B)

- ARS Property Manual

- ARS Extramural Agreements Manual

- ARS Safety Manual 230.0

VI. ATTACHMENTS

Attachment I-A CARE Review Characteristics Package

Characteristics Package
Provided Separately

Attachment I-B-Sample Scheduling Letter

Date

SUBJECT: CARE Review - (Location)

      TO: (Name)
           Research Leader/Location Coordinator
           (Location)

           (Name)
           Location Administrative Officer
           (Location)

  FROM: (Name)
           CARE Team Leader

ARS Administrative and Financial Management has implemented the Consolidated Assistance, Review, and Evaluation (CARE) Program aimed at assisting ARS Locations in the true spirit of the President's Management Agenda.

I will lead the CARE Review Team at (Location). After (X) years with ARS, I find CARE to be one of the most innovative programs of its type. It constitutes a golden opportunity to address: how the customer and providers of administrative services interact; what the delivery of services is; and what the delivery of services should be.

As discussed in our telephone conversation, your Location has been selected for review during the week of (month, days, year).

The Review Team consists of several highly recognized Location, Area, and Headquarters personnel (see Enclosure #1). A proposed agenda for the Review Team is also enclosed (see Enclosure #2) and a detailed interview schedule will be coordinated with the Location prior to the Team's arrival.

Enclosed for your information and distribution are the CARE Charter (Enclosure #3) and the Personnel Interview Questionnaire (Enclosure #4). As part of the Review process, we plan to interview you, secretaries, lead scientists, and the administrative support staff. Sharing the questionnaire will give interviewees an opportunity to consider their responses in advance. We request that private rooms be made available for interviews of employees not housed in individual offices.

Documentation for the CARE Review Team's activities will be developed during the Review. This documentation will be finalized shortly after completion of the Review, and will be shared with you generally 6-7 weeks after the Review is completed. In addition, I will provide both of you with personal briefings, followed by an Exit Conference to brief all Program and Administrative personnel of the Team's observations, recommendations, and follow-up actions.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. I can be reached via e-mail at (email address)mailto:sschaefer@ars.usda.gov or by telephone on (phone #). We look forward to visiting the (Location), and appreciate your support of the CARE Program. Through our combined efforts, we can add to the quality of administrative services while enhancing ARS' program delivery.

Enclosures

cc:
Area Director w/o encl.
Area Administrative Officer w/o encl.
CARE Coordinator w/o encl.
Division Directors w/o encl.
CARE Team Members w/o encl.

CARE Review Proposed Agenda

Date:
Time:

The CARE Team arrives at the Location and members are introduced to the Location Administrative staff. The Team Leader and Co-Leader meet with you and your Administrative Officer together or separately. We will discuss the review and determine if there are any specific administrative functions/concerns you want addressed or additional individuals you want us to see.

Date: (Monday morning)
Time:

Opening Conference
(We look forward to meeting with you and your secretary, your Administrative Officer and staff, and encourage all employees lead scientists, Union Steward, and any other individuals to attend.)

Date: (Monday morning)
Time:

Tour of Facilities

Date: (Monday afternoon)
Time:

Interviews and Review

Date: (Tuesday & Wednesday)
Time:

Interviews and Review

Date: (Thursday)
Time:

Interviews and Review finished and function write-ups prepared

Date: (Friday morning)
Time:

Team Leader and Co-Leader brief Location Coordinator& Administrative Officer
Date: (Friday morning)
Time

Exit Conference

Attachment I-C-CARE Standard Operating Procedures

SUGGESTED REVIEW APPROACH

TEAM STRUCTURE
A CARE Review Team will consist of four to ten members and will include a Leader and Co-Leader. Team members should include: at least two Location Administrative Officers/Technicians (LAO/T's); functional experts in Facilities, Human Resources, Information Technology, and ANew Initiatives@ (e.g. FFIS); and two additional members chosen from budget and finance representatives from the Area (ABFO) or Financial Management Division (FMD), acquisition and assistance representative from the Area, Procurement & Property Division (PPD), or Facilities Division (FD), Research Leader Secretaries, and a mixture of experienced and new members.

MEMBER ASSIGNMENTS
To the degree possible, team members should be paired for purposes of interviews and functional reviews. This pairing should be based on AFM Functions and, generally, the LAO/T's should be paired with an Area or AFM Division representative. This functional pairing will depend on the expertise of the individuals making up the team and the characteristics of the Location being reviewed. Interviews should be performed by pairs, and the Team Leader and Co-Leader should interview the Location Administrative Officer/Technician (LAO/T) and the Location Coordinator (LC). The LC will be a Research Leader (RL), a Laboratory Director, (LD), or a Center Director (CD), depending on the Location's organization structure.

While all Team members will be evaluating and collecting information on all AFM functions during interviews and reviews, individuals or pairs should be assigned main responsibilities for each of the seven main AFM functions (EAD, FD, FMD, HRD, ITD, & PPD) and Civil Rights.

One Team member should be assigned the responsibility for recording comments made at the Opening and Exit Conferences.

STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS AND REVIEW

For best results, a Location review should be built on the following progressive steps. Using these progressive steps allows the team to: capture a total picture of the AFM management/operations; point out overall or specific concerns for AFM functions that can be addressed while at the Location; and provide documentation for the report and assurance statement.

1. Location Support Staff (LSS) and CARE Team Introductions
2. Team Leader and Co-Leader meet with LC and LAO/T
3. Opening Conference
4. Tour of Facilities
5. Team meeting
6. Personal interviews
7. Team meeting to share impressions/findings
8. LSS functional interviews
9. Functional documents/systems review
10. Team meeting to share impressions/findings
11. Follow-up with the Program personnel or LSS on functions
12. Team meeting to consolidate impressions/findings and prepare for Exit Conference
13. Briefing of LC and LAO/T
14. Briefing CARE Coordinator
15. Briefing of AAO (as soon as possible during review)
16. Exit Conference
17. Report

The sequencing of steps 3, 4, and 5 are left to the Team Leader's discretion and the individual needs of the Location being reviewed.

SOP FOR TEAM MEMBERS

PURPOSE   Based on the listed progressive steps and the tools developed (questionnaires, functional listing, functional questions, and summary sheets), the following standard operating procedures should be applied:

Tour of the Facilities
1. During the "walk through" tour each member should maintain notes on observations, impressions and findings.
2. Following completion of the tour each member should share these observations, impressions and findings.
3. All documentation sheets should be given to the Team Leader.

Opening Conference
1. Introduction of team members
2. Intent of CARE
3. Question and answer session

Program Personnel Interviews
1. Using the Personnel Interview Questionnaire (which was sent to the Location prior to the review) as a guide, team members should interview personnel and note responses against each question on a copy of the questionnaire.
2. Following the interviews, each member should ensure the information collected is clear, concise and is numbered based on the functional codes.
3. After all interviews are complete, the team should meet to share findings.
4. Interview sheets should be completed and given to the Team Leader who will ensure that copies are given to each Team member.
5. Follow-up of identified concerns relating to specific functions should be addressed by the individual(s) assigned that function during interviews of the LSS and/or review of the documents or systems.

LSS Personnel Interviews
1. Using the Personnel Interview Questionnaire (which was sent to the Location prior to the review) as a guide, team members should interview individuals and note responses against each question.
2. In addition, information collected during these interviews should be noted (where applicable) against functional codes.

Functional Reviews

1. Using the AFM Functional codes, individuals should review functional processes, documentation and/or systems.
2. Summary of findings or information collected should be used to answer functional codes.
3. The functional code section of the CARE manual (or notes on paper by functional code) should be used to record specific findings.
4. After preliminary interviews and review of functions the team should meet to share findings, discuss concerns and seek clarification of issues. Team Leaders will conduct conversations with Area personnel, and/or the CARE Coordinator, if the need arises.

Follow-up (Program Personnel, LSS or Functions)

1. After clarification of issues, or obtaining information for assistance or help, members should follow-up on specific functions or with Program or LSS personnel.
2. Any assistance provided or information promised should be recorded on summary sheets.
3. After follow-up the review team should meet to discuss overall findings, draft functional statements (each individual, or pair, should prepare a short draft of findings for each section of the assigned function), and discuss presentations at the Exit Conference.
4. At this time all original documentation should be given to the Team Leader. Copies will be given to each Team member to be used in writing closeout significant findings for their section of the report.

Briefings

1. The Team Leader and Co-Leader should first brief the LC and the LAO/T on findings and proposed Exit Conference presentations.
2. The LC, LAO/T, Team Leader and Co-Leader should reach agreement on issues, or at least recognize differences.

Exit Conference

This meeting sets the stage for the formal review report and, as a minimum, should cover the following:
1. Positive findings
2. Written Summary of functional Significant Findings
3. Recommendations/Suggestions
4. Assistance provided by team members
5. Unique processes or techniques learned/commendation of Best Practices
6. Appreciation for the Location participation in the CARE Program
7. Question and Answer session

Evaluation Forms

The Team Leader should customize the following forms:
1. Location Evaluation of CARE Team
2. CARE Team Self-Evaluation

Form #1 should be provided to Location personnel for completion and returned to CARE Coordinator via the LAO. Form #2 should be provided to CARE team members and returned individually to the CARE Coordinator.

AO/CARE Coordinator Briefing

The Team Leader should coordinate with AAO prior to the review to decide when AAO would like to be briefed (either onsite during/after the review or immediately upon the Team Leader's return to his/her duty station after the review). NOTE: AAO should always be consulted during the review if any sensitive issues should arise.

The Team Leader should consult with CARE Coordinator throughout the Review as needed and should provide a briefing on the specifics of review immediately after briefing the AAO.

Report

Based on notes from the Opening and Exit Conferences, documentation and individual member follow-up/input, the Team Leader shall prepare a draft report using the word processing template provided by the CARE Coordinator.

1. The Team Leader shall prepare the Assurance Statement and refer the report and statement to team members for review and comment.
2. After review and comment the Team Leader shall finalize the report and statement and refer them to the CARE Coordinator for final signatures and distribution. This report, along with the documentation and the Location Packet, shall be retained by the Team Leader until notified by the CARE Coordinator that the action plan developed for the Location has been completed and the report is closed by the Deputy Administrator, Administrative and Financial Management.

DO'S WHILE CONDUCTING REVIEWS

Do remember to wear your CARE lanyard and a smile.

Do remember the primary function of CARE is to assist Locations in a helpful and pro-active way.

Do remember that conversations with individuals are confidential and that names will not be used in reporting findings.

Do remember that you are a visitor in another Area and as such you may encounter different policies and procedures that MUST be taken into consideration.

Do remember that if you encounter a difficult situation, it should be immediately brought to the Team Leader's attention and not discussed outside the Team.

Do reference regulations in report in situations of "Assurance with Exception" or "No Assurance"

Do remember to check with the Team Leader or functional specialist on Team if not absolutely certain of your facts BEFORE discussing policies and procedures during a review.

Do remember that you are on-site for only a week and you won=t always get all the facts correct. Throughout the review and closeout, issues should be discussed with the LAO/T and LC. Their comments regarding issues should be taken into consideration.

DON TS WHILE CONDUCTING REVIEWS

Don't get involved in Employee Relations/EEO issues. If a situation arises, you need to let the individual know that dealing with these issues is not a function of CARE and that if they proceed, the matter will have to be brought to the attention of upper level management.

Don't try to push your "better way of doing things" on the Location. What doesn't work for your Location may very well be working fine at this site.

Don't get overly involved with Location personnel in "after-hour" activities since team findings are usually discussed during these times.

PROCESS FOR ASSIGNING
ASSURANCE WITH EXCEPTION OR
NO ASSURANCE

Assurance With Exception

1. Identify trend
2. Discuss within Team
3. Be able to cite specific issue, number of occurrences (or percentage) and Policy and Procedure, regulation, etc., that has been violated. Team should also be able to cite correct procedure (final report should contain a recommendation on how to correct situation).
4. Upon Team agreement, it can be indicated to the Location that an AAssurance with Exception@ will probably be cited in the final report, unless additional data is produced that refutes the finding.

No Assurance

1. Identify trend. Seriousness of situation (intent for waste, fraud, or abuse) will dictate difference between AAssurance With Exception@ and ANo Assurance.@
2. Discuss within Team.
3. Be able to cite specific issue, number of occurrences (or percentage) and Directive, regulation, policy, etc., that has been violated. Team must have thorough documentation of situation and assure that there was an intent to circumvent regulations.
4. Discuss with CARE Coordinator prior to citing ANo Assurance@.
5. Discuss situation with Area Administrative Officer/Location Management. Location/Area must be made aware of the ANo Assurance@ call prior to the Team leaving the Location and clearly understand what the issue is and how it should be corrected.

Attachment II-A - AFM Functional Codes/Questions

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT - GENERAL

1.01   <u>Location Administrative and Financial Management</u>

- Provide a summary of how administrative processes in general are functioning.

- How do the administrative and program personnel interact? Are monthly staff meetings conducted? If so, are they beneficial?

- Is the Location doing any "best practices" that can be captured and shared with other Locations?

1.02   <u>Area Administrative and Financial Management</u>

- Provide a summary of the level of interaction between the Area and the Location.

1.03   <u>Headquarters Administrative and Financial Management</u>

- Describe the interaction between the Location and Headquarters.

- If the Location deals with specific Divisions, state relationship and description of service provided.

1.04   <u>Other</u>

- Describe any other processes that do not fit into the above-mentioned categories (i.e., program process issues)

CARE FUNCTIONAL REVIEW
ACQUISITION OF SUPPLIES, SERVICES, AND EQUIPMENT

For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Linda Wilson on 301-504-1733.

2   Acquisition

- Select 10 percent of orders from the purchase order log book for review. Look carefully at orders placed during the last two weeks of the fiscal year and at orders over $2,500.

2.01   Requisitions

Reference Field Acquisition Manual (FAM) 213.2M, updated 2002, and FAR Part 13, REE Purchase Card Program Manual 213.3M, Departmental Regulation 5013-6, APC/LAPC Purchase Card Program Guide.

- AD-700 Procurement Request: Ensure the file includes an AD-700 Procurement Request complete with required sub-account, specifications, funding, estimates, justifications, and approval.

- Verify that the AD-700 is signed by an authorized individual. Verify that the AD-700 has a procurement request number and is properly dated.

- Verify that a tracking system is in place to handle the administration of procurement requests, contracts, purchase orders, assignments of requests for action. An example would be to have a manual or automated log. Verify that an action is traceable through the system. Is there a management information system in place to report on status of sensitive actions?

- If the AD-700 has been entered in FFIS for commitment accounting, the FFIS RQ print screen must be with the AD-700.

2.02   Procurement

- Verify that current P&P's, Bulletins, etc., are readily available.

- Document the kind of random review and supervision of the purchasing function at the Location to insure efficiency and compliance with regulations. What is the Area's involvement in this regard?

2.02-1.01   Blanket Purchase Agreements (BPA's)

- Ensure that BPA's are replaced by using the purchase card when appropriate.

- Ensure that BPA's are documented on an AD-838 Type 45 and contain all the necessary terms and conditions, including individuals authorized to place orders and extent of their authority, and securing maximum discounts. (FAM 213.2M and FAR Part 13.303).

- Ensure BPA orders are only used by those individuals authorized on the agreement (FAR Part 13.303).

- Check to see that whenever possible, contractors invoice monthly rather than invoicing for each call order (FAR Part 13.303 and FAM). This is to reduce paperwork and cost to the Government.

- Ensure BPA's are reviewed annually to reaffirm the need and proper usage (FAM 213.2M and FAR Part 13.303).
- Ensure that call orders over $2,500 are documented to show that competition was obtained or notation for sole-source (FAR Part 13.303 and FAM).

- Ensure that individual call orders do not exceed the maximum call order limit (FAM 213.2M and FAR Part 13.303).

- Ensure that BPA's do not exceed the total dollar limitation or its stated time period.

2.02-1.02   Purchase/Delivery Orders

- Check logbooks for orders just under $100,000 representing split requirements that were broken down into several purchases merely to permit the use of simplified acquisition procedures. Look for open market purchase orders that exceed the $100,000.

- Check logbooks for multiple orders to same vendor/merchant broken down to remain under warrant authority.

- Check purchase orders for best value and/or price reasonableness determinations.

- Ensure there is an awareness of the procedures for ratification of unauthorized obligations (P&P 212.16).

- Ensure that confirming orders are documented to show need for a confirming order and who placed it (FAR Part 13 and FAM).

- Ensure that the total value of the order is within the delegated authority of the contracting officer.

- Check to see if the purchasing agents are using required sources properly, particularly, Javits-Wagner-O-Day (JWOD) Act program sources (FAR 8).

- Check to see if procurement outreach efforts are being accomplished. Is there an awareness of the procurement preference program in terms of need to locate small businesses, small disadvantaged businesses, women-owned businesses, HUBZones, and service disabled veterans? (FAR13 and 19, DR 5090-002, DR5090-003).

  Are there established procedures for accepting capability statements and/or market literature from small businesses? Are these small businesses being added to source lists? For open-market projects between $25,000 and $100,000 are there at least one each of the following small business concerns identified on the source list: small business, woman-owned small business, small disadvantaged business, and service-disabled veteran?

- Ensure that Small Business - Small Purchase Set-Aside regulations are adhered to: Purchases over $2,500 must be set- aside for small businesses. The file should be documented as stated in FAR 19.506(c) should dissolution of the set-aside be necessary. Note: Orders under $2,500 (micro-purchases) do not have to be set aside for participation by small business.

- Very Small Business Set-Aside (open market only). Applies if the dollar value is between $2,500 and $50,000 and the contracting office is located within the geographical area served by a designated SBA district; or the service will be performed in the geographical area, then check to see if the project was set aside for Very Small Business Concerns (FAR 19.9): Albuquerque, NM; Los Angeles, CA: Boston, MA; Louisville, KY; Columbus, OH; New Orleans, LA; Detroit, MI; Philadelphia, PA; El Paso, TX; or Santa Ana, CA. (This excludes the Small Business

Competitiveness Demonstration Program).

- Check log book for multiple orders less than $25,000 that may have been broken down into several purchases merely to circumvent synopsizing requirements.

- Ensure that the Small Business Competitiveness Demonstration Program regulations are adhered to: Requirements such as construction, A-E, and refuse services should be acquired according to the Small Business Competitive Demonstration Act. (FAR 19.10, Policy Memorandums 19-04 and 19-08, APD ALERT No. 2004-08. The ALERT covers the authority for FY 2004, however, it should continue to be used until FY 2005 has been established and published in a new ALERT).

- Verify that all open-market requirements of $25,000 or greater were posted on FEDBizOpps. (FAR 4 and 13). Note that AGAR Advisory 37A waives posting of service requirements between $25,000 and $100,000 through March 31, 2005. Supply requirements between $25,000 and $100,000 must be posted.

- Ensure that competition is obtained for requirements over $2,500. If not, the file should document why competition was not feasible or not obtained. For non-competitive purchases exceeding $2,500, ensure price reasonableness is included in the file (FAR Part 13 and FAM).

- Services over $2,500: If subject to the Service Contract Act, wage rates should be obtained through Wage Determinations On Line and incorporated in the order. (FAR 13, APD ALERT 2004-04)

- Actions under the Small Business Competitiveness Demonstration Program: Verify that it was entered in FPDS-NG in accordance with FPDS procedures, in the specified time from the FPDS Reporting Manual, and a printout of the FPDS-NG action is in the file. Note: The Small Business Competitiveness Demonstration Program actions for FY 2004 and FY 2005 (construction, refuse, services, etc.) of any dollar value must be entered in FPDS-NG. Verify the SF-281 Code "22" is used on purchase orders to ensure the action is not counted twice.

- Construction over $2,000: Ensure Davis-Bacon Wage Rates are incorporated in the order (FAR Part 22 and FAM).

- Request for quotes: The file should be documented to show the method of solicitation, either orally or in writing. Written competition is required for construction over $2,000 (FAR Part 13 and FAM).

- Ensure that source lists are maintained and used to select sources for simplified acquisitions. This includes GSA (FAR Part 8, FAR 13, and FAM).

- Defaults - In case of Termination for Default, did the office charge the excess costs of any reprocurement action to the defaulted contractor?

- Ceiling price: Are ceilings established for all estimated orders?

- Delivery date: Does the order contain a definitive or determinable date for delivery of supplies or performance of services.

- Are AD-838's, Purchase Orders, prepared in accordance with the instructions on IRS Form 1099 reporting requirements (NFC Manual Title II, Chapter 5, Section)?

- Check to see if procurement files are well maintained and organized. All pertinent data should be kept in the contracting officer's file.

- FFIS print screen of the VEND Table Record for the vendor's remittance address must be in the file with the purchase order.

- Ensure that as stated in FAR Part 4.805, the Location retains records as follows: 1) Construction contracts over $2,000 and all other contracts over $25,000 for 6 years and 3 months after final payment; 2) Signed construction contract of $2,000 or less and all other contracts of $25,000 or less 3 years after final payment; 3) Records pertaining to contracts using simplified acquisition procedures 1 year after final payment. Refer to Part 4 for detailed information.

- Verify that all proposed contract actions between $10,000 and $25,000 are displayed in a public place or placed on FEDBizOpps (FAR 5)

- Confirm that purchasing agents are aware of the CCR requirements prior to issuance of purchase orders.

2.02-1.03   Purchase Cards

- Qualification and Training of LAPC

  – Verify that the LAPC is in the 1102 or 1105 series. For those not in the 1102 or 1105 series, check to see what procurement training have they received to qualify them as a Level 1B Contracting Officer. This does not mean that the LAPC has to be warranted (APC/LAPC Program Guide and Departmental Regulation 5001-1).

- Reference Tools

  – Check to see what tools the LAPC is using to manage and provide oversight of the purchase card program (i.e., Discoverer, PCMS, PCMS Newsletters, etc).

- Reports

  – Check to see if LAPC has submitted any monthly or quarterly reports on Purchase Card/Check Use and Reconciliation to the Area.

- Management and Oversight

  – Check to see if the LAPC is performing any reviews of cardholder transactions for compliance with existing procurement policies, i.e., random review of cardholder transactions.

- Ensure that cardholder keeps a log for recording purchase card transactions (REE Purchase Card Program Manual 213.3M).

- Disputes

  – Ensure the cardholder maintains a separate file of disputed purchase card transactions with required documents to ensure credits are received in a timely manner and to ensure items are credited appropriately when resolved. (REE Purchase Card Manual 213.3M)

- What kind of random review is done on the purchases made by the purchase card?

2.02-1.04   Training

- Verify warrants are posted (FAR Part 1.602-1).

- Verify training plans are in place to maintain and enhance purchasing/contracting skills (FAR Part 1.603 and DR5001-1).

2.02-1.05   Federal Supply Schedule (FSS)

- Ensure that delivery orders used to purchase from the FSS have (per FAR Part 13 and FAM):

    – The "Delivery Order" block checked on the AD-838.
    – The special item number shown for each item.

- Ensure there is a printout of confirmation from FPDS-NG in the file for delivery orders and delivery order modifications over $25,000 (FAR 13)

- Ensure that quotes have been obtained from at least 3 schedule contracts before placing an order with FSS contractor. (FAR 8.404(b)(2))

2.03   Administration

2.03-1   Simplified Acquisitions

- Ensure there is an effective tracking system and procedure for determining contract and order completion and final payment for closeout purposes.

- Scope of Order: If a modification increased the supplies or services ordered, it should be within the scope of the original order. If not, it should be justified as a "new procurement" action (FAR Part 13 and FAM).

- Supplemental agreement: Ensure that if a modification increased the total over $100,000 and it was by supplemental agreement, it incorporated the mandatory contract clauses.

2.03-2   Receiving Reports

- Receiving reports over $1,000 must be signed and dated and promptly released to NFC (FAM 213.2 and NFC Policy and Procedures for Purchase Orders, Title II, Chapter 5, NFC Manual).

2.03-3   Invoice/Payments/Closeout

- Verify there is evidence of record of invoice/payment in the file and evidence of final payment. (FAR 4.804-3)

- Verify there is evidence of closeout in the file. (FAR 4.804-5)

PERSONAL PROPERTY

For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Cheryl Brumback on 202-270-2359.

2.04   Personal Property

2.04-1   Organizational Structure

• Determine who has delegated authority as the location's property management officer (PMO) and who performs the PMO's duties and responsibilities. Determine if the Area PMO provides any operational support for the location's property functions.

• How many designated Accountable Property Officers (APO's) does the location have?

• Determine how the PMO ensures that new APO's are aware of their duties and responsibilities. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 2, Property Management Authority, Subsection "Accountable Property Officers.")

2.04-1.01   Training

• Verify whether the property staff has the support and training to perform property management functions. Determine whether they need additional training or support to perform property management functions.

2.04-1.02   Reference Material

• Ensure that the location's property staff has the latest versions of the following personal property references:

    – REE Manual 221.1M, Personal Property, Motor Vehicle, & Aircraft Management, dated 8/3/99.

    – NFC Procedures Manual, Personal Property System (PROP), dated March 1998.

    – Property Management Quick Guide (dated 2004).

2.04-2   Property Control, Accountability, and Inventory

• Review property management files. Determine whether the location maintains consolidated files for each APO or a separate files for inventories, excess, transfers, etc. Confirm that the files contain copies of physical inventories, purchase documents for inventory items, excess and unserviceable property reports, and completed disposal documents.

• Review inventory records to ensure that the location performs physical inventories every 2 years and whenever there is an APO change. Verify that the files contain a copy of the current physical inventory, signed by the APO. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 4, Physical Inventories and Agriculture Property Management Regulations, AGPMR 104-51.106. Note: The PROP28 Report in PMIS/PROP will list the APO name, address, and latest inventory date to help CARE Team confirm current/delinquent inventories.)

• Determine who performs the physical inventory, certifies its accuracy, and reconciles the official property records.

• Verify whether the APO receives a copy of the reconciled inventory as stated in REE Manual 221.1M, Section 4, Physical Inventories, Subsection "Reconciling Physical Inventories".

• Explain any problems that occur when conducting and completing physical inventories.

- Confirm that appropriate managers authorize property passes (i.e., memoranda, forms AD-873, OF-7, Property Pass, AD-107, etc.) to employees when removing Government property from the location.

- Determine how the location ensures departing employees return Government property.

2.04-2.01   Property Receipt and Identification

- Determine whether the property staff receives copies of purchase documents (AD-838, Purchase Order, AD-700 for Purchase Card, etc.) from the purchasing agent/contracting officer at the time of the purchase.

- Explain how the property staff requests serial number information from the APO, assigns the barcode/NFC-ID (AG number), and updates new accountable property in PMIS/PROP. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 3, Accountability and Control, Subsection "Receipt Documents for Accountable Property.)

2.04-2.02   Personal Property Suspense Reports

- Determine how often the location receives Suspense Reports from the Area and how they reconcile transactions to within 60 days of receipt and within 30 days of appearing on Suspense. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 5, Suspense Listings, and APD Policy Memorandum 221.1-04, Reconciling Area Suspense Reports, dated 3/9/00. At a **minimum**, locations should receive monthly reports. However, reconciling every two weeks reduces administrative burdens.)

- Explain any problems that occur when reconciling Suspense Reports.

2.04-2.03   Sensitive Property

- Verify whether the location has any sensitive property (firearms and law enforcement badges). Ensure firearms are properly secured, bar coded, and listed on the location's official inventory. (REE Manual 221.1M, Section 2, Accountability and Control, subsection "Sensitive Property", all firearms and law enforcement badges are considered sensitive and are accountable property).

- Determine whether the location or Area has declared other types of Government property as sensitive.

2.04-2.04   Reporting Property Theft, Loss, or Damage

- Determine if the location has experienced any property theft, loss, or damage. Ensure the location documents incidents (form AD-112, Report of Unserviceable, Lost, Stolen, or Damaged Property), including obtaining statements from the custodian, supervisor, APO and appropriate law enforcement officials (for thefts). Confirm documentation contains appropriate signatures from the APO and that the PMO properly removes accountable property records from PMIS/PROP. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 9, Reporting Lost, Stolen, or Damaged Property.)

2.04-3   Property Exchange

- Determine whether the location evaluates property that is no longer needed for possible reassignment or exchange potential.

- Ensure that the location follows exchange sale procedures, including the list of ineligible property categories, follows the definition of similar items (within the same Federal Supply Classification

Group), and applies the one for one rule. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 13, Exchange/Sale of Property and Federal Management Regulations, FMR 102-39 for the ineligible list.)

- Confirm that the location documents the trade-in/exchange process on the purchase document, lists the item description, serial number, AG number if accountable, and the trade-in amount. Ensure the PMO accurately removes the item in PROP when the trade-in involves accountable property.

2.04-4   Acceptance of Gifts

- Determine whether the location has accepted any Unconditional Gifts and who has the authority to accept Gifts on behalf of ARS. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 18, Acceptance of Gifts, Subsection "ARS Field".)

- Confirm that the location ensures that the Gift meets the acceptance criteria (not from a prohibited source), documents the receipt, and updates PROP if the gift meets the accountability criteria. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 18, Acceptance of Gifts, Subsection "Unconditional Gifts".)

2.04-5   Excess Property

- Confirm the process the location uses to determine whether excess property is available before acquiring new acquisitions (first source of supply as applicable). Determine the methods that the location uses to view available excess property.

- Explain the procedures APO's use to report excess property. What type of documentation (memorandum, forms SF-120 or AD-107) does the location require? Review property files to ensure the documentation contains the APO's signature or approval (if E-mail) and lists the excess condition code.

- Review files to ensure that the PMO reports excess property through PMIS/PROP, for both accountable and non-accountable property. (According to FMR 102-36, Federal regulations require agencies to report most all excess property.) Confirm that the files contain documentation of required screening (such as screen prints from PROP or file notations).

- Ensure that the PMO is aware of the required screening for excess property pending disposal action. (The required screening time frames are revised from 30-day departmental screening for reportable property/15-day screening for non-reportable property to 15-day departmental screening for all USDA excess, from a 21-day Federal utilization screening and 21-day donation screening to a combined 21-day screening for GSA screening. See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 10, Reporting Excess Property and FMR-102-36 for revised time frames.)

- Explain how the location maintains accountability and control of excess pending disposal.   Does the location have a storage area for pending excess, how is excess labeled or identified? (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 10, Reporting Excess Property, Subsection "Procedures".)

- Explain circumstances when the PMO bypasses required screening and authorizes abandonment or destruction using form AD-112. Review files to ensure documentation contains written determinations for abandonment or destruction (property has no commercial value, cost of continued care and handlings exceeds sales, proceeds, etc), appropriate signatures, and condition codes.

- Ensure the location properly documents property disposal and confirm that if the location donates excess in lieu of abandonment or destruction, they donate to "public bodies", which are organizations that receive Federal, state, or local funding, not non-profit organizations. (See REE

Manual 221.1M, Section 16, Abandonment and Destruction, Subsection "Donation to Public Bodies" and FMR 102-36.)

- Confirm that the location posts the "Public Notice of Abandonment or Destruction" when disposing of excess with an acquisition cost of $500 or more. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 16, Abandonment and Destruction, Subsection "Public Notice" and FMR 102-36.)

- Determine whether the location has procedures in place to clear hazardous materials from excess property before disposal.

- Explain any problems that occur when reporting excess.

2.04-5.01   Transfers under Specific USDA Donation Programs

- Determine whether the location has donated excess property under the following USDA's Donation Programs, Stevenson-Wydler Technology Act, Executive Order 12999 Computers for Education, 1862 (Land Grant) Institutions, and FAIR-1890 (Historically Black), 1994 (Native American), and HIS (Hispanic Serving) Institutions.

- Review files to ensure the PMO first reports available property as excess in PMIS/PROP for required USDA screening. Ensure the location receives a justification statement from the eligible donee. Ensure the transfer document, form SF-122, Transfer of Excess Property, contains the appropriate signatures. (Refer to REE Manual 221.1M, Section 17, USDA Donation Programs. Also refer to APD Policy Memorandum, 104-01, Revised Guidelines for Excess Research Equipment under the Stevenson/Wydler Technology Act, Including Executive Order 12999, Computers for Education, dated 5/14/99. Note: USDA no longer requires donation agreements.)

- Confirm that the location reports transfers under the Donation Program to their APMO for inclusion in the required annual report.

2.04-6   Agency Administered Sales

- Verify that files contain appropriate sales documentation, including form OF-15, Sale of Government Property, and form OF-16, Sales Slip. Ensure the location deposits sale proceeds into the appropriate suspense account fund if sale is exchange sale property, or US Treasury for sale of surplus property.

- Ensure that the location is aware that USDA prohibits selling property to employees who are or were accountable for the property, used the property, or connected with its declaration as excess or sale. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 14, Agency Administered Sales, Subsection "Exemptions" and AGPMR 104-45.302.)

2.04-7   Motor Vehicles

- Confirm that the location is aware of the Area's limits on passenger vehicles (sedans/station wagons) and that the location justifies any fleet additions.

- Ensure that the location acquires vehicles that meet the Federal fuel average fleet economy standard, meet replacement standards, and are the minimum size necessary to accomplish the mission. Ensure the location includes justifications when ordering vehicles other than standard vehicles. (This may be accomplished at the Area level. However, locations are responsible for requesting replacement vehicles according to requirements listed in REE Manual 221.1M, Section 19, Motor Vehicle Management, Subsection "Replacement Standards" and FMR 102-34.)

- Verify whether the location has purchased alternative fueled vehicles (AFV's). Determine if the location is required to purchase AFV's. (See APD Policy Memorandum 221.1-07, Preference for Using Alternative Fuels and Alternative Fueled Vehicles, dated 1/22/02. **(Federal regulations require agencies in specific geographic locations, based on the county and zip code, to purchase AFV's).** If the location is required to purchase AFV's, confirm that the location/Area maintains justifications for when AFV's will not meet their needs.

- Verify whether the location maintains any vehicles that are exempt from Federal markings and identification. If so, confirm that the location has requested proper approval. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 23, Vehicle Operations, Subsection Vehicle Registration/Identification Exemption.)

- Ensure the location properly identifies Government vehicles with Government tags, decal AD-792, For Official Use Only, USDA (if the location uses the newer version of USDA tags that are imprinted with "For Official Use", they no longer need decal AD-792), AD-185, Penalty for Unofficial Use, form AD-651, Accident Reporting Kit, and form ARS-715, Operational and Maintenance Record, or other method for recording and tracking vehicle operational data. (The location may use the ARS-715 or use any other method to record and track vehicle operational data that is not captured through the Voyager Fleet Card.) The location should receive tags and decals from the Area before vehicle receipt.

- Ensure that the location maintains motor vehicle dispatch records/logs that provide reasonable audit trails to verify official use. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 22, Use of Government Vehicles, Subsection "Supervisory Responsibilities" and AGPMR 104-38.301(c)(3).

- Ensure that the location secures vehicle keys and fleet cards when they are not in use.

- Determine how the location mechanically inspects Government vehicles according to State/local requirements. If there are no State or local requirements, the location should follow the manufacturer's recommendations.

- Determine how the location performs and documents annual visual safety inspections. Verify that they promptly repair any noted repairs or problems. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 23, Vehicle Operations, Subsection "Visual Safety Inspections" and APD Policy Memorandum 221.1-06, Motor Vehicle Visual Safety Inspections, dated 11/29/00.)

- Explain how the location tracks quarterly vehicle operational and maintenance data and updates information to PROP for all transactions that occur using any other payment method other than the Voyager fleet card. This includes Government provided fuel and maintenance from an on-site facility. The Voyager fleet card automatically captures transaction data (odometer reading, number of gallons and cost of fuel, maintenance costs,) through PCMS-Fleet and feeds the information to PMIS/PROP. (See APD Policy Memorandum 221.1-05, Motor Vehicle Reporting Requirements, dated 10/11/00, and REE Manual 221.1M, Section 23, Vehicle Operations, Subsection "Reporting Operational and Maintenance Data".)

- Verify whether the location has employees that use Government vehicles for Official Home-to-Work Transportation Authority". Verify that the employee is in a job series authorized for Home-to-Work. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 22, Use of Government Vehicles, subsection "Home to Work Transportation", and Department Regulation 5400-5, Use of Government Vehicle for Home-to-Work Transportation, Appendix A, for the list of authorized job series.)

- Explain circumstances for allowing home to work transportation for employee outside the authorized job series. Ensure the Location receives Departmental approval for any other

occurrence. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 22, Use of Government Vehicles, subsection "Home to Work Transportation".)

- Employees, who are in "official travel status" and are entitled to per diem and use the Government vehicle in lieu of short-term rental, may be authorized for temporary overnight home to work because they must arrive/depart at an unusually early or late time frame. However, this is determined on a case-by-case basis. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 22, Use of Government Vehicle, subsection "Temporary Home to Work Transportation While in Travel Status.)

CARE FUNCTIONAL REVIEW
FACILITIES MANAGEMENT, CONSTRUCTION, REAL PROPERTY
AND SAFETY, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Rommy Ignacio on 301-504-1191.

3.00-1   Repair and Maintenance

- Determine if the Location annually earmarks at least 4 percent of its base funds to accomplish routine repair and maintenance (R&M) needs or has received a waiver in accordance with Agency policy. (ARMS Manual, ARS Manual 245.1, Chapter IX).

- Verify that there is regular maintenance procedures in place. Are buildings and ancillary equipment inspected on a regular basis? Ensure that the Location is consulting with the Area Engineer for identifying/prioritizing repair and maintenance needs/projects.

- Check to see if multi-year facility planning is in place. Ensure the Location's Facility Plan contained in the ARMP correlates with the annually updated ARS Facility Plan.

3.00-2   Energy Management

- Determine if the Location is integrating energy conservation into its regular operations and maintenance activities per ARS Energy Management Plan (P&P 134.2).

- When was the last energy audit performed? Have recommended energy conservation projects been implemented or included in the ARS Facility Plan? Does the ARS Facility Plan include future energy audits? Were energy projects recommended by the audits implemented?

- Ensure that Location maintains consumption records/monitors energy consumption patterns so that any possible irregularities in utilities billing or estimating procedures can be identified quickly.

3.00-3   Facility Accessibility

- Ensure Location facilities meet the needs of individuals with physical disabilities. Have professional surveys been done to assess physical accessibility needs to conform with the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS) or the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG)? Does the Location have copies of the UFAS or ADAAG?

- Are Location buildings and facilities accessible to people with disabilities?

- Is there an accessible route from the public way to building entrances?

- Are there marked parking spaces and entrances for disabled individuals?

- Are there accessible paths of travel to primary workstation, conference/training room, all purpose (gathering) areas?

- Are there accessible elevators to all floors of facility?

- Is there one accessible rest room, on each floor of facility, with proper door width; toilet stall; sink basin; path of travel?

- Are there accessible water fountains?

3.01 Architect-Engineering (A-E) Contracts

For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Regina Herchak on 301-504-1179.

3.01-1 A-E Contracts

- Determine if the Location has A-E authority? If so, what is the threshold?

- Determine if the Location obtains A-E Services. If they do, how do they acquire them?

- Determine if the Location has any concerns with A-E services provided under Area/Headquarters contracts.

3.02 Construction Contracts

- Determine if the Location has construction authority. What is the threshold?

- Determine if site visits and pre-bid conferences are conducted as described in FAR 14.207. Are uniform agendas utilized? Are the events of these meetings documented?

- Determine if large projects are being split to keep them within the Location's authority.

- Determine if the Contracting Officer has delegated any authority or responsibility to personnel at the job site. If so, was a formal letter(s) of delegation as Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) or Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (COTR) issued that clearly describes the authorities, responsibilities, and limitations in accordance with FAR Part 42.202?

- Are Davis-Bacon Act (DBA) requirements being monitored in accordance with FAR 22.4? For example, Posting of Wage determinations (FAR 22.404-10) and Submission and Review of Weekly Payroll Records (FAR 22.406-7), etc.

- Determine how payments are made under construction contracts. Are payments made monthly based on a percentage of completion, lump sum, etc

- Determine if change orders or contract modifications were executed. Were these actions documented for the file as follows:

- What was the contractual authority for the change (changes, differing site conditions, suspension of work, etc.)?

- Were these actions pre-priced or based on actual costs?

- Was the price determined fair and reasonable (FAR 13.106-3) (FAR 31.201-3)?

- Determine if contract performance periods are appropriately monitored. If completion date passes, is some action taken to reestablish the completion date?

- Are inspections conducted in accordance with FAR 46-312 and 46.1? If so, are files documented to show the results of the final inspection?

- Are contracts closed out properly (FAR 4.804)?

- Are formal written Notices to Proceed (NTP) issued to the contractor to establish the official commencement date of performance? Does the contractor sign it? Is a signed copy of the NTP maintained in the contract/purchase order file?

- Are significant discussions and/or issues documented and copies maintained in the contract/purchase order file?"

- Is the Form ARS-371, Construction Progress and Payment Schedule, (or something similar) being used for individual projects involving multiple disciplines (HVAC, plumbing, electrical, etc.), larger dollar value projects, or lengthy projects? If so, is it being reviewed by the COR and approved by the CO; and is it also being used as a means of verifying contractor invoices?

3.03   Facility Security

For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Terry Rupe on 301-504-1228.

Reference: P&P 240.3, June 2000, Physical Protection, Security and Conduct While on REE Facilities; P&P 243.4, January 2004, Issuing and Controlling ARS ID Badges.

- Ensure the Location has an Occupant Emergency Program (OEP) established and that each employee has a copy. The program should cover processes to be followed during emergencies, such as fire, explosions, bomb threats and natural disasters.

- Ensure the Location is conducting physical security surveys. Does the Location perform these in conjunction with ARS Homeland Security Office (ARSHS)?

- Identify if Location has any Physical Security Countermeasure projects planned or under consideration. If yes, are they aware of ARSHS design and review role?

- Does Location know to contact ARSHS (202.720.2452) for the following: all possible OIG investigations; vandalism to, or theft of, mission critical assets; workplace violence activities; and workplace death events.

- Does the Location maintain a current roster and call list of local and federal law enforcement contacts?

- Does the Location have any security related MOU's in place? If yes, with what agency and for what specific service?

- Is the Location aware of the ARSHS Web site [http://arsnet.usda.gov/OHS/].

- Does the Location rely on any outbound third-party security alarm monitoring and response mediums or services ? If yes, who and what type?

  Examples:

  --Door contact alarms monitored and responded to by campus police between hours of 1800 - 0700 seven days a week.

--Greenhouse temperature alarms that automatically page a location employee who decides on appropriate response.

--Burglar alarms monitored by a third-party service that notifies a pre-determined entity (campus police, local police, contract guard services, location employee, etc.).

- How often does the Location is review its security operation and administrative procedures?

- Ensure that there is some type of fire protection/prevention system (alarms, sprinklers) in place (ARS Manual 230).

- What procedures are in place for conducting annual "Emergency Disaster Drills" (ARS Manual 230)?

- Is the Location issuing ID Badges in accordance with P&P 243.3?

3.03-1   Workplace Violence

- Did the Location receive the orange "workplace violence handbook"?

- Is there a plan in place to respond to workplace violence? Do managers/employees know what to do in the event of a violent situation?

- Are employees aware of the Secretary's policy on the prevention of Workplace Violence?

3.04-1   Acquisition (Purchase, Donation, Exchange or Transfer) of Real Property

References Real Property Manual Chapter VI, August 1989 and 7 United States Code 2250(a)

- Is the Location aware that no acquisition shall be made unless provision is made in the applicable appropriation or other law? Does the Location have an accurate understanding of Agency policy regarding the acquisition of land (purchase, exchange, or otherwise), as well as non-Agricultural Research Service (ARS) construction on ARS-owned property?

- Does the Location know where to direct acquisition questions? Provide useful contact phone numbers for the Area Realty Specialist and assigned Headquarters Realty Specialist.

- Is the Location aware that the Real Property Management Branch (RPMB), 301-504-1224, should be contacted regarding all acquisitions, including gifts of real property?

- How are newly constructed facilities or capitalized improvements tracked for inputting or updating in the Corporate Property Automated Information System (CPAIS)? Is the Location forwarding its requests for the establishment of a Unique Asset Identifier for all capitalized assets to the Area Realty Specialist? Is the Location aware that copies of all prior year adjustments – for example for a capitalized structure that already exists and should have been on an inventory, but was overlooked during the last reconciliation cycle – must be forwarded through the Area Realty Specialist to the Real Property Management Branch on a monthly basis?

- Do Location files have copies of acquisition documents, including deeds, leases, transfer documents, etc.?

- Is training or guidance needed in the area of Acquisition?

3.04-2   Utilization, Accountability, and Control of Real Property

Reference: Real Property Manual Chapter IX, July 1992

- How does the Location ensure land and facilities are utilized in accordance with Agency policies?

- Is the Area Office providing copies of inventory printouts, for verification and update, every 5 years? What procedures are in place for conducting inspections of real property holdings to verify that all land, buildings and structures are accounted for and effectively used in support of mission-related activities?

- Is the Location aware that the CPAIS system will be used to capture laboratory and office space assigned to each SY? University space covered under a Memorandum of Agreement, Special/Cooperative Agreements, etc?

- Are records established and maintained with the following:
  - custodial responsibility for the real property assigned to the Location and Location worksites
  - physical inventories signed by the Accountable Property Officer along with documented recommendations for adjustments
  - identification of Historical properties/sites and related Historic Preservation Plans. Are copies provided to the Area Office and Headquarters?
  - acquisition files containing copies of short- and long-term leases, construction-related materials including "as builts" and floor plans, donation or transfer documents, and AD-107's for formal documentation for RPMIS updates, etc.
  - disposition files containing AD-107's, AD-112's, SF-118's, SF-118a,b,c's and
  - Statements of Findings--are these completed at the Location and forwarded to the Area Office for buildings and structures that are recommended for disposal?

- Are procedures in place to address encroachments on ARS lands? If an encroachment is identified or brought to the Location's attention, how is this information relayed to the attention of the Area Office's or Real Estate Warrant Officer (REWO)?

- What processes are in place to ensure construction projects are within legal limitations? Does the Location take an active role in the review process during Design/Construction? Is this coordinated with the Area Office? Does the Location coordinate with any local "Referral Agencies" that must be involved, such as planning commissions, the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), etc?

3.04-3   Leasing Real Property – Land and Space – and Agreements

References: Real Property Manual 245.1 Chapters I and VIII, August 1989; Departmental Regulation 1620-2, USDA, Space Management Policy and7 United States Code 2250(a)

- Are copies of any space or land leases, Memorandums of Understanding, Unfunded Cooperative Agreements, Supplemental Agreements, etc. on file? Are copies of these documents forwarded to the Area Realty Specialist? Agreements may cover space in non-ARS-owned buildings, land for field plots, and the construction or placement of ARS-owned buildings.

- Is the Location familiar with the requirements and restrictions of these documents and what procedures are in place for these being periodically reviewed?

- Is the Location aware that ARS may not erect buildings or other structures on non-Federal lands without first obtaining the right to use the land through a lease or other document granting realty

interest in the land for the estimated life of or need of the improvement as described in 7 U.S.C. 2250(a)?

- Has the Location made any capital improvements ($25,000 or more) to space not covered by a realty interest? Since such improvements are not permitted, if this has occurred, such actions should be immediately brought to the Area Office's attention so that a document can be prepared and executed.

- Ensure the Location is aware that Departmental Regulation 1620-2 establishes USDA policy on acquisition, management and disposition of office and related space for USDA-owned, leased and GSA-controlled space, and that all USDA agencies must comply with this regulation. The RPMB has under its direction a small group of space and building management specialists should assistance in this area be required.

- Is the Location aware that the Area has responsibility for preparing short-term leases covering 1-10 years? Does the Location provide renewal justifications in a timely manner to ensure that lease renewal notices may be sent and signed prior to expiration to prevent ARS from being in "hold over status"? Is Location aware that RPMB prepares long-term leases covering terms over 10 years?

3.04-4   Grants of Easement and Revocable Permits

References: Real Property Manual 245.1 Chapters III and IV, August 1989 and P&P 244.0-ARS, September 2003, Guidance and Instructions for the Collection and Use Fees for Revocable Permits and Easements

- How does the Location verify that easements and revocable permits are in place as required? Are these periodically reviewed to ensure renewal prior to expiration, that expired easements are vacated, etc.? How does the Location communicate their findings to the Area Office and/or REWO?

- What part does the Location play in the identification of historic properties and archeological resources that may be affected? Who is responsible for determining if there is "an undertaking" established? How does the Location coordinate requests for information and technical assistance from the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) as related to the Section 106 Process? Does the location maintain files on all consultations? Does the location forward copies to the Area Office? Is the Location familiar with the lead-time for SHPO review and consultation?

- When screening requests for easements, how does the Location ensure that the request is a case of necessity and that the land requested does not exceed what is required? Are procedures in place to ensure that rights are not granted to ARS property that would be incompatible with the proposed use or encumber use of the property? Are current and future program needs and possible conflicts considered during the review process--prior to recommending such requests?

- How are requests to occupy ARS-owned buildings or utilization of ARS facilities addressed at the Location? How does the Location ensure that a revocable permit is issued for all entities using ARS-owned/controlled space? Are inspections performed of tenant space to ensure compliance with ARS regulations?

- How are requests for the installation of antennas addressed at the Location? Are these carefully evaluated and coordinated with the REWO to ensure that requests do not impact or interfere with existing research programs, future land development plan, "Referral Agencies", human exposure limits, etc.?

- Is the Location familiar with P&P 244.0, Guidance and Instructions for the Collection and Use Fees for Revocable Permits and Easements? This is available on-line.

3.04-5   Quarters Rentals

References: Real Property Manual 245.1 Chapter V, August 1989; P&P 245.2, June 1993; Furnishings and Household Goods in ARS Controlled Living Quarters and Department of Interior Department Quarters Handbook 400 DM, June 1994

- If the Location has quarters, is the Location aware of the responsibilities regarding quarters management? Are rental fees collected used in accordance to regulations?

- Do quarters files have support documentation to demonstrate that Government living quarters for ARS employees are properly managed and accounted for? Do files at a minimum include:

    - Documentation of Consumer Price Index (CPI) adjustments
    - Copies of the most recent appraisal along with any background documentation
    - Documentation of Condition of Employment (must be reviewed every 5 years.)
    - Sampling results from any screening tests performed (i.e., lead, asbestos, mold, etc.)
    - Are lead disclosure statements provided to residents for homes constructed prior to 1970?

- Are Forms ARS-494's, ARS-4's and REE-15's prepared at the Location or Area Office? If prepared elsewhere, are they carefully reviewed for accuracy prior to having the employee who is renting the quarters sign the documents and then forwarding them to the REWO for execution?

- Does the Location bring any rental collection problems incurred to the attention of the REWO?

- Are CPI adjustments made annually? Are employees provided with a minimum of 30 days advance notice of such adjustments?

- Are the Quarters Rental Surveys and Sample Plans that are prepared by the Department of Interior reviewed to ensure that the information provided is correct, such as the nearest established community?

- How does the Location ensure the inventory and accountability of furnishings provided in quarters?

- Is a physical inspection performed of the quarters prior to occupancy and a condition report prepared and signed by the inspecting official and employee who is renting the quarters? Are periodic physical inspections performed to identify maintenance, repair and safety and health conditions that need correction? How are items identified formally documented and what tracking mechanism is in place to ensure these are corrected?

3.04-6   Disposal of Real Property

References: Real Property Manual 245.1 Chapter II, August 1989 and P&P 246.1-ARS, September 1997
- Are Locations compiling packages for real property identified as excess or recommended for disposal?
- Are Locations developing the annual protection and maintenance costs for real property assets for such expenses to be incurred during the excess/surplus/disposal process?

- Does the Location prepare AD-107's, AD-112's, SF-118's, and etc. for all disposal actions, including disposal of ARS-owned buildings with a value of $50,000 or less? Are these documents forwarded to the Area Office upon completion?

- Are the following screening surveys being addressed during the disposal process?

    - threatened and endangered species
    - hazardous building components such as lead, asbestos
    - associated underground or above ground storage tanks
    - environmental impact
    - McKinney Act
    - Section 106 review and consultation
    - site-specific requirements

- Has the Location established a working relationship with the SHPO? Does the Location have a Programmatic Agreement in place?

3.05-1 Safety, Health, and Environmental Management

For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Pete Jovanovich on 301-504-1243.

- Verify the Location had assigned personnel to manage and implement the safety, health and environmental management (SHEM) program. At a minimum, each Location must have an assigned Collateral Duty Safety Officer. Locations with 15 or more full time employees must have a Safety Committee. The Safety Committee should be representative of the Location's employees. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 17)

- Verify the Location has a written SHEM policy statement and annual program goals and objectives for eliminating and/or minimizing losses as a result of accidents/incidents involving or producing injury, illness, and property/environmental damage in the ARS workplace. (ARS Manual 230, Chapters 9, 25, 26, and 30)

- Verify funding for SHEM requirements are listed in the ARMPS. Costs for requirements in excess of $25,000 should be listed in the Procurement Plan of the ARMPS. Costs for requirements less than $25,000 may appear elsewhere in the ARMPS at the direction of the Area office. If the Location is using Hazardous Waste Cleanup (HWC) funds, those funds should be listed in the HWC High Priority Requirements List section of the ARMPS. (ARMPS Manual/Guidance and ARS P&P 230.1, Tracking Hazardous Waste Cleanup Funds)

- Verify applicable Federal, State, and local SHEM laws, regulations, codes and guidance are present in a centralized location available for reference by employees at all times. Access through the Internet is acceptable if employees are provided with Web site addresses, a knowledge and/or training on how to use this source, and access to an on-line computer at all times. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 8)

- Verify required SHEM related materials (i.e., Poster AD-1010, USDA Safety and Health poster; OSHA Form 300A, Summary of Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses; CA-10, What a Federal Employee Should Do When Injured at Work; and other local requirements) are posted on a bulletin board(s) in a conspicuous location(s) accessible to all employees. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 16)

- Verify safety, health, and environmental requirements are taken into consideration during the design and construction process. Location and/or Area SHEM personnel must review designs to ensure they meet SHEM requirements. (ARS P&P 242.2, Facilities Construction)

3.05-2   Safety, Health and Environmental Education/Training

- Verify safety, health, and environmental training is provided as part of the ARS Employee Orientation Program for new or transferred employees. (ARS Manual 230, Chapters 13, 25, 26, 28 and 29)

- Verify personnel have viewed each of the six Agency SHEM training videos, as applicable.

- Verify the Location has assessed the workplace and identified appropriate job-specific safety, health, and environmental training for all employees.

- Verify completed training is documented and kept in a centralized location. Training that has not yet been completed should be documented in the employee's Individual Development Plans (IDP), ARS Form 48. Employees should not engage in an activity until they have received appropriate training. (ARS Manual 230, Chapters 10 and 13)

- Determine if the Location has an Incentive Awards Program for recognizing SHEM performance. While not required, many Locations use such methods to encourage participation in SHEM programs. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 14)

3.05-3   Safety Management

- Verify the Location provides written notification of potentially hazardous conditions to employees. Management must inform employees about any workplace hazards. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 25).

- Verify that the Location has a comprehensive SHEM Inspection Program using ARS Form 404, or equivalent. Inspections must be conducted annually and reports kept on file for five years. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 21)

- Verify the Location has a comprehensive SHEM Abatement Program to correct deficiencies identified by employees and during annual inspections. Check to verify deficiencies are abated within 30 calendar days. If a deficiency was not abated within 30 calendar days, check to verify the facility developed a written abatement plan with milestones as well as interim steps to protect employees from injury as a result of the unsafe or unhealthful working condition. All abatement activity documentation must be present in a centralized location available for reference by all employees. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 21)

- Verify the Location has an Accident/Incident Investigation and Reporting Program in place (i.e., the Location must have a file for accident reports and the ensuing investigations.) Ensure the Location has documented the measures taken to prevent recurrence of accidents/incidents. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 19)

3.05-4 Industrial Hygiene

- Determine if the location has conducted an industrial hygiene baseline survey to identify hazards in the workforce (i.e., Locations are required to establish baseline surveys by June 2005). (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 33)

- If chemical, biological, or radiological agents are used, verify the Location has a written Hazard Communication Program and Chemical Hygiene Plan; and, that training has been provided for these programs. (ARS Manual 230, Chapters 13, 25, and 26)

- Verify the Location maintains an inventory of chemical, biological, or radiological agents, and that the inventory is updated at least annually. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 25)

- Verify that Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) are retained and that they are orderly and easily assessable to employees who need them. MSDS are required for all materials that may be harmful to humans such as laboratory chemicals, pesticides, insecticides, cleaning agents, biological agents, radiological agents, etc. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 25)

- Verify all hazardous areas and areas containing hazardous materials (i.e. chemical, biological, and radiological agents) are clearly posted and secured. (ARS Manual 230, Chapters 25 and 29)

- Verify applicable Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is available and its use mandated. Each employee's immediate supervisor is responsible for:

  - assessing the need for PPE;
  - providing appropriate PPE to employees;
  - developing standard operating procedures for PPE;
  - training employees on proper use and care; and
  - ensuring that employees utilize the equipment.
    (ARS Manual 230, Chapters 21 and 30)

- Verify that first aid is available on all shifts. In the absence of professional medical attention in near proximity to the workplace (i.e., 3-4 minutes), verify the Location has a person(s) trained to render first aid and has adequate first aid supplies. (OSHA Standard 29 CFR 1910.151 and ANSI Standard Z308.1)

3.05-5   Environmental Management

- Determine if the Location has established an Environmental Management System (EMS) coordinator and is working on developing a Location EMS (i.e., all Locations must have an EMS in place by December 31, 2005). (E.O. 13148, Greening the Government Through Leadership in Environmental Management)

- Verify the Location considers safety, health, and the environment in its procurement practices. Specifically, the Location should have procedures for reviewing AD-700's for hazardous substances to determine if:

  - materials are already in stock and available;
  - less hazardous substance can be substituted; and
  - minimal quantities are being ordered.
    (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 52)

- Verify the Location has procedures for determining if a waste is a regulated hazardous waste as well as for the satellite accumulation of hazardous wastes. Verify that personnel who generate hazardous waste have been trained on these procedures. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 45)

- Verify the Location maintains records on the quantity and types of hazardous waste generated each month. The Location utilizes this information to determine and document their generator classification (i.e. conditionally exempt small quantity, small quantity, and large quantity). (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 46)

- Verify the Location has filed EPA Form 8700-12, "Notification of Hazardous Waste Activity", with the EPA or State, if applicable. The EPA does not require conditionally exempt small generators to file, however, the State may require the Location to file. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 46)

- Verify the Location has written procedures for the temporary storage of hazardous wastes including management, handling, and disposal. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 46)

- Determine if the Location maintains a log of hazardous wastes inspections. Weekly inspections of hazardous waste storage areas must be conducted for large quantity generators. Small quantity and conditionally exempt small quantity generators are not required to perform such inspections but are encouraged to do so. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 46)

- Verify Hazardous Waste Manifests are on file and orderly (a returned signed copy from the disposal or treatment facility receiving the waste is required). Locations that utilize University resources to dispose of waste are responsible only for documenting the types and quantities of waste (i.e., copies of manifests are not required). (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 46)

For information on interpretation or clarification of the functional questions, please call the contact person whose name and phone number is shown next to each section.

4.01   <u>Employment</u> (Sue Hamilton, 301-504-1398)

- Verify the Location's procedures for receipt of applications. All applications should be either date-stamped or the date of receipt of the application should be notated in ink.

  Applications for permanent employment (competitive service): These applications must either be forwarded immediately to the servicing Branch, HRD, for response or the Location must return the application by letter informing the applicant to apply for permanent positions in response to specific vacancy announcements. These vacancies are advertised on the OPM and HRD Web sites. Verify that the Location does not retain any applications for permanent employment.

  Applications for L/A and Student Positions (excepted service positions): If the LAO has delegated employment authority, applications for L/A and student positions (nonpermanent positions in the excepted service) may be circulated. Verify that the Location does not keep applications on file and gives "veterans preference," if applicable, to applicants.

  Applications for Postdoctoral positions (excepted service positions): may be submitted to the scientist who is the mentor for the position and may be retained until a selection is made. Verify that the Location gives "veterans preference," if applicable, to applicants.

- Verify that the Location obtains proof of enrollment in school on a full- time or part- time basis from employees on student appointments.

  This can be done by requesting a copy of transcripts once or twice per year, or by requesting verification of enrollment through the registrar's office. Note: If a student stops going to school at least on a half-time basis as defined by the institution, the Location should initiate an SF 52 to terminate the appointment. [Reference P&P 413.8, Student & Volunteer Programs.]

- If volunteers are used at the Location, verify they have signed agreements, which are on file and records of service are being maintained. This includes documentation of days and number of hours worked. [Reference P&P 413.8, Student & Volunteer Programs.]

- Verify HRD has approved the content of employment ads (paid and free) for recruitment. [Purchase order files should contain the necessary approvals. Reference PPD Memorandum, Approval of Paid Advertisements, dated June 8, 1995.]

Note: Paid ads must be reviewed by the servicing HR specialist to ensure USDA and ARS are featured prominently as the employer; the correct salary range is listed; the type of appointment is shown, and the EEO/CR statement is included.

- Verify employee paper records are safeguarded in locked file cabinets with restricted access. Records should contain only current documents necessary to the function of the office.

Note: there should be no attempt to duplicate an Official Personnel Folder. No information other than "public information" (i.e., Name, Title, Pay Plan, Series, Grade, Pay Rate and Duty Location) may be released without the employee's consent. [Reference P&P 158.1, Freedom of Information Act and Privacy Act Guidelines and P&P 411.7, Releasing Information About REE Employees.]

- Verify the Location understands when an SF-52 should be prepared, i.e., name changes, position redescriptions, reassignment of employees to another management unit, etc. Verify details of employees (those who are detailed to other positions for more than 30 days) are being documented with an SF-52. [Reference HRD Web site, Preparing Requests for Personnel Actions.]

4.02   Time and Attendance (Denise Corbitt, 301-504-1443)

- Verify all employees (with the exception of intermittent who should not have a regular work schedule) have an established tour of duty approved by the supervisor, (example REE-331).

- Verify employees and timekeepers are initialing and that supervisors are signing each T&A, unless determined to be impracticable.

- Verify all credit and/or compensatory time is being recorded on T&A's. Credit hours are initiated by the employee versus compensatory time, which is ordered/required by the supervisor. Compensatory time cannot be forced on an employee earning less than GS-10, step 10 or if these employees are non-exempt from FLSA. These employees, however, may decide to accept compensatory time in lieu of overtime. If so, the statement on the bottom of time sheet should be initialed by both the employee and the supervisor.

- Verify that credit hours accrued (especially on Saturdays and Sundays) were worked on the employee's own initiative. If the work was assigned/ordered/directed/etc., by management, the hours worked must be recorded as overtime or compensatory time, not credit hours. See bullet item above.

- Review T&A information for leave used under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and Sick Leave Usage for Family Care, Adoption and Bereavement as follows:

  - FLMA is an entitlement for up to 12 weeks of Leave Without Pay (LWOP) (annual and/or sick leave may be substituted as appropriate) during any 12 month period to care for a family member. LWOP is coded as Transaction Code (TC) 71 for processing and all time must be maintained in a cumulative manual or automated record.

  - Sick Leave for Family Care and Bereavement: Sick leave provision allows employees to use up to 480 hours of sick leave for serious medical conditions (prorated for part time employees) each leave year as long as the employee maintains a sick leave balance of at least 80 hours for care of a family member or for bereavement. An employee can use up to 40 hours of sick leave for this same purpose without having to maintain a balance of 80 hours. TC 62 (sick leave used) with the prefix 62 Sick Leave for Family Care is used for time and attendance processing. A maximum of 104 hours of family sick leave can be used for non-serious medical situations. The total amount of family sick leave, both serious, and non-serious combined, cannot exceed 480 hours in a leave year. Only 40 hours may be advanced for sick leave for family care.

- Verify in the T&A records for callback overtime work situations. If an employee is called back to work unexpectedly for additional duty later in the workday or on a day that was not originally scheduled as a workday, overtime is credited for a minimum of 2 hours – whether 1 minute or 2 hours is actually worked. After the first 2 hours the individual would earn overtime as it was actually worked. [Reference P&P 402.3, Premium Pay.]

- Check to see if any employees are listed on the NFC TIME 4004 Report, also known as the CULPRT 0152 or Leave Error Report. If so, verify an AD-717, Leave Audit, has been completed to resolve the leave error. **Note:** Leave reconciliation/audits must be conducted when an employee has a discrepancy in leave balances between the NFC database and the STAR database.

- All Leave audits must be prepared from ARS-331's – not from the system printouts. To certify correctness of an audit, the ORIGINAL SIGNATURE of audited employee's supervisor along with DATE is required on all audits (AD-717). The Supervisor's signature on the leave audit certifies correctness of the audit consistent with their personal knowledge. Leave audits should also indicate the name of the audit preparer (normally the timekeeper) and her/his phone number. An accurate leave audit includes explanatory notes as necessary. Leave audits should start with pay period 01 or the first pay period of a new employee; through the last pay period which was paid/separates.

- Verify certified T&A reports and the supporting documentation are being retained for 6 years [Reference NFC Procedures: Title I, Payroll/Personnel Manual, Chapter 7, Time Procedures, Section 1, Time and Attendance Instructions, dated 3/02.]

4.03   Pay and Leave (Denise Corbitt, 301-504-1443)

- Review that employees and supervisors understand the differences between overtime, compensatory time in lieu of paid overtime (work required by management) and credit time (work initiated by the employee) as follows:

   Overtime worked and compensatory time in lieu of paid overtime must: Exceed 8 hours in a day or 40 hours in a week; and

      1) be officially ordered or approved (employees cannot approve their own overtime);
      2) be actually performed by an employee;
      3) be documented in writing in the documentation attached to the
         T&A log;

- Credit hours are hours worked in excess of an employee's basic work requirement, 1) the employee elects to work and the supervisor approves so as to vary the length of the workweek or a workday, 2) used before they are earned, 3) cannot be earned on a holiday during the hours that correspond to the employee's regularly scheduled hours for that day and 4) cannot be earned by intermittent employees. [Reference P&P 402.3, Premium Pay, and P&P 402.1, Flexible Work Schedules.]

- Verify that supervisors/employees understand the administration of leave as follows:

   - administrative leave (which is usually applied uniformly in an organization);

   - advanced sick leave advanced annual leave must be requested with justification.

- Advancing of sick leave for an employee is limited to 240 hours. Note: Employees with NTE dates are eligible for advance annual or sick leave not-to-exceed the amount of annual or sick leave they will earn in the remaining period of employment. (Prorated for PT.) Advancing sick leave is limited to up to 40 hours if used to care for family members.

4.04   Performance Management (Helene Saylor, 301-504-1432, Reference the HRD Web site - topic "Performance Management")

Review a sampling of performance plans and appraisals for the following:

- Verify performance plans are in place and annual ratings of record are being conducted for covered employees,

- Verify employees are covered under the correct rating cycle (i.e. December 31 or March 31),

- Verify that performance plans are current, and accurate and relevant to the position,

- Verify there are three, but not more than 10 elements, of which one must be critical, but not all,

- Verify a separate critical element addressing EEO/CR is included in each supervisor's performance plans. (Positions classified as supervisor usually include the term Supervisory, Supervisor, Manager, Officer, or Administrator in the title.),

- Verify EEO/CR objectives are incorporated in a critical element (typically communications/customer service) in each non-supervisor's performance plan,

- Verify plans include a critical element (not a separate critical element) addressing supervisory responsibility,

- Verify plans include a health and safety element where job related or required by the Area,

- Verify OSQR objectives are addressed in Category 1 and Category 4 scientist plans,

- Verify midyear reviews are conducted and documented,

- Verify performance plans have been in place at least 90 days before an employee has been rated and that annual performance ratings are completed within established time frames (within 90 days of the end of the rating cycle or within time frames prescribed by a labor management agreement) and,

- Verify performance plans and annual appraisals are reviewed and approved by a person at a higher organizational level than that of the rating official.

4.05   Awards (Helene Saylor, 301-504-1432, Reference the HRD Web site - topic "Awards")

By sampling of awards and discussions with Location employees, review for the following:

- Verify the incentive awards program, including Spot and Time-Off awards as well as Non-Monetary awards, is being used at the Location,
- Verify performance awards are being submitted in a timely manner, specifically time to the period of award coverage. (Performance awards should be given within 60-90 days of end of the appraisal period),

- Verify AD-287 forms are signed with two levels of approval. (AD-287 forms must have the signatures of the recommending individual and the approving official),

- Verify awards are approved at a management level higher than that of the recommending individual,

- Verify the ARS delegation of authority for approval of awards or any other Area approval policy is being followed,

- Verify true accomplishments and achievements area being recognized,

- Verify through discussions with the LAO: Is there a pattern in the approval of awards? Are the same employees receiving them all the time? Are only higher graded employees receiving awards? Are there unusual differences in the amounts of the awards among awardees?

- Verify employees, managers, supervisors, and teams/groups are recognized for demonstrating superior equal employment opportunity accomplishments,

- Verify AD-287 forms are being initiated and sent to HRD for Spot Awards. (Ensure that convenience checks are no longer being used for the spot awards payments), and

- Verify written justifications are attached to AD-287 forms for awards over $500 and for Time-Off Awards over 10 hours.

4.06   Training   (Marianne Plumb, 301 504-1470)

- Review a sampling of Individual Development Plans (IDPs), which are required by the Agency. Determine if the IDP is a joint effort on the part of the supervisor and employee and if it is updated annually. [Reference P&P 440.1, Employee Training and Development.]

- Review the employee orientation procedures followed at the Location. Reference P&P 412.2, Appointment and Orientation of New Employees and the New Employee Orientation Program Guide. Ensure that each orientation package includes:

  1. A copy of "Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch" and "Employee Responsibilities and Conduct"
  2. The USDA Handbook on "Workplace Violence Prevention and Response"
  3. A copy of the publication, "Handling Diversity in the Workplace."
  4. A copy of the publication, "Sexual Harassment"

Note: New researchers and research supervisors should be properly oriented to the Research Position Evaluation System (RPES). Verify they been instructed to bookmark the RPES Home Page (http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/rpes/) and been shown the 3-part video series.

4.07   Position Description/Management   (Tina Voglesong, 301-504-1407)

- Verify supervisors understand their responsibility for assigning work and for certifying to the accuracy of the position description. Do they know whom to call with questions on writing position descriptions, requesting desk audits, and on appeal procedures? [P&P 431.1, Position Management and Position Classification, 10/02/02]

- Verify the Locations are maintaining the official position description copies certified by Headquarters, and all employees have position descriptions that reflect current duties and responsibilities. Verify collateral duty statements contained in position descriptions when appropriate. (Collateral duties should be identified in position descriptions if they are regular and recurring.) [P&P 431.1, Position Management and Position Classification, 10/02/02]

4.08   Employee Relations   (Employee Relations, Kathleen Antonelli, 301- 504-1418)
           (Ethics, Sue Mutchler, 301 504-1442)

- Verify supervisors, managers and employees understand procedures for addressing conduct and performance issues. Are supervisors aware that the authority to propose and to decide conduct and performance actions has been delegated to the Area?

- Verify the Location follows the USDA Supplemental Standards of Ethical Conduct regarding the prior approval requirement for outside employment or activities for those employees required to file either a public or confidential financial disclosure report (SF-278 or OGE Form 450). Employees seeking to engage in employment/activities for which advance approval is required shall submit form REE-101 to their immediate supervisor and REE Ethics Advisor for approval.

- Verify Ethics Advisor contacts (names and phone numbers) are either posted or readily available to all employees, and are updated at least annually.

4.09   Other

           (Exit Clearance Procedures, Bill Duggan, 202-720-7638)
           (Occupational Medical Surveillance Program, Ann Lucas, 301-504-1487)

- Determine if there are any problems with retirement/separation procedures. [Reference P&P 426.1, Employee Exit Clearance Procedures, October 22, 1998.] Specifically,

    (1)Verify AD-581's for lump sum payments are forwarded for processing within 2 weeks of the employee's last day of work;

    (2)Verify all separating employees are given an SF 8 and a copy of the separating employee's SF 52 is faxed to the Frick Company.

- Determine if the Occupational Medical Surveillance Program (OMSP) is being utilized at the Location? (Employee participation is not required but should be encouraged). Are OMSP results of employee medical examinations being forwarded to the Medical Review Officer (USPHS-DFOH) by the local provider? (P&P 235.0-ARS, ARS Occupational Medial Surveillance Program, April 3, 2002)

CARE FUNCTIONAL REVIEW
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ACTIVITIES

Additional information on the subjects in this section can be found at the Information Technology Division (ITD) homepage: http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/divisions/itd/

5.01   AFM Systems (For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Doug Page on 301-504-1121.)

• Is the Location experiencing any problems updating information in the REE Directory?

   The REE Directory contains information on all ARS employees. Each Location should verify personnel and locator information on http://isbprod.ars.usda.gov/dir2/viewemp$.startup and submit needed updates. Contact the ITS for assistance.

5.02   Voice/Data/Video Telecommunications (For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Dave Chab, ARS/OCIO/Infrastructure Branch on 301-504-4843.)

• Has the Location received approval from its Area Information Technology Specialist (AITS) and Brenda Katulski, the ARS Telecommunications Mission Area Control Officer (TMACO), before ordering dedicated telecommunications equipment or services per the REE Centralized Telecommunications Management Plan (CTMP) dated 4-30-97 and the USDA Telecommunications Network Stabilization and Migration Program (TNSMP)) dated 4-4-97 and USDA DR-3300-1 dated 20-96.

   Per Departmental policy (DR 3300-1 and TNSMP) dedicated telecommunications purchases, regardless of dollar value or source, are subject to strict planning and procurement processes. Dedicated telecommunications includes routers, servers, switches, hubs, multiplexers, PBXs, KSUs, video equipment, certain kinds of wireless equipment (not cell phones or pagers), circuits, network management contracts, etc. used for long distance data, voice, and/or video. Review dedicated telecommunications purchases to ensure that there is documentation that the AITS and the ARS TMACO have approved the purchases.

• Per USDA CIO's memo dated 2-01, the USDA CIO via a waiver request prior to purchasing must approve dedicated telecommunications purchases over $25,000. The location should submit the waiver request to the ARS TMACO who will review and forward to Gary Rich, the ARS Waiver Liaison to the Department. Gary will review and then forward to the USDA's Chief Information Officer for approval. Review dedicated telecommunications purchases over $25,000 to ensure that a waiver request was submitted and approved per this policy.

• Does the Location share telecommunications services and equipment with other USDA sites?

   Departmental policy (DR 3300-1 and the TNSMP) requires Locations to evaluate sharing services and equipment with other USDA agencies and to share when it is:

   1. Cost-effective (includes one-time and ongoing costs),
   2. Functionally effective (includes security and administrative support), and
   3. The agencies are sharing the same city, building, or campus of buildings. (Clarification: If two organizations are in the same city, a local circuit can be run between them to allow only one MCI circuit to the Departmental IAN.)

• Location should work with its AITS and the ARS TMACO to evaluate sharing services and equipment where feasible. Ask the location whether they are to be co-located with another

USDA agency and whether they consider sharing telecommunications services and equipment ith them.

- Does the Location use GSA's FTS2001 contract for intraLATA (also called "local toll;") interLATA (also called " long distance"); and international voice, data, and video telecommunications services? If not, does it have an approved exception from the ARS TMACO?

  Departmental policy requires that the FTS2001 contract be used for these services. However, some Locations may not be able to comply with some provisions of this requirement because they are using university or state services that are mandatory for that Location. Ask to review any telephone bills to see whether they are being billed for local toll, long distance, and/or international calls via another vendor (not MCI's FTS2001).

  The CARE Team should note exceptions in the report with the reason the Location is not using the FTS2001 contract.

- Has the Location consulted the GSA Federal Wireless Contract prior to acquiring cellular or pager services or the FTS2001 contract to acquire pager service?

  The GSA Federal Wireless and the GSA FTS2001 contracts are not mandatory for these services but Locations are required to compare these contracts prior to ordering equipment or service elsewhere. Contact the Area Office and the ARS/OCIO/Infrastructure Branch for further information and cost-benefit analysis support.

- Does the location to use radio frequencies? If so, are they authorized the National Telecommunications Information Administration (NTIA) radio frequencies? If yes, has the radio, telemetry or Global Positioning System (GPS) equipment been certified for narrow banding? If no, when does the Location plan to replace/upgrade this equipment? (Contact person: Maureen Harris, 301-504-1077)

  If the Location uses radios, telemetry*, or GPS equipment to transmit data*, it must have authorization for a Government radio frequency on file (per USDA DR 3300-1 and ARS Directive 260.1 (being revised)).

  Due to the upcoming mandatory transition to narrowband, the NTIA has instituted a program whereby all Government agencies that operate land mobile radio systems in the 162-174 MHz (VHF) and 406-420 MHz (UHF) frequency bands will convert from the present 25 KHz channel spacing to 12.5 KHz channel spacing by January 1, 2005 and January 1, 2008 respectively. Come these dates, the equipment must be able to operate at 12.5 KHz (narrowband) on either side of the assigned frequency. (Any equipment purchased after 1995 should already meet these requirements.)

  After receipt of a request for a frequency assignment, the REE Frequency Manager is responsible for requesting a Radio Frequency Authorization (RFA) from the National Telecommunications Information Administration (NTIA). Prior to using the radio frequency, a Location must have the Radio Frequency Authorization (RFA) in hand. Ideally, the Location should be have the RFA prior to purchasing equipment. NOTE: Requests for new radio frequency assignments take at least six months, and often much longer. So planning is important.

  Locations may not use non-Government (FCC) frequencies, such as those utilized by radios purchased from Radio Shack. Use of non-Government (FCC) radio frequencies that are licensed

to local public safety or university organizations is allowed ONLY with a mutually-approved arrangement. As part of this arrangement, the Government agency must obtain, from the non-Government licensee, written certification that the Government operation of these radios is necessary. A copy of this certification should be forwarded to the REE Frequency Manager.

In accordance with NTIA and USDA directives, all RFAs must be reviewed every five years from original approval or modification so that frequencies no longer required can be released for use elsewhere. The Radio Frequency Manager is in charge of this review and will contact locations when respective RFAs are due for review.

*Examples of telemetry and GPS equipment: transmitters on bugs or cows sending information to data collection systems; wireless hydrologic measurement tools; GPS systems on tractors; weather condition measurement tools sending information back to a central collection point using wireless modems.

Please ensure Location has RFAs in their possession for any equipment they operate as listed above.

- Does the Location have a need for secure telephone/fax or GETS cards? If yes, does the person/persons who would have access to the secure phone/fax have appropriate security clearances? Are these items secured according to regulation?

  These communications options are used primarily in a COOP situation. While most locations would have no need for such items, there may be some locations/persons (i.e., BSL-3 labs, top Area Administration) that would find them beneficial for continuity of operations in an emergency situation. DR3300-1, Appendices D and J define the requirements for National security and emergency preparedness telecommunications. Contact the Area Office or Maureen Harris (301-504-1088) for assistance.

- Has the acquisition of two-way video equipment been approved by the USDA Chief Information Officer (CIO)?

  USDA DR 3300-1 Appendix E requires Locations to consider sharing existing Federal Government video facilities before acquiring new equipment. If there is already equipment at a Location, but sharing is not feasible, the Location must send a proposal through the APMO and ITD to the USDA/OCIO for approval. Specific procedures are outlined in Appendix E.

  Additional information regarding the subjects in this section can be found at the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) Cyber Security homepage:

5.03   <u>Information Systems Security</u> (For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Bill Keen on 301-504-1072).

- Has a Security Point of Contact been assigned at the Location?

   P&P 253.3, "ARS Information Systems Security Program", states that a Security Point of Contact must be assigned at each ARS Location by the Area Administrative Officers, with the assistance from Location Coordinators.

   The Security Point of contact serves as primary security liaison with the Area Information Technology Specialist (AITS)/Deputy Security Officer and the Headquarters Information System Security Program Manager (ISSPM).

- Does a warning banner appear prior to system LOGON in order to provide fair notice on proper use to those attempting to access USDA systems and networks?

   Department Policy CS-017 - "Required Language for Agency Warning Banners" provides guidance on implementing language requirements concerning Warning Banners for those accessing government networks and systems. The policy and exact wording to use can be found on URL: http://www.ocionet.usda.gov/ocio/cyber_sec/policy.html
   Note: This Web site can only be accessed via a USDA assigned IP address; therefore, ARS employees at a University Location will need to contact the OCIO/Infrastructure Branch (301-504-4843) for access via VPN.

- Has information about the Security Point of Contact been provided to the Agency ISSPM and if so, is it current?

   The ARS Office of the Chief Information Officer (CIO) keeps a current file of all after duty security Points of Contact in the event a security incident occurs after hours. The following information can be electronically sent to bkeen@ars.usda.gov:

   - Name of contact(s)
   - Work number
   - After hours number
   - Pager (if applicable)
   - Cell number (if applicable)
   - E-mail address
   - Platforms: Server/PC type, software, html editor
   - Operating system and version
   - Internet Protocol (IP) addresses

- Does the Location access the Internet through the USDA Internet Access Network (IAN) or another approved means?

If Internet access is through any means other than the IAN, such as a commercial Internet Service Provider (ISP) or university, USDA/Department Regulation "DR3140-002 USDA Internet Security Policy," requires a technical waiver be obtained. The waiver request must be submitted through the AITS to the OCIO for approval. Contact the AITS for assistance.

- If the Location accesses the Internet through a method other than the USDA IAN, what security measures are in place to protect information resources from the Internet?

- If the Location is using a local provider or university there is a good chance they will not know what security measures are in place. If this is the case please note this in the final report. If they do know of any security measures please also note in the final report. Department Manual, DM3525-001 "USDA Internet Access Security for Private Internet Service Providers", establishes minimum security requirements to ensure adequate protections are in place to protect USDA data from tampering, break in, and disruption.
  http://www.ocio.usda.gov/directives/files/dm/DM3525-001.htm

  Note: This Web site can only be accessed via a USDA assigned IP address; therefore, ARS employees at a University Location will need to contact the OCIO/Infrastructure Branch (301-504-4843) for access via VPN.

- Has a security plan been developed for each general support system and major application within the Location and submitted to the ARS Office of the Chief Information Officer?

  P&P 253.3, "ARS Information Systems Security Program" requires Locations to update and submit an annual security plan. The guideline for developing ARS Information Systems Security Plans is entitled "User Guide for Developing and Evaluation Security Plans for Unclassified Federal Automated Information Systems," (the guideline) Draft Version 6.03, dated July 18, 1997."

  This guideline and templates can be found on the OCIO Cyber Security Home Page located at http://www.arsnet.usda.gov/ocio_intra/cybersecurity/secplanGT.html

  Security plans are due to the ARS Office of the Chief Information Officer (CIO) on April 15 of each year.

- Does the Location have a completed self-assessment using NIST 800-26 for each of these systems?

  Both the Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA), Public Law 107-347 and OMB Circular A-130, Appendix III, Security of Federal Automated Information Resources require that all Federal Government Information Technology Systems be certified and accredited every 3 years and self assessments be completed annually.

- If a Location's information technology is managed by a university, is there some type of Agreement in place? (i.e. Memorandum of Agreement or Understanding ((MOA))((MOU))/Interconnection Security Agreement/Research Support Agreement ((RSA))/Service Level Agreement)? (A template is being developed by the OCIO – Lisa Upton.)

  Any Agency system that maintains and processes sensitive information is required by the USDA OIG to establish some type of agreement to protect the security interests of that system.

  Does the Location follow best or notable IT security practices?

The *Security Best Practices Memo,* developed by the ARS CIO's office, identifies specific rules and responsibilities applicable to all Agency system users. This document can be found at: http://www.arsnet.usda.gov/ocio_intra/cybersecurity/policy.html

- Does the Location follow the Agency's security incident procedures?

  Procedures developed by the ARS CIO's office identify the steps and actions to be taken by systems administrators when a security incident occurs.

- Do employees know how to report or recognize misuses of IT resources as stated in P&P 253.4, "Use of Information Technology Resources," dated 09/03/99?

- Is the Location ensuring that terminated/transferred employees no longer have access to IT Resources (such as the network or NFC) as outlined in P&P 426.1, "Employee Exit Clearance Procedures," dated 10/22/98?

5.04   Information Collection from the Public (For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Yvette Anderson on 202-720-4030.)

- Obtains OMB approval for the location before conducting surveys to the public.

  The Paperwork Reduction Act and OMB regulations require advance OMB approval before collecting information from 10 or more persons outside the Federal Government. This includes questionnaires, surveys, and applications for services, regardless of the media. For example, Web sites are now used to gather information. For further information and assistance, first contact the Area Office, then the Information Collection Officer in OCIO-CSB.

5.05   Records Management (For information on the interpretation or clarification of the functional questions in this section, please contact Steve Pollard on 202-720-3359.)

- Does the Location establish, maintain, protect, and dispose of records according to current NARA and Departmental and Agency policies?

  According to ARS P&P 251.8 (http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/ppweb/), "Documentary materials created or received (by the REE agencies of USDA) in pursuance of Federal law or in connection with the transaction of public business are records and the property of the U.S. Government. They must not be removed from agency custody or destroyed without the approval of NARA. Employees may dispose of records, **regardless of media**, only in accordance with the General Records Schedules (GRS) or a NARA-approved records control schedule for the agency…" Schedules contain NARA-approved retention periods and instructions on what to do with records when they are no longer needed to conduct Agency business."

- Does the Location retire or transfer eligible records to a Regional Records Facility?

  Instructions for retiring/transferring records are contained in Manual 251.8. To determine which facility services the Location, staff should first contact their Area Office for advice and assistance, and then visit the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) Web site http://www.archives.gov/facilities/index.html, or contact Steve Pollard, the REE Records Management Officer.

- Does the Location have records that would be categorized as "National Security Classified," "Secret," or "Top Secret?" If so, are they maintained in accordance with Departmental Manual

DM-3440-1? Contact the Area Office, or call Steve Pollard, the REE Classified Material Officer, for further assistance.

5.06   Policy and Procedures Management (For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Jackie Sharp-Hendrix on 202-720-5507.)

See http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/ppweb/ for information on this subject. For information about the REE Administrative Issuances system, consult P&P 010, "The REE Administrative Issuances System," dated May 25, 1999. When new issuances are added to the P&P Web site or when major changes are made to issuances, the REE Issuances Manager will notify ARS Areas and LAOs via e-mail.

- Is the Location using the latest version of administrative issuances that are on the P&P Web site? If not, why not? Are these issuances in a format that are usable to the Location? If the Location is using issuances that have been canceled or replaced, list the number, title, and date of these issuances, as well as the reason. This will be used to help rewrite existing issuances so that they will better serve the organization.

5.07   Printed Forms (For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Yvette Anderson on 202-720-4030.)

- Is the Location encountering any problems ordering forms from the Beltsville Services Center, Beltsville, Maryland?

Any Location needing paper copies of forms can order them from the Beltsville Service Center, Beltsville Maryland. These orders may be placed either via a paper copy of AD-14 or CFPDC-1, or through the electronic ordering system. Locations should contact their Area Offices for more information.

- Are printed envelopes or letterhead ordered?

Offices that have a need for letterhead design, envelope design, etc. should contact the representative for their Location. (ARS P&P 256.2, "Printed Letterhead, Envelopes, Postcards, Mailing Labels", dated 1/11/94.)

5.08   Mail and Messenger Services (For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Yvette Anderson on 202-720-4030.)

See http://pe.usps.gov/text/DMM/P030.htm and http://pe.usps.gov/text/qsg/q024.htm for further information.

- Does the Location maintain accountability records of the postage meter activity?

If the Location is metering its own mail, ARS P&P 263.3, dated 4/2/91, and the US Postal Service (USPS) require manual or automated accountability records of postage meter activity. Either PS Form 3602-A, "Daily Record of Meter Register Readings," or an in-house automated system should be used. Accountability records must be maintained for six years before disposition in accordance with the General Records Schedule.

- Does the Location properly secure the postage meter?

- Is the postage meter inspected according to postal regulations (see above Web sites for table)?

5.09   IT Resource Planning

- Verify that the unit ARMP includes IT purchases planned and required for the fiscal year, including hardware/software replacements and purchases, dedicated telecommunications acquisitions (circuits, routers, telephone systems), maintenance and support contracts, Web-page development and support, etc.

  The Location is required to forecast planned acquisitions of dedicated telecommunications services and equipment in its annual ARMP package (see Administrator's ARMP kickoff letter). Due to special Departmental mandates for telecommunications, all such equipment, regardless of cost, must be included in the forecast. Review the Location's last ARMP package to see if any dedicated telecommunications services and equipment were forecasted and make a note of that on the report.

5.10   Telecommunications Billing and NFC

- Does the location pay for recurring local telecommunications service bills through the TELE or FTSP system at the National Finance Center (NFC)?

- Are non-recurring telecommunications equipment and services being procured and paid for through the NFC PRCH payment method if over $350?

  Per Bulletin 03-001 dated 11-24-03 and AGAR Advisory 58 dated 10-3-03 regarding telecommunications purchases, purchase cards can only be used to purchase telecommunications equipment under $350 unless the purchase is necessitated by an emergency as defined in the bulletin and the advisory. All non-recurring telecommunications equipment over $350 must be purchased with a purchase order. And all recurring telecommunications services must be paid with a TELE account created via TUMS (for commercial services) or FTSP (for GSA telephone lines and FTS2001). Telecommunications purchases necessitated by an emergency must be documented and forwarded to the ARS TMACO per the bulletin instructions for approval or disapproval. Check purchase card transactions and purchase orders for compliance of this policy. If a purchase card was used for an emergency purpose, check to ensure that the ARS TMACO was notified and approved the emergency transaction.

- Does the location review and update its TELE accounts via TUMS at least annually to make sure the account information is accurate – such as the T&A contact point, the service location address, the service and toll dollar limits, etc.? Does the location cancel TELE accounts via TUMS that are no longer active?

  TUMS access is via www.nfc.usda.gov and requires a user id and password. Nicole Oliver-Coleman, the ARS NFC Security Officer, should be contacted at 301-504-1074 to obtain a user id and password if needed. TELE accounts should be monitored via TUMS to ensure that agencies know what NFC is paying on these accounts every month and to ensure that NFC has a current contact person if they have a billing question regarding one of these accounts.

- If the location has GSA telephone lines, does it review it's GSA TOPS account monthly to ensure that the telephone line inventory and billing are correct?
  The NFC FTSP payment system is for GSA services provided through the Federal Telecommunication Service (FTS) consolidated switch sites, which are usually located in a Federal building – but not always. The GSA TOPS system may be used for verification of services and billing. It can also be used to track GSA orders. The ARS TMACO, Brenda Katulski, must approve access to TOPS.

5.11   Web Sites (For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Pete Lombardo on 301-504-1073.)

- Does the location have a public-facing Web site?

  Provide the following information for the Location's public-facing Web site(s): If more than one public-facing Web site, please duplicate requested information.

  Web Site Base URL:

  – Responsible location (and Mode Code):
  – Is this the primary organizational site for this location?
  – Primary contact(s):
          Name:
          E-mail address:
  – Technology/Platforms (such as Server-side Includes, ASP, JSP or ColdFusion):
  – Key Word Phrases (such as "Children Nutrition"):

- Is the Web site compliant with USDA regulations?

  USDA Directive "Home Page Development and Maintenance" DR3430-001 can be found at http://www.usda.gov/directives/files/dr/DR3430-001.htm. Particular attention should be paid to Accessibility in accordance with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act.

- Does the location make best use out of existing Web/Internet communication services, rather than duplicating them?

  The ARS Web Site presents information on all ARS employees as well as all research projects, locations, publications, and patents approved for public disclosure. The data for these come from the ARIS and REE Directory databases. To learn more send an email to webmaster@ars.usda.gov.
  In addition, email list services (aka listserve) are a available for use in communicating with both the public and workgroups who span across agencies. For more information, send an email to webmaster@ars.usda.gov.

- Is the Location experiencing any problems getting information updated on the ARS Web Site?

  Each Location should verify their relevant information and submit needed updates as outlined in http://www.arsnet.usda.gov/web/arsredesign/faq/faq.htm. Email webmaster@ars.usda.gov for assistance.

CARE FUNCTIONAL REVIEW
BUDGET AND FISCAL

For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in the following section, please contact Lisa Baldus on 301-504-1300.

6.0   Budget and Fiscal (General)

• In the interview process, determine whether Location management officials (LC, RL's and LAO/T) believe that adequate support (e.g., guidance/instructions/Agency P&P issuances, financial reviews for dealing with problems or issues, etc.) is given from ARS Headquarters and the Area Office to manage and control Agency programs, assets, and resources.

• Ensure that all recommendations from recent audits and reviews (including CARE reviews, and financial reviews) have been resolved, and appropriate corrective action taken. If not, explain.

6.01   CRIS Accountability

• Make sure that RL's understand and correctly interpret the Agency's Current Research Information System (CRIS) accountability policy, and that they are spending dollars by CRIS in accordance with the Budget and Program Management Staff (BPMS) approved allocation.

In order to do so, review the Location's most current CRIS Activities Module (CAM) report. Determine whether there are deviations in planned versus actual expenditures of more than plus or minus 5% or $50,000, whichever is less. If so, determine whether approvals were obtained for these expenditure variances. If approvals were not obtained, cite what CRIS is not in compliance, and the percentage or amount in variance. (Policy and Procedure Number 315.0)

• Determine if obligations in CRIS Allocation Tracking System (CATS) status of funds reports appear to be made to the benefiting CRIS.

In order to do so, review a representative sample of large obligation transactions and attempt to determine whether the obligations are consistent with the type of research conducted in the CRIS (i.e., it would not be consistent for a human nutrition related CRIS to purchase a tractor). If obligations do not appear to be charged to the benefiting CRIS, explain.

6.02   Research Cost

6.02-1   Indirect Research Costs (IRC) and Shared Research Costs (SRC)

• Determine whether each CRIS was assessed for IRC or SRC and "All Other" fixed costs according to established Agency policy.

In order to do so, examine the ARMP CRIS Allocation Schedules (CRAS) and supporting worksheets or other documentation developed for the last ARMP. Wherever possible, costs should be assigned based on actual usage of resources. Cost accounting prorations based on FTE, SY's or dollars are acceptable but should only be used after ruling out

other, more precise methods of assigning common support costs (i.e., space occupied, number of telephones, etc.) (The ARMS manual; P&P 329.5) If IRC and SRC worksheets or other documentation are not available to support the assessment methodologies used, explain.

- Does the Location have the latest ARMPS instructions? Do they feel the instructions are clear, concise, timely, and easy to understand?

6.03   ARMPS Preparation/Implementation

- Inquire whether the ARMP process adequately allows the Location to prepare and update a comprehensive detailed annual operating plan for spending funds and accomplishing program objectives. Document any suggestions for improvement.

- Ensure that the Location is planning at least 4 percent of base funds on R&M as required by ARMP policy contained in the ARMS manual (unless the Location has been granted a documented exception to the policy).

  > In order to verify that at least 4% of base funds is planned for R&M spending, add amounts in object class 2530 on the Location's ARMP Annual Operating Plans (AOP's) and compare that total to the total base funds for the Location. If the total object class 2530 amount is less than 4%, determine what other budgeted amounts the Location considers to be R&M, and explain.

6.04   Allocations

- Ensure that official allocations are adhered to in establishing CATS financial plans at the Management Unit level and for CRIS subaccounts.

  > In order to do so, compare CATS financial plans to the budget documentation provided by the ABFO. MU totals can be verified against FFIS records.

6.05   Salary Estimates/Tracking

- Make sure employee salaries are being charged to CRIS subaccounts as planned on the approved ARMP. In order to do so, compare the ARMPS CRIS Resource Allocation Schedules with the SAMS Liability by CRIS report.

- Determine if any problems are encountered by the Location in using SAMS to account for salaries. If so, explain.

6.05-1   Salary Lapse Reporting

- Review salary lapse reports to determine if they accurately reflect the amount of lapse to the CRIS level. Review offsets on specific positions to validate that the offsets were appropriate (Reference Ground Rules to Salary Lapse). Ensure that the adjustment amounts are reflected on the CATS Financial Plan.

6.06   Period-End Estimates

- Determine whether the Location fully understands ARS' Year-end Closing Instructions and
  Procedures, including preparation of period-end estimates. Inquire whether the Location has any
  ideas on improving the year-end instructions and procedures.

6.07   Prior-Year Funding

- Inquire whether the Location is aware of the P&P for prior-year fund approval requests. For
  requests of $1,000 or under, the approval process is not required. For requests of $1,001 or more,
  a Form ARS 323-8 (or an E-mail message containing the same information as the form) must be
  completed and approved. For requests exceeding $10,000, a certification of funds availability
  must be requested from the Financial Management Division--an e-mail message request is
  sufficient. (P&P 323.8, as amended.) For requests exceeding $25,000, FMD approval is
  required.

6.08   Prompt Payment

- Determine whether the Location management is aware and sensitive to the Prompt Payment Act
  (budget object code 4310) requirement that an interest penalty must be paid to the vendor, with
  the invoice amount, for invoices not paid 30 days after receipt (interest is charged directly to the
  fundholder's account). (Review the CARE characteristics package for information on recent
  interest amounts charged to the Location.)

(NOTE: In the FFIS environment, the vendor record in VEND must reflect the appropriate payment
terms. If there is excessive interest, determine whether correct information is obtained from the vendor
and communicated to the vendor coordinator.)

6.9   Claims for and Against the Government

- Ensure that the Location has access to instructions for processing and disposition of claims (P&P
  328.0 - Claims for the Government; P&P 227.1 - Claims against the Government).

6.10   Collections

In accordance with procedures in the FMM, Chapter 2600; P&P326.0; and Bulletin 02-314:

- Ensure that a collections official has been properly designated by inspecting their letter of
  designation from the Area office. Ensure that they are aware of all responsibilities.

- Ensure that all collections (cash, checks, etc.) received by the Location are properly secured and
  that they are promptly deposited/credited into the lock box to the proper miscellaneous receipt or
  appropriated fund account.

- Ensure that proper vendor codes are being used.

6.11   Accounting/CATS

- Ensure that there is effective coordination between CATS and other Agency systems (e.g.,
  ARMPS, FFIS, SAMS, ARIS, etc.). The Current Year column of the ARMP should be the initial
  financial plan amount in CATS. CATS must be reconciled with FFIS reports on a monthly basis.
  The "Reconciled" column on the Status of Funds Report should be tied into the cumulative
  obligations of the FFIS OCA Report. Budget documentation provided by the ABFO must be

used to update MU financial plans in CATS. SAMS should be used to incorporate salary obligations and projections into CATS.

- Ensure that the information/data produced by CATS is verifiable; i.e., that the information/data can be traced to the source documents.

  In order to do so, review CATS posted and unposted obligations on transaction listings. Select a random sample of transactions and verify that corresponding obligation documents are found in the Location files.

- Ensure that Location funds control records are reconciled monthly with FFIS reports, and that unusual or unidentified items are followed up on with the ABFO. The local funds control records should be thought of as a "check book" and the FFIS reports should be thought of as an "official bank statement." Transactions appearing in the FFIS reports must be "posted" in local funds control reports in order to maintain accurate account balances.

6.12   Status of Funds

- Ensure that fundholders receive monthly status of funds reports from CATS in accordance with Directive 325.1. Although not required, it is suggested that fundholders also receive SAMS "Liability to MU" reports.

- Inquire whether the reports are adequate for the fundholder's needs. If not, explain.

- Ensure that each fundholder reviews detailed financial transactions charged against their accounts from CATS printouts at least three times a year to determine if the documents belong to the MU. If there have been invalidly charged obligations, explain.

6.12-1   CRIS Activities Module (CAM)

- Determine if the Location encounters any difficulties in the use of CAM for downloading year-end planned versus actual CRIS subaccount data into special reports for BPMS. If so, determine the issues to be resolved, and explain.

6.12-2   Cuff Records

- Determine if fundholders maintain any funds tracking records (cuff records) in addition to the CATS reports maintained by the Location support staff. If yes, explain. As stated in ARS P&P 325.1, "CATS (formerly LOTS) will be used by employees throughout ARS as the only Location funds control system. No other system (either manual or automated) will be used or supported...Fundholders and their subordinates should generally not maintain any financial records, but should rely on the information produced by CATS. The fundholder may maintain a simple pending file of outstanding documents, which could be totaled and deducted from the CATS Status of Funds report. The maintenance of additional records by research scientists and research support personnel should be strongly discouraged."

For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in the following section, please contact Diane Eggert on 301-504-1260.

6.13   Travel

- Verify that Location personnel know how to access policies and procedures related to travel (http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/ppweb/).

- Ensure that delegations of authority for approving travel are in writing, that they are accessible, and that responsibilities are effectively discharged. In order to do so, review the Location travel files.

- Determine if controls are in place to ensure that personal travel, when commingled with official travel, is not charged to the Government.

     In order to do so, review travel authorizations and travel vouchers for cases of mixed travel and make sure days of personal expenses were not charged to the Government.

- VERY IMPORTANT. In accordance with the General Records Schedule, paper copies of transmitted transactions (bearing the original signatures of all parties) and supporting documents (e.g., receipts) must be retained for a 6-year and 3-month period. Agency offices that use the online data entry component to enter travel transactions are the official record keepers of the original paper copies of the transmitted transactions. These offices must follow the record retention requirements established by the National Archives and Records Administration in the "General Records Schedule". These original vouchers shall be kept in a central locked file.

6.13-1   Travel Authorizations

- Ensure that all travel orders are reviewed by properly designated individuals, other than the traveler, to determine that travel is official in purpose and nature and clearly stated, absolutely necessary, consolidated with other trips if feasible, and amounts estimated are reasonable.

- Ensure that the use of types B and N travel authorizations are limited only to individuals whose frequent, routine, repetitive travel requirements make individual trip authorizations (Type C) unrealistic and those positions have been pre-determined by the Administrator to be issued the type B or N travel authorization.

- Determine if there were more than three instances during the last fiscal year of fund holders (or supervisors) post approving their subordinates' travel. (This procedure indicates a breakdown in the proper pre-approval process for authorizations) If yes, explain.

6.13-2   Travel Advances

- Ensure that employees leaving the Agency have paid back any outstanding travel advance balances.

- Ensure that travel advances are only issued in conjunction with an approved travel authorization; and returned promptly when a trip is completed, canceled, or delayed past a reasonable time (P&P 342.3). Emphasis should be made on travel advances open to non-Government persons traveling for the Government. NOTE TO CARE TEAM: The number of travel advances should have decreased with the use of the Automated Teller Machines under the Travel charge card program.

- Ensure that employees that have had their travel charge card canceled for misuse or non-payment are not obtaining travel advances from NFC. These individuals may only obtain travel advances when they perform foreign travel.
- Effective July 20, 2004 with REE Bulletin 04-307, Use and Management of Travel Charge Cards, travel advances may only be given to travel charge cardholders whey they are approved by the Chief Financial Officer or for foreign travel.

- Ensure that managers are notified of outstanding travel advance balances at the Location on a regular basis. Employees performing the travel function at the Location should be performing this function. Inquire whether they are.

6.13-3   Travel Vouchers

- Interview the employees performing the travel function to determine if the Location is experiencing any problems with processing travel vouchers. If so, explain. Review the travel files to ensure that vouchers are being prepared accurately and according to prior authorization.

- Review travel vouchers to ensure that registration fees for meetings or conferences are not being claimed on travel vouchers. Registration fees shall be paid using the Government Purchase Card. See REE Bulletins, 04-307, Use and Management of Travel Charge Cards, and 04-303, Non-Travel Related Employee Reimbursements.

- Ensure that applicable receipts are attached to the travel voucher for common carrier tickets, lodging, and any expense of $75 or more.

6.13-4   Relocation Allowances

- Ensure that obligations/adjustments are being properly accounted for. The authorized amount on the travel authorization appearing in TRVL must be deobligated, based on actual reimbursements and reflected in the Location's accounts maintenance records. There must be a review by accounts maintenance personnel to ensure that TRVL has properly deobligated relocation amounts.

6.13-5   Mandatory Use of Contracted Travel Management Centers

- Ensure that all tickets are being purchased through a contracted travel management center.

- Ensure that there are sufficient internal controls at the Location for safeguarding undistributed paper tickets. Determine if a safe or a suitable locked file cabinet is available to store the tickets. (P&P 343.4, Use of Contract Air Services.) Paper tickets are only allowed for foreign travel.

- Determine if a review of travel authorization/itineraries is made before tickets are given to travelers. Inquire this of both travelers and employees performing the travel function at the Location.

- Determine whether unused/partially used tickets (eTickets or paper tickets) are promptly returned and canceled for credit to the cardholder or Government. Review procedures with employees performing the travel function at the Location.

6.13-6   Bank of America Transaction Accounts (TR's)

- Ensure that accountability is adequately maintained at the Location for maintenance and use of the Bank of America Transaction Account. Make sure that only the accountable employee has access to the account number and that only tickets for official travelers without an active travel charge card use the account except for foreign travel tickets. These accounts replaced the use of Government Transportation Requests August 1, 2003. The "TR" code is still used on travel authorizations and travel vouchers for transportation costs charged to these accounts.

6.13-7   Travel Charge Cards

- Ensure that employees with travel charge cards are using them to the fullest extent and only for official reimbursable travel expenses.

- Ensure that employees leaving the Agency turn in their travel charge cards. In order to do so, request to see the Exit Clearance form and check list (in accordance with P&P 426.1, Employee Exit Clearance Procedures). If employee is going to another USDA agency, the travel charge card shall be transferred. If not, the card must be cancelled.

6.13-8   Foreign Travel

- Inquire whether the Location experiences any problems in processing foreign travel requests (e.g.. HQ/Area approvals, passports, visas, etc.). If so, document the specific issues involved. (P&P 345.3)

- Inquire whether the Location experiences any problems using the Foreign Travel Information System (FTIS) via ARIS. If so, document the problems.

- Ensure that official passport receipts and a passport log are maintained in accordance with Agency guidelines.

- Ensure that all passports and documentation are secured in a suitable locked fireproof cabinet/safe.

For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in the following section, please contact Lisa Baldus on 301-504-1300.

6.14   Utility Accounts

- Ensure that the Location knows how to establish utility accounts with NFC through completion of the Form AD-474 Transmittal-Telephone and Utilities. Instructions are contained in the NFC Voucher and Invoice Payments Manual.

- Determine if the Location is encountering any problems with utility payments or reconciliation of accounts. If so, explain.
- Ensure that obligations for OPAC, Motor Pool, GPO, GSA, etc., are appearing on the Transaction Detail Listing (TDL). If not, determine if the Location is taking corrective action with NFC and/or the appropriate Government vendor agency.

6.15   Agreement Accounting

6.15-1   Research Support Agreement (RSA) Expenditure Tracking

- Ensure that the ADODR or designee reconciles RSA cooperator billing data (i.e., the Monthly Management Reports or SF-1034 vouchers) with documentation submitted by the RL's (i.e., packing slips, delivery tickets, memoranda, etc.) to ensure receipt of goods and services billed for.

- Ensure that the Location maintains an adequate tracking system for comparison of actual expenditures to the Task Order obligation(s). Some Locations use CATS for this purpose; others use automated spreadsheets.

6.15-2   Trust Funds and Reimbursable Agreements

- Refer to Bulletins 02-316, 02-314, and 03-309.

- Ensure that reimbursable accounts coded as Type 63 have been approved by the Director, FMD, and are being billed by the AFBO/Location in accordance with Bulletin 03-309.

- Ensure that the Location waits for receipt of authorization from ABFO before initiating research activity for the cooperator. Trust fund agreements require an up-front payment from the cooperator before work may begin.

- Ensure that the Location is aware of carry-over implications for multi-year appropriation authorities. When the ordering agency has statutory multi-year spending authority, funds provided by the agreement are available for obligation by ARS for the specified years, subject to limitations imposed by the ordering Agency. This will ordinarily result in carryover amounts from one fiscal year to another of any unobligated balance. The providing agency has the prerogative of stipulating the dollar amount that should be expended by fiscal year. (FMM Chapter 2400, Section 2415.1.2; Bulletin 03-309)

6.15-3   Sales/Exchange Funds

- Ensure that the LAO/T and APO are following the required exchange/sale procedures. In the acquisition, sale, or exchange of property, both the item to be acquired and the item to be replaced must fall within a single category identified in the Federal Property Management Regulations. Proceeds from the exchange/sale of property are available for obligation to purchase replacement property during the year in which the property was sold plus one additional fiscal year. (FMM Chapter 2400, Section 2415.5) Separate accounts are established for suspense (sales proceeds) and reimbursement (repurchases) and are tracked by fiscal year of availability. (FMM Chapter 2400, and Section 2470). Review the Location files to determine if requirements for sale/exchange funds are being met. If not, explain.

6.15-4   Quarters

In accordance with the FMM, Chapter 2400, Section 2480:

- Review Location files to ensure that employee quarters payments are made through proper coding of Time and Attendance reports to accomplish payroll deductions. (Collections that are not received through payroll deductions must be paid into the Treasury Miscellaneous Receipt Account and thus are not available to the Location for obligation.)
- Review Location files to determine whether quarters rental receipts are used only for upkeep of the Government residences, as required. If not explain.

6.15-5   Revolving Fund

- Determine if the Location has a university (or cooperator) administered "revolving fund" composed of proceeds from the sale of Location animals, crops, or related by-products. If yes, provide the dollar amount, and describe the record keeping responsibilities between ARS and the university (or cooperator).

- Ensure that the anticipated funding amount is annotated on the ARMP.

- Determine if ARS employees have the authority to authorize (or cause) expenditures to be made from this fund. If yes, explain if they are doing so according to the terms of the MOU or agreement. An ARS official may not, under any circumstances, approve by signatory authority any obligation documents covered under a revolving fund. Review the Location files to determine whether this may be happening. If so, explain.

6.16   Reference Manuals

- Ensure that budget/fiscal external procedures (including ARS P&P's) are complete, readily accessible, up-to-date, and are being properly followed. Attach or reference any internal procedures developed by the Location.

- Ensure that references are readily available for each of the following subject areas and that they are being fully utilized and understood: CATS; FFIS; FMM; SAMS; ARMPS; NFC Procedures Manuals; & Travel

6.17   Training

- Through the interview and review process, determine whether employees are adequately trained in budget/fiscal operations to perform their duties, and whether the Location has competent and sufficient staff to carry out budget/fiscal functional responsibilities.

6.18   Budget/Fiscal Records Management

- Ensure that budget/fiscal records are maintained and disposed of in accordance with P&P 251.8, which provides records distribution schedules for administrative and financial management files.

For information on interpretation or clarification of the functional questions in this section, please contact Korona Prince, Office of Civil Rights, 202-720-6161.

Note: References include Departmental Regulation No. 4300-6, "Civil Rights Policy for the Department of Agriculture; USDA and ARS Policy Statements.

7.01   Special Emphasis Programs

- Does the Location initiate and conduct programs and other activities to increase awareness/representation of women, minorities and persons with disabilities? (This includes special observance celebrations, display of special observance month posters, and other educational and awareness activities).

- Is the Location aware of the Area's Special Emphasis Programs/Equal Employment Opportunity/Civil Rights or Diversity Committees and its functions and accomplishments?

- Is there adequate communication between the Special Emphasis Programs and the Equal Employment Opportunity/Civil Rights or Diversity Committees?

7.02   Outreach Efforts

- What outreach efforts have been made by the Location to increase awareness of ARS programs and activities? (This includes visits to schools, tours, direct contact with local community resources, cooperative efforts with universities, high schools, and professional public and private organizations, etc.). If so, what were the results of those efforts?

7.03   Recruitment Efforts and Affirmative Action Program

Questions to the LC and LAO:

- What efforts have been made to hire minorities, persons with disabilities, and female applicants into positions where there is under-representation? What were the results of those efforts?

- Are there any specific EEO activities/hiring objectives that the Location has undertaken in the past 2 years? If so, what are the results?

- Was assistance requested from the Special Emphasis Programs/Equal Employment Opportunity Civil Rights or Diversity Committees or Recruitment Staff? If so, did they provide assistance?

- Are you aware of the Affirmative Employment Program Accomplishment Report and Update your Area Civil Rights Manager/Coordinator prepares?

7.04   Persons with Disabilities

- Are accommodations provided for employees with disabilities to perform the essential duties of their positions and attending special observances, meetings, and training sessions?

- Are employees aware of the reasonable accommodation process?
- Have there been any activities to foster or facilitate the employment of persons with disabilities including making reasonable accommodations for known physical or mental limitations of qualified applicants and employees with disabilities?

7.05   Communication

- Are current USDA/ARS/Area policy statements for EEO/CR and the prevention of sexual harassment prominently displayed on all official bulletin boards? (Agriculture Secretary's and ARS Administrator's policy statements). Has the LC/CD/RL communicated his/her commitment and support of the USDA/ARS/CR program objectives to all Location employees? How or what mechanism was used?

- Are the posters "Discrimination in Employment is Illegal" and "And Justice For All" prominently displayed on all official bulletin boards?

- Are employees aware of who the Area Civil Rights Manager/Coordinator is and his/her role?

- What and how are civil rights expectations communicated to the employees?

- Are employees aware of the Civil Rights web site (ARS and Area)?

7.06   Training

- Have all location/area employees completed the current mandatory Civil Rights training?

- Are there additional EEO/CR topics where training is needed?

7.07   Recognition

- Are employees aware of the Administrator's EEO/CR Awards Program and Area's Award program (if applicable)?

- Are employees, managers/supervisors, organizational units, etc, recognized for demonstrating superior equal employment opportunity accomplishments?

- What is the process for determining who receives awards at the location?

For information on the interpretation of clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Sherri Carroll on 301-504-1144.

8.01   Extramural Agreements Program (General)

Reference: Extramural Agreements Manual (EAM) 280.0 dated April 1994. Additional information can be found on the EAD Web site - http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/ead/index.htm

- Interview the LAO/T to:

    − Identify Location staff involved in the agreements process including the types of agreements they process and their duties/responsibilities. (ADODR's, LAO, LSS, etc.)

- Interview the Location (LAO, LSS, and ADOD'Rs) staff involved in the agreements process to document their concerns, comments, or suggestions about the following:

    - turn around time;
    - training needs; and
    - improvement to the extramural agreements process.

- Interview the responsible LSS to determine whether the following assistance is provided to each ADODR:

    - development of the Statement of Work (SOW);
    - development of the budget; (ensure all applicable direct and indirect costs are documented);
    - ensure the appropriate ARIS documents (ARS-416/417/550A/425) are entered correctly;
    - assembly of the agreement request package:
        - approved ARIS (required for all agreements)
        - AD-700 (Commitment Authorization)
        - SOW/ Proposal
        - budget
        - justification for funding increase/decrease or extension of time (if applicable)
          Note: The justification can be submitted in the following format: email, on the AD-700, program increase memo, ARIS remarks section, transmittal memo.
        - transmittal memo or other document providing necessary ADODR and Cooperator information.

    - submission of the complete request package to the Area Office
    - follow up with the Area Office; regarding receipt of the complete request package

8.02   Research Support Agreement

Research Support Agreement (RSA) – A cost-reimbursable agreement between ARS and a College or University. The RSA formally documents the relationship under which the institution provides goods and services, including personal services, to ARS in support of research activities of mutual interest.

Reference: EAM 280.0, Chapter 2400 and REE Bulletin 01-153

- Determine if the RSA is used at the Location. If yes:

- Determine who serves as ADODR for the RSA. **Note: In most Locations the LAO/T is the ADODR for the RSA.**

- Verify that the Location has a copy of the approved ARS-550, Research Agreements Plan, from the ARMP.

- Interview the ADODR to determine the process for preparing task orders at the Location. Location/Areas may vary in the sequence of steps or other procedures. Verify the following:

    - Task orders are sent to ADO (Upon final signature)

    - ARS is <u>not</u>:

        - Selecting cooperator employees
        - Administratively supervising cooperator employees
        - Administering cooperator payrolls
        - Establishing wage levels
        - Entering into employment agreements with individuals
        - Approving/disapproving cooperator employees' leave

    - ADODR is sending task orders to the Cooperator for pricing and/or determination of wage rates. Note: An Authorized Representative of the Cooperator must co-sign the task order.

    - Services requested on task orders are in accordance with ARS policy and procedures regarding the acquisition of goods and personal services under an RSA.

    - ADODR is aware of ARS policy which specifies a 4-year limitation on acquiring personal services for recurring requirements, i.e., a Lab Technician.   Acquiring the services of a University employee equivalent to an ARS Category 1 and/or 4 Scientist position is limited to 90 days (Janitorial and maintenance services are excluded) **(Is the Location's RSA in compliance with the policy?)**

    - ADODR is submitting the fully executed task order to the National Finance Center (NFC), ADO, or the Area Budget and Fiscal Office in order to obligate funds.
    - Task Orders contain appropriate ARS Budget Object Code and Sub-Object Code Note: BOC = 2554, SUB BOCs = LG and PU. This information is required for FFIS purposes.

    - Task orders are being closed out upon completion.

- Verify that task orders (including amendments) issued by ADODR have the following:

    - Approved AD-700

- General description and amount of supplies, materials, and/or services

- Listing of occupational categories (title) with duties

- Dates or time frame for delivery of goods or performance of services

- If payment method for RSA is under HHS/Payment Management System:

  - Determine if Cooperator is providing ADODR with a Monthly Management Report (MMR) or equivalent.

  - Determine if the ADODR and RL verify and approve the MMR or equivalent.

  - Determine if the ADODR is sending a copy of the MMR or equivalent to the ADO.

- If payment method for RSA is other than HHS/Payment Management System:

  - Determine if Cooperator submits an itemized invoice to ADODR.

  - Determine if RL is certifying and ADODR is verifying the receipt of goods and/or services on the invoice.

  - Determine if the ADODR is promptly submitting the invoices to NFC, ADO, or ABFO for payment.

8.03   Cooperative Agreements: (Specific Cooperative Agreements, Trust Fund and Reimbursable)

Specific Cooperative Agreement (SCA) - describes in detail a jointly planned, executed, and funded research program or project.

Trust Fund Cooperative Agreement (TFCA) - involves cooperative research between ARS and another party where ARS is paid in advance to conduct research or for the other party to share in the cost of a research project conducted by ARS.

Reimbursable Cooperative Agreement (RCA) - similar to the Trust Fund Cooperative Agreement except, that the Cooperator pays when billed by ARS for work completed.

Reference: EAM 280.0 Chapters 2100 and 2300

- Determine if the SCA, TFCA, and/or RCA is used at the Location. If yes:

- Verify that the ADODR maintains an agreement file with copies of information relevant to the extramural project. (The Area office maintains the "official" Agency file). **Note: The file must include the following: (1) fully executed copy of the agreement and (2) copy of the approved ARIS documents. The file may also include the following: (1) amendment(s), (2) payment records/invoices, (3) correspondence, (4) copies of Financial and Performance reports and (5) internal emails and notes.**

8.04   Standard Cooperative Agreement

Standard Cooperative Agreement - describes a cooperative relationship between ARS and another party that defines a mutually beneficial relationship relative to the use of land, labor, equipment, facilities, livestock, or other resources. The agreement includes a "make whole" provision using one of the following methods: (1) Tort claims Act, or (2) a fair market value as agreed upon by the parties.

Reference: EAM 280.0, Chapter 2200 and REE Bulletin 03-700

- Determine if the Standard Cooperative Agreement is used at the Location. If yes:

    - And the agreement(s) was executed/awarded at the Location level:

        - Verify the LAO/T has written delegation of signature authority from the ADO.
        - Verify the LAO/T is preparing and sending a written delegation of authority to the ADODR.
        - Verify that the Location maintains an agreement file and forwards a copy the Area office. **Note: The file <u>must</u> include the following: (1) fully executed copy of the agreement and (2) copy of the approved ARIS documents. The file <u>may</u> also include internal emails and notes.**

    - And the agreement(s) was executed/awarded at the Area level:

        - Verify that the Location receives a copy of the agreement and maintains a file. (The Area office maintains the "official" Agency file)

8.05   Grants and Assistance Type Cooperative Agreement

Grant - transfers a thing of value (money, property, services, etc.) to the recipient to stimulate or carry out a public purpose with <u>no</u> substantial involvement anticipated between the agency and the recipient

Assistance Type Cooperative Agreement (ATCA) - transfers a thing of value to the recipient to stimulate or carry out a public purpose and substantial involvement is anticipated between the agency and the recipient.

Reference: EAM 280.0, Chapter 3100

- Determine if the Grant and/or ATCA is used at the Location. If yes:

    - Verify that the ADODR maintains an agreement file with copies of information relevant to the extramural project. (The Area office maintains the "official" Agency files). **Note: The file <u>must</u> include the following: (1) fully executed copy of the amendment and (2) copy of the approved ARIS documents. The file <u>may</u> also include the following: (1) payment records/invoices, correspondence, (3) copies of Financial and Performance reports and (4) internal emails and notes.**

- Determine whether the LAO/T is familiar with the requirement to document substantial involvement on the ATCA.

8.06   Supplements to the MMOU

Supplements to the MMOU - further defines cooperative research related to the MMOU**. Used prior to August 14, 2003.   Supplements have been replaced by Non-Funded Cooperative Agreement.**

- Determine if there are active Supplements. If yes:

- Ensure the Location is advised to work with the Area Office to terminate all active Supplements and convert those still needed to Non Funded Cooperative Agreements.

8.07   Standard Memorandum of Understanding

Standard Memorandums of Understanding (SMOU) - describes a cooperative relationship between ARS and another party that defines a mutually beneficial relationship relative to the use of land, labor, equipment, facilities, livestock, or other resources. The agreement <u>does not</u> include a "make whole" provision. **Used prior to August 14, 2003. SMOU's have been replaced by Non-Funded Cooperative Agreements.**

- Determine if there are active Standard Memorandum of Understanding. If yes:

- Ensure the Location is advised to work with the Area Office to terminate all SMOU's and convert those still needed to Non Funded Cooperative Agreements.

8.08   Individual Memorandum of Understanding

Individual Memorandum of Understanding (IMOU) - describes a cooperative program or project between ARS and another party when there was no Master MOU to supplement. **Used prior to August 14, 2003. IMOU's have been replaced by Non-Funded Cooperative Agreements.**

- Determine if there are any active IMOU's.

- Ensure the Location is advised to work with the Area Office to terminate all active IMOU's and convert those still needed to Non Funded Cooperative Agreements.

8.09   Memorandum of Understanding

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) – an agreement between ARS and another party that sets out, in very broad, general terms, a plan for the parties to coordinate their efforts on projects of mutual interest. No specific duties and responsibilities are defined. Only general terms which identify how the parties intend to cooperate are described. There is no substantial commitment of resources by ARS and there is no direct transfer of funding from one party to the other.

Reference REE Bulletin 03-700

- Determine if the MOU is used at the Location. If yes:

- Verify that the ADODR maintains an agreement file with copies of information relevant to the extramural project.

- Verify that the ADODR understands the "new" MOU principles outlines in REE 03-700.

    MOU's may only be used to establish the *intent* to cooperate, with independent performance, on projects of mutual interests where there is no transfer of resources.

8.10   Non-Funded Cooperative Agreement

Non-Funded Cooperative Agreement (NFCA) - describes in detail a jointly planned and executed project of mutual interest. All parties contribute resources and benefit independently in the outcome of the project. There is no direct transfer of funding from one party to the other. **NFCA replaces the Individual Memorandum of Understanding (IMOU), Supplements to the MMOU and the Standard Memorandum of Understanding.**

Reference REE Bulletin 03-700

- Determine if the NFCA is used at the Location. If yes:

- Verify that the ADODR maintains an agreement file with copies of information relevant to the extramural project. (The Area office maintains the "official" Agency files). **Note: The file must include the following: (1) fully executed copy of the agreement and (2) copy of the approved ARIS documents. The file may also include the following: (1) amendment(s), (2) correspondence, (3) copies of Financial and Performance reports and (4) internal emails and notes.**

Attachment II-B – Final Written Report Format

CONSOLIDATED ASSISTANCE, REVIEW, AND EVALUATION

(CARE)

REPORT OF ASSISTANCE, HELP, FINDINGS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

USDA, ARS,

Inclusive Dates of Review:

PURPOSE: Review of Administrative Processes in Support of the USDA Consolidated
Review Program

CARE Review Team No.

Team Leader
Co-Leader

INDEX

PREFACE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PREFACE

Utilizing the principles of the USDA Consolidated Review Program (CRP), the President's Management Agenda, and the Consolidated, Assistance, Review, and Evaluation (CARE) Program Charter, members of a CARE Review Team reviewed the administrative processes at the USDA, ARS

The approach used was a Location survey, general interview of both program and administrative personnel utilizing questionnaires developed by the CARE Program, and a review of documents or processes/systems against a listing of administrative functions and related questions to be answered. This approach incorporates the limited review principles of the USDA CRP and the goals of the CARE Program to:

- Assist, in a helpful and practical way, those being reviewed to understand what can be done to improve their operations.

- Help to make actual changes necessary to improve operations in the true spirit of the President's Management Agenda.

- Assist those being reviewed to interpret and understand current policy and procedural guidance.

- Identify gaps in available guidance/policy/procedures that require attention in order to meet the needs of location activities.

- Promote efficiency, economy and responsiveness to program needs through the sharing of ideas and techniques for improving administrative processes.

- Assure compliance with Federal policies and regulations by officially designated employees.

Assistance, suggestions, or recommendations provided or obtained were recorded on summary documents by AFM functional code by each CARE Review Team Member and then consolidated by AFM functional code for developing this report. The enclosed Summary Assurance Statement is a consensus of the CARE Review Team and CARE Coordinator based on the limited review performed.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The USDA, ARS,   consists of   research units with approximately
   employees, and   person Location Support Staff (LSS). The location's buildings are

The CARE Team noticed a real effort made by the Location to have a safe work environment.
The Location had a positive attitude about the review and looked at the process as a way to help
identify areas that could be improved.

Significant CARE Team findings of knowledgeable disregard of Agency Policies & Procedures
are reported as No Assurance. Team findings where Agency Policies & Procedures are not
being adhered to are reported as Assurances with Exception. Team findings that identify Best
Practices are report as Commendations. Instances where CARE Teams provided direct
assistance to the Location are reported as Assistance Provided. The CARE Team expresses its
appreciation for the cooperation, assistance, and genuine hospitality extended to us by Location
personnel during the review.

No Assurance was issued in the following Section:

Section   Issue

Assurances with Exception were issued in the following Sections:

Section   Issue

Commendations were issued in the following Sections:

Section   Issue

Assistance provided were reported in the following Sections:

Section   Issue

SPECIFIC FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS, AND ASSISTANCE

1.   ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT - GENERAL

1.01   <u>Location Administrative and Financial Management</u>

1.02   <u>Area Administrative and Financial Management</u>

1.03   <u>Headquarters Administrative and Financial Management</u>

1.04   <u>Other</u>

2.   ACQUISITION OF SUPPLIES, SERVICES, AND EQUIPMENT

2.0   <u>Acquisitions</u>

2.01   <u>Requisitions</u>

2.02   <u>Procurement</u>

2.02-1.01   <u>Blanket Purchase Agreements (BPA's)</u>

2.02-1.02   <u>Purchase/Delivery Orders</u>

2.02-1.03   <u>Purchase Cards</u>

2.02-1.04   <u>Training</u>

2.02-1.05   <u>Federal Supply Schedule (FSS)</u>

2.03   Administration

2.03-1   Simplified Acquisitions

2.03-2   Receiving Reports

2.03-3   Invoice/Payment/Closeout

2.04   Personal Property

2.04-1   Organizational Structure

2.04-1.01   Training

2.04-1.02   Reference Material

2.04-5.01   <u>Transfers under Specific USDA Donation Programs</u>

2.04-6   <u>Agency Administered Sales</u>

2.04-7   <u>Motor Vehicles</u>

3. FACILITIES MANAGEMENT, CONSTRUCTION, REAL PROPERTY AND SAFETY, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

3.00-1   <u>Repair and Maintenance</u>

3.00-2   <u>Energy Management</u>

3.00-3   <u>Facility Accessibility</u>

3.01   <u>Architect-Engineering (A-E) Contracts</u>

3.01-1   <u>A-E Contracts</u>

3.02   <u>Construction Contracts</u>

3.04-5   <u>Quarters Rentals</u>

3.04-6   <u>Disposal of Real Property</u>

3.05-1   <u>Safety, Health, and Environmental Management</u>

3.05-2   <u>Safety, Health, and Environmental Education/Training</u>

3.05-3   <u>Safety Management</u>

3.05-4   <u>Industrial Hygiene</u>

3.05-5.01   <u>Environmental Management</u>

4. HUMAN RESOURCES

4.01 <u>Employment</u>

4.02 <u>Time and Attendance</u>

4.03 <u>Pay and Leave</u>

4.04 <u>Performance Management</u>

4.05 <u>Awards</u>

4.06 <u>Training</u>

4.07 <u>Position Description/Management</u>

4.08 <u>Employee Relation</u>

4.09   <u>Other</u>

5.   INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ACTIVITIES

5.01   AFM Systems

5.02   Voice/Data/Video Telecommunications

5.03   Information Systems Security

5.04   Information Collection from the Public

5.05   Records Management

5.06   Policy and Procedures Management

5.07   <u>Printed Forms</u>

5.08   <u>Mail and Messenger Services</u>

5.09   <u>IT Resource Planning</u>

5.10   <u>Telecommunications Billing and NFC</u>

5.11   <u>Web Sites</u>

6. BUDGET AND FISCAL

6.0   Budget and Fiscal (General)

6.01   CRIS Accountability

6.02   Research Cost

6.02-1   Indirect Research Costs (IRC) and Shared Research Costs (SRC)

6.03   ARMPS Preparation/Implementation

6.04   Allocations

6.05   Salary Estimates/Tracking

7.   CIVIL RIGHTS

7.01   Special Emphasis Programs

7.02   Outreach Efforts

7.03   Recruitment Efforts and Affirmative Action Program

7.04   Persons with Disabilities

7.05   Communication

7.06   Training

7.07   Recognition

8.   EXTRAMURAL AGREEMENTS

8.01   Extramural Agreements Program (General)

8.02   Research Support Agreement (RSA)

8.03   Cooperative Agreements (Specific Cooperative Agreements, Trust Fund, and Reimbursable)

8.04   Standard Cooperative Agreements

8.05   Grants and Assistance Type Cooperative Agreement

8.06   Master Memoranda of Understanding

8.07   Supplements to the Master MMOU

8.08   Standard Memorandum of Understanding

8.09   Individual Memorandum of Understanding

8.10   Non-Funded Cooperative Agreement

SUMMARY ASSURANCE STATEMENT FOR

Consolidated Assistance, Review, and Evaluation (CARE) Review Team No. 6 reviewed the administrative management/operations at the
under the requirements of the Consolidated Review Program. Attached is a listing of the segments (functions) reviewed and assurances made. Reasonable assurance can be given regarding the location's administrative management/operations as follows:

1)   there are sufficient controls and security measures to compensate for any identified risks associated with administrative management/operations and/or their environments;

2)   the programs' clientele are satisfied with the results/performance of the administrative management/operations;

3)   administrative management/operations are being operated in a cost-effective manner and comply with applicable laws and regulations;

4)   there is proper management of the programs' information; and

5)   administrative management/operations comply with management, financial, accounting, information resources management, budget, and other appropriate standards.

_____   Dated:

Team Leader

_____   Dated:

CARE Coordinator

Approved By:

_____   Dated:

James H. Bradley
Deputy Administrator,
Administrative and Financial Management

Attachment II-C – Assurance Statement

SUMMARY ASSURANCE STATEMENT FOR
(City, State)

Consolidated Assistance, Review, and Evaluation (CARE) Review Team No. (__) reviewed the administrative management/operations at the (City, State) Location in (Month of Year) under the requirements of the Consolidated Review Program. Attached is a listing of the segments (functions) reviewed and assurances made. Reasonable assurance can be given regarding the Location's administrative management/operations as follows:

1)   there are sufficient controls and security measures to compensate for any identified risks associated with administrative management/operations and/or their environments;

2)   the programs' clientele are satisfied with the results/performance of the administrative management/operations;

3)   administrative management/operations are being operated in a cost-effective manner and comply with applicable laws and regulations;

4)   there is proper management of the programs' information; and

5)   administrative management/operations comply with management, financial, accounting, information resources management, budget, and other appropriate standards.

_____   _____

(Team Leader Name)   Dated:
Team Leader

_____   _____

David Carter   Dated:
CARE Coordinator

Approved By:

_____   _____

James H. Bradley   Dated:
Deputy Administrator,
Administrative and Financial Management

Attachment II-D - Location Personnel Interview Questionnaire

Consolidated Assistance, Review and Evaluation (CARE)
Location Questionnaire

Location Being Reviewed:_____

Person Being Interviewed:_____

Title:_____

Date:_____   Time:_____

Please review the following questions to help you prepare for your confidential personal interview with the CARE Team during your Location Review. Comments concerning your expectations and satisfaction with the delivery of administrative support services will enhance the ability of the CARE Team to evaluate the efficiency and delivery of service you are receiving at the Location.

NOTE: Not all questions may apply to your particular situation.

1. How is information disseminated at your Location? What are your suggestions for improvement?

2. Do you feel the Location works as a team? What improvements would you suggest?

3. What are your comments on the delivery of procurement support and services (supplies, services, equipment, construction, and repair & maintenance)?

4. What are your comments on the delivery of facilities management including physical security, your workspace, safety, health and environmental management?

5. What are your comments on the delivery of human resources support and services (benefits, time & attendance, awards, recruitment, etc.)?

6. Are your major duties and responsibilities described in your position description? If you are a supervisor, how often do you review subordinates' position descriptions?

7. Are your training needs reflected on your individual development plan? Are they being met? If not, why not?

8. Comment on your work hours and your ability to take leave.

9. In what ways are you being recognized for the work you do?

10. What are your comments on the delivery of information technology products, support and services (hardware, software, telephone systems, Internet access, etc.)?

11. What is your opinion on Agency issued policies and procedures? Have you come across any that need clarification?

12. ARS has a policy on acceptable use of Information Technology resources. Based on this policy, how would you recognize and report misuse of Information Technology resources?

13. That are your comments on the delivery of accounting and financial management support and services (Status of Funds Reports, ARMP, etc.)?

14. What are your comments on the delivery of travel support and services?

15. What are your comments on the delivery of extramural agreements support and services (Specific Cooperative Agreements, CRADAs, Grants, etc.)?

16. Besides the things we have already discussed, is there anything that impairs your ability to do your job?

Attachment II-E - Sample Opening Conference Notes

SAMPLE OPENING CONFERENCE SPEECH

Good Morning

I'm _____, CARE Team Leader. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank <u>LC, LAO/T,</u> and the rest of you for allowing us to visit your Location.

This is the ___ (number of years) cycle of the Consolidated Assistance, Review and Evaluation Program, better known as CARE. We are one of 6 teams reviewing 13 locations this fiscal year. We believe this visit will benefit both the Location and the team members.

Before I explain to you what the CARE Program is all about, I'd like to tell you a little bit about CARE Teams and formally introduce the Team members. Teams are comprised of individuals represented by the three organizational levels within ARS--Location, Area and Headquarters. This allows Teams to perform reviews of administrative operations in much the same manner as peer reviews are conducted. We all have regular full-time positions within the Agency; none of us are auditors or examiners. Individuals are chosen based on their unique skills and abilities in their field of expertise.

Now, I'd like to introduce this CARE team to you.

<u>Name team members, titles, Location and background--may consider having team members do this themselves.</u>

Now, I'd like to tell you how CARE came about and why we're here. In the past, ARS measured "quality" management via "conforming to requirements," as specified in laws, Office of Management and Budget (OMB) requirements, General Accounting Office (GAO) standards, etc. To make reasonable assurances that ARS was complying with these requirements, separate administrative inspections or audits were conducted; for example, Mutual Assistance Reviews and Verification Audits. In the late 1980's, ARS also introduced and carried out major quality improvement efforts with such administrative programs as the Location Support Study and Location Automated System Task Force.

Then, in 1989, these inspections and audits moved toward the Total Quality Management effort of de-emphasizing "conforming to requirements" and focusing on "meeting customer expectations," or de-emphasizing the audit-and-inspection approach and focusing on the problem-identification-and-solving approach. In this vein, ARS Administrative Management consolidated as many reviews, inspections, and audits as possible into the single Consolidated Assistance Review and Evaluation (CARE) Program. The goals of the CARE Teams are to:

- **Assist** in a helpful and practical way, those being reviewed to understand what can be done to improve their operations.

- **Help** to make actual changes necessary to improve operations in the true spirit of the President's Management Agenda.

- **Assist** those being reviewed to interpret and understand current policy and procedure guidance.

- **Identify gaps** in available guidance/policy/procedures that require attention in order to meet the needs of Location activities.

- **Promote** efficiency, economy and responsiveness to program needs through the sharing of ideas and techniques for improving administrative processes.

- **Assure** compliance with Federal policies and regulations by officially designated employees.

The goal of the Agency is to review all ARS Locations, including Area Offices and Headquarters approximately every 8 years. It is planned that the CARE reviews will replace or reduce Mutual Assistance Reviews, Procurement Management Reviews, Financial Management and Budget reviews. It will not, however, replace certain reviews outside of ARS; i.e., OIG and GAO audits.

While we're here we'll first tour your facilities to gain a general sense of the research being conducted here.

Then, focusing on customer (and we're all customers at given times) and provider interaction, we're going to conduct a review via personal interviews and functional reviews of the administrative processes here.

Personal interviews have been scheduled with program and administrative individuals. Questionnaires have already been distributed to these people to start them thinking. The purpose of the interviews is to identify everyone's expectations, frustrations, desires, and concerns about administrative services, not just individual gripes--and when I say administrative services, I mean all levels of administrative services impacting you; including those services controlled at Area and Headquarters levels. To the maximum extent possible, the information that is gathered will be kept confidential and no names will be associated with the comments. Also, we need to emphasize that CARE does not deal with EEO/Civil Rights complaints or employee relations issues. As part of our process, we look for assurances that systems are in place to handle these types of issues, but do not deal with specific cases. Also, if anyone here is not scheduled for an interview, but would like to talk to one of us, please see me or another Team member and we'll schedule a time for you.

Then, we're going to perform limited functional reviews of specific administrative areas. This will allow us to understand what and how local administrative service is actually being delivered. I want to emphasize that we will not be auditing your records; but are simply looking to see whether administrative processes overall are being done appropriately and within Agency guidelines.

Through the interviews and functional review, we, as a team, look for trends and try to identify areas of concern, if any--and again, this encompasses all levels of administrative management in ARS. We may also offer recommendations or suggestions to help people work smarter. In addition, throughout the visit, we will be looking for innovative ways that functions are being performed, in order to adopt them ourselves and pass them along to other Locations.

If we can provide assistance or get answers while we're here, we will.

Finally, ____ (day of week) at ___(time), the results of our review will be passed along to you at the Exit Conference. A written report will be prepared within 6 weeks of the review. LC, LAO/T and AAO (name individuals) will each receive copies and we encourage these individuals to share this report with you. ARS Headquarters Divisions also receive copies of these reports and they and the AAO are responsible for assuring that an action plan is developed for areas of concern.

As a follow up, after all reviews have been completed, the CARE Coordinator maintains a tracking system which emphasizes positive things being done at Locations that could benefit others. The report also addresses trends, areas of concern and actions taken to

address those areas. To date, data that has already been collected has enabled Headquarters Administrative and Financial Management Divisions to work at resolving common issues for the benefit of the Agency. One way this has been accomplished is in forming Teams to address specific processes and in revising or, in some cases abolishing policies and procedures.

CARE will not only continue to bring issues to light, but to continually assess issues that have been addressed to ensure end results were as intended. So, you can see that while your specific Location is being reviewed, you are a part of ARS, and as such, your issues and concerns contribute to looking at Agency administrative services as a whole. We, therefore, encourage you to be specific in your concerns and as open and honest as possible.

Again, we're looking forward to visiting with all of you and learning about the research conducted here. We know our review will be disruptive to your operation, but hopefully we can keep it to a minimum.

Are there any questions?

Attachment II-F - Sample Closing Conference Notes

SAMPLE EXIT CONFERENCE SPEECH

As a result of all the information you've provided us via our personal interviews and reviews of specific administrative areas, we've looked for trends; ways to help you work smarter; ways that we can utilize processes here to help other Locations work smarter; how customers and providers of administrative services interact; and problem areas, if any. With this information, we're in a position to make reasonable assurance certifications as required to be in compliance with applicable laws and regulations, and to make recommendations to improve processes.

At this time we want to share with you a synopsis of what will be in the final report. There are nine functional areas that we must comment about in the final report. These areas are:

General Administrative Management

Procurement

Property

Facilities

Safety and Health

Human Resources

Information Systems and Automated Data Processing

Budget and Fiscal

Civil Rights

Extramural Agreements

I'm going to read to you summary statements of our significant findings in each of these individual areas. In the final report, more detailed information will surround the significant findings. Also, I need to emphasize that there will be no surprises in the final report; nothing will be in the report that is not addressed here. Again, in the interest of time, you may receive a more abbreviated version than what will be in the final report.

When the final report is sent to the Location, any areas of concern where an Agency policy is not being adhered to will be marked **AAssurance with Exception@,** or in very serious situations, **ANo Assurance@.** These areas must be addressed by the Location as to how they plan to correct the situation.

Also, as was mentioned in the opening conference, all reports are looked at for trends, better ways of doing things, etc., for Divisions/Areas to look at problem areas and methods of process improvement. A summary of all Locations reviewed for the year are entered into a CARE trends tracking database that will be available shortly on the Internet. Summary reports are also provided to Agency management so trends can be assessed. Based on some of the information in CARE reports, P&P=s have either been updated or even abolished.

Finally, we'll be glad to answer any questions you may have about individual items, but we ask that you wait until I've read you all of the Significant Findings so you can get an overall feel of the findings.

(After reading significant findings, ask for questions and then thank Location for their participation).

Attachment III-A - Team Leader Checklist

Team Leader Checklist

Immediately After CARE Training for New Members

CARE Coordinator provides mailing list of team
members to Team Leaders   _____

Work with Co-Leader/Teams/Locations to set
dates of reviews   _____

Four-Six Weeks Prior to Review

Call AAO to discuss issues at Location
to be reviewed and to assure Location is aware it
was selected for review   _____

Call LAO/T and LC to explain CARE process and discuss
issues at Location. Work with LAO/T on who will be
interviewed, scheduling and conference room
accommodations, lunch with administrative staff   _____

Send Scheduling Letter to Location   _____

Conduct conference call with Team to discuss
logistics of review, issues at the Location,
functional review responsibilities, interview
partners, etc.   _____

Packet of information for Team Members
      Hotel logistics for Team
      Airline schedules for team
      Home telephone numbers for team members
      Which team member(s) will rent vehicles
      Functional areas members are responsible for
      Characteristics package for Location
      Schedule for review (including interview
      schedule which should have who they will
      interview, times, room #=s)   _____

One Week Prior to Review

Call LAO/T and AAO to assure everything is in place for
review   _____

Prepare Opening/Closing Conference Notes   _____

After CARE Review

Four-Six Weeks After Review Submit final CARE report to
CARE Coordinator (Team input should be incorporated)   _____

Attachment III-B – CARE Report Critical Path

CARE Report Critical Path

Week of Review	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6
Review Team On Site						
	Team Members draft assigned functional write-up and submit draft write-ups to Team Leader					
			Team Leader compiles report and edits writing styles to similar voice			

Week of Review	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6
				Team Leader submits first draft to team and receives comments		
					Team Leader prepares and submits final report from comments received	
						CARE Coordinator, Special Assistant to DAAFM, and DAAFM review and sign report.

Attachment III-C - CARE Evaluation Forms

Location Evaluation of CARE Team

	Excellent	Good	Poor	N/A
Quality of Information and Services Provided				
Overall Performance of Team onsite				
Performance of Individual Team Members:				
Team Leader				
Team Co-Leader				
Team Member				
Team Member				
Team Member				
Team Member				
Team Member				
Team Member				

Comments: (Required for any responses of ›Poor‹, encouraged for any responses
of ›Excellent‹; use back of page if required)

CARE Team Self-Evaluation

Scale: E=Excellent, G=Good, P=Poor

Skills:	Team Leader	Team Co-leader	Team Member	Team Member	Team Member	Team Member	Team Member	Team Member
Willingness to Learn								
Teamwork								
Communication Skills								
Objectivity								
Adaptability to Changing Situations								
Leadership								
Organizational Skills								

Comments: (Required for any responses of ›P‹, encouraged for any responses of ›E‹; use back of page if required)