

INDIAN AFFAIRS
DIRECTIVES TRANSMITTAL SHEET

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs (Management) (DAS-M)		DATE JUN 27 2013

EXPLANATION OF MATERIAL TRANSMITTED:

This policy establishes guidance for the mandatory use of the Data Tracking System (DTS) to develop and track all Indian Affairs (IA) correspondence. All IA bureaus and offices are required to use *only* the approved and official correspondence system, DTS, for creating, tracking, logging, and processing official IA correspondence, whether controlled or non-controlled.



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FILING INSTRUCTIONS:

Remove: None

Insert: 7 IAM 4 (New)

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- 1.1 Purpose.** This policy establishes guidance for the mandatory use of the Data Tracking System (DTS) to develop and track all Indian Affairs (IA) correspondence.
- 1.2 Scope.** This policy applies to all bureaus, programs and offices under the authority of the Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs (AS-IA), including the offices reporting to the AS-IA, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE).
- 1.3 Policy.** This policy documents the conversion from the previously used Information Management System (IMS) to the Department of the Interior’s (DOI) enterprise-wide correspondence system, DTS. The transition to DTS facilitates a reduction in paper creation and waste; transitioning to an all-electronic numbering and approval process; becoming more uniform with Department initiatives; and implementing a more effective method for creating, tracking and routing IA documents between IA and Department bureaus and offices.

All IA bureaus and offices are required to use *only* the approved and official correspondence system, DTS, for creating, tracking, logging, and processing official IA correspondence, whether controlled or non-controlled. Unless otherwise directed, or for sensitive documents that may include Personally Identifiable Information (PII), Office of Inspector General reports, or Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests, IA must use the DTS as designed and instructed. IA offices will have the ability to expand their uses of DTS and customize it to their individual program needs as well.

1.4 Authority.

A. Statutes and Regulations.

- 1) P.L. 107-347, E-Government Act of 2002
- 2) P.L. 105-277, Title XVII, Government Paperwork Elimination Act of 1998 (GPEA)
- 3) 44 USC 31, Records Management by Federal Agencies

B. Guidance.

- 1) Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs (Management) Memorandum, *Data Tracking System (DTS): Transition and Assistance*, March 20, 2013

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- 2) Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Memorandum, *Increasing Shared Approaches to Information Technology Services*, May 2, 2012
- 3) 382 Department Manual (DM) 3, Correspondence Management
- 4) 382 DM 11, Managing Records in Electronic Form

C. Handbooks.

- 1) Department of the Interior Secretarial Correspondence Procedures Handbook, October 1991
- 2) Indian Affairs Correspondence Handbook (7 IAM-H), June 2004
- 3) U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) Data Tracking System (DTS) User Manual, April 2008

1.5 Responsibilities.

A. **Deputy Assistant Secretary - Indian Affairs (Management) (DAS-M)** is responsible for ensuring that an effective system is in place to create, track, and route all controlled and non-controlled correspondence for all IA programs, and that appropriate guidance is developed and communicated throughout IA to ensure staff and management understand and use the DTS appropriately.

B. **Directors, BIA and BIE; Deputy Directors; Regional Directors; Associate Deputy Directors; Superintendents; Assistant Deputy Directors; Education Line Officers; and Heads of Field Offices/Agencies** are responsible for:

- Appointing administrative staff in their offices to track correspondence and official documentation;
- Ensuring that an effective process is in place to train and provide guidance to all employees who will use DTS (staff and management);
- Ensuring that DTS is used for all IA correspondence;
- Providing guidance to IA programs where correspondence and the use of DTS is concerned;
- Ensuring that all appropriate parties are included in the surnaming process for correspondence;
- Ensuring that responses to incoming correspondence, for which their office(s) is/are responsible for, are timely, complete, accurate, and meet the standards for plain language.

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C. Office Directors are responsible for:

- Establishing internal procedures to ensure that staff prepare accurate and appropriate responses in the correct format to controlled and non-controlled correspondence;
- Ensuring that all appropriate parties are included in the surnaming process for correspondence;
- Ensuring that documents and supporting attachments are provided to the appropriate administrative staff for uploading into DTS, and that office staff coordinate the timely tracking of correspondence through the DTS with administrative staff.

D. Staff Assigned to Write Correspondence are responsible for:

- Meeting due dates related to correspondence;
- Following established DOI, IA and Federal Government style guidelines, and ensuring correspondence is appropriate and accurate, grammatically correct and free of typographical errors;
- Identifying and including in the surnaming process other IA or external organizations that should review the correspondence;
- Working with the administrative staff assigned to correspondence to track correspondence in the DTS.

E. Administrative Staff Who Assemble and Track Correspondence and Executive ASIA Staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring correspondence follows established format standards and style guidelines, and working with IA program staff to correct any errors;
- Uploading documents and supporting attachments into DTS;
- Using the tools available in DTS, including routing, versioning, closing files, and surnaming to track correspondence throughout the process;
- Maintaining information and providing reports as necessary on the status of overdue correspondence;
- Working with IA program staff and management to facilitate the completion of overdue correspondence through the DTS.

1.6 Definitions.

- A. **Correspondence** is any communication by letter, form letter, electronic mail, telegram, memorandum, endorsement, summary sheet, postcard, routing slip, and other written communication.
- B. **Controlled Correspondence** is correspondence that is formally developed and/or received, tracked, and managed using a correspondence management system.

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Typically this type of correspondence is viewed as important and requires a response.

- C. **Data Tracking System (DTS)** is a secure, web-based information technology system used to upload and assign correspondence for action; assign surname packages prepared for other reasons (e.g., Federal Register notice); and to electronically track all correspondence.
- D. **Non-controlled Correspondence** is correspondence that is not controlled by the DOI Office of the Secretary, Executive Secretary; rather it is correspondence that is received and/or controlled by the IA Executive Secretary and will be forwarded to the appropriate IA office to respond to if the IA office deems a response is necessary.
- E. **Surname** is a procedure which indicates concurrence with the content of a written document by a designated official.

1.7 Procedures. The USFWS DTS User Manual provides detailed instructions and illustrations to assist DTS users. The Manual can be located by entering a search for 'DTS' on the USFWS web page: <http://www.fws.gov/>