

DEPARTMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Departmental Management provides the executive-level leadership, policy, guidance, and coordination needed to manage the diverse, complex, and nationally significant programs which are the Department's responsibilities.

The Secretary of the Interior is responsible for ensuring that the diverse programs and priorities of the Department are conducted effectively and efficiently in accordance with Presidential and Congressional direction. Accordingly, the Secretary of the Interior provides executive level leadership from the Secretary's Immediate Office, coordination among bureaus, and management of significant Departmental initiatives through programmatic Assistant Secretaries, policy guidance from the Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget, and cost-effective services through the Interior Service Center, the Office of the Solicitor, and the Office of Inspector General.

Five Assistant Secretaries advise and assist the Secretary on policy matters in carrying out his statutory, policy, and management responsibilities. They include Assistant Secretaries of Land and Minerals Management; Water and Science; Fish and Wildlife and Parks; Indian Affairs; and Policy, Management and Budget.

Despite an uncertain fiscal situation for a large part of 1996, we achieved some noteworthy accomplishments: We continued to streamline our operations and reduce overhead; helped to move closer to a more unified Interior Department; provided leadership in the innovative delivery of services to Interior bureaus and programs; and improved the delivery of reliable, timely, and useful information on Departmental operations.

Organizationally, several significant changes occurred in the Department, including the closure of the Bureau of Mines, and the realignment of functions of the National Biological Service and the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The termination of the Bureau of Mines and the transfer of its remaining core functions were accomplished in 1996. The National Biological Service joined the U.S. Geological Survey as a fourth operating division effective October 1, 1995. The Bureau of Indian Affairs' Office of Trust Fund Management was placed under the Office of Special Trustee for American Indians, where a major effort is underway to correct and improve accounting of

financial resources held by the Secretary in trust for American Indians.

Reinventing Interior Programs

The Department has made significant progress over the past year in changing business practices and finding more cost-effective and efficient management strategies. The Department is using the tools of performance management, reengineering and organizational streamlining to improve programs, operate more efficiently, and provide better service to customers. A common thread that characterizes many of Interior's successful reform efforts is a focus on partnership and cooperation as a new way of doing business. The Department is shifting toward more coordinated and cooperative efforts that involve multiple bureaus, other agencies, State and local governments, and other partners.

The Department has initiated a series of programs to improve service, reduce costs, and use technology to provide easier access to government information and services. The Department has an aggressive reinvention laboratory program in place that has resulted in improvements to a number of programs and work processes, and new ways to improve performance and meet the growing demand for its services.

In recognition of its innovation and achievement in the reinvention of programs and work processes, the Department was selected as a recipient of Vice President Gore's "Hammer Award" on three separate occasions. The awards were presented for the Department's California Desert Lab; the U.S. Geological Survey's Information Dissemination Lab; and the National Park Service's Denver Service Center Lab.

Status of Implementing the Government Performance and Results Act

The Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) calls for effective planning, budgeting, program evaluation, and fiscal accountability for Federal agencies. GPRA will be fully implemented in 1999, and strategic plans for the Department and its bureaus will be in place by September 30, 1997.



Bighorn Canyon (photo by R. Frear)

Interior has worked collaboratively with Congress, the Office of Management and Budget, and others in pursuing innovative strategies to meet the challenges, expectations, and requirements that the GPRA created. The Department is exploring effective ways to link strategic planning and budget formulation and to consolidate reporting requirements of the GPRA and other related reports.

The Department will continue to pursue improved accountability by cascading performance goals throughout the organization and tying them to individual performance plans and agreements. The Department is gathering performance data that will form a baseline for implementation of the GPRA in 1999.

Entrepreneurial Activities

Today, the demand for and interest in cross servicing is increasing in conjunction with streamlining, reinvention and other National Performance Review (NPR) initiatives. The Department has been a leader in providing cross-servicing and franchising services to a variety of government clients. These activities and services are provided by three service centers: the Denver Administrative Service Center (DASC); the Washington Administrative Service Center (WASC); and the Interior Service Center (ISC).

These service centers maintain a unique competitive position and exercise leadership in providing cost-effective services to Interior and non-Interior clients. Service centers have become proven alternatives for agencies that wish to reduce costs associated with administrative systems and support services, achieve economies of scale, and produce operating efficiencies. Service centers provide a variety of services on

reimbursable basis under the Economy Act. Their mission is to provide cost effective, high quality administrative systems and support services that are responsive to customer needs.

Today, service centers provide administrative systems and support services to over 80 governmental entities in the following areas:

- personnel, payroll, procurement and financial management systems and operations;
- support services, such as general purpose mainframe computer timesharing, computer based training products and electronic commerce; and
- aircraft services in business systems, aircraft acquisitions, technical assistance, and aviation safety.

In addition, Interior has been selected to establish a Franchise Pilot Program under the provisions of the Government Management Reform Act of 1994.

To assist in managing these organizations and coordinating the efforts of the Service Centers, the Department has established an Administrative Service Advisory Board to provide executive leadership and guidance to Interior service providers.

Customer Service

The Department is committed to providing the best possible service to customers, partners, and stakeholders. Over the past three years, Interior's bureaus and offices have developed customer service plans, established standards of service, and conducted customer surveys. This data has been used to make management changes based on customer feedback. The Department is also using partnerships and new technology to improve service and operate more efficiently.

Bureaus published their second annual customer service reports in September 1996. These reports provide feedback on how Interior is meeting the needs of its customers, improving service, and meeting its standards. The reports are available electronically on the Internet at http://www.doi.gov/doi_cust.html.