

Department of the Interior Departmental Manual

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Series: Organization

Part 110: Office of the Secretary

Chapter 17: Office of the Executive Secretariat and Regulatory Affairs

Originating Office: Office of the Executive Secretariat and Regulatory Affairs

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17.1 General. The Office of the Executive Secretariat and Regulatory Affairs (OES) is located in the Immediate Office of the Secretary. The OES is headed by a Director who serves as principal advisor to, and discharges the duties of, the Secretary, with the authority and direct responsibility for Departmental policy and management of:

- A. Correspondence
- B. Regulatory activities
- C. Committees
- D. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) activities
- E. Document production
- F. Directives

17.2 Organization and Functions. The OES staff is organized under two deputies and three functional positions as follows: Deputy Director – Correspondence, Document Production, and FOIA Management; Deputy Director – Policy and Regulatory Affairs; Committee Management Officer; Document Management Unit Supervisor; and a Senior Advisor; all of whom report directly to the Director. The functional descriptions are described below.

A. Deputy Director – Correspondence, Document Production, and FOIA Management. The Deputy Director – Correspondence, Document Production, and FOIA Management serves as principal advisor to, and discharges the duties of, the Director, with the authority and direct responsibility for policy and management of Departmental correspondence and activities related to Departmental compliance with the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 U.S.C. 552), which includes the following:

(1) Correspondence. The Correspondence staff has primary responsibility for the Department's correspondence policy and for documents signed by or addressed to the Secretary

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and Deputy Secretary. This includes: controlling incoming correspondence and assigning action to the appropriate Departmental office; coordinating development of drafts and reviews of Secretarial correspondence, and determining the signature and clearance levels; ensuring quality standards for documents prepared for the signature of the Secretary and the Deputy Secretary; ensuring that outgoing correspondence accurately reflects Departmental policy and incorporates relevant Bureau/office positions, and providing information to the Department, the White House, Congress, other Federal agencies, State and local governments, Indian tribes, and the public; revising, as necessary, the Departmental and Secretarial Correspondence Handbooks; and providing technical assistance and training to Bureaus/offices for correspondence management.

(2) Document Production. The Document Production staff has primary responsibility for production of documents in response to Congressional inquiries, subpoenas, and other inquiries. The Deputy coordinates relationships within the Department to ensure production is timely and that the views of the Secretary, the Solicitor, and affected Bureaus/offices are represented and considered. The Deputy manages priorities among requests for production and initiates meetings, when appropriate, to facilitate resolution of issues as they arise.

(3) Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). The FOIA staff has primary responsibility for the Department's FOIA policy and review of Office of the Secretary documents released under FOIA requests. This includes: reviewing FOIA requests and working with the Solicitor's Office to determine documents that will be released; training Departmental FOIA staff on FOIA laws, regulations, and policies; maintaining the Departmental FOIA handbook and regulations; and preparing and submitting the annual FOIA report to the Department of Justice.

B. Deputy Director – Policy and Regulatory Affairs. The Deputy Director – Policy and Regulatory Affairs serves as principal advisor to, and discharges the duties of, the Director, with the authority and direct responsibility for policy and management of Departmental regulatory activities and directives, which includes the following:

(1) Regulatory Affairs. The Regulatory Affairs staff has primary responsibility for regulatory policy for the Department including developing policy and managing the regulatory process. This includes: facilitating agreements and working relationships among Bureaus/offices and managing the Department's relationships with the Office of the Federal Register; managing the Department's regulatory relationship and working on policy and regulatory documents with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), Executive Office of the President (EOP), and the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ); providing technical assistance and guidance to Bureaus/offices for publishing Federal Register documents and writing regulations in "plain language"; managing interagency regulatory affairs, including coordinating Bureau/office reviews of documents received from OMB during interagency reviews; reviewing and ensuring that Departmental policy documents and regulations comply with all legal and policy requirements; and developing the Department's semiannual agenda of regulations, regulatory plan, and other reports required by Congress, the President, and OMB.

(2) Directives Management. The Directives Management staff has primary responsibility for Departmental directives as required by the Federal Records Act (44 U.S.C. 31) and the Administrative Procedure Act (5 U.S.C. 552). This includes: developing and managing a system of Departmental Directives that includes the Departmental Manual, Secretary's Orders, Departmental Handbooks, Succession Memorandums, and, as appropriate, other written internal directives; reviewing and coordinating Departmental comments on proposed Presidential documents (i.e., Executive orders, Proclamations, and Presidential memoranda); providing guidance and ensuring that Bureaus/offices prepare Departmental directives consistent with Departmental policy requirements; coordinating Office of the Secretary review and approval of Departmental directives and, when appropriate, Departmental reviews of external directives; and maintaining the official and historical records of Departmental directives including the Electronic Library of Interior Policies (ELIPS).

C. Committee Management Officer. The Committee Management Officer, under the direction of the Director, supervises the Department's committee management effort as set forth in 308 DM. This includes developing, overseeing, and coordinating the Department's Committee Management Program including the review of actions that require the Secretary's approval.

D. Document Management Unit Supervisor. The Document Management Unit Supervisor, under the direction of the Director, supervises the Document Management Unit. The Document Management Unit has primary Departmental responsibility for the production of documents in response to requests from Congress and the Courts. This includes: working with the Solicitor's Office to produce documents pursuant to litigation and coordinating the Department's production of documents in response to requests from the Congress; facilitating reviews of Departmental documents by the Independent Counsel, U.S. Special Counsel, Inspector General's Office, congressional staff and outside organizations; managing document production and responses to FOIA requests, in coordination with the Deputy Director – Correspondence and FOIA Management and the Solicitor's Office.

E. Senior Advisor. The Senior Advisor, under the direction of the Director, is responsible for day-to-day operation of the Office, all administrative functions, and correspondence quality control. The Senior Advisor maintains appropriate Office staffing levels; monitors human resource requirements and ensures conformance with regulations and DOI policy; prepares OES appraisals of employee performance and awards for supervisors; provides for acquisition, use, and management of all property, equipment, and services that support the Office; formulates the OES budget and produces justifications to support budget amounts sufficient to cover program needs; establishes and maintains systematic methods of analyzing operating expenses; sets policy and manages archiving of correspondence; serves as a technical expert on all correspondence matters and handles the most difficult actions where there are no precedent cases; and provides final review of correspondence and other documents submitted for signature by the Secretary or Deputy Secretary to ensure quality, formatting, and consistency with OES correspondence standards.