

Department of the Interior Departmental Manual

Effective Date: 7/26/04

Series: Organization

Part 110: Office of the Secretary

Chapter 6: Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs

Originating Office: Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs

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6.1 General. The Director, Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs (OCL), discharges the duties of the Secretary with the authority and direct responsibility for the Department's official policies and activities with respect to legislation and congressional liaison activities, except for appropriations issues for which the Office of Budget in the Office of the Assistant Secretary - Policy, Management and Budget is responsible.

6.2 Primary Functions. The primary functions of the OCL are as follows:

- A. Serves as the Department's primary liaison with Congressional Committees and individual Members of Congress;
- B. Coordinates the Department's presentation of views on all legislative matters and resolves inter- and intra-Departmental disagreements on policy and issues related to those views; and
- C. Serves as the Secretary's focal point for Congressional oversight, Congressional correspondence, and Congressional requests for documents. In addition, the OCL provides guidance and assistance to individuals nominated by the President to positions in the Department.

6.3 Responsibilities. Under the direction of the Director, OCL, the responsibilities of the office are carried out as follows:

- A. Congressional Affairs
 - (1) Communicates to the Congress policies of the Department and the viewpoints of the Secretary regarding Congressional issues and programs, and other matters of interest to the Department;
 - (2) Facilitates interchange of information between Congress and the Department to maintain close and harmonious relationships, and to fully present the Secretary's policies and

viewpoints;

(3) Communicates with Members of Congress on administrative and policy matters regarding the scope of programs and activities of the Department;

(4) Coordinates oversees and provides policy guidance and direction regarding congressional and legislative activities of the Department's bureaus and offices; and

(5) Serves as the Departmental Congressional and legislative affairs liaison with the White House.

B. Legislative Counsel

(1) Oversees the preparation and coordination of the Department's views on all legislative matters (including proposed legislation, testimony, legislative reports, correspondence on legislation, and any other written statement expressing views on a legislative matter); the clearance of those views by the Office of Management and Budget; and the presentation of those views to the Congress.

(2) Coordinates the Department's response to the Office of Management and Budget on legislative matters of other agencies (including proposed legislation, testimony, legislative reports, correspondence on legislation, and any other written statement expressing views on a legislative matter) referred to the Department for comment.

(3) Maintains contacts on legislative matters with the Congress and other Federal agencies.

(4) Provides drafting service assistance to Departmental offices and Members of Congress.

6.4 Organization. The OCL includes the Director, who is assisted by Deputy Directors, the Legislative Counsel, and support staff.

7/26/04 #3629

Replaces 8/21/97 #3169