

# Department of the Interior Departmental Manual

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**Effective Date:** 9/24/86

**Series:** Information Resources Management

**Part 381:** Origination of Records and Information

**Chapter 6:** Reports Management Program

**Originating Office:** Office of Information Resources Management

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## 381 DM 6

**6.1 Purpose.** The purposes of the reports management program are to provide a Departmentwide system for the control, evaluation, and improvement of reporting requirements, and to ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

**6.2 Authority.** The reports management program is operated under the authority and provisions of various laws, such as the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980 (44 U.S. C. 3501 et. seq.), the Federal Records Act of 1950 (44 U.S.C. 3102), regulatory issuances of Federal agencies, such as the Office of Management and Budget Regulations, 5 CFR 1320 and GSA Federal Information Resources Management Regulations (FIRMR), 41 CFR 201-45.102; and 380 DM 1.

**6.3 Scope.** The reports management program applies to all Departmental offices, bureaus, and field activities of the Department of the Interior, and covers both reporting requirements originated at all levels of Government external to the Department, and those originated by Department components and imposed internally and externally. Execution of the reports management program normally will be accomplished in coordination with other elements of the Department records management program.

**6.4 Objectives.** The objectives of the program are:

- A. To provide officials with timely information in a clear, useful format.
- B. To collect, transmit, process, use and store information through the most economical utilization of staff, funds, equipment and services.
- C. To avoid the imposition of invalid or inefficient reporting requirements.
- D. To maintain management control over the promulgation, use, and cancellation of reporting requirements.
- E. To establish and maintain records of the origin, cost, currency, and cancellation of reports, and to provide needed information to originators and respondents.
- F. To coordinate reports management activities with overall records management

activities, such as forms and directives, and with Departmental and bureau ADP and information systems.

## **6.5 Responsibilities.**

A. Office of Information Resources Management (PIR). The Chief, Division of Directives and Regulatory Management, PIR, is responsible for:

- (1) Developing Departmental policies, requirements, standards, and procedures for the reports management program.
- (2) Providing technical assistance to bureaus and offices in executing reports management policies and procedures.
- (3) Evaluating the effectiveness of reports management throughout the Department.
- (4) Performing the functions of a report control unit as defined in 6.6M.

B. Bureaus. Bureaus and offices are responsible for:

- (1) Ensuring the effectiveness of Department reports management policies and standards, supplementing them as necessary for internal use.
- (2) Issuing adequate instructions on reports management, covering the assignment of responsibilities, designation of reports control units, policies and standards, and operational procedures.
- (3) Conducting reports management operations in accordance with Department standards within their headquarters and field activities.

**6.6 Definitions.** The following definitions apply to the reports management program in the Department of the Interior.

A. Report. Data or information which is transmitted for use in determining policy; planning, controlling, and evaluating operations and performance; making administrative determinations; establishing and maintaining official records, or preparing other reports. This data or information may be a narrative, statistical, graphic, or other form and may be displayed on paper, magnetic tape, or other media.

B. Reporting Requirement. The statement, directive, or request which contains the imposition of a report to be submitted from one official or organization to another.

C. Reporting. The process by which data or information for a report is collected, organized, transmitted, and retained.

D. Reports Management. An organized and continuous effort to control and improve the quality and economy, of reporting.

E. Congressional Reporting. Any reporting requirement imposed by Statute, a Congressional committee, or a member of Congress, directly on a particular agency, group of agencies, or a bureau.

F. Public Reporting (Information Collection). The collection of answers, to identical questions, from any non-Federal government, business, institution, group, or individual, and which is subject to the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980, and 5 CFR 1320 (see 381 DM 11).

G. Interagency Reporting. Any requirement that involves a report to an agency from one or more other agencies covered by the Federal Records Act (see 381 DM 10).

H. Internal Reports. Reporting requirements originated and used completely within the Department of the Interior (see 381 DM 9).

I. Continuing Reporting Requirement. A reporting requirement imposed on an extended, recurring basis, stipulating periodic, situation or as-required submission.

J. One Time Reporting Requirement. A reporting requirement imposed for the submission of a single report, and automatically canceled upon submission.

K. Operational Report. A form or other document used to facilitate, accomplish, or provide a description or record of a transaction, function, or event; i.e., purchase order, bill of lading, personnel actions, management studies and management surveys.

L. Report Symbol. An alphanumerical identification assigned to reports that have been approved by a reports control unit.

M. Reports Control Unit. A reports management operation which reviews and analyzes proposed and existing reporting systems and requirements; exercises delegated approval, disapproval, and cancellation authority (or makes recommendations to higher authority concerning such actions); assigns identifying report symbols to approved reports; establishes and maintains records and reference aids; and coordinates reports management with all relevant administrative management operations.

N. Reports Analysis. A management technique which determines the essentiality and effectiveness of a reporting requirement or system based upon examination and evaluation of all elements of the report.

**6.7 General Policies.** The following are general reports management policies:

A. To comply with reports program management requirements, guidelines, and procedures established by the Office of Management and Budget, and the General Services Administration.

B. To establish, maintain, and observe reports management standards and control and coordination procedures which foster an effective Departmentwide program.

C. To review, analyze, and control all reporting requirements originated within the Department so that only essential information is requested and is gathered with a minimum of effort and expense.

D. To share information and data obtained through reporting among various organizational components, subject to considerations of security classification and privileged or limited-use information.

E. To comply with all valid reporting requirements imposed upon the Department by external authority.

**6.8 Program Management Standards.** The following standards should be applied to reporting requirements when they are initiated, promulgated, responded to or reviewed:

A. Assign responsibility for each report imposed within the Department to a cognizant office. This office is the originator of an internal report, or the sponsor for Interior's response to an external report, and is the office to which inquiries are made regarding explanation of the report, its currency, or cancellation.

B. Prescribe each authorized reporting requirement by means of a directive which is recognized as official guidance, and which includes the title and report symbol of the report, when it is due, what is to be reported, who is to report and to whom, and the title and number of any forms to be used.

C. Impose reporting requirements via the organizational chain of authority in order to avoid imposition of workload upon smaller units when larger units may be able to furnish needed information.

D. Apply the concept of cost-effectiveness to every report; the time, cost, and effort involved should not exceed the report's value.

E. Avoid negative reporting requirements; i.e., to report that something did not occur, or to report that there is nothing to report or no change since a previous report.

F. Integrate the actions necessary to acquire and record data or information into operating procedures and completion of forms, wherever possible, rather than preparing a report as a separate activity.

G. Employ reporting by exception; i.e., establishing normal or expected limits of performance, and requiring only exceptions therefrom to be reported.

H. If possible, use statistical sampling when identical data is required from a large

number of respondents.

I. If possible, conserve respondents' time by furnishing them current data for verification, correction, and return.

**6.9 Exemptions.** The following are exempt from reports standards and controls:

A. A single report on a one-time basis requested by one organization of a single respondent.

B. Individual transaction documents such as requisitions, personnel actions, vouchers, and legal briefs.

C. All normal accounting documents, records and reports included in the course of routine accounting, auditing, and budgeting activities. (Normally, all documents except special financial reports generated on a nonrecurring basis).

D. Comments requested on proposed texts, responses to audits and investigations, and testimony and hearings.

E. Information voluntarily given, in the absence of a stated or implied reporting requirement.

F. Exemptions from interagency clearance procedures as specified in 41 CFR 201-45.609-1.

**6.10 Compliance.**

A. Officials and organizations of the Department of the Interior are required to respond to approved or exempt reporting requirements punctually and completely in compliance with the requirement set forth by the requiring law, agency, bureau, or office.

B. Officials and organizations of the Department are not required to respond to interagency reporting requirements imposed on them unless there is evidence that a report symbol has been assigned, or, if the reporting requirement is imposed by law or an agency exempt from the clearance process as defined in 41 CFR 201-45.609-1.

C. Officials and organizations of the Department may challenge an internal reporting requirement by submitting a memorandum to the originating organization. Challenges will document one or more of the following:

- (1) Other reports submitted provide all or part of the information requested.
- (2) Reporting procedures are cumbersome.
- (3) Information being requested is not available.

- (4) Information is available only at great cost or expenditure of staff hours.
- (5) The requirement appears to have lost validity or currency since it was originally imposed.
- (6) Information is of questionable value or appears erroneous in the form presented.

**6.11 Implementation.** Additional requirements, guidelines, and procedures for implementation of the reports management program are published in the following chapters:

- 381 DM 7, Management of Reporting Requirements within the Department of the Interior.
- 381 DM 8, Statutory and Other Reports to Congress.
- 381 DM 9, Internal Reports.
- 381 DM 10, Interagency Reports.
- 381 DM 11, Information Collection from the Public.

**6.12 Reports Program Management Check List.** Appendix 1 is furnished as a guide for appraisal of the quality of a reports management program at any organization level. The check list is constructed to elicit a Ayes@ or Ano@ response. A Ano@ response indicates a possible deficiency that may require management attention. Appendix 1 will serve as a basic evaluation guide for evaluations conducted by PIR in accordance with 381 DM 6.5A(3).

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**381 DM 6  
Appendix 1**

**Reports Program Management CHECK LIST**

	YES	NO
1. Has the reports program been formally established within the organization, have responsibilities been assigned, and have all offices been advised in a directive?	()	()
2. Have procedures been published which inform both requesters and respondents of reports review and approval requirements and controls?	()	()

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|---|-----|-----|
| 3. Is a reports control unit designated, staffed, and carrying on reports analysis and control operations?  | ( ) | ( ) |
| 4. Does a continuously updated inventory of reports under the cognizance of the organization exist?   | ( ) | ( ) |
| 5. Are new reporting requirements submitted to reports control units for analysis and establishment of control symbols and records before imposition on respondents?  | ( ) | ( ) |
| 6. Is there a periodic review of each existing reporting requirement to ensure its validity and to examine it for possible reduction or combination with another, or complete cancellation?   | ( ) | ( ) |
| 7. Is a list of existing reporting requirements and recent cancellations regularly published?   | ( ) | ( ) |
| 8. Does the review of reports include coordination with ADP, forms, and directives management, take into account appropriate controls relating to public and interagency reports, and recognize applicable requirements of the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552), Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. 552a), and Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) (40 U.S.C. 759(f) and 15 CFR 6)? | ( ) | ( ) |
| 9. Are there ongoing projects to review and analyze information systems and management information needs beyond the scope of a single report?   | ( ) | ( ) |

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