

# Department of the Interior Departmental Manual

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**Effective Date:** 10/27/04

**Series:** Special Programs

**Part 753:** Dam Safety and Security Program

**Chapter 1:** Policy and Responsibilities

**Originating Office:** Bureau of Reclamation

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## 753 DM 1

- 1.1 **Purpose.** This chapter provides the policy and responsibilities for the Department's dam safety and security program.
- 1.2 **Scope.** The policy in this chapter applies to bureaus and offices with responsibility for acquisition, planning, design, construction, operation and maintenance, rehabilitation, modification, regulation (licensing or permitting), removal, and/or providing for security of dams. The policy also applies to Departmental dams which are owned by or have been made a part of a Department facility or project.
- 1.3 **Authorities.** Authorities for carrying out actions under the dam safety and security program include:
  - A. *Federal Guidelines for Dam Safety*, dated June 25, 1979, (as directed in an October 4, 1979 Presidential memorandum)
  - B. *The National Strategy for the Physical Protection of Critical Infrastructures and Key Assets*, dated February 2003.
  - C. *Homeland Security Presidential Directive/HSPD-7*, dated December 17, 2003.
  - D. Any subsequent Federal or Departmental policies and guidelines.
- 1.4 **Policy.**
  - A. The *Federal Guidelines for Dam Safety* state that reasonable judgments need to be made in the application of the guidelines based on the size, complexity, and hazard classification of each dam. The Guidelines can be found at [http://www.usbr.gov/ssle/dam\\_safety/dsg.pdf](http://www.usbr.gov/ssle/dam_safety/dsg.pdf). The policy in this chapter provides the minimum necessary requirements for bureau dam safety and security programs. Bureaus may establish additional policy or guidance applicable to the dams for which they are responsible.

B. Unless otherwise noted, the policy in this chapter applies to high- and significant-hazard dams as defined by applicable Department of Homeland Security/Federal Emergency Management Agency (DHS/FEMA) guidelines for the hazard classification of dams (i.e., a classification of the potential for loss of life or economic damage if those dams were to fail), unless otherwise directed by statute. Low-hazard dams are important to the operations of each respective bureau and the safety and security of these structures shall be maintained through various programs as deemed appropriate by each bureau.

1.5 **Definition.** For the purpose of this chapter, a dam is a water impounding structure that meets the requirements for reporting in the National Inventory of Dams (as authorized by the National Dam Inspection Act of 1972 (P.L. 92-367), as subsequently amended).

1.6 **Responsibilities.** The responsibilities within the Department are as follows:

A. Program Assistant Secretaries are responsible for ensuring that bureaus under their authority conduct dam safety and security programs in accordance with Departmental policy and the *Federal Guidelines*; and approving and reviewing their respective bureau programs, giving consideration to recommendations by the Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation. Responsibilities of the Office of Law Enforcement and Security are identified in 112 DM 17.

B. Heads of Bureaus are responsible for overall operation of a dam safety and security program in accordance with the *Federal Guidelines*, and 753 DM 2 (which describes the requirements of Bureau Dam Safety and Security Programs). Heads of bureaus and offices in the Department will designate an office(s) or official(s), reporting directly to the head of the bureau (or office) or his/her specified representative, to be responsible for dam safety and dam security program functions and duties. Responsibilities of the Designated Official(s) are delineated in 753 DM 2.2.

C. Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation, as delegated by the Secretary, and in addition to his/her duties as the head of a bureau is responsible for assuring the overall coordination and providing advice to Assistant Secretaries and bureau heads on the development and operation of the dam safety and security program in the Department. The responsibilities include:

(1) Advising and assisting bureaus in developing and operating their individual dam safety and security programs.

(2) Identifying and developing dam safety and dam security policy standards and practices in cooperation with bureaus for implementation Department-wide.

(3) Reviewing and evaluating the administrative, technical, and regulatory practices of the applicable bureaus as they relate to dam safety and security.

(4) Reviewing bureau dam safety and security programs and providing respective program Assistant Secretaries with recommendations for program improvements or revisions.

(5) Coordinating with the FEMA and with other parts of DHS on National Dam Safety Program matters and representing the Department with DHS, FEMA and other domestic or foreign entities on Departmental dam safety and security matters.

(6) Developing technical standards, criteria, and guidelines in cooperation with bureaus, for design, construction, operation, and inspection, and security of dams.

(7) Serving as Chairman of the Working Group on Dam Safety and Security as outlined in 753 DM 1.7A.

(8) Consulting with the Director, Office of Law Enforcement and Security, on matters affecting security at high and significant hazard dams.

**1.7 Intra-Departmental Coordination.** Coordination within the Department will occur as outlined below:

A. Working Group on Dam Safety and Security. The Interior Working Group on Dam Safety and Security (WGDSS) coordinates the operation of bureau dam safety and security programs in accordance with the WGDSS Charter. The Charter can be found at [http://www.usbr.gov/ssle/dam\\_safety/charter.pdf](http://www.usbr.gov/ssle/dam_safety/charter.pdf). The WGDSS is chaired by the Commissioner of Reclamation and is composed of the designated dam safety and security officials from bureaus and offices responsible for the safety and security of dams. The WGDSS meets several times per year, at the request of the Chairman.

B. Research. The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) will administer a program for dam safety and dam security research to serve the collective needs of the Department.

C. Training and Conference. Reclamation will facilitate and the WGDSS will coordinate annual conferences for bureau dam safety and security program personnel. The Department's dam safety and security training needs will be coordinated by the WGDSS.

D. Inventory. Each bureau will assist in the maintenance of the National Dam Safety Program's National Inventory of Dams (753 DM 2.7), which is administered by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Each bureau will update the National Inventory of Dams, as requested, in coordination with Reclamation.

E. Prioritization System. Reclamation will maintain a list of all the Department's high- and significant-hazard dams. Reclamation will investigate and implement systems in consultation with the other bureaus to rank the dams by various factors, including: condition, threat, vulnerability, mission criticality, consequences, and risk.

F. Reporting. Reclamation will coordinate with the other bureaus and offices to complete dam safety and security reports as required by the National Dam Safety Program or as requested by other agencies.

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