

## Trust Commission

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**From:** Bobby Crow Feather <bobby.crow.feather@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, December 17, 2012 11:36 AM  
**To:** Trust Commission  
**Subject:** Updating authority/responsibility of the BIA

I have two recommendations for updates that would certainly increase my faith in the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and the Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians (OST).

1. The Individual Indian Monies Statement of Performance that is issued annually is issued by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, but it's header and all relevant information on the document leads a person to believe that the document originates from the Office of the Special Trustee (I can provide scans if you like). This leads me to have questions. Why would one agency brand themselves as another, etc. I feel it would certainly go a long way to have it bear the appropriate agencies logo and information. We can't have faith or trust in an agency that continues to lie/misinform us.

2. I wrote a letter on September 19, 2012 to the BIA in Washington, DC and asked them a question regarding why it was taking a long time to receive copies or right of ways, leases, etc. that I had requested and was sent a letter dated December 7th, 2012 that said "The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) has an obligation to produce records under the authority of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). The BIA does not have an obligation or the authority to produce copies of records, particularly trust title records, to any person solely based on the demand of that person, including Indian land owners or trust beneficiaries. However, the BIA will usually accommodate a reasonable request for title information or documentation from a land owner to accomplish a purpose or reason stated by the land owner. The BIA, acting as Federal Trustee, does have a duty to furnish complete and accurate information concerning the nature and amount of trust property to a trust beneficiary. The Individual Indian Monies Statement of Performance is issued to you on a quarterly basis and meets the duty to provide that information to you. If your account has had no activity for a period of 18 months, you will receive an annual statement instead of a quarterly statement." The letter is signed Bryan C. Rice, "Acting" Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs

The BIA should be accountable for responding to our demand for our records. This is partly the reason that things have escalated and many have lost faith in them. To provide us with this ability would definitely increase the transparency and accountability of the BIA and OST.