

CARE FUNCTIONAL REVIEW

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT – GENERAL

1.0 Location Administrative and Financial Management

- Provide a summary of how administrative processes in general are functioning.
- How do the administrative and program personnel interact? Are monthly staff meetings conducted? If so, are they beneficial?
- Is the Location conducting any “best practices” that can be captured and shared with other Locations?

1.01 Area Administrative and Financial Management

- Provide a summary of the level of interaction between the Area and the Location.

1.02 Headquarters Administrative and Financial Management

- Describe the interaction between the Location and Headquarters.
- If the Location deals with specific Divisions, state relationship and description of service provided.

1.03 Other

- Describe any other processes that do not fit into the above-mentioned categories (i.e., program process issues)

CARE FUNCTIONAL REVIEW

ACQUISITION OF SUPPLIES, SERVICES, AND EQUIPMENT

For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Linda Wilson on 301-504-1733.

We recommend that the reviewer take a copy of the Federal Acquisition Regulation to assist in performing a review of acquisitions.

2.0 General Acquisitions

- Select 10 percent of orders from the purchase order log book for review. Look carefully at orders placed during the last two weeks of the fiscal year and at orders over \$3,000.

2.01 Requisitions

References:

APD Issuances - <http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/acquisitions/alerts.htm>

Federal Acquisition Regulation – <http://www.acqnet.gov/far/index.html>

213.3M REE Purchase Card Program – <http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/purchase-cards/index.htm>

DR 5013-6 – <http://www.ocio.usda.gov/directives/doc/DR5013-006.htm>

AbilityOne Program – <http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/acquisitions/ability-one.htm>

- Verify that the action was processed via the Integrated Acquisition System (IAS). If the action was processed external to IAS, a completed Procurement Request (PR) and FFIS RQ print screen is required. For orders external to IAS:
 - Ensure the file includes a PR complete with required sub-account, specifications, funding, estimates, justifications, and approval.
 - Verify that the PR is signed by an authorized individual.
 - Verify that the PR has a procurement request number and is properly dated.
 - Verify that an FFIS RQ print screen is included in the file.
 - Are OF 347's or other approved procurement vehicles and/or Purchase Orders, prepared in accordance with the instructions on IRS Form 1099 reporting requirements (NFC Manual Title II, Chapter 5)?
- Verify that a tracking system is in place to handle the administration of PRs, contracts, purchase orders, and assignments of requests for action. An example

would be to have a manual or automated log. Verify that an action is traceable through the system, i.e., from PR to award document. Is there a management information system in place to report on status of sensitive actions?

2.02 Procurement

- Verify that current P&P's, Bulletins, etc., are readily available.
- Document the kind of random review and supervision of the purchasing function at the Location to insure efficiency and compliance with regulations. For example, does the AO randomly review purchase order files, etc? What is the Area's involvement in this regard?

2.02-1 Blanket Purchase Agreements (BPA's)

- Ensure that BPA's are replaced by using the purchase card when appropriate. Check BPA for frequency of use.
- Ensure that BPA's are documented on a proper form (FAR Subpart 13.307) and contain all the necessary terms and conditions, including individuals authorized to place orders and extent of their authority, and securing maximum discounts (FAR Subpart 13.303).
- Ensure BPA orders are only used by those individuals authorized on the agreement (FAR Subpart 13.303).
- Check to see that whenever possible, contractors invoice monthly rather than invoicing for each call order (FAR Subpart 13.303). This is to reduce paperwork and cost to the Government.
- Ensure BPA's are reviewed annually to reaffirm the need and proper usage (FAR Subpart 13.303).
- Ensure that call orders over \$3,000 are documented to show that competition was obtained or notation for sole-source (FAR Subpart 13.303).
- Ensure that individual call orders do not exceed the maximum call order limit (FAR Subpart 13.303).
- Ensure that BPA's do not exceed the total dollar limitation or its stated time period (FAR Subpart 13.303).

2.02-2 Purchase/Delivery Orders

- For UNICOR purchases, ensure the file contains a comparability determination (FAR Subpart 8.602 and APD Alert 2005-13).

- Check log books for orders just under \$100,000. Look for orders to a single vendor in close proximity to the same date. These orders may represent potential split requirements that were broken down into several purchases merely to permit the use of simplified acquisition procedures. Look for open market purchase orders that exceed \$100,000.
- Check log books for multiple orders to the same vendor/merchant broken down to remain under warrant authority.
- Check purchase orders for best value (getting the best deal) and/or price reasonableness determinations. Refer to Policy Memorandum 13-01 for information on best value determinations and FAR Subpart 13.106-3 for information on price reasonableness.
- Ensure there is an awareness of the procedures for ratification of unauthorized commitments (P&P 212.16).
- Ensure that unpriced purchase orders are documented to show the need for using this type of order (FAR Subpart 13.302-2).
- Ensure that the total value of the order is within the delegated authority of the contracting officer.
- Check to see that biobased products are purchased if comparable in price, quality and availability to non-biobased products. Refer to USDA's Web site for a list of biobased products (www.usda.gov/biopreferred). (FAR Subpart 23.4)
- Check to see that recycled products are purchased if the agency designated item exceeds \$10,000 or the aggregate amount paid for designated items in the preceding fiscal year was \$10,000 or more and can be acquired competitively within a reasonable time meeting appropriate performance standards and at a reasonable price. (FAR Subpart 23.4). Refer to EPA's Web site for a list of designated items (www.epa.gov/cpg).
- Check to see that Energy Star®, FEMP designated products, or other energy efficient products and water efficient products are purchased. (FAR Subpart 23.2) Refer to the following Web sites for information on energy star products: www.energystar.gov/ and www.eere.energy.gov/femp/procurement.
- Check to see if the purchasing agents are using required sources properly, particularly, AbilityOne (formerly Javits-Wagner-O'Day (JWOD) Act Program) (FAR Part 8).
- Check to see if procurement outreach efforts are being accomplished. Is there an awareness of the procurement preference program in terms of need to locate small businesses, small disadvantaged businesses, women-owned businesses,

HUBZones, and service disabled veterans? (FAR Parts 13 and 19, DR 5090-002, DR 5090-003)

Are there established procedures for accepting capability statements and/or market literature from small businesses? Are these small businesses being added to source lists? For open-market projects between \$25,000 and \$100,000, are there at least one each of the following small business concerns identified on the source list: small business, woman-owned small business, small disadvantaged business, and service-disabled veteran?

- Ensure that regulations on Set-Asides for Small Business are adhered to: Open-market purchases over \$3,000 must be set-aside for small business. The file should be documented in accordance with FAR Part 19.502-2 if the eligible requirement was not set-aside. Note: Orders under \$3,000 (micro-purchases) do not have to be set aside for participation by small business.
- Check log book for multiple orders less than \$25,000 that may have been broken down into several purchases merely to circumvent synopsis requirements.
- Verify that all open-market requirements of \$25,000 or greater were posted on FEDBizOpps (FAR Parts 5 and 13).
- Ensure that competition is obtained for requirements over \$3,000. If not, the file should document why competition was not feasible or not obtained. For non-competitive purchases exceeding \$3,000, ensure that the basis for the price reasonableness determination is included in the file (FAR Part 13).
- Services over \$2,500: If subject to the Service Contract Act, wage rates should be obtained through Wage Determinations OnLine (www.wdol.gov) and incorporated in the order (FAR Subpart 22.1008-1, APD Alert 2004-04).
- Actions under the Small Business Competitiveness Demonstration Program: Verify a printout of the FPDS-NG action is in the file and that it reflects the contract award document/contract file. Confirm the FPDS-NG report was completed within three (3) workdays after contract award and that it was processed in accordance with the procedures found in the FPDS-NG User's Manual (FAR Subpart 4.6, <https://www.fpds.gov/>).

Note: The Small Business Competitiveness Demonstration Program actions (construction, refuse, services, etc.) of any dollar value must be entered in FPDS-NG.

- Construction over \$2,000: Ensure Davis-Bacon Wage Rates are incorporated in the order (FAR Part 22).

- Request for quotes: The file should document the method of solicitation (orally or written) and include information on offers, prices, discounts, and basis for determination of price reasonableness. A written solicitation is required for construction requirements over \$2,000 (FAR Part 13).
- Ensure that source lists are maintained and used to select sources for simplified acquisitions. This includes GSA (FAR Parts 8 and 13).
- Defaults – In the case of Termination for Default, did the office charge the excess costs of any reprourement action to the defaulted contractor?
- Ceiling price: Are ceilings established for all estimated orders?
- Delivery date: Does the order contain a definitive or determinable date for delivery of supplies or performance of services?
- Check to see if procurement files are well maintained and organized. All pertinent data should be kept in the contracting officer's file.
- Verify that all proposed contract actions between \$10,000 and \$25,000 are displayed in a public place or placed on FEDBizOpps (FAR Part 5).
- Ensure that as stated in FAR Subpart 4.805, the Location retains records as follows:
 - Construction contracts over \$2,000 and all other contracts over \$100,000 for 6 years and 3 months after final payment;
 - Signed construction contracts of \$2,000 or less and all other contracts of \$100,000 or less, 3 years after final payment
 - Contracts (and related records or documents, including successful proposals) at or below the simplified acquisition threshold (\$100,000) for other than construction, 3 years after final payment.

Confirm that purchasing agents are aware of the CCR requirements prior to issuance of purchase orders. Vendors must be registered in CCR to be eligible for contract award. (FAR Subpart 4.11)

2.02-3 Purchase Cards

Obtain a list of cardholders and their supervisors/managers from the Local Agency Program Coordinator. Select 10 percent of cardholders to review their purchase card logs. In addition, select 10 percent of the supervisors/managers to review their respective purchase card management review reports to verify oversight of cardholder's purchases are being performed.

- Check purchase card log to determine if cardholders are using AbilityOne (formerly JWOD) distributors and suppliers to obtain office supplies.
<http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/acquisitions/ability-one.htm>
- Check purchase card log for multiple orders to the same vendor/merchant broken down to remain under cardholder's single purchase limit.
- Check purchase card log for transactions over \$3,000 to ensure competition is obtained and that the file contains a contracting document in the form of either a purchase order or contract, including applicable clauses. Ensure a printout of the FPDS-NG action is in the file and that it reflects the procurement award document.
- Confirm that purchasing agents are aware of the CCR requirements prior to paying with a card/check over \$3,000 (FAR Subpart 4.11).
- Check purchase card log for checks over \$2,500 to ensure approval from the REE APC is in the file (AGAR Advisory No. 52 and APD Alert 2004-09).
- Check purchase card log for payments for recurring telecommunication services or telecommunication purchases over \$350. These purchases are prohibited. Refer to APD Alert 2005-4 and AGAR Advisory 58A.
- Qualification and Training of LAPC
 - Verify that the LAPC is in the 1102 or 1105 series. For those not in the 1102 or 1105 series, check to see what procurement training they have received to qualify them as a Level 1B Contracting Officer. This does not mean that the LAPC has to be warranted (APC/LAPC Program Guide and DR 5001-1).
- Reference Tools
 - Check to see what tools the LAPC is using to manage and provide oversight of the purchase card program (i.e., Discoverer, PCMS, PCMS Newsletters, etc).
- Reports
 - Check to see if LAPC has consistently submitted the required management and oversight reports on Purchase Card/Check Use and Reconciliation to the Area.
- Management and Oversight
 - Check to see if the LAPC is performing any reviews of cardholder

transactions for compliance with existing procurement policies, i.e., random review of cardholder transactions. Refer to 213.3M REE Purchase Card Program.

- Check to see if cardholder's supervisors are receiving and reviewing cardholder reports on a monthly basis in accordance with the guidance in 213.3M REE Purchase Card Program.

- Ensure that cardholder keeps a log for recording purchase card transactions (REE Purchase Card Program Manual 213.3M).
- What kind of random review is done on the purchases made by the purchase card?

2.02-4 Training

- Verify warrants are posted (FAR Subpart 1.602-1).
- Verify training plans are in place to maintain and enhance purchasing/contracting skills (FAR Subpart 1.603 and DR 5001-1).

2.02-5 Federal Supply Schedule (FSS) (FAR Subpart 8.404)

- Ensure that delivery orders used to purchase from the FSS have:
 - The "Delivery Order" block checked on the AD-838.
 - The special item number shown for each item.
- Ensure there is a printout of the FPDS-NG action in the file for delivery orders and delivery order modifications. Verify the FPDS-NG action reflects the delivery order document and contract file (FAR Subpart 4.6, <https://www.fpds.gov/>).
- Ensure that quotes have been obtained from at least 3 schedule contracts before placing an order with an FSS contractor (FAR Subpart 8.405-1).

2.03 Administration

2.03-1 Simplified Acquisitions

- Ensure there is an effective tracking system and procedure for determining contract and order completion and final payment for closeout purposes.
- Scope of Order: If a modification increased the supplies or services ordered, it should be within the scope of the original order. Within the scope of the original order means that the added supplies and/or services could have been anticipated from the face of the original order and they are not materially different from the services and/or supplies currently produced under the original order. If not, it should be considered as a "new procurement" action. (FAR Part 13)

- Supplemental agreement: Ensure that if a modification increased the total over \$100,000 and it was by supplemental agreement, it incorporated the mandatory contract clauses.

2.03-2 Receiving Reports

- Receiving reports over \$1,000 must be signed and dated and promptly released to NFC (NFC Policy and Procedures for Purchase Orders, Title II, Chapter 5, NFC Manual).

2.03-3 Invoice/Payments/Closeout

- Verify there is evidence of record of invoice/payment in the file and evidence of final payment. (FAR Subpart 4.804-3)
- Verify there is evidence of closeout in the file (FAR Subpart 4.804-5).

2.04 Personal Property

For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Cheryl Brumback on 202-720-2359.

2.04-1 Organizational Structure

- The AO has delegated authority as the property management officer (PMO), with oversight from the Area PMO (APMO). List additional staff positions that are responsible for performing personal property duties and responsibilities.
- Determine whether the Area Office performs the Location's property management duties and responsibilities.
- Determine how many designated Accountable Property Officers (APO's) the Location has.
- Determine how the property office ensures that APO's are aware of their duties and responsibilities. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 2, Property Management Authority, Subsection "Accountable Property Officers.")

2.04-2 Training

- List the types of informal and formal training that members of the Location's property staff have had to ensure they are able to perform property management functions. Indicate whether the property staff needs additional training or support to adequately perform these functions.

2.04-3 Reference Material

- Determine whether the property staff has access to and uses the following personal property references:
 - REE Manual 221.1M, Personal Property, Motor Vehicle, & Aircraft Management, dated 8/3/99 (policy)
 - NFC Procedures Manual, Personal Property System (PROP), dated March 1998 (using PMIS/PROP)
 - Property Management Quick Guide, dated 2004 (overview of PMO duties)
 - Quick Guide to Using AAMS/GSAXcess, dated Oct 2007 (reporting and acquiring excess property)

2.04-4 File Management

- Ensure the property office maintains official property management files. Determine whether the office uses consolidated files for each APO with a section for various property functions or separate files for inventories, excess, disposal, transfers, etc.
- Review the files to ensure they contain copies of current physical inventories, purchase documents for property on inventory, excess/unserviceable property forms, and completed disposal documents.

2.04-5 Inventory Management

- Review the files to determine whether physical inventories are current. (USDA regulations require offices to conduct physical inventories every 2 years and when there is an APO change).
- Ensure the files contain the “working copy” of the current physical inventory. The “working copy” should include notations of items on-hand, excess, etc., and it is signed by the APO. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 4, Physical Inventories, and Agriculture Property Management Regulations, AGPMR 104-51.106)
- Determine how often the office reviews the PROP28 Report, which lists the physical inventory status. (Note: The PROP28 Report in PMIS/PROP will list the APO name, address, and latest inventory date to help determine current/delinquent inventories.)
- Explain how the office notifies APO’s when physical inventories are due. Determine whether the office provides APO’s with written instructions and how much advanced notice they routinely provide.

- Determine who reconciles the official property records in PMIS/PROP. Verify whether the APO's submit documentation supporting inventory changes such as transfers, excess, disposals, and new acquisitions before the property officer makes any inventory adjustments. (Documentation includes forms AD-107 Report of Transfer, SF-120 Report of Excess Property, AD-112 Report of Unserviceable, Lost, Stolen, or Damaged Property, and purchase documents.)
- Determine whether the property office forwards a copy of the reconciled inventory to APO's (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 4, Physical Inventories, and Subsection "Reconciling Physical Inventories").
- Explain any problems that occur when requesting, performing, or completing physical inventories and how the property office resolves the problems.

2.04-6 Property Accountability and Control

- Determine whether the property office receives copies of purchase documents from the purchasing agent/contracting officer at the time of purchase for accountable property or does the property office have to request copies after the transaction appears on the Suspense Report.
- Explain how the property office requests equipment descriptive information, serial number, etc., information from the APO, assigns the AG number, and updates new accountable property to PMIS/PROP. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 3, Accountability and Control, Subsection "Receipt Documents for Accountable Property.")
- Explain how the office authorizes employees to remove property from the facility, including what type of documentation they use, such as memoranda, form AD-873, AD-107, etc; and who is authorized to approve property passes. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 3, Accountability and Control, Subsection "Removing Property from Government Offices".)
- Determine how the office ensures employees return property on loan.

2.04-7 Property Suspense Reports

- Determine how often the property office receives and reconciles the Suspense Report.
- Verify whether the property office reconciles transactions according to USDA policy, which requires offices to reconcile upon receipt, but no later than 60 days of appearing on Suspense. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 5, Suspense Listings, and APD Policy Memorandum 221.1-04, Reconciling Area Suspense Reports, dated 3/9/00.)

- Explain any problems that occur when reconciling Suspense Reports and how the property office resolves the problems.

2.04-8 Sensitive Property

- Determine whether the office has any sensitive property, which are firearms and law enforcement badges. Ensure the office properly secures, bar codes, and lists sensitive property on the APO's inventory. (REE Manual 221.1M, Section 2, Accountability and Control, subsection "Sensitive Property.")
- Determine whether the Area or Location has declared, in writing, other types of property as sensitive. Ensure the office lists any other item declared "sensitive" on the inventory in PMIS/PROP.

2.04-9 Reporting Property Theft, Loss, or Damage

- Determine if the office has experienced any property theft, loss, or damage. Ensure the files contain documentation of incidents (form AD-112), including statements from the custodian, supervisor, APO, and appropriate law enforcement officials (for thefts).
- Verify the documentation contains signatures from the APO and the property office removes accountable property from PMIS/PROP as appropriate. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 9, Reporting Lost, Stolen, or Damaged Property.)

2.04-10 Property Trade-in/Exchange or Sale

- Determine whether the office evaluates property for possible reassignment or trade-in/exchange potential. Explain the method used to process trade-ins/exchange (such as direct trade-in with vendor or sale by GSA).
- Ensure the office is aware that USDA prohibits selling property to employees who are or were accountable for the property, used the property, or connected with its declaration as excess or sale. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 14, Agency Administered Sales, Subsection "Exemptions" and AGPMR 104-45.302.)
- Ensure the office follows Federal sale regulations, including an awareness of the list of ineligible property categories, follows the definition of similar items (within the same Federal Supply Classification Group), and applies the one-for-one rule. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 13, Exchange/Sale of Property and Federal Management Regulations, FMR 102-39 for the ineligible list.)
- Review the files to ensure the office documents the trade-in process by listing item descriptions, serial numbers, AG numbers, if accountable, and the trade-in amounts on the purchase document. Ensure the property office accurately

removes the item in PMIS/PROP when the trade-in involves accountable property.

- Determine whether the office conducts sales of crops or animals. List the type of commodities/animals sold, the method of sale, the replacement crop/animal purchased, and who maintains the sales proceeds.

2.04-11 Acceptance of Gifts

- Determine whether the office has accepted any unconditional gifts and who has the authority to accept unconditional gifts for the Location on behalf of ARS/USDA. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 18, Acceptance of Gifts, Subsection “ARS Field”.)
- Review the files to ensure all gift acceptances contain a letter from the offeror stating the gift is “unconditional” and the value of the gift. Determine how the Location ensures the unconditional gift is not from a prohibited source. Ensure the Location documents acceptance of the unconditional gift on behalf of ARS/USDA and updates PMIS/PROP if the gift meets the accountability criteria. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 18, Acceptance of Gifts, Subsection “Unconditional Gifts”.)

2.04-12 Excess Property

- Explain how the office determines whether excess property is available before acquiring new acquisitions (first source of supply, as applicable). Determine the methods the office uses to view available excess property.
- Determine the method APO’s use to report excess property, listing the type of documentation required, such as form SF-120, AD-107, or e-mail.
- Review the files to ensure excess reports contain the APO’s signature or approval (if e-mail) and lists the property condition code.
- Review the files to ensure the property office reports excess property for required USDA and Federal screening using AAMS/GSAXcess, for both accountable and non-accountable property. (Federal regulations FMR 102-36 require agencies to report most all property as excess for potential reuse.) Verify whether the files contain documentation of required screening, such as screen prints from AAMS or file notations.
- Determine whether the office submits/uploads pictures of excess property to AAMS/GSAXcess for excess property meeting GSA’s criteria, which includes all vehicles, tractors, medical equipment, and all accountable property. (See APD Alert 2007-12, Using Photos When Reporting Excess Property, dated May 2007.)

- Explain how APO's maintain accountability and control of excess property during the screening process and pending disposal. Determine how the office identifies and labels excess pending disposal and whether the office has a storage facility. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 10, Reporting Excess Property, Subsection "Procedures".)
- Explain the circumstances when the property officer bypasses required screening and authorizes abandonment or destruction using form AD-112.
- Review the files to determine whether form AD-112 contains detailed information supporting condition codes of "unserviceable", "salvage", or "scrap" when reporting property as unserviceable. Ensure the documentation also contains signatures from the APO and PMO. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 16, Abandonment and Destruction).
- Explain any problems that occur when reporting excess/unserviceable and how the property office resolves the problem.

2.04-13 Disposal

- Review the files to ensure that when the Location disposed of property by abandonment/destruction, the PMO authorized the action via signature, and the APO and a witness signed the AD-112 certifying the disposal.
- Review the files to ensure that when the Location donated property in lieu of abandonment/destruction after USDA and Federal screening, the PMO authorized the action via signature, and the office donated property to a public body, which is an organization that receives Federal, State, or local funding. (Note: Non-profit organizations are not public bodies. See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 16, Abandonment and Destruction, Subsection "Donation to Public Bodies" and FMR 102-36.)
- Confirm that the property office posts the "Public Notice of Abandonment or Destruction" prior to abandonment/destruction, when disposing of excess property with an acquisition cost of \$500 or more. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 16, Abandonment and Destruction, Subsection "Public Notice" and FMR 102-36.)
- Review the files to verify that the disposal process shows a clear audit trail from reporting an asset as excess to its final disposal. (See APD Alert 2007-10 Audit Trail for Reporting Excess and the Audit Trail, dated April 2007. A complete audit trail includes a signed excess report, proof of screening, signed transfer document or AD-112 signed by an APO and witness.)

- Explain how the property office ensures excess property that contains hazardous materials, including excess electronic equipment such as monitors, are disposed of in a safe and environmentally friendly manner.
- Explain any problems that occur with the disposal process and how the property office resolves the problem.

2.04-14 USDA Donation Programs

- Determine whether the office uses one of USDA's Donation Programs, such as Computers for Learning (CFL), Stevenson-Wydler (S/W) Technology Act, FEPP Programs for 1862-Land Grant Institutions, and FAIR-1890 (Historically Black), 1994 (Native American), and HSI (Hispanic Serving) Institutions, to transfer excess property.
- Review the files to ensure the office first reported property as excess for required USDA screening in AAMS/GSAXcess (required only for CFL and S/W). (See APD Alerts 2007-13, Stevenson-Wydler, dated May 2007, and 2007-14, Computers for Learning, dated July 2007.)
- Ensure the transfer document, contains signatures from the recipient and the PMO. (See APD Alerts 2007-13, Stevenson-Wydler, dated May 2007, and 2007-14, Computers for Learning, dated July 2007.)
- Ensure the office tracks and submits reporting requirements to the Area Office for the annual Non-federal Recipients Report, for property transferred under the donation programs.

2.04-15 Motor Vehicles

2.04-15.1 Size and Composition

- Confirm that the office is aware of the limits on passenger vehicles (sedans/station wagons).
- Explain any fleet increases and review the files to ensure the office submitted an approved justification for additions.
- Determine how the office ensures they only acquire vehicles that meet the Federal fuel average fleet economy standard, meet replacement standards, and are the minimum size necessary to accomplish the mission. (This may be accomplished at the Area level. However, Locations are responsible for requesting replacement vehicles according to requirements listed in REE Manual 221.1M, Section 19, Motor Vehicle Management, Subsection "Replacement Standards" and FMR 102-34.)

- Explain how the office ensures there is a continued need for a vehicle before it is replaced. Verify that requests for new vehicles include the AG number or tag number of the vehicle the Location is replacing. Determine how the office ensures they report the old vehicle as excess or sale upon receipt of the new vehicle.
- Verify whether the office has purchased alternative fueled vehicles (AFV's). (See ADP Alert 2007-9, Purchase of Alternative Fueled Vehicles and Fuel, dated April 2007. In FY2007, all offices are required to acquire an AFV when an AFV is available in the type and size needed. Also required by EO13423)
- Determine the types of hybrid vehicles the office has purchased. (EO13423)

2.04-15.2 Vehicle File Management

- Verify whether the office maintains official motor vehicle files. If the Area maintains the files, list the information that the Location sends to the Area. Review the vehicle files to ensure files contain vehicle requisition, maintenance and service records, and accident files.

2.04-15.3 Identification

- Ensure the vehicles are properly identified with Government tags, decal AD-792, For Official Use Only, AD-185, Penalty for Unofficial Use. (The new version of Government tags are embossed with "For Official Use Only". When using these tags, the AD-792 decal is not required.) Verify that the vehicles have form AD-651, Accident Reporting Kit, in the glove box.

2.04-15.4 Vehicle Use

- Explain the type of vehicle dispatch records/logs the office uses to provide reasonable audit trails to track official use of vehicle. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 22, Use of Government Vehicles, Subsection "Supervisory Responsibilities" and AGPMR 104-38.301I (3).
- Explain how the office secures vehicle keys and fleet cards when they are not in use.

2.04-15-5 Fuel/Maintenance Costs

- Explain how the office tracks vehicle cost data for Government provided fuel and maintenance and when drivers do not use the Voyager Fleet Card. Note: Offices may use Booklet ARS-715, Operational and Maintenance Record or other methods to capture vehicle operational costs. (See APD Policy Memorandum 221.1-05, Motor Vehicle Reporting Requirements, dated 10/11/00, and REE Manual 221.1M, Section 23, Vehicle Operations, Subsection "Reporting

Operational and Maintenance Data”. Also, EO 13423 requires strict reporting of all fuel use.)

- Explain how often the property office requests and updates Government provided fuel/maintenance costs and non-Voyager Fleet Card fuel and maintenance costs to PMIS/PROP. (See APD Policy Memorandum 221.1-05, Motor Vehicle Reporting Requirements, dated 10/11/00, and REE Manual 221.1M, Section 23, Vehicle Operations, Subsection “Reporting Operational and Maintenance Data”. EO13423 requires strict reporting of all fuel use.)
- Determine how the office ensures vehicles are mechanically inspected according to State/local requirements. (Note: If there is no State or local requirements, the office must follow the manufacturer’s recommendations.)
- Determine how the office ensures vehicles undergo annual visual safety inspections. Verify how the office documents the process and promptly repairs any noted repairs or problems. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 23, Vehicle Operations, Subsection “Visual Safety Inspections” and APD Policy Memorandum 221.1-06, Motor Vehicle Visual Safety Inspections, dated 11/29/00.)
- Explain any problems that occur when tracking, requesting, or updating required operational and maintenance costs and how the property office resolves the problem.

2.04-15-6 Home-to-Work Transportation Authority

- Determine whether the office has employees that use Government vehicles for Official Home-to-Work Transportation under the Home-to-Work Authority.
- Verify whether the employee is in a job series authorized for Home-to-Work. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 22, Use of Government Vehicles, subsection “Home to Work Transportation”, and Department Regulation 5400-5, Use of Government Vehicle for Home-to-Work Transportation, Appendix A, for the list of authorized job series.)
- Explain any compelling circumstances for allowing home-to-work transportation for employee outside the authorized job series. Determine whether the Location/Area received required USDA approval for any other occurrence. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 22, Use of Government Vehicles, subsection “Home to Work Transportation”.)
- Explain the approval process for allowing employees, who are in “official travel status”, entitled to per diem, and are using the Government vehicle rather than a rental vehicle, to temporarily store a Government vehicle overnight. Ensure overnight storage is to prevent employee hardship and increases Government

efficiency and is not for employee convenience or comfort. (Temporary overnight storage may be approved when an employee must arrive/depart at an unusually early or late timeframe, determined on a case-by-case basis. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 22, Use of Government Vehicle, subsection “Temporary Home to Work Transportation While in Travel Status.)

2.04-16 Oversight

- (For a Location) Describe any oversight provided by the APMO in inventory management, suspense reconciliation, reporting excess, fleet management, or overall property management.
- (For an Area Office) Describe any oversight the APMO provides in inventory management, suspense reconciliation, reporting excess, fleet management, or overall property management.
- Explain any problems that occur when conducting oversight and how the property office resolves the problems.

CARE FUNCTIONAL REVIEW

FACILITIES MANAGEMENT, CONSTRUCTION, REAL PROPERTY AND SAFETY, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

3.0 Facilities Asset Management

For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Rommy Ignacio on 301-504-1191.

- Determine if the Location is aware of the requirements of Executive Order 13327 on Asset Management to track Operations and Maintenance (O&M) costs as well as the Repair and Modernization Cost at the individual building level?

3.0-1 Periodic Evaluation of Assets

- Determine if inventories of real property are completed every 5 years. *Ensure that all utilization data, condition index, deferred maintenance, and Operations and Maintenance data is reported accurately and entered into the Corporate Property Automated Information System (CPAIS). (For Area Office Care Review Only.)*
- Does the Location have a facility program that includes a periodic review of facilities to assess its condition and needs?

3.0-2 Multi-Year Facility Planning

- Is the Location aware of the ARS Capital Project and Repair Plan (CPRP) process to guide the planning and budgeting, acquisition, management-in-use, and disposition of Agency capital assets? (Bulletin 08-151, ARS Capital Project and Repair Plan CPRP).
- Does the Location have a multi-year plan for needed repairs and renovations to its buildings and facilities? Who provides direct input to the multi-year plan?
- How are facility needs identified? Determine if the Location uses the CPRP process to develop its multi-year facility plan. Ensure that the Location is aware that only projects meeting the following criteria are to be listed on the Location CPRP: Any project costing at least \$25,000; any land acquisition, any project using construction authorities for Unlimited Small Buildings (USB), Ten Small Buildings (TSB), Headhouse/greenhouse (H/G) and Ten Percent Alteration (TPA).

- Does the Location have existing facility master plans or facility condition studies? If so, are the impacts on the normal Operations and Maintenance (O&M) budget considered when identifying facility project needs?
- Determine if the Location maintains an up-to-date 3-year CPRP consisting of a prioritized list of all AMRB-validated and approved facility projects.
- Ensure the Location's Facility Plan contained in the ARMP correlates with the annually updated ARS Capital Project and Repair (CPRP) Plan per Bulletin 08-151, ARS Capital Projects and Repair Plan.

3.0-3 Pre-approval of Building Authorities Facility Projects

- Is the Location aware that a pre-approval from headquarters is required to use USB, TSB, H/G, and TPA building authority in excess of \$25,000? (Bulletin 07-152, Facilities Construction Authorities).
- Determine if the Location is familiar with the descriptions and limitations of the Agency's construction authorities outlined in the ARS Policies and Procedures 242.2 - Facilities Construction Authorities.
- Is the Location aware that each building authority project should be assigned a special accounting code and tracked using a unique Program Type code that corresponds to the appropriate construction authority as follows: 71 (USB), 72 (TSB), 73 (H/G), 74 (TPA)?

3.0-4 Implementation of Project Design and Construction

- Determine Location's compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements related to construction. Are required environmental assessments and all NEPA related documentation, including categorical exclusions, findings of no significant impacts, and records of decision on file?
- Assure that all realty interests associated with a project have been completed, including confirmation of federal-ownership of the property or a lease agreement sufficient to cover the Federal Government's investment in the property. Ensure that easements, right-of-ways, or other land use agreements for roads and utilities in support of the projects have been executed.
- Assure Location project compliance with approved master plans, national historic preservation act, and threatened and endangered species act.
- Determine if Location staff responsible for operating and maintaining the facility is involved and participates in the process of commissioning of building systems, final inspections, acceptance, and closeout of construction projects.

3.0-5 Post Construction, Warranty and Maintenance Work

- Verify the method used by the Location for accomplishing maintenance task upon completion of new construction and renovation. Determine if the Location has established a facilities maintenance program that encompasses preventive and routine maintenance of building systems and equipment.
- Does the Location have a process in place for accomplishing warranty work?
- Assure property records are established in CPAIS.

3.0-6 Facilities O&M Management

- Determine if the Location has an organized system for the development of a yearly budget for the operation and maintenance (O&M) of physical assets. How are O&M costs identified with individual buildings or structures at the Location? Determine if the Location has developed a methodology for distributing O&M costs to the appropriate land/building/structure at each Location. Verify if the Location has established a new accounting code in FFIS to facilitate the capturing and reporting of O&M costs for the Location.
- Determine if a Location preventative maintenance (PM) program has been implemented to reduce long-term maintenance costs and service outages. Does the Location have a formal PM program? Does the Location perform PM on a regular basis? Does the Location have a system for prioritizing maintenance needs uniformly throughout the Location?
- Determine how historical data of completed maintenance work is recorded and maintained? Are record/as built drawings properly stored and protected? Are O&M manuals properly maintained and accessible to maintenance staff?
- Determine if the Location maintenance and operations staff identifies and implements strategies to contain energy costs, regularly monitors energy management controls and generates routine reports to verify the energy management system is working. Determine if the Location O&M cost data is being captured throughout the year for reporting purposes. Ensure that utilization data is reported accurately and entered into CPAIS.
- Determine if the Location uses specific performance measures to measure the effectiveness of the O&M program

3.0-7 Deferred Maintenance Management

- Determine if the Location annually earmarks at least 4 percent of its base funds to accomplish routine repair and maintenance (R&M) needs or has

received a waiver in accordance with Agency policy. (ARMS Manual, ARS Manual 245.1, Chapter IX).

3.0-8 Disposal of Unneeded Property

- Determine the Location's approach for identifying and disposing of unneeded real property asset. Are Location personnel aware of procedures for disposing of real property assets?
- Determine if a CERCLA 120 (h) environmental sites assessment and any follow-up investigation and/or cleanup work is accomplished prior to disposal of real property.
- Does the Location maintain disposal data and track actual disposal actions as they occur in CPAIS?

3.01 Energy Management

For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Sandy Morgan on 301-504-4895.

- Determine if the Location is integrating energy and water conservation and sustainability into its regular operations and maintenance activities per EO 13423 and the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (EPACT 2005).
- When was the last energy audit performed? Have recommended energy conservation projects been implemented or included in the ARS Facility Plan? Does the ARS Facility Plan include future energy audits? Were energy projects recommended by the audits implemented?
- Determine if the Location has been evaluated for compliance with EPACT 2005, Section 103, which says by the end of FY 2012 each Federal building must have an advanced electric meter where cost effective, i.e., over 10,000 gross square feet.
- Ensure that the Location checks all utility bills and maintains consumption records/monitors energy consumption patterns so that any possible irregularities in utilities billing or estimating procedures can be identified quickly and corrected.
- Ensure that the Location maintains records of all utility consumption and cost for, as applicable, electricity, fuel oil, natural gas, LPG/propane, coal, purchased steam, purchased chilled water, renewable energy generated on Federal land including the type and source, purchased renewable energy, water consumption including quantity and cost, and energy training including number trained and cost. (EO 13423)

- Determine if the Location uses employee incentive programs to reward exceptional performance for implementing EO 13423.
- Determine if the Location provides training and education in energy management requirements, promotion of Energy Star and other energy efficient and low standby power products, WaterSmart, EPEAT and purchasing recycled and biobased products for Federal purchase card holders. (EO 13423 and EPEAT 2005)
- Ensure that the Location has a recycling program including paper, cardboard, cans, bottles and toner/ink cartridges. (EO 13423)
- Is the Location aware of, and does it have a policy of enabling Energy Star features on all computers, equipment and systems? Is the Location aware of what energy saving features have been incorporated into their buildings? Are they functioning? (EO 13423 and EPEAT 2005)
- If the Location has had a recent construction project that impacted landscaping, where they aware of the need for, and install beneficial landscaping? (EO 13423)

3.02 Facility Accessibility for People with Disabilities

- Determine if the Location is aware of the requirements associated with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Does the Location have copies of the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS) or the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG)?
- Are Location buildings and facilities accessible to people with disabilities? Have professional surveys been done to review and identify areas at the Location that do not meet ADA requirements? Are plans being developed to improve any deficiencies? Are ADA requirements used as part of design process for new or renovation of facilities?
 - Is there an accessible route from the public way to building entrances?
 - Are there marked parking spaces and entrances for disabled individuals?
 - Are there accessible paths of travel to primary workstation, conference/training room, all purpose (gathering) areas?
 - Are there accessible elevators to all floors of facility?
 - Is there one accessible rest room, on each floor of facility, with proper door width; toilet stall; sink basin; path of travel?

- Are there accessible water fountains?

3.03 Architect-Engineering (A-E) Contracts

For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Regina Herchak on 301-504-1179

3.03-1 A-E Contracts

- Determine if the Location has A-E authority. If so, what is the threshold?
- Determine if the Location has any concerns with A-E services provided under Area or Headquarters contracts.
- Determine how the Location obtains A-E Services: through their own A-E contracts utilizing the procedures in FAR Part 36.6, or through Area or Headquarters contracts.
- Verify that IAS (Integrated Acquisition System) is being used.
- If the Location acquires A-E services by issuing delivery/task orders against their own or Area or Headquarters A-E contracts, verify/determine the following:
 - that AD-700's or purchase requests, justifications, and all other required backup documentation (Government estimate, specifications, sketches, drawings, etc.) is maintained in the file. (FAR 4.803)
 - whether the delivery/task orders are issued in accordance with procedures for issuing delivery orders against established contracts which would include issuing a request for proposal that contains a statement of work to the A-E firm; evaluating the proposal and negotiating price, terms and conditions; as well as documenting negotiations and the award rationale. (FAR 36.601-3)
 - whether modifications to delivery/task orders are properly executed. Are these actions documented in the file and the following information included: reason for the change; the contractual authority and FAR clause cites for the change (exercise of option, changes, differing site conditions, suspension of work, etc.); how these actions were priced (pre-priced or based on actual costs); how the price was determined to be fair and reasonable? Do the modification documents include the appropriate FAR clause cite for the change(s)? (FAR 13.106-3, FAR 13.302-3, FAR 36.609, and FAR 43.204)
 - if contract deliverables and performance periods are appropriately monitored.

(FAR 4.803)

- that significant discussions and/or issues are documented and copies maintained in the contract/task order file. (FAR 4.803)
- that delivery/task orders are closed out properly (FAR 4.804) and are maintained in accordance with FAR 4.805(b)(3) or, if the basic contract total value exceeds the simplified acquisition threshold in accordance with FAR 4.805(b)(2).
- If the Location has A-E authority and acquires their own A-E services, verify/determine the following:
 - that AD-700's or purchase requests, justifications, and all other required backup documentation (Government estimate, specifications, sketches, drawings, etc.) is maintained in the file. (FAR 4.803)
 - that the evaluation criteria posted in FedBizOpps are the same criteria used to evaluate A-E's SF-330's (Architect-Engineer Qualifications). (FAR 36.601-1 and 36.602-1)
 - that an evaluation board was established, that it evaluated all SF-330's, and whether the board's chairperson submitted a report to the Contracting Officer (CO) that contained the names of the 3 highest qualified (ranked) firms in accordance with FAR 36.602. Determine if, once the report is received, negotiations are conducted with the highest ranked firm in accordance with FAR 36.606.
 - that award is made to the highest qualified (ranked)/most preferred firm in accordance with FAR 36.606.
 - whether modifications are executed properly. Are these actions documented in the file and the following information included: reason for the change; the contractual authority and FAR clause cites for the change (exercise of option, changes, differing site conditions, suspension of work, etc.); how these actions are priced (pre-priced or based on actual costs); how the price is determined to be fair and reasonable? Do the modification documents include the appropriate FAR clause cite for the change(s)? (FAR 13.106-3, FAR 13.302-3, FAR 36.609, and FAR 43.204)
 - if contract deliverables and performance periods are appropriately monitored. (FAR 4.803)
 - that significant discussions and/or issues are documented and copies are maintained in the contract/purchase order file. (FAR 4.803)

- that delivery/task orders/contracts are closed out properly (FAR 4.804) and are maintained in accordance with FAR 4.805(b)(3).
- Verify that all contracts/delivery/task orders for A-E services have been entered in the FPDS-NG system. (FAR 4.602-c-2 – USDA is a participant in the Small Business Competitiveness Demonstration Program, FAR 19.10)
- Are invoices processed in accordance with the Prompt Payment Act (FAR 32.904-c)?

3.04 Construction Contracts

- Determine if the Location has construction authority. If so, what is the threshold?
- Verify that IAS (Integrated Acquisition System) is being used.
- Determine if projects are being split to keep them within the Location’s authority.
- Determine if commercial item procedures (FAR Part 12), rather than construction procedures (FAR Part 36), are being used for small dollar, uncomplicated tasks, such as installation of a hot water heater, replacement of one or two windows, small painting projects, routine carpet purchase and installation, replacement of small areas of drywall, simple electrical or plumbing tasks (replacement/installation of a light fixture or a water faucet), and similar small and noncomplex services. Refer to the Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) Memo, Applicability of FAR Part 12 to Construction Acquisitions, dated July 3, 2003.
- Verify that AD-700’s or purchase requests, justifications, and all other required backup documentation (Government estimate, specifications, sketches, drawings, etc.) is maintained in the file. (FAR 4.803)
- Verify that construction requirements with an estimated cost between \$10,000 and \$25,000 are posted in a public place or on the Location’s web site (FAR 5.101(a)(2)). Verify that requirements with an estimated cost greater than \$25,000 have been publicized in FedBizOpps in accordance with FAR 5.101(a)(1).
- Verify that a full copy of the Request for Quote (RFQ)/Invitation for Bid (IFB)/Request for Proposal (RFP) (for all construction projects that exceed \$2,000), with the appropriate clauses and wage determination, is maintained in the file. (FAR 4.803, FAR 13.101, FAR 13.302-5, and FAR 36.213-3).
- Verify that site visits (FAR 36.210) and/or optional pre-bid conferences (FAR 14.207) are conducted. Are uniform agendas utilized? Are the proceedings of

these meetings documented and distributed to all parties? Verify that a copy is maintained in the file.

- Verify that the rationale for award is documented in the file. Is the award amount determined to be fair and reasonable? What is the basis for the determination? (FAR 13.106-2, FAR 13.106-3 and FAR 31.201-3)
- Verify that all purchase orders and contracts for construction, as well as modifications, have been entered in the FPDS-NG system. (FAR 4.602I(2) — USDA is a participant in the Small Business Competitiveness Demonstration Program, FAR Subpart 19.10)
- Verify that formal written Notices of Award are issued to contractors (FAR 36.213-4). Verify that formal Notices to Proceed (NTP) are issued to the contractors to establish the official commencement date of performance. Verify that a signed copy of the NTP is maintained in the contract/purchase order file. (FAR 14.408, FAR 36.212, and FAR 36.213-4)
- Verify, for projects between \$25,000 and \$100,000, that a valid Payment Bond (from an acceptable individual surety or from a surety that is listed on the Department of Treasury Circular 570 - Companies Holding Certificates of Authority as Acceptable Sureties on Federal Bonds and Acceptable Reinsuring Companies) or alternative type of payment protection has been submitted and is in the file. (FAR 28.102-1(b) and FAR 28.102-1(c))
- Verify, for projects over \$100,000, that a valid Bid Bond from an acceptable individual surety or from corporate surety that is listed on the Department of Treasury Circular 570 was submitted by the successful offeror and is maintained in the file. (FAR 28.101 and FAR 28.2)
- Verify, for projects over \$100,000, that the Performance and Payment Bonds submitted by the successful offeror are from an acceptable individual surety or a corporate surety that is listed on the Department of Treasury Circular 570. (FAR 28.202)
- Verify that the documents submitted by the successful offeror's individual surety as a pledge of assets for bid, performance and/or payment bonds were reviewed by the Office of General Counsel and determined adequate and acceptable. (FAR 28.203(f))
- Verify, for projects over \$100,000, that valid performance and payment bonds (from acceptable corporate listed on the Department of Treasury Circular 570 or individual sureties), and certificates of insurance are submitted by the successful offeror prior to the issuance of a Notice to Proceed and are maintained in the file. (FAR 28.102 and FAR Subpart 28.2)

- Verify that Davis-Bacon Act (DBA) requirements (for projects exceeding \$2,000) are being monitored in accordance with FAR Subpart 22.4. For example, wage determinations and DOL Form WH-1321 must be posted by the contractor (FAR 22.404-10) and weekly payroll records must be submitted and reviewed by the Contracting Officer (FAR 22.406-6 and FAR 22.406-7), etc.
- Verify that significant discussions and/or issues are documented and copies maintained in the contract/purchase order file. (FAR 4.803)
- Determine if the Contracting Officer has delegated any authority or responsibility to personnel at the job site. If so, was a formal letter(s) of delegation as Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) or Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (COTR) issued that clearly describes the authorities, responsibilities, and limitation in accordance with FAR Part 42.202?
- Determine if change orders or contract modifications were properly issued (FAR 43.204). Were these actions documented for the file as follows:
 - What was the contractual authority for the change (changes, differing site conditions, suspension of work, etc.)?
 - Were these actions pre-priced or based on actual costs?
 - Was the price determined fair and reasonable (FAR 13.106-3 and FAR 31.201-3)?
- Determine if contract performance periods are appropriately monitored. If the completion date passes, what action was taken?
- Are inspections conducted in accordance with FAR 46-312 and 46.1? If so, are files documented to show the results of the final inspection?
- Is the Form ARS-371, Construction Progress and Payment Schedule (or something similar), being used for individual projects involving multiple disciplines (HVAC, plumbing, electrical, etc.), larger dollar value projects, or lengthy projects? If so, is it being reviewed by the COR and approved by the CO, and is it also being used as a means of verifying contractor invoices?
- Are invoices processed in accordance with the Prompt Payment Act (FAR 32.904(d))?
- Are contracts/purchase orders closed out properly and maintained in accordance with FAR 4.804 and FAR 4.805(b)(4)?

3.05 Facility Security

For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Terry Roark on 301-504-1248 or Jeff Hayes on 202-720-3778.

Reference: P&P 240.3, June 2000, Physical Protection, Security and Conduct While on REE Facilities; P&P 243.4, January 2004, Issuing and Controlling ARS ID Badges.

- Ensure the Location has an Occupant Emergency Program (OEP) established and that each employee has a copy. The program should cover processes to be followed during emergencies, such as fire, explosions, bomb threats and natural disasters. (Federal Property Management Regulations, 40 CFR, Subchapter D, Part 101-20.)
- Ensure the Location is conducting physical security surveys. Does the Location perform these in conjunction with ARS Homeland Security Office?
- Identify if Location has any Physical Security Countermeasure projects planned or under consideration. If yes, are they aware of ARSHS design and review role?
- Does Location know to contact ARSHS (202.720.2452) for the following: all possible OIG investigations; vandalism to, or theft of, mission critical assets; workplace violence activities; and workplace death events?
- Does the Location maintain a current roster and call list of local and federal law Enforcement contacts?
- Does the Location have any security related MOU's in place? If yes, with what agency and for what specific service?
- Is the Location aware of the ARSHS Web site [<http://arsnet.usda.gov/OHS/>]?
- Does the Location rely on any outbound third-party security alarm monitoring and response equipment or services? If yes, who and what type?

Examples:

--Door contact alarms monitored and responded to by campus police between hours of 1800 – 0700 seven days a week.

--Greenhouse temperature alarms that automatically page a location employee who decides on appropriate response.

--Burglar alarms monitored by a third-party service that notifies a pre-determined entity (campus police, local police, contract guard services, location employee, etc.).

- How often does the Location review its security operation and administrative procedures?
- Ensure that there is some type of fire protection/prevention system (alarms, sprinklers) in place (ARS Manual 242.1, Chapter 7).
- What procedures are in place for conducting annual “Emergency Disaster Drills” (ARS Manual 230).
- Is the Location issuing ID Badges in accordance with P&P 243.4?
- Does the Location have a certified Human to Human Pandemic Influenza Plan in place? Does the Location do any testing of its’ Plan? If so, what kind?

3.06 Acquisition (Purchase, Donation, Exchange or Transfer) of Real Property

References Real Property Manual Draft Acquisition Chapter I, 2005, and 7 United States Code 2250(a)

- Has the Location acquired land in the last 5 years? If yes, does the Location have a copy of the applicable appropriation or law authorizing the land acquisition within the asset file?
- How are newly constructed facilities or capitalized improvements identified/tracked for inputting or updating in the Corporate Property Automated Information System (CPAIS)? Is the Location forwarding its requests for the establishment of a Unique Asset Identifier (UAI) for all capitalized assets to the Area Realty Specialist? Is the Location aware that copies of all prior year adjustments – for example for a capitalized structure that already exists and should have been on an inventory, but was overlooked during the last reconciliation cycle – must be forwarded through the Area Realty Specialist to the Real Property Management Branch on a monthly basis?
- What information is being maintained within the asset files? There should be copies of acquisition documents, including deeds, leases, transfer documents, surveys, environmental support documentation, etc.

3.06-1 Utilization, Accountability, and Control of Real Property

Reference: Real Property Manual Draft Accountability and Control Chapter 9, 2005; FMR 102-84.55; Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and AGPMR 110-85.55.

- At the Location, who is responsible for monitoring utilization of land and facilities and ensuring utilization is in accordance with Agency policies?

- Is the Area Office providing copies of inventory printouts, for verification and update, every 5 years? What procedures are in place for conducting physical inspections of real property holdings to verify that all land, buildings and structures are accounted and properly reflected on the inventory record/within CPAIS and effectively used in support of mission-related activities?
- What process is used to review owned and leased, and otherwise managed properties and to communicate any modifications necessary to the REWO for maintaining an up-to-date inventory in CPAIS?

How is CPAIS being used at the Location to capture space utilization, including the number of workstations, number of personnel or Sys within all space usage types as required by Federal Real Property Profile reporting. Are there procedures in place to ensure the capturing of University space covered under a Memorandum of Understanding, Special/Cooperative Agreements, etc. and the utilization of this space with CPAIS.

- Are records established and maintained with the following:
 - custodial responsibility for the real property assigned to the Location and Location worksites
 - physical inventories signed by the Accountable Property Officer along with documented recommendations for adjustments
 - identification of Historical properties/sites and related Historic Preservation Plans. Are copies provided to the Area Office and Headquarters?
 - acquisition files containing copies of short- and long-term leases, environmental surveys, property descriptions, construction-related materials including “as built” and floor plans, donation or transfer documents, and AD-107’s for formal documentation for FDMIS/CPAIS updates, etc.
 - disposition files containing AD-107’s, AD-112’s, SF-118’s, SF-118a,b,c’s
- Are there internal procedures in place to address encroachments on ARS lands? If an encroachment is identified or brought to the Location’s attention, how is this information relayed to the attention of the Area Office’s or Real Estate Warrant Officer (REWO)?
- Who is the responsible agency official to determine if a Design/Construction project is an undertaking as defined in Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.
- Has the Location established a working relationship with the SHPO? Does the Location have a Programmatic Agreement in place?

3.06-2 Leasing Real Property – Land and Space – and Agreements

References: Real Property Manual 245.1 Draft Chapters 2 and 3, 2005; Departmental Regulation 1620-2, USDA, Space Management Policy and 7 United States Code 2250(a)

- Are copies of any space or land leases, Memorandums of Understanding, Unfunded Cooperative Agreements, Supplemental Agreements, Land Use Agreements, etc., on file. Agreements may cover space in non-ARS-owned buildings, land for field plots, and the construction or placement of ARS-owned buildings.
- What procedures are in place for the periodic review of the above documents?

Has the Location erected buildings or other structures on non-Federal lands without first obtaining the right to use the land through a lease or other document granting realty interest in the land for the estimated life of or need of the improvement as described in 7 U.S.C.2250(a)? What procedures are in place to ensure the Location acquires the necessary realty interest prior to constructing a building or structure on non- Federal land.

- Has the Location made any capital improvements (\$25,000 or more) to space not covered by a realty interest? If this has occurred, such actions should be immediately brought to the Area Office's attention so that a document can be prepared and executed.
- How does the Location assure that it is complying with Departmental Regulation 1620-2 which establishes USDA policy on acquisition, management and disposition of office and related space for USDA-owned, leased and GSA-controlled space. The RPMB has under its direction a group of space and building management, specialists should assistance in the area be required.
- Ensure that leases contain energy efficiency and sustainability provisions. (EO 13423)

3.06-3 Grants of Easement and Revocable Permits

References: Real Property Manual 245.1 Draft Chapters 5 and 6, 2005 and P&P 244.0-ARS, September 2003, Guidance and Instructions for the Collection and Use Fees for Revocable Permits and Easements.

- How does the Location verify that easements and revocable permits are in place as required? How are these periodically reviewed to ensure renewal prior to expiration, compliance with terms and conditions, that expired easements are vacated, etc.? How does the Location communicate their findings to the Area Office and/or REWO?
- When screening requests for easements or permits, how does the Location ensure

that the request is a case of necessity and that the land or space requested does not exceed what is required? Are procedures in place to ensure that rights are not granted to ARS property that would be incompatible with the proposed use or encumber use of the property? Are current and future program needs and possible conflicts considered during the review process—prior to recommending such requests?

- How are requests to occupy ARS-owned buildings or utilization of ARS facilities addressed at the Location? How does the Location ensure that a revocable permit is issued for all entities using ARS-owned/controlled space? Are inspections performed of tenant space to ensure compliance with terms and conditions of the agreement to occupy the space?
- How are requests for the installation of antennas addressed at the Location? Are these evaluated and coordinated with the REWO to ensure that requests do not impact or interfere with existing research programs, future land development plan, “Referral Agencies”, human exposure limits, etc.?
- How is the Location complying with P&P 244.0, Guidance and Instructions for the Collection and Use Fees for Revocable Permits and Easements? This is available on-line.

3.06-4 Quarters Rentals

References: Real Property Manual 245.1 Draft Chapter 7, 2005; P&P 245.2, June 1993; Furnishings and Household Goods in ARS Controlled Living Quarters and Department of Interior Department Quarters Handbook 400 DM, June 1994

- If the Location has quarters, is the Location aware of the responsibilities regarding quarters management? How are rental fees collected and used in accordance with regulations?
- If quarters files are maintained at the Location, do quarters files contain support documentation to demonstrate that Government living quarters for ARS employees are properly managed and accounted for? Do files at a minimum include:
 - Documentation of annual Consumer Price Index (CPI) adjustments, any waiver or supporting documentation
 - Copies of the most recent appraisal and/or regional quarters rental surveys along with any background documentation
 - Documentation of Condition of Employment (must be reviewed every 5 years) or Convenience of the Government appointment
 - Sampling results from any screening tests performed (i.e., lead, asbestos, mold, etc.)

- Are lead disclosure statements provided to residents for homes constructed prior to 1970?

Are Forms ARS-494's, ARS-4's and REE-16's prepared at the Location or Area Office? If prepared elsewhere, are they carefully reviewed for accuracy prior to having the employee who is renting the quarters sign the documents and then forwarding them to the REWO for execution?

- Does the Location bring any rental collection problems incurred to the attention of the REWO?
- Are CPI adjustments made annually? Are employees provided with a minimum of 30 days advance notice of such adjustments?
- Are the Quarters Rental Surveys and Sample Plans that are prepared by the Department of Interior reviewed to ensure that the information provided is correct, such as the nearest established community?
- How does the Location ensure the inventory and accountability of furnishings provided in quarters?
- Is a physical inspection performed of the quarters prior to occupancy and a condition report prepared and signed by the inspecting official and employee who is renting the quarters? Are periodic physical inspections performed to identify maintenance, repair and safety and health conditions that need correction? How are items identified formally documented and what tracking mechanism is in place to ensure these are corrected?

3.06-5 Disposal of Real Property

References: Real Property Manual 245.1 Draft Chapter 8, 2005 and P&P 246.1-ARS, September 1997

- Does the Location compile packages for real property identified as excess or recommended for disposal?
- Has the Location developed the annual protection and maintenance costs for real property assets for such expenses to be incurred during the excess/surplus/disposal process?
- Does the Location review its inventory annually to identify excess properties for disposal? Does the Location prepare AD-107's, AD-112's, SF-118's, and etc. for all disposal actions, including disposal of ARS-owned buildings with a value of \$50,000 or less? Are these documents forwarded to the Area Office upon completion?
- Are the following screening surveys being addressed at the location during

the disposal process?

- threatened and endangered species
 - hazardous building components such as lead, asbestos
 - associated underground or above ground storage tanks
 - environmental impact
 - McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act
 - Section 106 review and consultation
 - site-specific requirements
- Has the Location established a working relationship with the SHPO?
 - Does the Location have a Programmatic Agreement in place?

3.07 Safety, Health, and Environmental Management

For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Pete Jovanovich on 301-504-1243.

- Verify the Location has assigned personnel to manage and implement the safety, health, and environmental management (SHEM) program. Each Location must have an assigned Safety Representative or Collateral Duty Safety Officer and an Environmental Management System (EMS) Coordinator (i.e., these positions may be held by the same person). (ARS Manual 230, Chapters 18 and 38)
- Verify the Location has an EMS Committee; and, if the Location has 15 or more Full-time employees, a Safety Committee (i.e., documented on ARS Form 309, Safety and Health Committee, or equivalent.) The Location may choose to have a single Committee combining the requirements. (ARS Manual 230, Chapters 18 and 38)
- Verify the Committee(s) meets on a recurring basis not less than quarterly (i.e., by reviewing the meeting minutes.) (ARS Manual 230, Chapters 18 and 38)
- Verify the Location has written annual safety, health, and environmental goals and objectives, and, an EMS policy statement. (ARS Manual 230, Chapters 10 and 38)
- Verify funding for SHEM requirements is listed in the ARMPS. Costs for requirements in excess of \$25,000 should be listed in the Procurement Plan of the ARMPS. Costs for requirements less than \$25,000 may appear elsewhere in the ARMPS at the direction of the Area office. If the Location is using Hazardous Waste Cleanup (HWC) funds, those funds should be listed in the HWC High Priority Requirements List section of the ARMPS. (ARMPS Manual/Guidance and ARS P&P 230.1, Tracking Hazardous Waste Cleanup Funds)

- Verify the Location has access to current applicable Federal, State, and local SHEM laws, regulations, codes, standards, policies, etc., available in paper, electronic, or other media formats. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 8)
- Verify required SHEM related materials (i.e., Poster AD-1010, USDA Safety and Health poster; CA-10, What a Federal Employee Should Do When Injured at Work; EMS Policy Statement; and, OSHA Form 300A, Summary of Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses (from February 1 through April 30) are posted on a bulletin board(s) in a conspicuous location(s) accessible to all employees. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 17)
- Verify safety, health, and environmental requirements are taken into consideration during the design and construction process. Location and/or Area SHEM personnel must review designs to ensure they meet SHEM requirements. (ARS Manual 230.0, Chapter 19, ARS Manual 242.1, Facilities Design Standards, and ARS Manual 242.4, Major Facilities Construction)

3.07-1 Safety, Health and Environmental Education/Training

- Verify safety, health, and environmental training is provided as part of the ARS Employee Orientation Program for new or transferred employees. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 14)
- Verify the Location has assessed the workplace and identified appropriate job-specific safety, health, and environmental training for all employees. (ARS Manual 230, Chapters 14 and 26)
- Verify completed training is documented and kept in a centralized location.
- Verify that training that has not yet been completed is documented in the employee's Individual Development Plans (IDP), ARS Form 48, or equivalent. Employees should not engage in an activity until they have received appropriate training. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 14)
- Determine if the Location has an Incentive Awards Program for recognizing SHEM performance. While not required, many Locations use such methods to encourage participation in SHEM programs. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 15)

3.07-2 Safety Management

- Verify the Location provides written notification of potentially hazardous conditions to employees. Management must inform employees about any workplace hazards. (ARS Manual 230, Chapters 22 and 26).

- Verify that the Location has a comprehensive SHEM Inspection Program using ARS Form 404, or equivalent. Ensure inspections have been conducted annually and reports kept on file for five years. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 22)
- Verify the Location has a comprehensive SHEM Abatement Program to correct deficiencies identified by employees and during annual inspections. Check to verify deficiencies are abated within 30 calendar days. If a deficiency was not abated within 30 calendar days, check to verify the facility developed a written abatement plan with milestones as well as interim steps to protect employees from injury as a result of the unsafe or unhealthful working condition. Ensure abatement activity documentation is present in a centralized location available for reference by all employees. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 22)
- Verify the Location has an Accident/Illness Reporting, Investigation, and Analysis Program in place (i.e., the Location must have a file for accident reports and the ensuing investigations.) Ensure the Location has documented the measures taken to prevent recurrence of accidents/incidents. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 20)

3.07-3 Industrial Hygiene

- If chemical, biological, or radiological agents are used, verify the Location has a written Hazard Communication Program and Chemical Hygiene Plan; and, that training has been provided for these programs. (ARS Manual 230, Chapters 14, 26, and 33)
- Verify the Location maintains an inventory of chemical, biological, or radiological agents, and that the inventory is updated at least annually. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 26)
- Verify that Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) are retained and that they are orderly and easily assessable to employees who need them. MSDS are required for all materials that may be harmful to humans such as laboratory chemicals, pesticides, insecticides, cleaning agents, biological agents, radiological agents, etc. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 26 and 33)
- Verify all hazardous areas and areas containing hazardous materials (i.e. chemical, biological, and radiological agents) are clearly posted and secured. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 26)
- Verify applicable Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is available and its use mandated. Each employee's immediate supervisor is responsible for:
 - assessing the need for PPE;
 - providing appropriate PPE to employees;
 - developing standard operating procedures for PPE;

- training employees on proper use and care; and
 - ensuring that employees utilize the equipment.
(ARS Manual 230, Chapters 33 and 34)
- In the absence of professional medical attention in near proximity to the workplace (i.e., 3-4 minutes), verify the Location has a person(s) trained to render first aid on all shifts and that adequate first aid supplies are on-hand. (29 CFR 1910.151 and ANSI Standard Z308.1)

3.07-4 Environmental Management

- Verify that the Location has completed an EMS Self-Declaration checklist, signed by the Senior Management Official at the Location, confirming that the necessary elements are in-place? (ARS Manual 230.0, Chapters 38 and 63)
- Verify the Location considers safety, health, and the environment in its procurement practices. Specifically, the Location should have procedures for reviewing hazardous substances to determine if:
 - materials are already in stock and available;
 - less hazardous substance can be substituted; and
 - minimum quantities are being ordered.
(ARS Manual 230, Chapter 49)
- Verify the Location has procedures for determining if a waste is a regulated hazardous waste and, for the satellite accumulation of hazardous waste. Verify that personnel who generate hazardous waste have been trained on these procedures. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 57 and 40 CFR 260)
- Verify the Location maintains records on the quantity and types of hazardous waste generated each month. The Location utilizes this information to determine and document their generator classification (i.e. conditionally exempt small quantity, small quantity, and large quantity). (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 57 and 40 CFR 260)
- Verify the Location has filed EPA Form 8700-12, “Notification of Hazardous Waste Activity” with the EPA or State, if applicable. The EPA does not require conditionally exempt small generators to file; however, the State may require the Location to file. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 57 and 40 CFR 260)
- Verify the Location has written procedures for the temporary storage of hazardous wastes including management, handling, and disposal. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 57 and 40 CFR 260)
- Determine if the Location maintains a log of hazardous wastes inspections. Weekly inspections of hazardous waste storage areas must be conducted for large

quantity generators. Small quantity and conditionally exempt small quantity generators are not required to perform such inspections but are encouraged to do so. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 57 and 40 CFR 260)

- Verify Hazardous Waste Manifests are on file and orderly (a returned signed copy from the disposal or treatment facility receiving the waste is required). Locations that utilize University resources to dispose of waste are responsible only for documenting the types and quantities of waste (i.e., manifest copies are not required). (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 57 and 40 CFR 260)

CARE FUNCTIONAL REVIEW

HUMAN RESOURCES

For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Mary Weber (301) 504-1397.

4.0 Employment

- Verify the Location's procedures for receipt of applications. All applications should be either date stamped or the date of receipt of the application should be notated in ink.

Applications for permanent employment (competitive service): These applications must either be forwarded immediately to the servicing Branch, HRD, for response or the Location must return the application by letter informing the applicant to apply for permanent positions in response to specific vacancy announcements. These vacancies are advertised on the OPM web site (USAJobs) and HRD Web site. Verify that the Location does not retain any applications for permanent employment.

Applications for L/A and Student Positions (excepted service positions): If the AO has delegated employment authority, applications for L/A and student positions (nonpermanent positions in the excepted service) may be circulated. Verify that the Location gives "veterans preference," if applicable, to applicants.

Applications for Postdoctoral positions (excepted service positions): may be submitted to the scientist who is the mentor for the position and may be retained until a selection is made. Verify that the Location gives "veterans preference," if applicable, to applicants.

- Verify that the Location obtains proof of enrollment in school on a full-time or part-time basis from employees on student appointments.

This may be done by requesting a copy of transcripts each semester, or by requesting verification of enrollment through the registrar's office. Note: If a student stops going to school at least on a half-time basis as defined by the institution, the Location should initiate an SF-52 to terminate the appointment. [Reference P&P 413.8, Student & Volunteer Programs.]

If volunteers are used at the Location, verify they have a signed Volunteer Service Agreement on file and records of service are being maintained. This includes documentation of days and number of hours worked. [Reference P&P 413.8, Student & Volunteer Programs.]

Verify that HRD has approved the content of employment ads (paid and free) for recruitment. Purchase order files should contain the necessary approvals. [Reference P&P 412.0, ARS Job Advertisements – Print and Online, dated July 23, 2007.]

4.01 Time and Attendance (Ted Nykiel, 301-504-4426)

- Verify all employees (with the exception of intermittents who should not have a regular work schedule) have an established tour of duty approved by the supervisor (example REE-331).
- Verify employees and timekeepers are initialing and that supervisors are signing and dating each T&A, unless determined to be impracticable.
- Verify all credit and/or compensatory time is being recorded on T&A's. Credit hours are initiated by the employee versus compensatory time, which is ordered/required by the supervisor. Compensatory time cannot be forced on an employee earning less than GS-10, step 10 or if these employees are non-exempt from FLSA. These employees, however, may decide to accept compensatory time in lieu of overtime. If so, the statement on the bottom of time sheet should be initialed by both the employee and the supervisor.
- Verify that credit hours accrued (especially on Saturdays and Sundays) were worked on the employee's own initiative. If the work was assigned/ordered/directed/etc., by management, the hours worked must be recorded as overtime or compensatory time, not credit hours. See bullet item above.
- Review T&A information for leave used under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and Sick Leave Usage for Family Care, Adoption and Bereavement as follows:
 - FMLA is an entitlement for up to 12 weeks of Leave Without Pay (LWOP) (annual and/or sick leave may be substituted as appropriate) during any 12 month period to care for a family member. LWOP is coded as Transaction Code (TC) 71 for processing and all time must be maintained in a cumulative manual or automated record.
 - Sick Leave for Family Care and Bereavement: Sick leave provision allows employees to use up to 480 hours of sick leave for serious medical conditions (prorated for part time employees) each leave year. TC 62 (sick leave used) with the prefix 62, Sick Leave for Family Care, is used for time and attendance processing. The Sick Leave for Family Care should also be identified by a Transaction Code Descriptor ("03 – General" for a non-serious medical condition and "04 – Extended" for a serious medical condition). A maximum of 104 hours of family sick leave can be used for

non-serious medical situations. The total amount of family sick leave, both serious, and non-serious combined, cannot exceed 480 hours in a leave year.

- Verify in the T&A records for callback overtime work situations. If an employee is called back to work unexpectedly for additional duty later in the workday or on a day that was not originally scheduled as a workday, overtime is credited for a minimum of 2 hours – whether 1 minute or 2 hours is actually worked. After the first 2 hours the individual would earn overtime for the number of hours actually worked. [Reference P&P 402.3, Premium Pay.]
- Verify that Transaction Code 32, with prefix 78 is used for compensatory time for travel earned. And Transaction Code 64, with prefix 78 is used for compensatory time for travel used.
- Verify that timekeepers are keeping track of employee's comp-time for travel. An employee has 26 pay periods to use or lose comp-time for travel. If not used within 26 pay periods the timekeeper must remove the unused comp-time travel hours, because Star-Web will not.
- Verify that timekeepers are keeping track of employee's regular comp-time. An employee has 26 pay periods to use or receive payment for comp-time. If not used within 26 pay periods the timekeeper must remove the unused comp-time from the T&A system and have the employee paid through an AD-581 (Lump Sum Payment).
- Check to see if any employees are listed on the STAR Web Leave Error Report. The timekeeper can provide the report showing the employees in leave error or a report indicating that no leave errors exist. If a leave error(s) exist, inform the timekeeper that an AD-717, Leave Audit (or electronic counterpart) must be completed to resolve the leave error. Note: Leave reconciliation/audits must be conducted when an employee has a discrepancy in leave balances between the NFC database and the STAR database.
- All Leave audits must be prepared from original documentation (Typically from the REE 331). To certify correctness of an audit, the audited employee's supervisor must sign and date the leave audit. The supervisor's signature on the leave audit certifies correctness of the audit consistent with their personal knowledge. Leave audits should also indicate the name of the audit preparer (normally the timekeeper) and her/his phone number. An accurate leave audit includes explanatory notes as necessary. Leave audits should start with pay period 01 or the first pay period of a new employee; through the last pay period which was paid/employee separates. Timekeepers may fax leave audits to the party responsible for making changes to the NFC database (TINQ function).
- Verify that certified T&A reports and their supporting documentation are being

retained for 6 years. [Reference NFC Procedures: Title I, Payroll/Personnel Manual, Chapter 7, Time Procedures, Section 1, Time and Attendance Instructions.]

- Verify with timekeepers and supervisors that changes in types of employment and work schedules are not made in the STAR Web T&A system unless a personnel action (SF-52) requesting the change has been processed.
- Review backup documents for T&A's such as ARS-331, Military or Court orders, Medical Certificates, and approvals to work overtime or earn compensatory time. Military and Court leave should only be used if documented with specific orders. Medical Certificates may be required if sick leave used exceeds 3 consecutive days or if otherwise required by the supervisor.
- In the event of an on-the-job injury or job-related illness, verify the timekeeper understands how to code the T&A. The day of the injury is coded TC-66. Work days missed after that would be coded TC-67 while the OWCP case is being processed.

4.02 Pay and Leave (Ted Nykiel, 301-504-4426)

- Review that employees and supervisors understand the differences between overtime, compensatory time in lieu of paid overtime (work required by management) and credit time (work initiated by the employee) as follows:

Overtime worked and compensatory time in lieu of paid overtime must: Exceed 8 hours in a day or 40 hours in a week; and

1. be officially ordered or approved (employees cannot approve their own overtime);
 2. be actually performed by an employee;
 3. be documented in writing and attached to the T&A log (REE-331).
- Credit hours are:
 - Hours worked in excess of an employee's basic work requirement.
 - The employee elects to work and the supervisor approves so as to vary the length of the workweek or a workday.
 - Must be earned before they can be used.
 - Cannot be earned on a holiday during the hours that correspond to the employee's regularly scheduled hours for that day.
 - Cannot be earned by SES or intermittent employees. [Reference P&P 402.3, Premium Pay, and P&P 402.1, Flexible Work Schedules.]
 - Verify that full time employees only earn 8 hours of administrative leave on a

holiday, even if they are scheduled for more than 8 hours on that day. Verify that part-time employees only earn administrative leave for the number of hours they are scheduled to work on the holiday, (not to exceed 8 hours.)

- Verify with supervisors that they know that advancing leave is at their discretion, it is not an employee entitlement. Advanced sick leave and advanced annual leave must be requested with justification. Advancing sick leave for an employee is limited to 240 hours. Note: Employees with NTE dates are eligible for advance annual or sick leave not-to-exceed the amount of annual or sick leave they will earn in the remaining period of employment. Advancing annual leave is limited to what an employee can earn back by the end of the leave year. If too much annual leave is advanced, the employee will not be paid for those extra hours.

4.03 Performance Management (Theresa Bailey, 301-504-1452, Reference the HRD Web site - topic "Performance Management")

Review the following for employees covered by the Agency appraisal program:

- Verify performance plans were put in place within 30 days of the beginning of the rating cycle or position change,
- Verify performance plans were signed by Rater and Reviewer prior to employees signature,
- Verify there are 3, but not more than 10 performance elements, of which one must be non-critical, but not all,
- Verify performance plans are accurate and relevant to the position,
- Verify performance plans include an alignment statement or otherwise indicate the Agency/organizational goals to which the employee contributes (i.e. ARS Strategic Plan goals, National Program or CRIS project goals, business plan goals or other organizational work plan goals),
- Verify performance plans include specific expectations or specific goals that contribute to the Agency/organizational goals listed,
- Verify a separate critical element addressing EEO/CR is included in each supervisor's performance plan. (Positions classified as supervisor usually include the term Supervisory, Supervisor, Manager, Officer, Director, or Administrator in the title.),
- Verify EEO/CR objectives are incorporated in a critical element (typically communications or customer service) in each non-supervisor's performance plan,
- Verify performance plans of supervisors include a critical element addressing

supervisory responsibilities and expectations. (May be a separate critical element or incorporated in a related critical element.),

- Verify performance plans include a health and safety element where job related or required by the Area,
- Verify Office of Scientific Quality Review (OSQR) objectives are addressed in Category 1 and Category 4 scientist performance plans,
- Verify performance plans are reviewed and approved by a person at a higher Organizational level than that of the Rating Official,
- Verify mid-year reviews are conducted and documented in a timely manner,
- Verify performance plans have been in place at least 90 days (from the date employee signed, after rater and reviewer) before an employee has been given a rating of record,
- Verify annual appraisals are reviewed and approved by a person at a higher organizational level than that of the Rating Official, and
- Verify ratings of record are being conducted and submitted within 60 days of the end of the rating cycle or within timeframes prescribed by the union/labor management agreement.

4.04 Awards (Mary Oxner, 301-504-1368, Reference the HRD Web site - topic “Awards”)

Review awards and hold discussions with Location employees for the following:

- Verify the incentive awards program (including Performance, Spot, Extra Effort, Time-Off, and Non-Monetary awards, and Quality Step Increases {QSIs}) is being used by the Location,
- Verify incentive awards are being initiated after an accomplishment or achievement has occurred,
- Verify true accomplishments and achievements are being recognized,
- Verify employee, managers, supervisors and team/groups are recognized for demonstrating superior equal employment opportunity accomplishments,
- Verify the ARS Delegation of Authority for approval of awards or any other Area approval policy is being followed,
- Verify written justifications are attached to AD-287-2 forms for all monetary awards, Time-Off awards, and QSIs. (Performance accomplishment reports

may be submitted in lieu of the written justification for Performance awards, QSIs, and Time-Off awards given for performance recognition.)

- Verify AD-287-2 forms are signed with two levels of approval. (Must have signatures of the Recommending Individual and the Approving Official.),
- Verify awards are approved at a management level higher than that of the Recommending Individual,
- Verify performance awards are being submitted within 60 days of the end of the rating cycle, and
- Verify through discussions with AO/employees: Is there a pattern in the approval of awards (same employees/higher graded always receiving awards)? Are top performing employees being recognized for their performance and for their accomplishments and achievements? Are there unusual differences in the amounts of awards among awardees?

4.05 Training (Kit Hoyle, 301 504-1470)

- Review a sampling of Individual Development Plans (IDPs), which are required by the Agency. Determine if the IDP is a joint effort on the part of the supervisor and employee and if it is updated annually. [Reference P&P 440.1, Employee Training and Development.]
- Review the employee orientation procedures followed at the Location. Reference P&P 412.2, Appointment and Orientation of New Employees and the New Employee Orientation Program Guide. Ensure that each orientation package includes:
 1. A copy of "Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch" and "Employee Responsibilities and Conduct"
 2. The USDA Handbook on "Workplace Violence Prevention and Response"
 3. A copy of the publication, "Handling Diversity in the Workplace."
 4. A copy of the publication, "Sexual Harassment"

Note: New researchers and research supervisors should be properly oriented to the Research Position Evaluation System (RPES). Verify they been instructed to bookmark the RPES Home Page (<http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/rpes/>) and have reviewed the "Tips for First-Timers" section.

4.06 Position Description/Management (Tina Voglesong, 301-504-1407)

- Verify supervisors understand their responsibility for assigning work and for certifying to the accuracy of the position description. Do they know whom to call with questions on writing position descriptions, requesting desk audits, and on appeal procedures? [P&P 431.1, Position Management and Position Classification, 10/02/02]
- Verify the Locations are maintaining the official position description copies certified by Headquarters, and all employees have position descriptions that reflect current duties and responsibilities. Verify collateral duty statements contained in position descriptions when appropriate. [P&P 431.1, Position Management and Position Classification, 10/02/02]

4.07 Employee Relations (Employee Relations, Mary Byrd, 301-504-1418, Ethics, Sue Mutchler, 301-504-1442)

- Verify supervisors, managers and employees understand procedures for addressing conduct and performance issues. Supervisors and Research Leaders are delegated authority to take conduct and performance actions with the stipulation that the Location keeps the Area Office (AO) apprised of all actions.
- Verify the Location follows the USDA Supplemental Standards of Ethical Conduct regarding the prior approval requirement for outside employment or activities for those employees required to file either a public or confidential financial disclosure report (SF-278 or OGE Form 450). Employees seeking to engage in employment/activities for which advance approval is required shall submit form REE-101 to their immediate supervisor and REE Ethics Advisor for approval.
- Verify Ethics Advisor contacts (names and phone numbers) are either posted or readily available to all employees, and are updated at least annually.

4.08 Other

(Exit Clearance Procedures, Bill Duggan, 202-720-7638)
(Occupational Medical Surveillance Program, Ann Lucas, 301-504-1505)
(Telework, Tonya Morris, 301-504-1489)

- Determine if there are any problems with retirement/separation procedures. [Reference P&P 426.1, Employee Exit Clearance Procedures, October 22, 1998.] Specifically,

(1)Verify AD-581's for lump sum payments are forwarded for processing within 2 weeks of the employee's last day of work;

(2)Verify all separating employees are given an SF-8 and a copy of the separating employee's SF-52 is faxed to the Frick Company.

- Determine if the Occupational Medical Surveillance Program (OMSP) is being utilized at the Location? (Employee participation is not required but should be encouraged). Are OMSP results of employee medical examinations being forwarded to the Medical Review Officer (USPHS-DFOH) by the local provider? (P&P 235.0-ARS, ARS Occupational Medical Surveillance Program, April 3, 2002)
- Determine whether all active teleworkers at the location have current, approved agreements on file with the designated Area telework recordkeeper (i.e. Exhibit 1 of P&P 402.5, the REE Telework Program dated January 1, 2005.)

CARE FUNCTIONAL REVIEW

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

5.0 AFM Systems (For information on the interpretation or clarification on the Functional questions in this section, please contact Rhonda Sampson, ARS Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) Web Branch, on 301-504-3269.)

- Is the Location experiencing any problems updating information in the REE Directory?

The REE Directory contains information on all ARS employees. Each Location should verify personnel and locator information on <http://isbprod.ars.usda.gov/> and submit needed updates. Contact the Location Information Technology Specialist for assistance.

5.01 Voice/Data/Video Telecommunications (For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Brenda Katulski, ARS/OCIO, on 301-504-1100.)

- Has the Location received approval from its Area Information Technology Specialist (AITS) and Brenda Katulski, the ARS Telecommunications Mission Area Control Officer (TMACO), and, if appropriate, an approved Department Unplanned Change Waiver or IT Acquisition Waiver before ordering dedicated telecommunications equipment or services per the REE Centralized Telecommunications Management Plan (CTMP) dated 04-30-97, the USDA Telecommunications Network Stabilization and Migration Program (TNSMP) dated 04-04-97, the USDA DR-3300-1 dated 03-23-99, and the USDA CIO IT Acquisition Moratorium Memo dated 05-13-03.
- Per Departmental policy, dedicated telecommunications purchases, regardless of dollar value or source, are subject to strict planning and procurement processes. Dedicated telecommunications includes routers, servers, switches, hubs, multiplexers, PBXs, KSUs, video equipment, certain kinds of wireless equipment (not cell phones or pagers), circuits, network management contracts, software management programs, etc. used for long distance data, voice, and/or video. The CARE Team should review dedicated telecommunications purchases to ensure that there is documentation that the AITS and the ARS TMACO have approved the purchases and that any appropriate waivers have been approved.

As indicated in the memo from the USDA Chief Information Officer dated 05-13-03, the USDA/OCIO requires each agency to obtain an approved waiver for IT acquisitions (including dedicated telecommunications purchases) of \$25,000 or greater prior to purchase. The Location should submit all draft waiver requests and supporting documentation to Gary Rich, ARS/OCIO. Gary then reviews the waiver request, circulates it for internal review and comment within OCIO, and prepares

the final draft for signature by the Administrator and submission to the USDA/OCIO for approval.

The CARE Team should review dedicated telecommunications purchases over \$25,000 to ensure that a waiver request was submitted and approved per this policy.

- Per the Department's TNSMP dated 04-04-97, dedicated telecommunication Purchases regardless of dollar amount must be entered into the Forecasting Inventory Reporting System (FIRS) by the TMACO prior to purchase. FIRS is open three times a year for the TMACO to enter this information. If it is not open at the time a purchase is desired, the Location must submit an Unplanned Change Waiver request to the ARS TMACO for Department approval prior to purchase. The CARE Team should review all dedicated telecommunications purchases regardless of dollar amount to confirm that they have either been entered into FIRS or have an approved unplanned change waiver.
- Does the Location use GSA's FTS2001 contract for intraLATA (also called "local toll"); interLATA (also called "long distance"); and international voice, data, and video telecommunications services? If not, does it have an approved exception from the ARS TMACO?

Departmental policy requires that the FTS2001 contract be used for these services. However, some Locations may not be able to comply with some provisions of this requirement because they are using university or state services that are mandatory for that Location. Ask to review any telephone bills to see whether they are being billed for local toll, long distance, and/or international calls via another vendor (not MCI's FTS2001).

The CARE Team should note exceptions in the report with the reason the Location is not using the FTS2001 contract.

- Has the Location consulted the GSA Federal Wireless Contract prior to acquiring cellular or pager services or the FTS2001 contract to acquire pager service?

The GSA Federal Wireless and the GSA FTS2001 contracts are not mandatory for these services but Locations are required to compare these contracts prior to ordering equipment or service elsewhere. Contact Tony Koontz, ARS/OCIO/Infrastructure Branch on 301-504-1097 for cost benefit analysis support.

- Does the Location use radio frequencies? If so, are they authorized Government frequencies issued by the National Telecommunications Information Administration (NTIA)? If yes, has the radio, telemetry, or Global Positioning System (GPS) equipment been certified for narrow banding? If no, when does the

Location plan to replace/upgrade this equipment? Contact Maureen Harris, ARS/OCIO on 301-504-1077 for assistance.

If the Location uses radios, telemetry, or GPS equipment to transmit data, it must have authorization for a Government radio frequency on file (per USDA DR 3300-1 and ARS Directive 260.1). Examples of telemetry and GPS equipment: transmitters on cattle that send information to data collection systems; wireless hydrologic measurement tools; GPS systems on tractors; weather condition measurement tools sending information back to a central collection point using wireless modems.

Due to the upcoming mandatory transition to narrowband, the NTIA has instituted a program whereby all Government agencies that operate land mobile radio systems in the 162-174 MHz (VHF) and 406-420 MHz (UHF) frequency bands must convert from the present 25 KHz channel spacing to 12.5 KHz channel spacing by January 1, 2005 and January 1, 2008, respectively. As of these dates, the equipment must be able to operate at 12.5 KHz (narrowband) on either side of the assigned frequency. Equipment purchased after 1995 should already meet these requirements.

After receipt of a request for a frequency assignment, the REE Frequency Manager is responsible for requesting a Radio Frequency Authorization (RFA) from the NTIA. Prior to using the radio frequency, a Location must have the Radio Frequency Authorization (RFA) in hand. Ideally, the Location should have the RFA prior to purchasing equipment. NOTE: Requests for new radio frequency assignments take at least six months and often much longer, so planning is important.

Locations may not use non-Government (FCC) frequencies, such as those utilized by radios purchased from Radio Shack. Use of non-Government (FCC) radio frequencies that are licensed to local public safety or university organizations is allowed ONLY with a mutually-approved arrangement. As part of this arrangement, the Government agency must obtain, from the non-Government licensee, written certification that the Government operation of these radios is necessary. A copy of this certification should be forwarded to the REE Frequency Manager.

In accordance with NTIA and USDA directives, all RFAs must be reviewed every five years from original approval or modification so that frequencies no longer required can be released for use elsewhere. The Radio Frequency Manager is in charge of this review and will contact Locations when respective RFAs are due for review.

Please ensure Location has RFAs in their possession for any equipment they operate as listed above.

Does the Location have a need for secure telephone/fax or GETS cards? If yes, do the person/persons who would have access to the secure phone/fax have appropriate security clearances? Are these items secured according to regulation?

These communications options are used primarily in a COOP situation. While most Locations would have no need for such items, there may be some Locations/persons (i.e., BSL-3 labs, top Area Administration) that would find them beneficial for continuity of operations in an emergency situation. DR3300-1, Appendices D and J define the requirements for National security and emergency preparedness telecommunications. Contact the Area Office or Maureen Harris, ARS/OCIO on 301-504-1077 for assistance.

5.02 Information Collection from the Public (For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Yvette Anderson, ARS/OCIO on 202-720-4030.)

- Does the Location obtain OMB approval before conducting surveys to the public?

The Paperwork Reduction Act and OMB regulations require advance OMB approval before collecting information from 10 or more persons outside the Federal Government. This includes questionnaires, surveys, and applications for services, regardless of the media. For example, Web sites are now used to gather information. For further information and assistance, first contact the Area Office, then the Information Collection Officer in OCIO.

5.03 Records Management (For information on the interpretation or clarification of the functional questions in this section, please contact Jim Neal, Records Manager on 301-504-4567)

- Does the Location retire or transfer eligible records to a Federal Records Center?

According to ARS P&P 251.8 (<http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/ppweb/>), “Documentary materials created or received (by the REE agencies of USDA) in pursuance of Federal law or in connection with the transaction of public business are records and the property of the U.S. Government. They **must not** be removed from agency custody or destroyed without the approval of NARA. Employees may dispose of records, regardless of media, only in accordance with the General Records Schedules (GRS) or a NARA-approved records control schedule for the agency...Schedules contain NARA-approved retention periods and instructions on what to do with records when they are no longer needed to conduct Agency business.”

Instructions for retiring/transferring records are contained in Manual 251.8M. To determine which facility services the Location, staff should first contact their Area Office for advice and assistance, and then visit the National Archives and Records

Administration (NARA) Web site <http://www.archives.gov/facilities/index.html> or contact Jim Neal 301-504-4567.

- Does the Location have records that would be categorized as “National Security Classified,” “Secret,” or “Top Secret?” If so, are they maintained in accordance with Departmental Manual DM-3440-1? Contact the Area Office or Jim Neal on 301-504-4567 for further assistance.
 - o Has anyone at the Location had training in basic Records Management?
 - o Is there a need at the Location for annual Records Management training?

5.04 Policy and Procedures Management (For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Jackie Sharp-Hendrix, ARS/OCIO on 202-720-5507.)

See <http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/ppweb/> for information on this subject. For information about the REE Administrative Issuances system, consult P&P 010, “The REE Administrative Issuances System,” dated May 25, 1999. When new issuances are added to the P&P Web site or when major changes are made to issuances, the REE Issuances Manager will notify ARS DADs and Location Administrative Officers via e-mail.

- Is the Location using the latest version of administrative issuances that are on the P&P Web site? If not, why not? Are these issuances in a format that is usable by the Location? If the Location is using issuances that have been canceled or replaced, the CARE Team should list the number, title, and date of these issuances as well as the reason. This will be used to help rewrite existing issuances so that they will better serve the organization.

5.05 Printed Forms (For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Yvette Anderson, ARS/OCIO on 202-720-4030.)

- Is the Location encountering any problems ordering forms from the Beltsville Services Center, Beltsville, Maryland?

Any Location needing paper copies of forms can order them from the Beltsville Service Center, Beltsville Maryland. These orders may be placed either via a paper copy of AD-14 or CFPDC-1, or through the electronic ordering system. Locations should contact their Area Offices for more information.

- Are printed envelopes or letterhead ordered?

Offices that have a need for letterhead design, envelope design, etc. should contact the representative for their Location. (ARS P&P 256.2, “Printed

Letterhead, Envelopes, Postcards, Mailing Labels, (ARS)” dated 05/15/06) The P&P can be found through the following link.
<http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/ppweb/pplist.htm>

- 5.06 Mail and Messenger Services (For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Yvette Anderson, ARS/OCIO on 202-720-4030.)

See <http://pe.usps.gov/text/DMM/P030.htm> and <http://pe.usps.gov/text/qsg/q024.htm> for further information.

- Does the Location maintain accountability records of the postage meter activity?

If the Location is metering its own mail, ARS P&P 263.3, dated 04/02/91, and the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) require manual or automated accountability records of postage meter activity. Either PS Form 3602-A, “Daily Record of Meter Register Readings,” or an in-house automated system should be used. Accountability records must be maintained for six years before disposition in accordance with the General Records Schedule.

- Does the Location properly secure the postage meter?
- Is the postage meter inspected according to postal regulations (see above Web sites for table)?

- 5.07 IT Resource Planning (For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Doug Page, ARS/OCIO Chief Technical Officer, on 301-504-5600.)

- Verify that the unit ARMP includes IT purchases planned and required for the fiscal year, including hardware/software replacements and purchases, dedicated telecommunications acquisitions (circuits, routers, telephone systems), maintenance and support contracts, Web-page development, support, etc.

The Location is required to forecast planned acquisitions of dedicated telecommunications services and equipment in its annual ARMP package (see Administrator’s ARMP “kickoff” letter). Due to special Departmental mandates for telecommunications, all such equipment, regardless of cost, must be included in the forecast. Review the Location’s last ARMP package to see if any dedicated telecommunications services and equipment were forecasted and make a note of that on the report.

- Verify that all planned acquisitions which are \$25,000 or greater are supported by an IT acquisition waiver request.

As indicated in the memo from the USDA Chief Information Officer dated

May 13, 2003, the USDA/OCIO requires each agency to obtain an approved waiver for IT acquisitions of \$25,000 or greater. All draft waiver requests and supporting documentation are forwarded to Gary Rich, ARS/OCIO. Gary then reviews the waiver request, circulates it for internal review and comment within OCIO, then prepares the final draft for signature by the Administrator and submission to the USDA/OCIO for approval.

5.08 Telecommunications Billing and NFC (For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Brenda Katulski, ARS/OCIO TMACO, on 301-504-1100.)

- Does the Location pay for recurring local telecommunications service bills through the TELE for commercial services or an MO (for local GSA services and FTS2001) at the National Finance Center (NFC)?
- Are non-recurring telecommunications equipment and services being procured and paid for through the NFC PRCH payment method if over \$350?
- Per Bulletin 03-001 dated 11-24-03 and AGAR Advisory 58 dated 10-3-03 regarding telecommunications purchases, purchase cards can only be used to purchase telecommunications equipment under \$350 unless the purchase is necessitated by an emergency as defined in the bulletin and the advisory. All non-recurring telecommunications equipment over \$350 must be purchased with a purchase order. All recurring telecommunications services must be paid with a TELE account created via TUMS (for commercial services) or an MO (for GSA telephone lines and FTS2001). Telecommunications purchases necessitated by an emergency must be documented and forwarded to the ARS TMACO per the bulletin instructions for approval or disapproval. Check purchase card transactions and purchase orders for compliance of this policy. If a purchase card was used for an emergency purpose, check to ensure that the ARS TMACO was notified and approved the emergency transaction.
- Does the Location review and update its TELE accounts via TUMS at least annually to make sure the account information is accurate – such as the T&A contact point, the service location address, the service and toll dollar limits, etc. Does the location cancel TELE accounts via TUMS that are no longer active?

TUMS access is via www.nfc.usda.gov and requires a user id and password. Nicole Oliver-Coleman, the ARS NFC Security Officer, should be contacted on 301-504-1074 to obtain a user id and password if needed. TELE accounts should be monitored via TUMS to ensure that agencies know what NFC is paying on these accounts every month and to ensure that NFC has a current contact person if they have a billing question regarding one of these accounts.

- Does the Location have their recurring TELE telecommunication bills sent to them first for review prior to sending to NFC for payment? Per Bulletin 03-001

and AGAR Advisory 58, they should be receiving their telecommunications bills first for review so that they can notify NFC if the bill is incorrect and should not be paid in its entirety as they address the issue with the vendor.

- If the Location has GSA telephone lines, does it review its GSA TOPS account monthly to ensure that the telephone line inventory and billing are correct? The NFC MO payment system is for GSA services provided through the Federal Telecommunication Service (FTS) consolidated switch sites, which are usually located in a Federal building – but not always. The GSA TOPS system may be used for verification of services and billing. It can also be used to track GSA orders. The ARS TMACO, Brenda Katulski, must approve access to TOPS.

5.09 Web Sites (For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Pete Lombardo, ARS/OCIO Web Branch Chief, on 301-504-1073.

- Does the Location have a public-facing Web site?

Provide the following information for the Location’s public-facing Web site(s). If there is more than one public-facing Web site, please duplicate requested information.

Web Site Base URL: _____

Responsible Location (and Mode Code)

Is this the primary organizational site for this location?

Primary contact(s):

Name:

E-mail address:

- Technology/Platforms (such as SSI, ASP, JSP, or ColdFusion)
- Key Word Phrases (such as “Children Nutrition”)

- Is the Web site compliant with USDA regulations?

ARS Policy and Procedure entitled “ARS World Wide Web Sites,” Number 265.0 can be found at <http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/ppweb/PDF/265-0.pdf>. This contains both ARS policy as well as references to broader USDA and Federal-wide policies.

- Does the Location make best use of existing Web/Internet communication services rather than duplicating them?

The ARS Web Site presents information on all ARS employees as well as all research projects, Locations, publications, and patents approved for public disclosure. The data for these come from the ARIS and REE Directory databases. Both short and long version orientation videos are available for further

information and broad dissemination at http://sp.arsnet.usda.gov/training/ars_website_short.swf and http://sp.arsnet.usda.gov/training/ars_website_long.swf respectively. For more information, send an e-mail to webmaster@ars.usda.gov.

In addition, e-mail list services (aka a listserv) are available for use in communicating with both the public and workgroups who span across agencies. For more information, send an e-mail to webmaster@ars.usda.gov.

- Is the Location experiencing any problems getting information updated on the ARS Web Site?

Each Location should verify its relevant information and submit needed updates as outlined in either the orientation video (above) or in many of the links under “Helpful Resources” of the SitePublisher main menu. E-mail webmaster@ars.usda.gov for assistance.

- Does the Location make best use of existing Collaboration/Intranet communication services rather than duplicating them?

Each Location should look to the ARSnet/SharePoint platform for its online collaboration needs. Users should contact their Location IT Specialist or e-mail sharepoint@ars.usda.gov for assistance.

5.10 eAuthentication (For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Michael Witles, ARS/OCIO on 301-504-1071.)

- Are employees at the Location aware of the Federal Government’s eAuthentication credentialing process and that these credentials must be established prior to accessing systems such as the AgLearn on-line training management system?

Many Federal services and applications are available to USDA employees and customers electronically. In order to access certain systems USDA employees must establish their eAuthentication credentials and acquire a standard username and password.

The data required for credentialing are available on the employee’s most recent Earnings and Leave Statement (AD334) which is mailed by the National Finance Center (NFC) and also on the Personnel Action Form SF-50. If the employee does not have the most recent versions of these documents, they should contact the administrative officer or their servicing human resources assistant.

The USDA eAuthentication Web Site is located at <http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov>. The USDA Directive 3610-001 (11/04/04),

“USDA eAuthentication Services” is located at <http://www.ocio.usda.gov/directives/files/dr/DR3610-001.htm>.

- Are employees at the Location experiencing any problems getting an eAuthentication credential established?

The Frequently Asked Questions for the USDA eAuthentication are located at <http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov/eauthFAQ.html>. For assistance with the employee credentialing implementation process, contact the eAuthentication Help Desk at eAuthHelpDesk@usda.gov or call toll free 1-800-457-3642. In the event the eAuthentication Help Desk is unable to provide assistance, ARS employees should contact their Area IT Specialist or the ARS Help Desk at 1-866-802-4877.

CARE FUNCTIONAL REVIEW

BUDGET AND FISCAL

For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in the following section, please contact Lisa Baldus on 301-504-1300.

6.0 Budget and Fiscal (General)

- In the interview process, determine whether Location management officials (LC, RL's and AO/T) believe that adequate support (e.g., guidance/instructions/Agency P&P issuances, financial reviews for dealing with problems or issues, etc.) is given from ARS Headquarters and the Area Office to manage and control Agency programs, assets, and resources.
- Ensure that all recommendations from recent audits and reviews (including CARE reviews, and financial reviews) have been resolved, and appropriate corrective action taken. If not, explain.

6.01 CRIS Accountability

- Make sure that RL's understand and correctly interpret the Agency's Current Research Information System (CRIS) accountability policy, and that they are spending dollars by CRIS in accordance with the Budget and Program Management Staff (BPMS) approved allocation.

In order to do so, review the Location's most current CRIS Activities Module (CAM) report. Determine whether there are deviations in planned versus actual expenditures of more than plus or minus 5 percent or \$50,000, whichever is less. If so, determine whether approvals were obtained for these expenditure variances. If approvals were not obtained, cite what CRIS is not in compliance, and the percentage or amount in variance. (Policy and Procedure Number 315.0)

- Determine if obligations in CRIS Allocation Tracking System (CATS) status of funds reports appear to be made to the benefiting CRIS.

In order to do so, review a representative sample of large obligation transactions and attempt to determine whether the obligations are consistent with the type of research conducted in the CRIS (i.e., it would not be consistent for a human nutrition related CRIS to purchase a tractor). If obligations do not appear to be charged to the benefiting CRIS, explain.

6.02 Research Cost

6.02-1 Indirect Research Costs (IRC) and Shared Research Costs (SRC)

- Determine whether each CRIS was assessed for IRC or SRC and "All Other" fixed costs according to established Agency policy.

In order to do so, examine the ARMP CRIS Allocation Schedules (CRAS) and supporting worksheets or other documentation developed for the last ARMP. Wherever possible, costs should be assigned based on actual usage of resources. Cost accounting prorations based on FTE, SY's or dollars are acceptable but should only be used after ruling out other, more precise methods of assigning common support costs (i.e., space occupied, number of telephones, etc.) (The ARMS manual; P&P 329.5) If IRC and SRC worksheets or other documentation are not available to support the assessment methodologies used, explain.

- Does the Location have the latest ARMPS instructions? Do they feel the instructions are clear, concise, timely, and easy to understand?

6.03 ARMPS Preparation/Implementation

- Inquire whether the ARMP process adequately allows the Location to prepare and update a comprehensive detailed annual operating plan for spending funds and accomplishing program objectives. Document any suggestions for improvement.
- Ensure that the Location is planning at least 4 percent of base funds on R&M as required by ARMP policy contained in the ARMS manual (unless the Location has been granted a documented exception to the policy).

In order to verify that at least 4 percent of base funds is planned for R&M spending, add amounts in object class 2530 on the Location's ARMP Annual Operating Plans (AOP's) and compare that total to the total base funds for the Location. If the total object class 2530 amount is less than 4 percent, determine what other budgeted amounts the Location considers to be R&M, and explain.

6.04 Allocations

- Ensure that official allocations are adhered to in establishing CATS financial plans at the Management Unit level and for CRIS subaccounts.

In order to do so, compare CATS financial plans to the budget documentation provided by the ABFO. MU totals can be verified against FFIS records.

6.05 Salary Estimates/Tracking

- Make sure employee salaries are being charged to CRIS subaccounts as planned on the approved ARMP. In order to do so, compare the ARMPS CRIS Resource Allocation Schedules with the SAMS Liability by CRIS report.
- Determine if any problems are encountered by the Location in using SAMS to account for salaries. If so, explain.

6.05-1 Salary Lapse Reporting

- Review salary lapse reports to determine if they accurately reflect the amount of lapse to the CRIS level. Review offsets on specific positions to validate that the offsets were appropriate (Reference Ground Rules to Salary Lapse). Ensure that the adjustment amounts are reflected on the CATS Financial Plan.

6.06 Period-End Estimates

- Determine whether the Location fully understands ARS' Year-end Closing Instructions and Procedures, including preparation of period-end estimates. Inquire whether the Location has any ideas on improving the year-end instructions and procedures.

6.07 Prior-Year Funding

- Inquire whether the Location is aware of the P&P for prior-year fund approval requests. For requests of \$1,000 or under, the approval process is not required. For requests of \$1,001 or more, a Form ARS 323-8 (or an e-mail message containing the same information as the form) must be completed and approved. For requests exceeding \$10,000, a certification of funds availability must be requested from the Financial Management Division—an e-mail message request is sufficient. (P&P 323.8, as amended.) For requests exceeding \$25,000, FMD approval is required.

6.08 Prompt Payment

- Determine whether the Location management is aware and sensitive to the Prompt Payment Act (budget object code 4310) requirement that an interest penalty must be paid to the vendor, with the invoice amount, for invoices not paid 30 days after receipt (interest is charged directly to the fundholder's account). (Review the CARE characteristics package for information on recent interest amounts charged to the Location.)

(NOTE: In the FFIS environment, the vendor record in VEND must reflect the appropriate payment terms. If there is excessive interest, determine whether correct information is obtained from the vendor and communicated to the vendor coordinator.)

6.09 Claims for and Against the Government

- Ensure that the Location has access to instructions for processing and disposition of claims (P&P 328.0 – Claims for the Government; P&P 227.1 – Claims against the Government).

6.10 Collections

In accordance with procedures in the FMM, Chapter 2600; P&P326.0; and Bulletin 02-314:

- Ensure that a collections official has been properly designated by inspecting their letter of designation from the Area office. Ensure that they are aware of all responsibilities.
- Ensure that all collections (cash, checks, etc.) received by the Location are properly secured and that they are promptly deposited/credited into the lock box to the proper miscellaneous receipt or appropriated fund account.
- Ensure that proper vendor codes are being used and that the Area pseudo code is used as little as possible. The pseudo code should never be used when depositing trust fund or reimbursable agreement checks.

6.11 Accounting/CATS

- Ensure that there is effective coordination between CATS and other Agency systems (e.g., ARMPS, FFIS, SAMS, ARIS, etc.). The Current Year column of the ARMP should be the initial financial plan amount in CATS. CATS must be reconciled with FFIS reports on a monthly basis. The “Reconciled” column on the Status of Funds Report should be tied into the cumulative obligations of the FFIS OCP Report. Budget documentation provided by the ABFO must be used to update MU financial plans in CATS. SAMS should be used to incorporate salary obligations and projections into CATS.
- Ensure that the information/data produced by CATS is verifiable; i.e., that the information/data can be traced to the source documents.

In order to do so, review CATS posted and unposted obligations on transaction listings. Select a random sample of transactions and verify that corresponding obligation documents are found in the Location files.

- Ensure that Location funds control records are reconciled monthly with FFIS reports, and that unusual or unidentified items are followed up on with the ABFO. The local funds control records should be thought of as a “check book” and the FFIS reports should be thought of as an “official bank statement.” Transactions appearing in the FFIS reports must be “posted” in local funds control reports in order to maintain accurate account balances.

6.12 Status of Funds

- Ensure that fundholders receive monthly status of funds reports from CATS in accordance with P&P 325.1. Although not required, it is suggested that fundholders also receive SAMS “Liability to MU” reports.
- Inquire whether the reports are adequate for the fundholder’s needs. If not, explain.
- Ensure that each fundholder reviews detailed financial transactions charged against their accounts from CATS printouts at least three times a year to determine if the documents belong to the MU. If there have been invalidly charged obligations, explain.

6.12-1 CRIS Activities Module (CAM)

- Determine if the Location encounters any difficulties in the use of CAM for downloading year-end planned versus actual CRIS subaccount data into special reports for BPMS. If so, determine the issues to be resolved, and explain.

6.12-2 Cuff Records

- Determine if fundholders maintain any funds tracking records (cuff records) in addition to the CATS reports maintained by the Location support staff. If yes, explain. As stated in ARS P&P 325.1, CATS will be used by employees throughout ARS as the only Location funds control system (FFIS is the official accounting system). No other local system (either manual or automated) will be used or supported unless approved by the Financial Management Division. Fundholders and their subordinates should generally not maintain any financial records, but should rely on the information produced by CATS. The fundholder may maintain a simple pending file of outstanding documents, which could be totaled and deducted from the CATS Status of Funds report. The maintenance of additional records by research scientists and research support personnel should be strongly discouraged.”

For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Diane Eggert on 301-504-1260

6.13 Travel

- Ensure that only personnel with proper training and an AD-1143 on file have access to the GovTrip system.
-
- Verify that Location personnel know how to access policies and procedures related to travel (<http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/ppweb/> for REE policies, <http://www.ocio.usda.gov/directives/index.html> for USDA Travel and Travel

Card Policies, and

<http://www.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/channelView.do?pageTypeId=8199&channelId=-14863> for the Federal Travel Regulations).

- Ensure that delegations of authority for approving travel are in writing, that they are accessible, and that responsibilities are effectively discharged. In order to do so, review the Location travel files.
- Determine if controls are in place to ensure that personal travel, when commingled with official travel, is not charged to the Government.

In order to do so, review travel authorizations and travel vouchers for cases of mixed travel and make sure days of personal expenses were not charged to the Government.

- **VERY IMPORTANT.**
For travel prepared in the NFC TRVL system: In accordance with the General Records Schedule, paper copies of transmitted transactions (bearing the original signatures of all parties) and supporting documents (e.g., receipts) must be retained for a 6-year, 3-month period. Agency offices that use the online data entry component to enter travel transactions are the official record keepers of the original paper copies of the transmitted transactions. These offices must follow the record retention requirements established by the National Archives and Records Administration in the “General Records Schedule”. These original vouchers shall be kept in a central locked file.
For travel prepared in the GovTrip system: all approval and document stamping in the GovTrip system are considered to be official records. Northrup Grumman, owner of the GovTrip system will retain the official electronic records for 6 years and 3 months as established by the National Archives and Records Administration. When a travel arranger stamps a document T-entered on behalf of travelers for vouchers, a copy of the signed voucher must be uploaded and attached to the electronic records. If any travel arranger is delegated the authority to stamp a document approved on behalf of an approving official, a copy of the signed authorization must be uploaded and attached to the electronic document in the GovTrip system.

6.13-1 Travel Authorizations

- Ensure that all travel orders are reviewed by properly designated individuals, other than the traveler, to determine that travel is official in purpose and nature and clearly stated, absolutely necessary, consolidated with other trips if feasible, and amounts estimated are reasonable.

- Ensure that open authorizations in GovTrip are limited only to individuals whose frequent, routine, repetitive travel requirements make individual trip-by-trip authorizations administratively burdensome. Open authorizations must be limited to those positions pre-determined by the Administrator. Open authorizations must be limited to the appropriate geographic area and to expenses.
- Ensure that open authorizations have not been used when actual expense is requested or for foreign travel.
- Determine if there were more than three instances during the last fiscal year of fund holders (or supervisors) post approving their subordinates' travel. (This procedure indicates a breakdown in the proper pre-approval process for authorizations) If yes, explain.
- Ensure that actual expense (per diem in excess of the GSA per diem rates) has been approved in accordance with the revised Agricultural Travel Regulations of May 1, 2008. Actual expense approval letters must be uploaded and attached to the GovTrip authorization electronically. Actual expense for conferences and meetings should be approved in writing by the Director, FMD, and the written approval is in the travel file. Actual expense will be selected on the per diem page of the GovTrip authorization..

6.13-2 Travel Advances

- Ensure that employees leaving the Agency have paid back any outstanding travel advance balances.
- Ensure that travel advances are only issued in conjunction with an approved travel authorization; and returned promptly when a trip is completed, canceled, or delayed past a reasonable time (P&P 342.3). Emphasis should be made on travel advances open to non-Government persons traveling for the Government. NOTE TO CARE TEAM: The number of travel advances should have decreased with the use of the Automated Teller Machines under the Travel charge card program.
- Ensure that Travel Charge Card holders comply with REE Bulletin 07-301, Use and Management of Travel Charge Cards, and Bulletin 07-306, Paying for Travel Expenses. Ensure that employees holding a government contractor-issued travel card are not provided advances, except for foreign travel or when approved REE Chief Financial Officer (Director, FMD).
- Ensure that employees that have had their travel charge card canceled for misuse or non-payment are not obtaining travel advances from NFC. These individuals may only obtain travel advances hardship reasons, and only with a written waiver from the REE Chief Financial Officer (Director, FMD).

- Ensure that managers are notified of outstanding travel advance balances at the Location on a regular basis. Employees performing the travel function at the Location should be performing this function. Inquire whether they are.

6.13-3 Travel Vouchers

- Interview the employees performing the travel function to determine if the Location is experiencing any problems with processing travel vouchers. If so, explain. Review the travel files to ensure that vouchers are being prepared accurately and according to prior authorization.
- Review travel vouchers to ensure that registration fees for meetings or conferences are not being claimed on travel vouchers. Registration fees shall be paid using the Government Purchase Card. See REE Bulletins, 07-301, Use and Management of Travel Charge Cards, and 04-303, Non-Travel Related Employee Reimbursements.
- Ensure that applicable receipts are uploaded and attached to the electronic voucher for common carrier tickets, lodging, rental car, and any expense of \$75 or more.

6.13-4 Relocation Allowances

- Ensure that obligations/adjustments are being properly accounted for. The authorized amount on the travel authorization appearing in TRVL must be deobligated, based on actual reimbursements and reflected in the Location's accounts maintenance records. There must be a review by accounts maintenance personnel to ensure that TRVL has properly deobligated relocation amounts.

6.13-5 Mandatory Use of Contracted Travel Management Centers

- Ensure that all tickets are being purchased through a contracted travel management center.
- Ensure that there are sufficient internal controls at the Location for safeguarding undistributed paper tickets. Determine if a safe or a suitable locked file cabinet is available to store the tickets. (P&P 343.4, Use of Contract Air Services.) Paper tickets are only allowed for foreign travel.
- Ensure that the government contract airfares are used unless an exemption applies. (41 CFR §301-10.107)
- When restricted and/or penalty fares are used, ensure that the requirements of §301-10.108 and REE Bulletin 05-312 are met.

- Determine if procedures are in place to ensure that the TMC is not used for leisure travel.
- Determine if a review of travel authorization/itineraries is made before tickets are given to travelers. Inquire this of both travelers and employees performing the travel function at the Location.
- Determine whether unused/partially used tickets (eTickets or paper tickets) are promptly returned and canceled for credit to the cardholder or Government. Review procedures with employees performing the travel function at the Location.

6.13-6 Bank of America CBA Account

- Review travel vouchers to ensure that only travelers without an individually billed travel card or travelers on foreign travel are authorized to use the CBA account. Travelers with an individually billed account on domestic travel should not be authorized to use the CBA.

6.13-7 Travel Charge Cards

- Ensure that employees with travel charge cards are using them to the fullest extent and only for official reimbursable travel expenses. (See Bulletin 07-316, Paying for Travel Expenses).
- Ensure that employees leaving the Agency turn in their travel charge cards. In order to do so, request to see the Exit Clearance form and check list (in accordance with P&P 426.1, Employee Exit Clearance Procedures). If employee is going to another USDA agency, the travel charge card shall be transferred. If not, the card must be cancelled.
- Ensure that applications for individually billed travel cards submitted after January 1, 2006, are accompanied by a certificate of completion of the GSA or USDA online travel charge card training program.

6.13-8 Foreign Travel

- Inquire whether the Location experiences any problems in processing foreign travel requests (e.g., HQ/Area approvals, passports, visas, etc.). If so, document the specific issues involved. (P&P 345.3)
- Inquire whether the Location experiences any problems using the Foreign Travel Information System (FTIS) via ARIS. If so, document the problems.
- Ensure that official passport receipts and a passport log are maintained in accordance with Agency guidelines.

- Ensure that all passports and documentation are secured in a suitable locked fireproof cabinet/safe.

6.14 Utility Accounts

- Ensure that the Location knows how to establish utility accounts with NFC through the use of the NFC TUMS system.
- Determine if the Location is encountering any problems with utility payments or reconciliation of accounts. If so, explain.
- Ensure that obligations for IPAC, GPO, GSA, etc., are appearing on the Transaction Detail Listing (TDL). If not, determine if the Location is taking corrective action with NFC and/or the appropriate Government vendor agency.

6.15 Agreement Accounting

6.15-1 Research Support Agreement (RSA) Expenditure Tracking

- Ensure that the ADODR or designee reconciles RSA cooperator billing data (i.e., the Monthly Management Reports or SF-1034 vouchers) with documentation submitted by the RL's (i.e., packing slips, delivery tickets, memoranda, etc.) to ensure receipt of goods and services billed for.
- Ensure that the Location maintains an adequate tracking system for comparison of actual expenditures to the Task Order obligation(s). Some Locations use CATS for this purpose; others use automated spreadsheets.

6.15-2 Trust Funds and Reimbursable Agreements

- Refer to Bulletins 02-316, 02-314, and 03-309.
- Ensure that reimbursable accounts coded as Type 63 have been approved by the Director, FMD, and are being billed by the ABFO/Location in accordance with Bulletin 03-309.
- Ensure that the Location waits for receipt of authorization from ABFO before initiating research activity for the cooperator. Trust fund agreements require an up-front payment from the cooperator before work may begin.
- Ensure that the Location is aware of carry-over implications for multi-year appropriation authorities. When the ordering agency has statutory multi-year spending authority, funds provided by the agreement are available for obligation by ARS for the specified years, subject to limitations imposed by the ordering

Agency. This will ordinarily result in carryover amounts from one fiscal year to another of any unobligated balance. The providing agency has the prerogative of stipulating the dollar amount that should be expended by fiscal year. (FMM Chapter 2400, Section 2415.1.2; Bulletin 03-309)

6.15-3 Sales/Exchange Funds

- Ensure that the AO/T and APO are following the required exchange/sale procedures. In the acquisition, sale, or exchange of property, both the item to be acquired and the item to be replaced must fall within a single category identified in the Federal Property Management Regulations. Proceeds from the exchange/sale of property are available for obligation to purchase replacement property during the year in which the property was sold plus one additional fiscal year. (FMM Chapter 2400, Section 2415.5) Separate accounts are established for suspense (sales proceeds) and reimbursement (repurchases) and are tracked by fiscal year of availability. (FMM Chapter 2400, and Section 2470). Review the Location files to determine if requirements for sale/exchange funds are being met. If not, explain.

6.15-4 Quarters

In accordance with the FMM, Chapter 2400, Section 2480:

- Review Location files to ensure that employee quarters payments are made through proper coding of Time and Attendance reports to accomplish payroll deductions. (Collections that are not received through payroll deductions must be paid into the Treasury Miscellaneous Receipt Account and thus are not available to the Location for obligation.)
- Review Location files to determine whether quarters rental receipts are used only for upkeep of the Government residences, as required. If not explain.

6.15-5 Revolving Fund

- Determine if the Location has a university (or cooperator) administered “revolving fund” composed of proceeds from the sale of Location animals, crops, or related by-products. If yes, provide the dollar amount, and describe the record keeping responsibilities between ARS and the university (or cooperator).
- Ensure that the anticipated funding amount is annotated on the ARMP.
- Determine if ARS employees have the authority to authorize (or cause) expenditures to be made from this fund. If yes, explain if they are doing so according to the terms of the MOU or agreement. An ARS official may not, under any circumstances, approve by signatory authority any obligation

documents covered under a revolving fund. Review the Location file to determine whether this may be happening. If so, explain.

6.16 Reference Manuals

- Ensure that budget/fiscal external procedures (including ARS P&P's) are complete, readily accessible, up-to-date, and are being properly followed. Attach or reference any internal procedures developed by the Location.
- Ensure that references are readily available for each of the following subject areas and that they are being fully utilized and understood: CATS; FFIS; FMM; SAMS; ARMPS; NFC Procedures Manuals; & Travel.

6.17 Training

- Through the interview and review process, determine whether employees are adequately trained in budget/fiscal operations to perform their duties, and whether the Location has competent and sufficient staff to carry out budget/fiscal functional responsibilities.

6.18 Budget/Fiscal Records Management

- Ensure that budget/fiscal records are maintained and disposed of in accordance with P&P 251.8, which provides records distribution schedules for administrative and financial management files.

CARE FUNCTIONAL REVIEW

OUTREACH, DIVERSITY, and EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

For information on interpretation or clarification of the functional questions in this section, please contact Debra Vandergrift, Office of Outreach, Diversity, and Equal Opportunity, 202-720-6161.

References include Departmental Regulation (DR) No. 4300-6, Civil Rights Policy for the Department of Agriculture; DR No. 4230-002, Special Emphasis Programs; P&P 122.2, Reasonable Accommodation Procedures; USDA and ARS Policy Statements (USDA Workplace Diversity and Inclusion; ARS Diversity/EEO; Anti-Harassment; and Sexual Harassment); DR 4300-007, Processing EEO Complaints of Discrimination; and DR 4710-001, Conflict Prevention and Resolution Center.

7.0 Special Emphasis Programs

- Verify how the Location initiates and conducts programs or other activities as one method to increase awareness/representation in an effort to build and maintain a diverse and high-quality workforce. (This includes special observance programs, display of special observance month posters, and other educational and awareness activities).
- Verify how the Location employees are informed and encouraged to attend the Special Emphasis Programs and EEO/Diversity or other Committee activities (e-mails, posters, etc.).
- Who represents the following: Area Civil Rights Manager, Area/Location Special Emphasis Programs and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) or Diversity Committee? Do you know the Chairperson and the functions and accomplishments of the Committee?

7.01 Recruitment and Outreach Efforts

- Verify recruitment and outreach efforts conducted by the Location to increase awareness of ARS programs and activities and to increase diversity in the workplace. **NOTE:** This includes visits to schools, tours, direct contact with local community resources, cooperative efforts with universities, and professional public and private organizations, etc. Verify results of those efforts (reports, etc.).
- Verify the utilization of the ARS Office of Outreach, Diversity, and Equal Opportunity (ODEO) - Recruitment and Outreach Office for materials used to conduct recruitment and outreach activities (e-mails, etc.).

- Verify efforts made to develop personal contacts with regional offices or local chapters of minority organizations, college placement centers, local disability and placement centers, etc., to recruit qualified individuals to ensure a diverse workforce. If applicable, verify results of those efforts (reports, etc.).
- Verify the utilization of the Area ODEO Program Managers, Special Emphasis Program Managers or the EEO/Diversity or other Committees in recruitment efforts (e-mails, rosters of events, etc.).
- Verify how the Area Management Directive 715, Annual EEO Program Report is utilized to increase diversity in the workforce when recruiting for positions.
- Verify the documentation of identified barriers to diversity in the workplace and the status of the plans developed to eliminate those barriers.
- Verify the activities that have been held to foster or facilitate the employment of persons with disabilities including making reasonable accommodations for known physical or mental limitations of qualified applicants and employees with disabilities.

7.02 Reasonable Accommodation for Persons with Disabilities

- Are you aware of the reasonable accommodation process? If so, who would you contact to request a reasonable accommodation?
- Verify how employees are made aware of the reasonable accommodation process.
- Verify activities that have fostered or facilitated the employment of persons with disabilities including making reasonable accommodations for known physical or mental limitations of qualified applicants and employees with disabilities.

7.03 Communication

- Verify that the following are displayed on all official bulletin boards/display cases:
 - Current fiscal year ARS/Area (if applicable) policy statements for EEO/CR
 - “Discrimination in Employment is Illegal” and “And Justice for All” posters
 - Current Anti-Harassment Policy Statement
 - Documents regarding diversity and reasonable accommodation

- Verify that the following are included in new employee orientation packages (hard copy or on-line):
 - Current FY ARS and Area (if applicable) and USDA EEO/CR Policy Statements
 - ARS Sexual Harassment Policy Statement
 - Reasonable Accommodation Brochure
 - EEO Complaint Process (informal and formal)
 - DR-4300-010, Civil Rights Accountability Policy and Procedures
 - EEO Mediation/Alternative Dispute Resolution
- Verify that the commitment and support of the USDA/ARS/ODEO Strategic Plan objectives been communicated to all employees.
- Verify that outreach, diversity, and equal opportunity expectations are communicated to the employees.
- Are employees aware of the Office of Outreach, Diversity, and Equal Opportunity Web-site (ARS and Area)? [Are the Web-site(s) user friendly? What additional information would be helpful?]

7.04 Training

- Verify that all Location employees have completed the current mandatory Civil Rights training?
- Are there additional EEO/CR topics where training is needed? If so, please specify.

7.05 Recognition

- Verify how employees are made aware of the Administrator's Outreach, Diversity, and Equal Opportunity Awards Program and Area's Award program (if applicable).
- How are employees, managers/supervisors, organizational units, etc, recognized for demonstrating superior outreach, diversity, and equal employment opportunity accomplishments?
- What is the process for determining who receives awards at the Location?

7.06 EEO Complaint Process

- Do you know the process and who to contact if an EEO complaint needs to be filed?
- Are you familiar with the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)/mediation method as a feature in the EEO complaint process? Do managers and supervisors encourage the use of ADR?
- If you would need to file a complaint, would you consider using the ADR/Mediation process? If not, why?
- Do you feel EEO policies and procedures are followed in accordance with laws and regulations? If not, please explain.

CARE FUNCTIONAL REVIEW

EXTRAMURAL AGREEMENTS

For information on the interpretation of clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Kim Hicks on 301-504-1141.

8.0 Extramural Agreements Program (General)

Reference: Extramural Agreements Manual (EAM) 280.0 dated April 1994. Additional information is available on the EAD Web site -

<http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/agreements/index.htm>

- Interview the AO/T to identify Location staff involved in the extramural agreements process, including the types of agreements they process and their roles, duties, and responsibilities. (ADODRs, AO, LSS, CD/LD (if applicable))
- Interview the Location staff involved in the extramural agreements process to document their concerns, comments, and/or recommendations about the following:
 - process and turn around times;
 - training needs; and
 - improvement(s) to the extramural agreements process.
- Interview the Location staff involved in the agreements process to determine the following:
 - Is the staff aware that all agreements must be approved in ARIS/AIMS prior to execution?
 - Are all the Location's agreements entered into ARIS/AIMS? If not, document why and what types are not being entered. Note: Not applicable to Standard Cooperative Agreements.
 - Is the staff aware of the Agency wide implementation of the new Extramural Agreements process and the new ARIS/AIMS data entry requirements?
 - Has the staff received any AIMS or ARIS training? If so, by whom?
 - Is the staff aware of the following ARIS/AIMS resources:
 - The Short Guide "Almost Everything You Need to Know About the Agreements Process"
 - The ARIS User Guide
- Interview the AO/T to determine if they provide the following assistance to the ADODR:
 - Advice and guidance on the administrative requirements for extramural agreements.

- A pre-award review of all proposed agreements information entered into ARIS/AIMS.
 - Development of the proposed budget to ensure costs are allowable, allocable, and reasonable.
 - A pre-award review of the Statement of Work (SOW) versus budget to ensure budgeted items corresponds to the proposed level of effort.
 - Conducting preliminary negotiations on proposed terms and conditions of the agreements and budget.
 - Providing technical direction to the cooperator regarding program and administrative requirements within the scope and terms of the agreement.
- Interview the appropriate LSS to determine if they provide the following assistance to their ADODR:
 - Entering the appropriate information into ARIS/AIMS (ARS-416/417/425) completely and accurately.
 - Providing assistance in the development of the budget to ensure all applicable and indirect costs are documented.
 - Assisting the ADODR in reviewing the request for compliance prior to forwarding the request to the ADO.
 - Preparing justifications for funding increase/decrease and extensions of time.
- Verify the Location maintains an agreement file, for each type of agreement with copies of information relevant to the extramural project. (The Area office maintains the “official” Agency file.)
- Identify who maintains the agreement file (usually the ADODR) at the Location.
 - The file should include the following: (1) a fully executed copy of the agreement, (2) a copy of the approved ARIS documents and (3) a copy of the appointment letter delegating authority to the ADODR. The file may also include the following: (1) copies of amendment(s), (2) copies of correspondence, (3) copies of Financial and Performance reports, and (4) copies of internal e-mails and notes.

8.01 Research Support Agreement

Research Support Agreement (RSA) – A cost reimbursable agreement between ARS and State Cooperative Institutions or other colleges or universities, for the acquisition of goods or services, including personal services, to carry out agricultural research, extension, or teaching activities of mutual interest. There is a 4-year limitation on full time recurring requirements and a 10 percent limitation on reimbursing the cooperator for indirect costs. The terms RSA and Cost Reimbursable Cooperative Agreement (CRCA) are interchangeable.

Reference: REE Bulletin 07-001, Research Support Agreement (Revised 2008)

- Determine if the RSA is used at the Location. If yes:
 - Verify the Location has a copy of the approved ARS-550, Research Agreements Plan from the Annual Resources Management Plans System (ARMPS) to use the RSA.
 - Determine who serves as ADO for the RSA.
- If the RSA is administered at the Area, end the RSA review here.
- If the RSA is administered at the location, verify the following:
 - The ADO has a Level 1 Delegation of Authority granted by the Director, EAD to establish the RSA. Is the Certificate for Delegation of Authority for Extramural Agreements displayed in an open area in their office or primary work location? (P&P 700.0, Delegation of Authority for Authorized Departmental Officers)
 - The ADODR (usually the Research Leader) has a written delegation of authority from the ADO to act as the technical representative on the RSA.
 - The location has an e-mail or letter from the Area, indicating who is responsible for negotiating the Indirect Cost Rate (ICR) payable on the RSA.
- Verify the following:
 - The ADO is using ARIS/AIMS to produce the agreements package (REE-451, Signature Page, and SOW) for the RSA. Note: This will require access to ARIS/AIMS. (Bulletin 07-001)
 - The 5-year umbrella agreement is not in use.
 - Task Orders or Optional Forms 347 and 348 are not used to order supplies or services.
- Verify that the RSA does not exceed 12 months in duration. Note: The award period can cross fiscal years.
- Verify ARS employees are not intervening in personnel matters between the Cooperator and its employees including, but not limited to:
 - Selecting cooperator employees
 - Administratively supervising cooperator employees
 - Administering cooperator payrolls
 - Establishing wage levels

- Entering into employment agreements with individuals
 - Approving/disapproving cooperator employees' leave
- Determine if the ADO is verifying the RSA pricing and/or determining the wage rates with the Cooperator.
 - Determine if services requested on the RSA are in accordance with ARS policy and procedures regarding the acquisition of goods and personal services. Specifically:
 - Is the ADO aware of ARS policy, which specifies a 4-year limitation on acquiring personal services for recurring requirements, i.e., a Lab Technician? Note: General support costs i.e., janitorial and maintenance services, etc. are excluded from the 4-year limitation.
 - Is the ADO aware that acquiring the services of a university employee equivalent to an ARS Category 1 and/or 4 Scientist position is limited to 90 days?
 - Verify the Cooperator's ICR does not exceed 10 percent of their total direct cost.
 - Verify the ADO is performing the following:
 - Reviewing all ARIS/AIMS data fields for accuracy and completeness of the RSA information.
 - Conducting ICR negotiations with the Cooperator, as determined by the Area policy.
 - Entering into, administering, closing out and/or terminating the RSA.
 - Issuing a written delegation of authority, assigning technical oversight responsibilities to the ADODR.
 - Providing a copy of obligating documents and invoices to ARS Operations or their Budget and Fiscal Office (ABFO) for certification and processing.
 - Verifying the eligibility of the proposed Cooperator.
 - Verifying the presence of mutuality of interest between ARS and the Cooperator.
 - Obtaining the Cooperator's banking and FFIS vendor code information.
 - Obtaining and evaluating the Cooperator's pricing information to ensure costs are allowable, allocable, and reasonable.
 - Ensuring proper use of the RSA in accordance with Bulletin 07-001.
 - Reviewing all data fields for accuracy and completeness of the RSA information in ARIS/AIMS.
 - Maintaining the "official" RSA file.
 - Monitoring Cooperator performance and ensuring financial and performance reporting requirements are met as prescribed in the terms and conditions of the RSA.
 - Adjusting the RSA obligation, as needed, based on expenditures and changing programmatic needs.

- Ensuring the ADODR reviews and approves Management Reports (MRs).
- Verify the REE-451 (including amendments) includes the following:
 - Appropriate ARS Budget Object Code and Sub-Object Code Note: BOC = 2554, SUB BOCs = LG and PU. This information is required for FFIS purposes.
- A SOW, which includes the following:
 - A general description and amount of supplies, materials, and/or services
 - Listing of occupational categories (title) with duties
 - Dates or a time frame for delivery of goods or performance of services
- If payment method for RSA is under the Health and Human Services/Payment Management System (HHS/PMS):
 - Determine if the Cooperator is providing the ADO with a MR or equivalent.
 - Determine if the ADO and ADODR verify and approve the MR or equivalent based upon documentation (i.e., packing slips, payroll detail listing, delivery tickets, memoranda, etc.).
 - Verify the ADO is promptly submitting a copy of the MR to ARS Operations or ABFO, for comparison against disbursement activity in the HHS/PMS.
- If payment method for RSA is not HHS/PMS:
 - Determine if the Cooperator submits an itemized invoice to the ADO.
 - Determine if the ADODR is certifying the receipt of goods and/or services on the invoice based upon documentation (i.e., packing slips, payroll detail listing, delivery tickets, memoranda, etc.), and approve them for payment.
 - Determine if the ADO is promptly submitting the invoices to ARS Operations or ABFO for payment.

8.02 Cooperative Agreements: (Specific Cooperative Agreements (SCA), Trust Fund Cooperative Agreements (TFCA), and Reimbursable Cooperative Agreements (RCA))

SCA – describes in detail a jointly planned, executed, and funded research program or project.

TFCA – involves cooperative research between ARS and another party where ARS is paid in advance to conduct research or for the other party to share in the cost of a research project conducted by ARS.

RCA- similar to the TFCA except, that the Cooperator pays when billed by ARS for work completed.

Reference: EAM 280.0 Chapters 2100 and 2300

- Determine if the SCA, TFCA, and/or RCA is used at the Location. If yes:
- Verify the agreements are entered into ARIS/AIMS (100 percent requirement). Determine by whom.

8.03 Standard Cooperative Agreement (STCA)

STCA – describes a cooperative relationship between ARS and another party that defines a mutually beneficial relationship relative to the use of land, labor, equipment, facilities, livestock, or other resources. The agreement includes a “make whole” provision using one of the following methods: (1) Tort claims Act, or (2) a fair market value as agreed upon by the parties.

Reference: EAM 280.0, Chapter 2200 and REE Bulletin 03-700

<http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/ppweb/03-700.pdf>

- Determine if the STCA is used at the Location. If yes:
- Determine who serves as the ADO for the STCA. Note: The AO/T may be the ADO for the STCA.
- If the STCA is administered at the Location level, verify the ADO has a Certificate for Delegation of Authority for Extramural Agreements signed by the Director, EAD displayed in an open area in their office or primary work location. (P&P 700.0, Delegation of Authority for Authorized Departmental Officers)
- Verify the Location maintains an agreement file and forwards a copy of the STCA to the Area office. Note: The file should include the following: (1) fully executed copy of the agreement and (2) a copy of the appointment letter delegating authority to the ADODR. The file may also include internal e-mails and notes.
- If the STCA is at the Area level, verify that the Location receives a copy of the agreement and maintains a file. (The Area office maintains the “official” Agency file.)

8.04 Grants and Assistance Type Cooperative Agreement (ATCA)

Grant – transfers a thing of value (money, property, services, etc.) to the recipient to stimulate or carry out a public purpose with no substantial involvement anticipated between the agency and the recipient.

ATCA – transfers a thing of value to the recipient to stimulate or carry out a public purpose and substantial involvement is anticipated between the agency and the recipient.

Reference: EAM 280.0, Chapter 3100

- Determine if the Grant and/or ATCA is used at the Location. If yes:
- Verify the agreements are entered into ARIS/AIMS (100 percent requirement). Determine by whom.
- Determine whether the AO/T is familiar with the requirement to document substantial involvement on the ATCA.

8.05 Supplements to the MMOU

Supplements to the MMOU - further defines cooperative research related to the MMOU. Used prior to August 14, 2003. Supplements have been replaced by Non-Funded Cooperative Agreements (NFCAs).

- Determine if there are active Supplements. If yes:
 - Ensure the Location is advised to work with the Area Office to terminate all active Supplements and convert those still needed to NFCAs.

8.06 Standard Memorandum of Understanding (SMOU)

SMOU - describes a cooperative relationship between ARS and another party that defines a mutually beneficial relationship relative to the use of land, labor, equipment, facilities, livestock, or other resources. The agreement does not include a “make whole” provision. Used prior to August 14, 2003. SMOUs have been replaced by Non-Funded Cooperative Agreements.

- Determine if there are active SMOUs. If yes:
 - Ensure the Location is advised to work with the Area Office to terminate all SMOUs and convert those still needed to NFCAs.

8.07 Individual Memorandum of Understanding (IMOU)

IMOU - describes a cooperative program or project between ARS and another party when there was no Master MOU to supplement. Used prior to August 14, 2003. IMOUs have been replaced by NFCAs.

- Determine if there are active IMOUs. If yes:
 - Ensure the Location is advised to work with the Area Office to terminate all IMOUs and convert those still needed to NFCAs.

8.08 Non-Funded Cooperative Agreement (NFCA)

NFCAs - describes in detail a jointly planned and executed project of mutual interest. All

parties contribute resources and benefit independently in the outcome of the project. There is no direct transfer of funding from one party to the other. NFCA replaces the Individual Memorandum of Understanding (IMOU), Supplements to the MMOU and the Standard Memorandum of Understanding.

Reference REE Bulletin 03-700

Determine if the NFCA is used at the Location. If yes:

- Verify the agreements are entered into ARIS/AIMS (100 percent requirement). Determine by whom.