

# INDIAN AFFAIRS MANUAL

- 1.1 Purpose.** To establish policy for producing and issuing Assistant Secretary's Orders (ASOs).
- 1.2 Scope.** Compliance with ASOs is mandatory for Indian Affairs (IA) employees.
- 1.3 Policy.** ASOs are temporary directives by which the Assistant Secretary may issue delegations of authority, special assignment of functions, establish new organizational units, and convey emergency directives. ASO provisions remain in effect for one year unless extended, revoked, or incorporated into the Indian Affairs Manual (IAM).
- 1.4 Authority.**
- A.** The Public Information section of the **Administrative Procedure Act (5 U.S.C. 552)** requires that the following information be made available to the public: descriptions of the organization, where and how information and decisions can be secured, what and how functions are performed, what requirements must be met to get benefits or services, and what procedures must be followed.
  - B. Departmental Manual 381 DM 1** requires that IA provide proper documentation of its organization, functions, policies, and procedures.
- 1.5 Guidance.** The Indian Affairs Directives Handbook (1 IAM-H) provides instructions and examples to assist those who produce ASOs, including examples and templates for formatting, Transmittal sheets, and Clearance Records. The Handbook is on the IA intranet through the IA Directives System webpage: <http://inside.bia.gov/Org/AS-IA/ORM/DirectSys/index.htm> and on the Internet at <http://www.bia.gov/WhatWeDo/Knowledge/Directives/index.htm>. A copy may be obtained by contacting the Office of Regulatory Affairs and Collaborative Action, 2051 Mercator Drive, Reston, VA 20191.
- 1.6 Style.** ASOs should be written in plain language which is easily understood. Technical language and legal jargon should be avoided. Acronyms should be used sparingly and only after the complete words for the acronym have been spelled out the first time it is used.
- 1.7 Responsibilities.**
- A. Assistant Secretary (AS-IA); Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary (PDAS); Acting Assistant Secretary** evaluates and determines that an ASO is the appropriate form of policy, and carefully reviews the content of the text. The authoring Office is responsible for ensuring that the policy in the ASO conforms to applicable statutes, regulations and policies.
  - B. Deputy Assistant Secretaries; Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA); Director, Bureau of Indian Education (BIE), and Indian Affairs Offices.** A proposed ASO is prepared by the office or region with primary interest in or responsibility for the subject. The authoring Office is responsible for developing content; circulating drafts for internal review and comment; preparing the Transmittal Sheet and Clearance Record for review and concurrence; and ensuring the Order is appropriately distributed in electronic or printed format.

**C. Office of Regulatory Affairs and Collaborative Action (RACA)** provides guidance and assistance for developing ASOs. RACA assigns a release number and document identification number; reviews Orders for format, and coordinates any recommended changes or corrections with the authors. When ASOs are final and signed by the appropriate official, they are returned to RACA to enter it into the records management system, and forward for publication to the IA Internet.

**D. Signature Authority**. ASOs are signed only by the Assistant Secretary, the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, or an Acting Assistant Secretary.

## 1.8 Definitions.

**A. Clearance Record (Form DI 228)**. The Clearance Record is used during the final review and signature process (surnaming) to document concurrence by each reviewing official. Instructions and examples for completing the Clearance Record are in the IA Directives Handbook.

**B. Directive**. A means of written communication that conveys policy, initiates or governs actions, conduct, or procedures.

**C. Document Identification Number**. The document identification number is the unique identification number for the directive being issued. For ASOs, the document identification number is constructed of the acronym and a sequential number based on the ASOs issued (for example, ASO-1, ASO-2, etc.).

**D. Indian Affairs (IA)**. Includes the Offices of the Assistant Secretary - Indian Affairs, the BIE, and the BIA. The organization and functions of the components of IA are described in 110 DM 8 and 130 DM 1 through 130 DM 12.

**E. Proper Documentation**. Identifying what information needs to be created or received to provide documented evidence of carrying out official responsibilities; managing the organization; and meeting the Department's legal responsibilities.

**F. Transmittal Sheet (Form DI 416)**. The Transmittal Sheet contains a summary of the material in the ASO and provides primary point of contact information (usually the author in the originating office). Instructions for completing Transmittal sheets are in the IA Directives Handbook.