
From: Echohawk, Larry
Sent: Wednesday, June 29, 2011 1:52 PM
To: All_IA; All IE
Subject: ASIA Weekly Message to Employees

Dear Team:

Summer is now upon us and time continues to move fast for us here in Indian Affairs. Since becoming the Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs, one of the main topics brought to my attention was the administrative functions servicing our organization. We are beginning an evaluation of these functions relative to the reorganization that occurred almost a decade ago. I am taking a look at these areas in order to assess functionality, performance and customer support to determine if there are ways to improve Indian Affairs.

Many of you may recall the changes in administrative functions and procedures that began with the issuance of the 1999 National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) report titled, "A Study of Management and Administration: The Bureau of Indian Affairs." The NAPA study concentrated on management, support and administrative responsibilities throughout the Bureau of Indian Affairs and highlighted a number of weaknesses and management issues and served as the cornerstone for changes in the organization.

Taking into consideration the many requests by both employees and tribal leaders alike to evaluate administrative functions, I have moved forward in a joint partnership with the Department of the Interior to contract for an assessment of these services and the status of the implementation of the NAPA report. The assessment will focus on the current status of the reorganization, the degree to which improvements were implemented, the adequacy of service levels and resources, and opportunities for more effective and efficient operations. This will be a time intensive task to be completed within four months from the date the contract was awarded.

On Monday, June 20, 2011, a \$407,000 contract was awarded to the Bronner Group, LLC., a small, woman-owned business based in Chicago that specializes in consulting with government and the public sector. One of the key components of the contract requirements was that the contractor must obtain input from employees and tribal officials on their views on the changes in the organizational structure. This will be your opportunity to share your views and suggestions to improve Indian Affairs support services operations.

The Bronner Group will be contacting employees and tribal officials via personal interviews, web access and/or telephone contact. In addition, the Bronner Group will be attending various regional management meetings and tribal consultations to gather input from employees and tribes. Due to the tight timeframe to complete this assessment, not every location or office will be contacted. However, we are working on avenues to ensure we receive your input. More information will be forthcoming as details are confirmed.

I want to make sure that you have the facts about this effort from the beginning. I want to be sure that we approach this evaluation in a balanced manner that will result in sound analysis of alternatives and an outcome that will best support the ongoing programs in Indian Affairs and the services needed in Indian Country. Please keep this in mind and know that we have no preconceived ideas on the outcome of this report or expect any final decisions to be made prior to receiving your input and the Bronner analysis and recommendations. This is why we are asking for your participation from the beginning. If you hear this or that, just know that if the news isn't issued from this office, it has no basis in fact.

This is a wonderful opportunity for you to provide constructive suggestions to build a stronger, more effective and efficient organization that helps us meet our Federal responsibilities and improves our service delivery to Indian Country.

Thank you for all your hard work on behalf of Indian Affairs and I look forward to your participation regarding this timely and critical analysis of our organization. Your input is greatly valued.

Larry Echo Hawk
Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs