Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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Assistant Secretary Ross Swimmer said today he will initiate on June 2 a program to bring Bureau of Indian Affairs agency superintendents to Washington, D.C. for a three-week intensive orientation on the Bureau's headquarters operations

A priority will be given to selecting new and less experienced superintendents for enrollment in the program.

"As a part of my efforts to improve the management of the Bureau, I want to expose our frontline managers -- the agency superintendents who work directly with Indian tribal governments -- to the Washington headquarters operations so they can attain a greater understanding of the organizations' missions, policies, programs and administrative processes from a Bureau-wide perspective," Swimmer said. "I would expect that the headquarters' managers will likewise learn from the experience of the superintendents."

Swimmer said the information learned during the orientation will enable superintendents to be more responsive to tribal governments. "I want the managers of the Bureau to make informed decisions at the lowest organizational level possible, and not merely pass forward the decision responsibility to the next higher organizational level." He said that in those instances where a higher authority is responsible for a decision, "I want sound analysis to come forward so that expeditious and responsible decisions can be made and responses given to tribal governments."

Three superintendents per month will be assigned to Washington. The orientation is designed to assure that participants Rain a basic knowledge and understanding of the Bureau's trust and service responsibilities, its administrative authorities and procedures and management practices.

During their assignments the superintendents will spend time with the Assistant Secretary and his Deputies for Trust and Economic Development, Tribal Services, Education and Operations.