Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

Media Contact: Lovett 202-343-7445
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Commissioner of Indian Affairs Morris Thompson said today that key staff people from Bureau of Indian Affairs Area Offices have participated in intensive training this month in preparation for the implementation of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act.

Final regulations for the Act, published in the Federal Register November 4, will become effective December 4.

A training seminar, November 17-21, focused on options and opportunities which the Act offers to Indian tribes and the use of the program tools provided by the Act. Participants in the seminar will be responsible for conducting local orientation and training sessions in their areas.

Commissioner Thompson said the Act "marked the beginning of a new era in Federal-Indian relations." It is designed to strengthen the role of tribal governments and to facilitate Indian control of reservation programs.

The Act gives tribes the right to contract with the Bureau for the administration of programs serving them. It also provides for grants to increase tribal capabilities for such contracting and makes special provisions concerning tribal employment of Federal personnel.

Regulations for the Act were developed through an extensive process of consultation with Indian leaders.