



Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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WASHINGTON – Bureau of Indian Affairs Director Michael S. Black today announced that he has named Eugene R. Virden as Regional Director of the BIA's Alaska Regional Office in Juneau. Virden, an enrolled member of the White Earth Band of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, had been serving as the acting regional director since December 21, 2009. The Alaska Regional Office oversees two agencies serving 229 federally recognized Alaska Native tribes and villages. His appointment will become effective on January 30, 2011.

"Eugene Virden's extensive federal administrative, program and financial management experience has been of great service to the Bureau of Indian Affairs and its Alaska Regional Office," Black said. "I am pleased that by accepting this appointment he will continue to ensure that the BIA meets its obligations to the Alaska Native tribes."

"I want to thank BIA Director Mike Black and Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs Larry Echo Hawk for this tremendous opportunity," Virden said. "I am looking forward to working with them on how we can improve our ability to serve the Alaska Native people."

While acting regional director, Virden had been serving since October 2009 as the Deputy Regional Director-Native Services. As such, he was responsible for the day-to-day operations and administration of the Bureau's Indian Services programs in the Alaska Regional Office.

After serving in the U.S. Marine Corps from 1969 to 1971, Virden's 22-year career with the BIA, 13 of which have been in Alaska, began in December 1988 following several years in the private sector (November 1974 to November 1988) as the co-owner of Broberg, Virden and Johnson, LTD, a CPA firm, and Itasca Computer Services, both of Grand Rapids, Minn.

In December 1988, Virden joined the BIA's Alaska Area Office (now the Alaska Regional Office) in Juneau as an Accounting Officer, where he served until May 1999. As such, he supervised the obligation of all funds in Alaska for the BIA. During that period, from June 1 through July 31, 1992, he was detailed to the Bureau's Division of Accounting Management in Albuquerque, N.M., as Acting Chief of the Branch of Payments. The Division was responsible for all accounting in the Bureau and reported to the Deputy Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

From May 1999 to August 1999, Virden served as Finance Officer for the BIA at its headquarters in Washington, D.C, where he supervised the obligation of all funds for the Bureau's central office operations.

His time spent in Washington was immediately followed by a stint as the Acting Chief of the Division of Accounting Management in Albuquerque, from August 1999 to June 2000, where he oversaw the day-to-day operations of all payments, billing, collections and internal and external reporting for the Bureau. During his tenure, the BIA received its first clean (unqualified) opinion on the Chief Financial Officers Audit. In June 2000, he was named the division's chief, where he served until November 2001.

In November 2001, Virden was named Finance Officer for the BIA's Midwest Regional Office in Fort Snelling, Minn. As such, he supervised the obligation of all funds at the regional office, where he remained until December 2002 when he was named Superintendent of the Bureau's Minnesota Agency in Bemidji.

As Superintendent, Virden oversaw all areas of the Agency's activities and the delivery of BIA services to the six bands and reservations of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, as well as the coordination of all BIA administration, Indian services, trust responsibilities, economic development, employment and natural resources programs at the agency.

He moved from Minnesota in February 2008 when he was named the Superintendent of the Bureau's West-Central Alaska Agency in Anchorage. As such, he was responsible for the overall planning, organization, staffing, controlling, execution and coordination of all administration, enrollment and Indian services at the agency. He held the position until October 2009 when he was named the Deputy Regional Director-Native Services.

Virden holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Public Accounting from St. Cloud State College (now St. Cloud State University) in Minnesota (1974).

He is married with two children and two grandchildren.
