



Headquarters Policy Flash

FLASH 2000-13

DATE: May 5, 2000
TO: Heads of Contracting Activities and Procurement Directors
FROM: Office of Procurement and Assistance Policy, MA-51
Office of Procurement and Assistance Management

SUBJECT: Financial Assistance Simplification - Consultation with Partners

SUMMARY: On May 3, 2000, the Deputy Secretary sent a memorandum to the Heads of Departmental Elements regarding the implementation of the Federal Financial Assistance Management Improvement Act (Public Law 106-107). The Deputy Secretary requested their support in soliciting input from DOE's recipient community. Richard is also sending a similar memorandum to request support from the procurement community. The attached memorandum is being forwarded electronically for your information and appropriate action. If you have questions, please contact Trudy Wood at (202) 586-5625.



Gwendolyn S. Cowan
Gwendolyn S. Cowan, Director

Attachment

**Department of Energy**

Washington, DC 20585

MAY 4, 2000

MEMORANDUM FOR: HEADS OF CONTRACTING ACTIVITIES AND
PROCUREMENT DIRECTORS

FROM: RICHARD H. HOPF, DIRECTOR 
PROCUREMENT AND ASSISTANCE MANAGEMENT

SUBJECT: FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE SIMPLIFICATION -
CONSULTATION WITH PARTNERS

On November 20, 1999, the President signed into law the Federal Financial Assistance Management Improvement Act (Public Law 106-107) whose purposes are to improve the delivery of services to the public and the effectiveness and performance of Federal grant and cooperative agreement programs. Federal agencies are working with OMB to make it easier for State, local, and tribal governments, and nonprofit and commercial organizations to apply for and report on Federal financial assistance.

This memorandum requests your support toward implementation of the law, particularly in soliciting input from our recipient partners. The law requires Federal agencies to work with OMB to: develop uniform administrative rules and common application and reporting systems; replace paper with electronic processing in the administration of grant programs; and identify statutory impediments to program simplification.

OMB requires consultation with the recipient community and considers it an essential step in this simplification effort. Within DOE, our strategy is to make efficient use of the various meetings/forums/seminars/conferences already scheduled over the next several months with all sectors of the recipient community by providing information about the new law and our desire to learn more about the customers' priorities for program simplification.

The attached document, Simplification of Federal Financial Assistance Programs – Consultation with Partners, is a script of information about the new law and the “Opportunity to Comment” available from the DOE Financial Assistance home page. Please share this document with your staff who may be meeting with recipient organizations over the next several months. Comments will go to a special email address: PL106107@pr.doe.gov to be reviewed, analyzed, and summarized for use by the interagency work groups involved in working with OMB to implement the law.

We would appreciate the widest distribution appropriate. If you have any questions about this effort, please contact Trudy Wood at (202) 586-5625. Thank you.

Attachment



SIMPLIFICATION OF FEDERAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS - CONSULTATION WITH PARTNERS

Background

On November 20, 1999, the President signed into law the Federal Financial Assistance Management Improvement Act (Public Law 106-107). The purposes of the Act are to improve the delivery of services to the public and the effectiveness and performance of Federal grant and cooperative agreement programs. Federal agencies are working with OMB to: 1) develop uniform administrative rules and common application and reporting systems; 2) replace paper with electronic processing in administration of these programs; and 3) identify statutory impediments to program simplification.

Consultation with the recipient community is an important part of this simplification effort and a critical step in developing and implementing a work plan by May 2001, as required by this law. Program staff and Contracting Officers are encouraged to bring this Opportunity to Comment to the attention of the recipient community. This may be done during upcoming meetings, conferences, seminars, and forums involving various recipient organizations, or by posting information on other web sites, linked to the DOE Financial Assistance home page.

OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT:

DOE has a Financial Assistance Internet web site where the public can obtain information related to grants and cooperative agreements. The web site, at <http://www.pr.doe.gov/fahome.html>, highlights an "Opportunity to Comment" on the current financial assistance program simplification effort. Comments should be provided via email to: PL106107@pr.doe.gov. All comments will be reviewed, analyzed, and summarized for use by DOE and the various interagency work groups involved with implementation of the law.

The Opportunity to Comment includes identifying those processes in the financial assistance life cycle that need streamlining or improvement and offering suggestions for achieving improvements. It asks the recipient community 1) to describe what is most important in terms of program simplification; 2) to identify the specific financial assistance programs found to be most burdensome, and 3) to provide details about why they are burdensome. DOE will consider all responses in its simplification effort and provide summaries to the interagency working groups.

The input is valued, and is part of the larger process of achieving the goals the Department and of P. L. 106-107, namely simplification of Federal financial assistance programs for the benefit of our recipients.

Distribution List:

Manager, Albuquerque Operations Office
Manager, Chicago Operations Office
Manager, Golden Field Office
Manager, Idaho Operations Office
Manager, Nevada Operations Office
Manager, Oakland Operations Office
Manager, Oak Ridge Operations Office
Manager, Ohio Field Office
Manager, Richland Operations Office
Manager, Rocky Flats Office
Manager, Savannah River Operations Office
Manager, Naval Petroleum and Oil Shale Reserves in CO, UT and WY
Manager, Strategic Petroleum Reserves Project
Management Office
Director, National Energy Technology Center/DOE Pittsburgh

Director, Office of Headquarters Procurement Services, HR-54
Director, Contracts & Procurement Division, Albuquerque Operations Office
Director, Acquisition & Assistance Group, Chicago Operations Office
Director, Procurement Program, Golden Field Office
Director, Procurement Services Division, Idaho Operations Office
Director, Contracts Management Division, Nevada Operations Office
Director, Procurement Acquisition and Assistance Division, Oakland Operations Office
Director, Procurement & Contracts Division, Oak Ridge Operations Office
Director, Contracts Division, Ohio Field Office
Director, Procurement Services Division, Richland Operations Office
Director, Contracts Management Division, Rocky Flats Office
Director, Contracts Management Division, Savannah River Operations Office
Director, Acquisition & Assistance Division, National Energy Technology Center

[To be posted on DOE's Financial Assistance Home Page, at the top, right under "Last Update: , 2000".]

● **Opportunity to Comment – Simplification of Federal Financial Assistance Programs**

[This title will link to the following text.]

Opportunity to Comment – Simplification of Federal Financial Assistance Programs

During the last few years DOE has simplified and improved its financial assistance programs by 1) reducing its regulatory requirements by over 50 percent; 2) adopting thoughtful streamlining measures; 3) providing increased opportunities for competition to insure that everyone has an opportunity to participate; and 4) revising its merit review process to promote a more uniform and disciplined approach.

The Department is continuing to investigate opportunities for further improvement. We plan to do this in conjunction with the implementation of the Federal Financial Assistance Management Improvement Act of 1999 (Public Law 106-107). The purposes of this Act are to improve the delivery of services to the public and the effectiveness and performance of Federal grant and cooperative agreement programs. Federal agencies are working with OMB to 1) develop uniform administrative rules and common application and reporting systems; 2) replace paper with electronic processing in administration of these programs; and 3) identify statutory impediments to program simplification.

Consultation with the recipient community is an important part of this simplification effort. We want to know which processes in the financial assistance life cycle need streamlining or improvement and your suggestions for achieving improvements. We need to know what is most important to you, in terms of program simplification. Finally, we want you to identify the specific programs that you find to be most burdensome and provide details about why they are burdensome, so that we can focus our efforts on those programs that are in the greatest need of streamlining.

Please send your comments via email to: PL106107@pr.doe.gov and be sure to include the name of the organization you represent. If you would like to meet with a DOE representative to discuss your ideas, please call Ms. Trudy Wood at (202) 586-5625 to set up an appointment.

Your input is valued and is part of the larger process of achieving the Department's goals and those of Pub. L. 106-107, namely simplification of

Federal financial assistance programs for the benefit of our recipients. Please note that DOE will not respond to the individual comments, but will consider all responses in its efforts to simplify DOE's programs and will provide summaries to the interagency working groups involved with the implementation of the law. Thank you for your participation.