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MANUAL TRANSMITTAL SHEET

Subject

1293 - TELEPHONE COMMUNICATIONS

1. Explanation of Material Transmitted: This Manual Section replaces the Manual Section 1543. This section provides direction for BLM offices in telephone services and equipment requirements.
2. Reports Required: None.
3. Material Superseded: The Manual pages superseded by this release are listed under "REMOVE" below. No other directives are superseded.
4. Filing Instructions: File as directed below.

REMOVE

INSERT

None

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(Total: 6 Sheets)

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Glossary of Terms

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.01 Purpose. This Manual Section establishes procedures and controls on changes and installations of telephone systems, equipment and the utilization and ordering of telephone services.

.02 Objectives. The objectives are to provide guidelines and assure continual management control of existing and future telephone system installations.

.03 Authority.

A. Federal Information Resources Management Regulations (FIRMR) 201-21, 201-38, 201-39, 201-40, and 201-41.

B. 377 DM 2.5A, Telephone Systems Handbook (A-1).

.04 Responsibility.

A. The Director and the Deputy Director are responsible for the overall program governing control and approval of major telecommunications changes and new installations within the Bureau.

B. The Assistant Director, Support Services, is responsible for the general direction of all Information Resources Management (IRM) programs and for approving IRM program policy, directives, and priorities developed by the WO Division of IRM. This responsibility is exercised through the Chief, Division of IRM.

C. The Chief, Division of Information Resources Management, is responsible for issuing instructions and information, revising procedures, and conducting studies to assure equipment, service changes, and installations are accomplished only as needed to maintain and increase operation efficiency in the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) offices.

D. The State Directors, Service Center Director, and BLM Director-Boise Interagency Fire Center are responsible for assuring that all telephone equipment and services under their jurisdictions are in conformance with the guidelines set forth in this Manual Section.

.05 References. (Reserved.)

.06 Policy. It is Bureau policy to ensure that adequate telephone equipment and service are provided to support the Bureau's mission at the lowest possible cost to the Government.

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.1 Telephone Services. Telephone services consist of local service and equipment, long-distance service, teleconferencing service, telephone directories, billing and inventories, waste, fraud, and abuse, services for listening-in or recording telephone conversations, and essential telephone service during emergencies. Telephone services include the wire-related communicating systems and/or devices such as telephones, teletypes, facsimile machines, etc., required and used for rapid communications in carrying out the Bureau's programs. The control and approval of certain telephone service additions or changes are required to insure that adequate service is provided to meet the Bureau's needs at the lowest possible cost.

.11 Local Service and Equipment.

A. New Installations or Major Changes. Certain new installations or major changes to existing telecommunications services require the approval of the General Service Administration (GSA), the Department of the Interior (DOI) and/or the BLM Director.

1. Items Requiring GSA Approval. New installations or major changes which require GSA approval are listed in FIRMR 201-39.

2. Items Requiring DOI Approval. In addition to the items requiring GSA's approval, new installations or major changes listed in 377 DM 2.5A require Departmental approval.

3. Items Requiring BLM Director Approvals. In addition to the items requiring GSA and/or Departmental approval, the following items or services require Bureau approvals:

- a. 1A2 key telephone systems with more than 10 stations and/or 5 incoming lines.
- b. Coin operated telephones that are installed for public use by other than the local tariffed telephone company.
- c. Station Message Detail Recorders.
- d. Cellular radio service that requires leasing for more than 90 days or that requires equipment purchases.

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4. Request for Approval. Requests for GSA, DOI, or BLM Director approvals must include specific information as listed in FIRMR 201-39.006-1 and 377 DM 2.5A. This information includes but is not limited to: location, telephone coordinator's name and telephone number, existing service description, service requirements (numbers and types of lines), capacity of existing and proposed systems, copies of past 3 months of telephone bills with a summary, copy of current service record, and a short justification for the proposed system. All requests shall be submitted through the proper channels to Director (770).

5. Approved Installations. Requests to relocate a telephone system to a new address, disconnect an approved telephone system, or to install a subsystem on GSA's consolidated service are required prior to making the change. Approvals will list a specific timeframe and if not completed during that timeframe, a new request to Director (770) shall be required.

B. Equipment and Service Features. The number and type of telephones included in an office's inventory should meet the requirement of that office for effective operation. Installation of equipment for courtesy or guests' use is not in accordance with the Bureau's policy except in the case of telephones installed in Public Rooms for use by the public. These telephones are to be restricted to local service only and will require Director (770) approval.

1. Calling Features. The installation of features (call pick-up, speed dial, automatic transfer, etc.) should follow a study or plan for office needs with respect to assigned missions.

2. Intercommunication. The installation of an intercom function should meet specific needs as identified in the office plan.

3. Auxiliary Equipment. Auxiliary telephone station equipment including but not limited to speaker phones, memory dial, call diverters, pagers, and answering equipment should be installed only where essential and only if the features are not economically available through the existing system.

4. Telephone Equipment Inventories. Inventories shall be kept current and equipment removed and stored promptly when a position is vacated.

5. Personal Equipment. Only Government-owned or leased station equipment is to be used in Bureau offices. The use of privately owned station equipment is contrary to Bureau policy.

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.12 Long-Distance Service.

A. Federal Telecommunications System (FTS). FTS is the primary and recommended long-distance service (where available) for use by Bureau offices. The FTS as well as other Government telephone service and equipment is for official use only.

1. Requests for FTS. Intercity service requests are to be submitted to DOI through Director (770). Specific information required with each request includes but is not limited to: location of desired service, name and phone number of the telephone coordinator, toll bills from 3 consecutive months with a summary, seasonal traffic variations, description of present service (number and cost of business lines), and other toll-free services being used at the location. (See FIRMR 201-39.006-3.)

2. FTS Installation. GSA will arrange for installation of FTS lines, if approved, and bill the agency for the installation, recurring charges, and the usage. In cases where the FTS access is provided from a GSA-managed switch (OPX), recurring cost of the line, usage and common distributable charges (CDC) will be the using agency's responsibility.

B. Commercial Long-Distance Service. There are numerous "common carriers" that provide long-distance service either on a dial-up or dedicated line basis. Each office should select the carrier (PIC), in areas where FTS is not available, that can provide the required service at the lowest cost.

1. Equal Access. In offices that have FTS, users shall have access to long-distance through the local telephone company's equal access service. Offices in these areas are required to select a long-distance carrier (PIC). The local telephone company will request such a selection be made by the users at the time that the service becomes available. The equal access carrier selected is not to be used in place of the FTS, if FTS is available.

2. Request for Long-Distance. Long-distance service, for Bureau offices not having FTS, is available from various sources through use of WATS, FX lines or other types of dedicated lines. Requests for the installation of this type service must be submitted to DOI through Director (770). Information required with these requests include 3 months of toll bills. New offices should use commercial long-distance services for the 3-month period or estimate the amount of usage and adjust the number of lines needed to meet the requirements at a later date.

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3. Telephone Credit Cards. Credit cards are to be issued on a controlled basis. Only employees with duty assignments that require frequent long-distance calls from locations not served by FTS should have a need for a telephone credit card. Calls placed against a credit card incur an additional surcharge. Card holders are responsible for calls charged to their card.

- a. The issue, collection, and control of telephone credit cards are the responsibilities of the issuing office.
- b. Unsolicited cards that are received shall be promptly returned to the sender with a letter stating:

"The unsolicited telephone credit cards with the following control numbers have been received and returned by (Bureau/office name). This office will neither honor nor pay any charges placed against the above-listed cards."

4. Toll-Free Telephone Service. Requests for installation of a toll-free service must be approved by DOI. Requests are to be submitted through the Director (770) and must contain information such as: description of program to be supported, location of desired service, type of service requested (WATS, FX, etc.), estimated number of circuits needed, and estimated monthly costs. If this service is directed by statute, Executive Order, or regulation, the request must include the title and date of the regulatory document.

.13 Billings and Inventories. Each BLM office should identify a telephone coordinator position. Responsibilities of that position include verification of all monthly bills, maintenance of inventory records, evaluation of services and administrative management of the offices' telephone systems.

A. Evaluation. All existing service and equipment shall be periodically evaluated against the office requirements. Excess service and equipment should be disconnected immediately.

B. Inventories. Telephone equipment inventories are required on an annual basis. Each office is responsible for establishing and maintaining accounting procedures and equipment marking systems for all Bureau-owned equipment (according to property management policies).

C. Verification of Billing. The telephone coordinator for each Bureau office shall certify the accurateness and validity of the telephone bills. The bills shall be verified by comparing the charges for services to the services actually received.

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.14 Waste, Fraud, and Abuse. The Government telephone systems are for official business only. It is management's responsibility to assure that funds, property, and other assets are protected against waste, loss, unauthorized use, and misappropriation. Each office shall have a current policy on telephone use and shall provide training for all employees on an as needed basis to assure that employees all understand authorized and unauthorized use of the Government's telephone service.

A. Official Uses. Government telephone systems (equipment and services) shall be used for official business only, except in the case of an emergency where no other phone service is available. Some examples of official calls are listed:

1. An employee has to call a commercial telephone number to order parts to complete a job that was assigned.
2. An employee has to make a long-distance call to notify a rancher of a pending prescribed burn on acreage the rancher is using for grazing.
3. An employee has to stay late at the office and needs to let their family know they will be home late. This type of call is considered to be in the best interest of the Government and is considered official.
4. The Bureau feels that it is in the best interest of the Government to have employees who are in extended travel to make limited calls to the family and considers this kind of call to be official.

B. Operational Controls. Each office shall establish operational controls to prevent misuse of the telephone system. The following guidelines have been identified by the Department and may be helpful.

1. Supervisory approval prior to making personal calls.
2. Established procedures (through the local telephone company) for rebilling other than approved personal calls to the employee's residential telephone bill.
3. Using the electronic features of the office telephone system to control levels of access for each station.
4. Disciplinary action that will be used in the event of unauthorized or misuse of Government telephones should be defined for all BLM office employees.

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.15 Listening-In or Recording Telephone Conversations. Refer to the 377 DM 2.5A (Telephone System Handbook) for policies.

A. Usage. The Bureau uses listening-in or recording devices in the performance of official duties only after specific approval by the Director. Approvals will be considered for operations in the following areas: law enforcement, public safety, aid to handicapped employees, and service quality monitoring. Multiple party conversations, third party monitoring, use of speaker phones, and secretarial note-taking are permitted only after unanimous consent of all parties involved in the telephone conversation.

B. Definition. Listening-in devices are devices that can intercept telephone communication for listening to or recording without the knowledge of one or more parties to that conversation. The two categories of listening-in or recordings of conversations are:

1. "Consensual" one party to a telephone conversation has given prior consent to listening-in or recording the conversation.
2. "Nonconsensual" none of the parties to a telephone conversation has given consent to listening-in or recording the conversation.

C. Use of Nonconsensual Devices. Nonconsensual listening-in or recording of telephone conversations is prohibited. See 377 DM 2.5A (Telephone Systems Handbook) Section 8.3 for possible exceptions.

D. Use of Consensual Devices. Consensual listening-in or recording of telephone conversations is prohibited without prior DOI and BLM written approvals. See 377 DM 2.5A Section 8.4 for circumstances that warrant approval and the guidelines to be followed when listening-in or recording telephone conversations.

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.2 Procurement of Telephone and Services. The purchase of telephone systems and long-distance services shall be accomplished through competitive procedures; that is, all responsible sources must be afforded the opportunity to compete. Therefore, all new contracts or orders against GSA Nonmandatory Telecommunications Schedule Contracts (Part 58) must follow BLM procurement policy, including the guidelines in Appendix 14 of Handbook H-1510-1, "Purchasing," and the requirements of FIRMR 201-40. Only a warranted Contracting Officer may make the purchase. The Contracting Officer should be part of the system planning and provide advice and assistance on procurement strategy.

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Glossary of Terms

-I-

interexchange service: voice facilities interconnecting service points located in separate exchange areas. These facilities include such service as WATS, FX circuits, and other intercity private lines.

-K-

key telephone system: terminals and equipment in a local environment providing access to a selected line or function without operator assistance.

-L-

local service: telephone service within the local calling area. This includes the on-premise equipment, maintenance, and service connections (Centrex, Private Branch Exchanges, Key Systems, etc.).

long-distance: service that permits calling outside the local calling area for which a commercial toll charge or similar charge is made.

-P-

PABX: (1) A private telecommunications exchange that usually includes access to the public switched network either through a manual switchboard or automatically. (2) A private automatic switchboard that provides dial service on a subscribers premise and serves only those stations with local and trunked connections.

-T-

toll-free service: any incoming interexchange circuit arrangement that allows the public to make long-distance calls at Government expense.