

# Management Excellence



*The Department's enhanced citizen focus is reflected in our governance and our ongoing commitments to become more responsive and cost effective.*

*Secretary Gale A. Norton, January 30, 2003*

Good management sets the foundation upon which agencies can successfully meet their responsibilities to the American public. These responsibilities require that the Department of the Interior deploy its resources efficiently and effectively. To meet these responsibilities, the Department must strive for management excellence demonstrated by increased accountability for results, more effective leveraging of available resources, and continued process and technology improvements.

The Department's journey toward management excellence is guided by the President's management agenda and the Secretary's four key business principles: customer value, accountability, integration, and modernization.

The 2005 budget includes investments that foster management excellence, including:

- Strategic investments to migrate to a new financial and business management system.
- Strengthened law enforcement and security capability.
- An integrated, Department-wide Enterprise Services Network.
- Full funding for third-party audits of consolidated and bureau financial statements.
- Key investments in e-government initiatives.
- Targeted savings from improvements in the management of vehicle fleets.

## STRATEGIC PLAN

The linchpin of the Department's efforts in management excellence is an overarching strategic plan. Finalized in September 2003, the plan organizes strategic goals and Department-level performance measures into four mission areas: resource protection, resource use, recreation, and serving communities. Management, partnerships, and science support these four mission areas. The plan focuses on

*Management improvement is an ongoing, iterative process. Through continuous improvement, we can achieve the high performance necessary to fulfill our critical mission goals.*

*Assistant Secretary P. Lynn Scarlett, January 30, 2003*

outcomes; progress will be verified based on the plan's intermediate and end outcome goals. The plan replaces eight distinct bureau plans with a single, cohesive framework.

The plan guided formulation of the 2005 budget by providing a framework for establishing priorities. In addition, Program Assessment Rating Tool reviews, as well as Office of Inspector General, General Accounting Office, and other programmatic assessments provide valuable information used in shaping goals and performance measures, management and organizational changes, and budget requirements for a broad array of programs.

## CUSTOMER VALUE

Interior strives to ensure all of its activities are customer-centered, designed to add value for citizens, partners, users of public lands, other agencies, Tribes, States, and local governments. The Department focuses on efficiency through the application of best practices in competitive reviews and human capital management.

### COMPETITIVE SOURCING

Competitive sourcing is an important tool for exercising management vigilance, helping ensure that Interior is carrying out its business in the most effective manner possible to create value for the public. About 30 percent of Interior's workforce is involved in commercial activities. Of these 20,000 positions, the Department plans to study 5,000 FTE by the end of 2004 and approximately 7,000 by the end of 2005 to explore opportunities for management improvements.

The Department developed an express review and simplified cost-comparison of service options—tools generally incorporated into the 2003 revision to OMB Circular A-76, *Performance of Commercial Activities*. These innovations result in actions that are fair to employees, offer promise of efficiency and improved service for the public, and increase the likelihood that competitive reviews will generate real savings that the agency can reinvest in its mission.

By the end of 2003, the Department had completed

analyses involving 2,483 FTEs. Competitive sourcing has produced value at Interior and can be beneficial to employees. The National Park Service recently finished a simplified and streamlined cost comparison competition of an archeology center

**Customer Value** – ensuring that activities add value and ensure the effective use of resources

**Accountability** – establishing clear performance measures and holding managers and employees accountable for results

**Modernization** – using technology to work smarter and provide single points of access

**Integration** – identifying opportunities to avoid duplication and achieve economies to enhance customer service and efficiency

in the south-east, which was won by NPS employees. The center will generate \$850,000 in annual savings that NPS will reinvest in mission delivery. In the case of a number of seasonal employees who were NPS lifeguards in Florida, the winning contractor hired the employees and was able

to give them more work and more pay than they were earning as NPS seasonal employees. To date, not a single permanent employee has been involuntarily separated from the Department, although 1,515 positions have been contracted through the competitive review process.

Interior is pursuing competitive sourcing in a way that reflects bureau workforce plans and complements Departmental participation in e-government initiatives and other areas of the President's management agenda.

For a one-time investment of \$2.1 million in competitive sourcing studies, the Department is generating projected annual savings of \$2.4 million. The 2005 budget includes an estimated \$5.3 million for competitive reviews, an increase of \$1.2 million over 2004.

## STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT OF HUMAN CAPITAL

To meet its goal for citizen-centered governance, Interior needs an organization with a results-oriented, skilled, and diverse workforce. The Department's September 2002 *Strategic Human Capital Management Plan—FY 2003-2007* establishes the link between its human resources and its mis-

sion, and identifies common challenges that are shaping the kinds of skills, training, and professions needed throughout the Department. Key challenges include increased urbanization; rising security demands; an aging infrastructure; and expectations by citizens for greater transparency, accountability, and efficiency. Four programmatic and management areas were identified as needing special attention—wildland fire management, Indian trust management, financial management, and information technology.

Among the many steps underway to implement the plan are: 1) the development of a common template against which to evaluate financial management capacity in each bureau; 2) a partnerships team to identify best practices, barriers, and training needs to improve human resource capacity to engage in mediation, cooperative problem solving, and partnerships with interested organizations and communities; 3) an e-government solution to wildland firefighter hiring; 4) a reorganization of the entire Indian trust management structure and human resources capacity; 5) revised structures and practices for law enforcement across all Interior bureaus; 6) enhanced training and investment in tools to improve facilities management and improve leadership development and diversity programs; and 7) an employee performance management system that better relates performance to mission goals and differentiates between levels of performance.

The Interior bureaus have completed workforce plans that align with the Department's human capital plan. These human capital plans include a number of strategies, including: implementing technology that will streamline hiring and classification processes; a Department-wide learning management system to manage employee competencies and training; and intra-departmental recruitment strategies with coordinated recruiting visits, recruiter training, and strategic use of flexibilities. These efforts will also be coordinated with

related e-government initiatives to take advantage of government-wide opportunities.

## ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability requires clear performance measures for managers and employees. To excel, managers and employees require accurate, timely, and integrated financial, budget, and performance information.

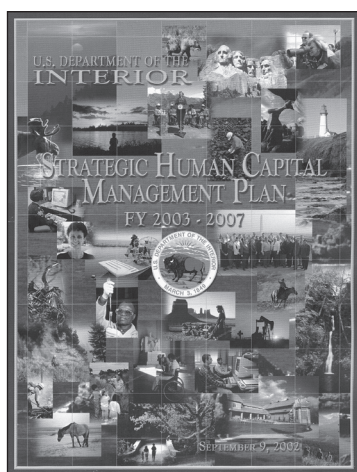
## BUDGET AND PERFORMANCE INTEGRATION

Budget and performance integration, highlighted by the President's management agenda, lies at the heart of ensuring both the strategic allocation of funds and their efficient use. The Department's approach to this integration extends beyond the cyclic budget-formulation process to include establishing cost and performance information systems that allow employees, managers, and the public to better understand unit costs of performing specific activities, as well as the relationship of those activities to achieving measurable goals and opportunities for greater efficiency and effectiveness. The Department is using strengthened capital asset planning and control processes to ensure its capital investments further mission goals. The Department is also improving budget and performance integration through internal management evaluations, including evaluations using the Administration's Program Assessment Rating Tool.

On October 1, 2003, Interior began implementation of a new, uniform, activity-based cost management system that includes both a cost and performance module. ABC/M breaks work into specific activities, allowing measurement and comparison of unit costs and performance by dollars spent and actions undertaken. This information allows Interior Department employees to make better decisions in allocating financial and human resources.

In 2004, all Departmental employees began to code their time and purchases to activities that describe the work of the Department. In 2005, the ABC/M system will be configured to accommodate bureau ABC/M activities, allowing bureaus to retire legacy bureau cost and performance systems.

For 2005, the Department completed the evaluation of an additional 15 programs under the





## PROGRAM ASSESSMENT RATING TOOL

For the 2004 Budget, approximately 20 percent of programs were assessed using the Administration's Program Assessment Rating Tool. PART was developed in 2002 with advice from the President's Management Council subgroup on Budget and Performance Integration and has been improved based on agency and public feedback. For the 2005 Budget, an additional 20 percent of programs were assessed. The goal of the PART is to evaluate program performance, determine the causes for strong or weak performance, and take action to remedy deficiencies and achieve better results. The Interior programs reviewed for 2004 and 2005 budgets include:

### **2004 BUDGET**

Wildland Firefighting  
BLM Restoration Programs  
MMS Environmental Studies  
OSM Abandoned Mine Lands  
USGS National Mapping  
BOR Hydropower  
BOR Title XVI Water Reuse  
BOR Rural Water Projects  
FWS Fish Hatcheries  
FWS Partners for Fish and Wildlife  
NPS Deferred Maintenance Backlog  
NPS Natural Resource Challenge  
BIA School Operations  
BIA School Construction  
BIA Tribal Land Consolidation

### **2005 BUDGET**

BLM Energy & Minerals Management  
BLM Recreation Management  
MMS Mineral Revenue Management  
OSM Regulation of Surface Coal Mining  
USGS Energy Resource Assessments  
USGS Geological Hazards Research  
USGS Mineral Resource Assessments  
BOR Science and Technology  
FWS National Wildlife Refuge System  
NPS Land & Water Conservation Fund Grants  
NPS National Historic Preservation Programs  
NPS Natural Resource Stewardship  
BIA Indian Forestry Program  
BIA Law Enforcement  
BIA Tribal Courts

For a full presentation of all PART evaluations, see the *Performance and Management Assessments* volume of the President's budget.

Administration's PART covering \$1.4 billion in annual spending and developed a five-year plan to examine all programs by 2008. The results of PART, described throughout this publication, vary by program.

### **SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE**

The Department revised its SES performance appraisal system to emphasize strategic plan goals through the performance of each executive. Individual performance plans now clearly link executive performance requirements to mission outcomes. Interior is using performance results as a basis for pay, awards, development, retention, removal, and other personnel decisions. A mandatory performance element for all SES members directly supports the President's management agenda and the Secretary's strategic vision of achieving Departmental goals through partnerships and cooperation.

### **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENTS**

In early 2003, Interior Department launched a comprehensive program aimed at transforming its financial management functions. The goal is to create a world-class financial management structure that links planning and budgeting with performance results; performs efficient and reliable transaction processing; recruits, trains, and rewards top financial management talent; and focuses on analysis to improve the business information available to program managers. The cornerstone of the Department's plan to transform financial management is the Financial and Business Management System, discussed below. The transformation effort also includes strengthening internal controls and standardizing the process for preparing financial statements; accelerating financial reporting; and developing a workforce plan for financial management.

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In compliance with the Chief Financial Officers Act of 1990, the Department's consolidated financial statement and individual bureau financial statements are audited annually. Interior obtained its seventh unqualified audit opinion on the consolidated financial statements in 2003. The 2003 performance and accountability report was completed on November 28, 2003, three months earlier than for 2002. Beginning in 2002, the Department, with oversight by the Inspector General, contracted with an outside audit firm to conduct the annual financial audit, and, as a result, has gained from the additional insights and independent views. The Department will continue to contract on a Department-wide basis for these audit services. However, in order to improve the transparency of the budget, beginning in 2005, the budget for each bureau will include the base financial statement audit costs previously funded in part by the Office of Inspector General.

## MODERNIZATION

Modernization of technology and practices will improve the delivery of services and optimize the use of resources throughout the Interior Department. The Department's efforts in modernization include the simplification of processes and systems that support them, achievement of more consistent practices, and elimination of redundancy and reengineering of business practices to improve efficiency and effectiveness. Modernization can help Interior use technology to work smarter and provide single points of access to services.

The Department's proposed spending on information technology in 2005 is \$799.1 million. The 2005 request reflects a maturing of Interior's approach to managing the IT investment portfolio guided by a new e-government strategy linked to the GPRA strategic plan, consistent organizational and management structures, enterprise architecture, and collaboratively developed projects and metrics to gauge performance.

### INTERIOR ENTERPRISE ARCHITECTURE

Key to the Department's modernization efforts is the enterprise architecture—high-level modernization blueprints for key business areas that enable Interior to integrate processes and systems and reduce redundancies, thereby more effectively managing information technology resources. Expanded descriptions of Interior business processes, data,

systems, and technology will enable more thorough analysis of opportunities for collaboration and integration as well as cost-saving opportunities. In 2003, the Department completed an "as-is" business architecture for its financial management line of business, facilitating implementation of FBMS. In 2004, the Department is completing "as-is" business architectures for four additional lines of business: wildland fire, law enforcement, Indian trust, and recreation.

The 2005 budget includes a net increase of \$800,000 to further develop and manage the enterprise architecture, including increases of \$1.2 million for Department-wide efforts and \$750,000 for NPS, and a decrease of \$1.2 million for the Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians. In 2005, Interior will develop modernization blueprints for three additional lines of business at the Departmental level and one modernization blueprint for each bureau.

### ENTERPRISE SERVICES NETWORK

Much like the overall organization of the Department, the current information technology architecture is large, widely dispersed, and complex. The ESN is an ambitious effort to integrate and consolidate the Department's existing networks, systems, and computing environments to provide secure and robust telecommunications throughout Interior. Enterprise Services Network will consolidate the Department's core IT infrastructure, including help desks, voice and data networks, desktop environment, and data centers and web servers. It will provide a secured, single network infrastructure that is centrally managed. The potential benefits gained by migrating to a single enterprise network include standardized and efficient network operations, enhanced accountability for network performance, a uniformly high level of security, the reduction of risks associated with the loss of knowledge capital due to high projected turnover rates for skilled staff, and improved technical support for network managers.

Enterprise Services Network will be implemented in two phases. Phase 1, which will begin in 2004, will establish a Department-wide intranet; consolidate all internet connections across Interior; and implement a network operations and security center to manage the network and provide customer support. Significant cost savings related to phase 1 result from establishing a single network operations and security center and consolidating

32 internet connections to four. Phase 2 will encompass the secure connection to the ESN of the approximately 150 bureau hubs or sites located primarily in cities, as well as their approximately 1,500 remaining smaller sites. Significant cost savings in phase 2 result from consolidating 13 wide-area networks to one.

The 2005 budget includes an increase of \$8.0 million for ESN implementation; an additional \$6.0 million is estimated to be available through efficiencies gained from implementing ESN and other integration and enterprise approaches. Funding in 2005 will support continuation of the first phase and planning for implementation of phase 2.

### FINANCIAL AND BUSINESS MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Interior's FBMS is a major enterprise management initiative to modernize and integrate financial management, acquisition, property management, grants administration, and other subsidiary systems. The system will revamp administrative processes throughout the Department.

In January 2004, the Department selected its solution provider to implement FBMS. The FBMS will replace a combination of government-wide systems, Departmental systems, and bureau-managed systems for processing financial and related transactions and meeting needs for business management information. Some of these existing systems are old, and certain commercial vendors that Interior relies on may not support the old systems in the future. Most of the existing Departmental business systems do not take advantage of new technology and are not integrated in a manner that facilitates effective and efficient transfer of data and streamlining of processes necessary to support the Department in the future. Implementation of FBMS will also facilitate the Department's participation in several e-government initiatives, including e-Travel and Grants.

gov, and the government-wide financial line of business efforts.

The 2005 budget includes a total of \$18.5 million for FBMS, an increase of \$7.0 million over 2004.

### IT SECURITY

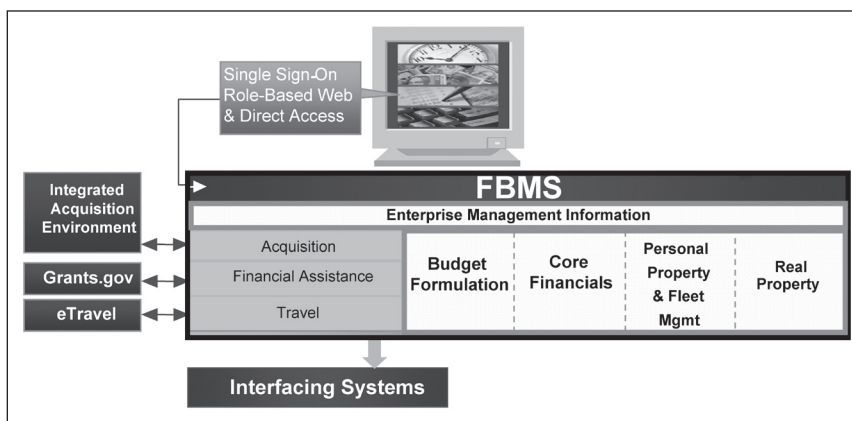
Interior continues to place a high priority on assuring its technology infrastructure protects mission information and has increased its efforts to meet the challenges of securing its information in an increasingly vulnerable environment. The Department takes a holistic approach to improving its IT security, monitoring performance using a monthly scorecard containing major performance elements, such as network hardening, training and awareness, and incident handling.

The Department has established management, operations, and technical security controls to safeguard its most critical IT assets. Interior established an operational network security profile that reduced potential vulnerabilities; conducts ongoing wide-area networks testing to ensure that it has effective perimeter defenses in place; established a 24 x 7 computer security incident response center; and trained over 70,000 individual users using a training module developed by the Defense Information Systems Agency.

The Department began an aggressive certification and accreditation program in 2003, conducting an inventory of systems and developing a schedule that will guide a multi-year C&A program. The 2005

budget includes \$12.5 million to continue dedicated efforts to complete certification and accreditation of legacy systems by the end of 2006, about the same level as 2004. The Department's schedule for C&A requires that bureaus

conduct C&A on their legacy IT systems using a risk-based approach, concentrating on the high-risk systems first. All high-risk systems currently have interim approvals to operate and by the end of





2004 will be fully accredited. Lower risk systems will receive full accreditation by 2006.

### GOVERNMENT-WIDE E-GOV INITIATIVES

As a result of its broad mission, Interior participates actively in the Administration's e-government initiatives, participating in all four project portfolios: Government to Citizen, Government to Business, Government to Government, and Internal Efficiency and Effectiveness. These initiatives strive to eliminate redundant systems and significantly improve the government's quality of customer service for citizens and businesses. The Department manages two government-wide e-government initiatives: Geospatial One-Stop and Recreation One-Stop. It also is a principal partner in the Office of Personnel Management's e-Payroll initiative that is consolidating Federal civilian personnel payroll processing.

The budget includes \$6.9 million in development costs to support e-government projects.

### MESSAGING

During 2004, the Department began migrating to a single e-mail/messaging system. This project entails the migration of approximately 70,000 employees using e-mail via 100,000 mailboxes and 553 mail servers. Currently, three e-mail programs are in use, Lotus Notes, Microsoft Exchange, and Novell Groupwise.

### WILDLAND FIRE

Wildland fire program system investments are developed, maintained, and operated jointly among four Interior bureaus and the U.S. Forest Service. The Department, in concert with the Forest Service, will continue to develop the LANDFIRE vegetative imaging and mapping technology, a tool that will assist the fire program in identifying and prioritizing lands most in need of hazardous fuels treatments. The LANDFIRE will provide consistent geospatial data on fire fuels, risks, and ecosystem status nationwide and at all scales (local, regional, and national). These data are critical for Federal land managers to plan, prioritize, and allocate resources needed to accomplish the Nation's fire management objectives. The LANDFIRE data will be used to guide hazardous fuel reduction, ecosystem rehabilitation and restoration, and firefighting safety program decisions. The Interior share for

### GEOSPATIAL ONE-STOP

The Geospatial One-Stop initiative will promote coordination and alignment of geospatial data collection and maintenance among all levels of government. The goals of the initiative are to:

- Develop a portal for seamless access to geospatial information.
- Provide standards and models for geospatial data.
- Create an interactive index to geospatial data holdings at Federal and non-federal levels.
- Encourage greater coordination among Federal, State, and local agencies about existing and planned geospatial data collections.

By making it easier for government officials at all levels to coordinate the collection and sharing of geospatial data, Geospatial One-Stop will help to improve decisionmaking and the delivery of government services. Geospatial One-Stop will also accelerate cost efficiencies while reducing duplication as governments better allocate their data resources.

LANDFIRE in 2005 will be \$4.5 million, an increase of \$3.7 million over 2004.

The fire program analysis system will be used to analyze and determine the appropriate levels and allocation of fire suppression resources needed to protect and manage the Nation's forest, rangeland, and aquatic ecosystems. This system will integrate ecological, economic, and social factors in evaluating appropriate levels of wildfire protection for the wildland-urban interface. The system also replaces a variety of different systems currently in use by the four Interior bureaus and the Forest Service. Fire program analysis will enable the agencies to determine resource allocation to maximize program effectiveness at a given budget level. The 2005 budget for this system is \$4.4 million, an increase of \$2.9 million over 2004.

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## INTEGRATION

The complementary and overlapping nature of many of Interior's responsibilities, coupled with efficiencies that accompany coordination, are driving the Department toward more integrated approaches to defining its goals and managing its resources. The Department's integration goal focuses on identifying opportunities to avoid duplication and achieve economies to enhance customer service and efficiency through human and technological solutions. In 2003 Interior completed its e-government strategy, which was adopted in 2004. The strategy provides a common framework to identify and adopt common technology solutions to support shared business needs across the bureaus, promoting standardization, consistency, and greater efficiency through reducing duplication and achieving economies of scale.

### OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

The Office of Inspector General's independent and objective reviews of Interior's programs and operations support achievement of all four strategic mission goals. The OIG's recommendations and advice on areas of risk and vulnerabilities that could directly impact mission accomplishment assist the Department in achieving greater accountability, integrity in administration, and more effective programs. The OIG has assisted Interior by providing input into a number of integration efforts, including appraisal reform, the Secretary's law enforcement reforms, and fleet management.

The OIG continues to provide leadership in the oversight of audits of the Department's consolidated and bureau financial statements. Beginning in 2002, Interior, with oversight by OIG, contracted with a third party accounting firm to audit the statements. This effort has provided valuable, independent reviews of Interior's financial integrity. The 2005 budget proposes to fund the costs of the audit in the bureaus; costs were previously funded through the OIG budget and with credit card rebates.

The 2005 budget request for the OIG is \$39.4 million, an increase of \$1.1 million over 2004. The budget proposes increased funding for OIG to: 1) obtain additional staff with the specialized skills and experience required to better address the diverse challenges and emerging issues for the Department; 2) support a new On TARGET initiative to strengthen and expand efforts in veri-

fying the Department's implementation of audit recommendations and to strengthen and provide more emphasis on Investigations' management advisories; 3) acquire information technology security enhancements and upgrades; 4) procure critical law enforcement equipment; and 5) conduct specialized technical training.

*All entrepreneurship involves a constant search for ways to add value by reducing costs and improving services in new ways.*

*Assistant Secretary P. Lynn Scarlett,  
April 2002*

### APPRAISAL REFORM

To ensure the integrity and independence of the real estate appraisal process, Interior is consolidating real estate appraisal functions within the Department. The Secretary's June 19, 2003 decision to consolidate appraisal functions addresses several long-standing concerns documented over several decades by the Inspector General, General Accounting Office, and, recently, the Appraisal Foundation. The consolidation is improving the integrity of the appraisal process through coordination and consistency and appraiser independence that fosters neutral valuation services that meet professional standards. The new organization is located in the National Business Center, which is continuing an uninterrupted high level of service to bureau programs delivered through regional and field appraisal offices. While the consolidation may improve efficiency, its primary purpose is to secure the independence and integrity of the appraisal process. The 2005 budget includes \$8.1 million for the personnel services costs of the consolidated function.

### LAW ENFORCEMENT REFORMS

Responding to the Inspector General's January 2002 observation that Interior law enforcement activities were in a "disquieting state of disarray," the Office of Law Enforcement and Security provides leadership in the integration of law enforcement programs and implementation of 25 law enforcement reforms. Review of the Department's law enforcement programs by the OIG, Secretary's law enforcement review panel, and others led to



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25 Secretarial directives, strategic investments in law enforcement and security, improved oversight of budgets, greater accountability, and effective performance goals and measures. The 2005 budget reflects the results of a Department-wide, strategic review of law enforcement and security programs and budgets. Interior's 2005 law enforcement and security request includes an increase of \$39.2 million targeted to highest priority needs based on the results of these and other reviews and consultation with law enforcement officials. For example, the budget request responds to the Secretary's directives and the results of a recent PART review of the Bureau of Indian Affairs law enforcement program and a review of the Fish and Wildlife Service refuge law enforcement program by the International Association of Chiefs of Police.

In a collaborative effort, Interior's law enforcement program is implementing performance measures to consistently measure performance and planning and is deploying an incident management, analysis, and reporting system to integrate incident information collection and reporting of performance. The 2005 budget includes \$6.4 million for deployment of IMARS, the incident management, analysis and reporting system, hosted by NPS and utilized by all Interior bureaus and offices with law enforcement responsibilities. This system will record and manage information relating to all law enforcement incidents on Interior lands. The development of the concept for IMARS was based on a needs assessment completed in September 2002. The need for an incident reporting system was identified in a BIA PART analysis and a 2003 General Accounting Office study of firearms control.

### FEDERAL VEHICLE FLEET

Among Federal civilian agencies Interior has the third-largest motor vehicle fleet. Interior employees and authorized volunteers use vehicles to support multiple mission activities, many in remote areas. In some locations, government vehicles are provided to support service contractors. Over 4,000 vehicles are used seasonally (*i.e.*, only in winter or summer), or for special purposes, such as law enforcement or firefighting. Nearly 90 percent of the fleet vehicles are trucks, vans,

buses, and ambulances, and 10 percent are sedans and station wagons.

Incorporating the recommendations of the Inspector General, the Department and the bureaus began a collaborative effort in 2004 to improve the management of vehicle fleets, including examination of the infrastructure for fleet management within each bureau, the identification of best practices that could be used Department-wide, and the development of action plans to improve fleet management and realize cost savings. The 2005 budget includes an \$8.0 million decrease for anticipated savings for improved fleet management. Savings will be achieved by: 1) reducing the size of the fleet; 2) employing energy saving practices by fleet operators; 3) acquiring more efficient vehicles; 4) acquiring the minimum-sized vehicle to accomplish the mission; 5) disposing of under-utilized vehicles; 6) freezing the acquisition of vehicles from the General Services Administration excess vehicle program; and 7) exploring and developing the use of inter-bureau motor pools.

### OFFICE OF THE SOLICITOR

The Office of the Solicitor's efforts advance all four of the Department's mission goals by providing legal counsel and support to all bureaus and offices. The Solicitor's input is essential to ensure that programs are carried out in a manner consistent with laws and regulations and in an advisory capacity to achieve a high level of compliance with legislative and administrative requirements. The Solicitor's input to the development of legislation, regulations, and other legal instruments is vital to the development and implementation of key presidential and other high-priority initiatives, such as trust reform, Indian education, and the management of natural resources.

The Solicitor's 2005 budget request is \$53.4 million, an increase of \$3.7 million over the 2004 enacted level to fund computer upgrades that will make the office compliant with Departmental and Federal security requirements; paralegal and support staff to improve the efficiency of office operations; an expanded ethics program; training; and funding for professional liability insurance.