

**Forest Service Handbook
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Forest Service Handbook 1409.11 – Fiscal Review and Analysis Handbook

Chapter 100 - Organization and Management

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This chapter covers the review and analysis of fiscal accounting phases of organization and management activities covered by FSM 1000.

110 - Directives Systems

Appraise adherence to the principles, requirements, and intended use of the directives system in the handling of fiscal accounting work. Such appraisal shall include, but not be limited to, the following determinations:

1. Whether current instructions in the directives system, including external directives, covering such work are understood and utilized so that dependence on special guides and procedures is held to a minimum.
2. Whether all amendments to directives covering such work have been posted.
3. Whether continuing local instructions covering such work have been issued as Forest supplements--review circulars, office orders, and similar communications.

Sources of information include:

1. External directives. (Federal Personnel Manual-- Civil Service Commission; Federal Procurement Regulations, Federal Property Management Regulations--General Services Administration; and Cashier's Manual--Department of the Treasury.)
2. Internal manuals and handbooks and Forest supplements thereto.
3. Forest circulars, office orders, and similar communications.
4. Discussions with employees.

120 - Organization

Appraise organization established to handle fiscal and accounting work.

Determine whether Forest Service objectives and policies (FSM) (1200) were followed in organizing such work at Forest headquarters, Ranger District, and other levels.

Evaluate the capability of organization by considering such factors as personnel turnover, individual experience and qualifications, tenure in job, and flexibility through cross-training and experience.

Sources of information include:

1. Organizing charts and supporting data.
2. Review of the working organization.
3. Discussions with employees.

121 - Principles

Determine whether organizational adjustments were made currently or periodically to meet changing fiscal and accounting needs and conditions affecting such work.

Observe the extent of supervisory control over such organization, through scheduled and special staff meetings; open door policy of administrative officer; and clearance (initialing) procedure for contracts, memorandums, and reports prior to signature.

Determine whether (1) fiscal and accounting workloads are distributed equitably and (2) there are abnormal or persistent backlogs of work in any specific areas.

Sources of information include:

1. Observe work contacts and accumulations of work.
2. Minutes of staff and committee meetings.
3. Documents of organizational adjustments.
4. Procedural guides.
5. Discussion with employees.

122 - Responsibilities

Review the fixing of responsibilities for handling of fiscal and accounting work, including determinations as to whether:

1. The administrative officer functions as a full member of the Forest Supervisor's staff, including (1) participating in regular and special meetings; (2) membership on Supervisor's Office committees; (3) submit general integrating inspections, as well as business management inspections; (4) Ranger meetings; (5) liason with the Regional Office, Office of the Inspector General, and General Accounting Office auditors and inspectors; and (6) headquarters office and field contacts with Forest users and the general public.

2. Personnel handling fiscal and accounting work participate in plans and decisions effecting such work.

3. Such responsibilities are placed upon section chiefs to the fullest extent commensurate with Forest Service policies and requirements.

4. Such responsibilities are adequately and properly reflected in a current organization chart.

Sources of information include:

1. Organization charts and supporting data.
2. Observation of day-to-day operations.
3. Written delegations of responsibilities.
4. Minutes of staff and committee meetings.

123 - Authority

Review the delegation of authority to handle fiscal accounting work, including determinations as to whether:

1. Such delegations from the Forest Supervisor to the administrative officer, the administrative officer to the section chief, and the section chief to understaff are delegable, clear cut, and observed. Note whether layers of supervision between a section chief and individuals in the section contribute to delays in work accomplishment or to backlogs.

2. Such delegations are made to section chiefs to the fullest extent commensurate with Forest Service policies and requirements.

Sources of information include:

1. Organization charts and supporting data.
2. Written delegations of authority.
3. Observation of day-to-day operations.
4. Discussions with employees involved.

130 - Management

Appraise management of fiscal and accounting work, including determinations as to whether:

1. There is satisfactory communication and correlation, both oral and written, with program staff and Ranger District and other field unit personnel and between sections.
2. Reporting deadlines are satisfactorily met. Observe the extent to which telephone or teletype reports are necessary in meeting such deadlines.
3. Supervision by administrative officer and section heads is adequate. Consider the quality of such performance as soundness of management practices and decisions, awareness of the status of the work, attention to all assigned responsibilities, ability to promptly detect and correct problems affecting the work, efforts to provide training and plan career development for subordinates, quality of service provided to management at all levels, and basic fiscal and accounting knowledge.
4. Employee suggestions are encouraged and fully considered. Research, interpretations, citations of existing instructions, and conclusions are thorough and proper.
5. Administrative studies which require the use of personnel or expenditures for supplies and materials have been properly authorized and approved.

Sources of information include:

1. Observation of day-to-day methods of correlation, communication, and supervision.
2. Calendar of reports and file copy of reports.
3. File of employee suggestions. Payments for suggestions adopted.
4. Plans for reports on administrative studies.

131 - Planning

Review the use made of material developed under the National Forest uniform work planning system in the handling of fiscal and accounting work, including determinations as to whether:

1. Personnel handling such work have current access to project and other work plans pertinent to expenditures of funds and determination of accounting charges.
2. The budget and finance section head participates fully in work planning and other activities pertinent to his budgetary and accounting responsibilities.

3. Nonroutine and nonrecurrent fiscal and accounting work is recognized in the Forest's program of work.

Sources of information include:

1. Forest and subunit work and financial plans.
2. Forest's annual program of work.

140 - Controls

Appraise the controls established for the handling of fiscal and accounting work. Such appraisal shall include, but not be limited to, the areas specifically mentioned in expansion of this code.

141 - Accounting

Determine whether the accounting system is being utilized to provide effective control over accountability for all funds, property, and other assets.

Sources of information include:

1. Work assignments.
2. Implementation and use of the prescribed accounting control system.

142 - General Accounting Office Audits

Determine whether findings relating to fiscal and accounting work in reports of GAO audits, if any, have been utilized effectively for control purposes. Was remedial action thorough, complete, and prompt? Determine that units are assuming their responsibilities for keeping the Regional Office advised of GAO audits, significant findings, special requests for information, and contents of exit conferences.

Sources of information include:

1. General Accounting Office reports.
2. Interim and final accomplishment reports on GAO audits.
3. Discussion with personnel directly involved.

143 - Internal Audits by Office of Inspector General

Review the action taken on findings relating to fiscal and accounting work in the report of the last audit of the unit by OIG. Were recommendations (1) accepted as constructive and (2) used to improve such work without delay?

Sources of information include:

1. Office of Inspector General audit reports.
2. Interim and final accomplishment reports on such audits.
3. Discussions with personnel directly involved.

144 - Inspections

Appraise unit's fiscal and accounting inspection program, including, but not limited to, the following determinations:

1. Whether Service-wide and Regional frequency standards are being met? Are heavy workload subunits scheduled for annual inspections? Were annual inspections made when the Ranger, or other subunit head, was new?

2. Whether inspection schedules are adjusted, irrespective of normal frequencies, to cover special situations, such as new subunit personnel, new programs, rapid changes in or expansion of existing program, or to inspect subunits creating special problems in such areas as financial control and late or substandard reporting.

3. Extent and adequacy of preinspection preparation in the headquarters office, including a written program, assignment of team members to segments of the inspection, and the extent to which inspectors utilize material compiled by the clerical force as a part of preinspection working paper preparation. Whether specific inspection notes from program and business management staff, and discussions with such personnel, are used as leads to areas of subunit performance requiring special attention.

4. Whether assignments of section chiefs to participate in inspections result in cross-training so that a section chief not only inspects in areas of his own responsibility, but is also trained and developed in other areas.

5. Scope and adequacy of working papers. Extent to which the handbook sequence as to inspection responsibilities and areas is followed. Extent to which working papers support report conclusions, recommendations, and supporting narration. Look particularly for items of significance in working papers which do not appear as report items or recommendations and determine the reason for omitting them.

6. Evaluate final inspection reports from the standpoint of comprehensive coverage through recommendations and related narration, supporting manual and handbook references, application of good writing principles, and promptness in meeting reporting time limits.

7. Evaluate transmittal memorandums from the standpoint of (1) timeliness, (2) a firm approach by the unit head in approving recommendations and in directing and requiring action upon them, and (3) setting reasonable time limits for accomplishment. Whether disapproval of any report recommendations has a sound basis in policy, actual practice, or in-Service instructions. Whether report transmittals are signed by the unit head or an acting in a line capacity.

8. Appraise adequacy of progress and final accomplishment reporting by the inspectees. Note extent to which action on recommendations is prospective, and degree of followup on such items. Determine whether such reports are reviewed by one or more of the inspectors concerned before the actions are approved and the file closed.

9. Compare quality of work observed on subunit with appraisal made by local inspection.

Sources of information include:

1. Plans of work and monthly travel schedules.
2. Inspection working papers.
3. Inspection reports.
4. Inspection report transmittal memorandums.
5. Interim and final progress or accomplishment reports on inspection.
6. Discussions with inspectors, inspectees, and staff.

144.1 - Research Cooperative Aid

Determine whether unit has research cooperative aid agreements requiring special audit. If so, were the requirements of the Handbook on Auditing Research Cooperative Aid Agreements (FSH) met?

Appraise adequacy of inspection of fiscal and accounting work in this area.

Sources of information include:

1. Audit working papers.
2. Audit report.
3. Audit report transmittal memorandums.

4. Interim and final progress or accomplishment reports on audit.
5. Discussions with inspector, inspectees, and staff.

144.2 - Commercial Public Service Special Use (230)

145 - Special Administrative Reviews and Investigations

Determine that unit personnel understand (1) when special administrative reviews and fiscal and accounting investigations are required by FSM 1450 and 6507 and (2) the requirements for reporting such situations to the Regional Forester.

Sources of information include:

1. Discussions with unit personnel.
2. Accident and other claims, trespass, fiscal irregularity, and similar special cases.

150 - External Relations

Appraise the fiscal aspects of formal and informal working relations with others. Was such work handled with businesslike efficiency and in accordance with established policies and procedures? Normally, this appraisal will be included in the review of files and personal contacts, pertaining to payments, collections, claims, cooperative arrangements, and related fiscal areas. Such appraisal shall include, but not be limited to, the following determinations:

1. Whether Federal assistance has been given to any parties who discriminate in making available to others the benefits of the assisted program.
2. Evaluate controls used to ensure that required non-discrimination provisions are included in permits or agreements before any Federal assistance is extended to a recipient other than users who are the ultimate beneficiaries of such assistance.
3. Determine if compliance reviews are being made as required in FSM 1564.
4. Other indications of discrimination.

Sources of information include:

1. Interdepartmental relations.
2. Intradepartmental relations.

3. State, county, and local agency relations.
4. Permittees and other users.
5. Claimants.
6. Suppliers.
7. Employees.
8. Office visitors.

160 - Information Services

Appraise the information services work done by fiscal and accounting personnel. Such appraisal shall include, but not be limited to, the following determinations:

1. Evaluation of the means, manner, and degree of participation of such personnel in the overall Forest information and education program.
2. Whether such personnel know and understand the information and education points emphasized by the Regional Forester and the Forest Supervisor in their respective annual work plans.
3. Whether the Forest business management practices aid the program of the Forest Service and enhance its standing in the local area served by the Forest.
4. Whether business offices are neat and well-kept, whether visitors are treated courteously in person and when they call, and whether publicity material is neatly displayed and available to the general public.
5. Note outstanding information and education accomplishments and evaluate extent of participation of fiscal and accounting personnel in local civic activities.
6. Whether information and education problems exist or if there are information and education needs that the fiscal and accounting group can solve or help with.

Sources of information include:

1. Information and education plans.
2. Work programs.
3. Payment inquiries and related correspondence.

4. General observations.

5. Information and education accomplishments (Articles, radio and television programs, and other contacts).

6. Discussions with employees, visitors, and local citizens.

170 - Defense Activities

Determine whether fiscal and accounting personnel are adequately informed on current defense activities and plans. Have such personnel taken available civil defense training?

Sources of information include:

1. Civil defense plans.
2. Civil defense training courses.
3. Discussions with Forest Service civil defense representatives.
4. Analysis of charges to Function 320, Work Performed for Others, etc.