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Washington, DC**

**Forest Service Manual 6600 – Systems Management  
Chapter 6610 – Computer Technology Management**

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**Digest:** Following is an explanation of the changes throughout the directive by section.

**6610.2:** Establishes a code and caption for Objectives and adds an objective to ensure that hardware and software is interoperable with the rest of the enterprise architecture.

**6610.3:** Establishes a code and caption for Policy.

**6610.4:** Establishes a code and caption for Responsibility.

**6610.41:** Adds a reference to FSM 6604.11 and 6604.12 for Chief and Deputy Chiefs responsibilities.

**6610.42:** Describes authority and responsibility delegated to the Washington Office Director of Information Resources Management as the Chief Information Officer (CIO).

**6610.43:** Adds responsibility for Washington Office Staff Directors to ensure that they do not duplicate systems and services provided by the Chief Information Officer and for the Director for Information Resources Management to provide governance processes for hardware and software, and Regional Foresters, Station Directors, Area Director, and Institute Director.

**6610.44:** Adds responsibilities for Regional Foresters, Station Directors, Area Director, and Institute Director in addition to those set forth in FSM 6604.2.

**6610.5 – 6610.51:** Updates terms and their definitions and abbreviations.

**6611:** Sets forth procedures for developing and implementing an equipment replacement plan.

**6612:** Sets forth procedures for management and administration of information technology equipment.

**Forest Service Manual 6600 – Systems Management**  
**Chapter 6610 – Computer Technology Management**  
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This chapter provides direction for the management and administration of information technology (IT) resources.

### **6610.1 – Authority**

(See FSH 6609.14, sec. 20.1.) Basic authorities concerning the procurement and management of IT resources are contained in Departmental Regulation 3140-00, Information Systems Security Policy (DR 3140-001) and Departmental Manual 3140-001, Management ADP Security Manual (DM 3140-001). More specific authorities are described in succeeding sections of this chapter.

### **6610.2 – Objectives**

In addition to the general systems management objectives stated in FSM 6602, Forest Service objectives for the management of information technology (IT) resources are:

1. Provide necessary IT resources and expertise to meet servicewide computer system needs.
2. Maintain Information Resources Management (IRM) staff competence in all aspects of IT.
3. Provide for the administration, operations, and security of IT resources.
4. Ensure that all hardware and software deployed is consistent with and interoperable with other technology in use, as described in the Forest Service enterprise architecture.

### **6610.3 – Policy**

See FSM 6603 for broad system management policies.

1. Acquire, maintain, and update a corporate IT architecture.
2. Ensure that the architecture grows and evolves to continually meet the computing and information management needs of the Agency.
3. Acquire architecture by use of Agency-wide or Forest Service-sanctioned Governmentwide contracts, which set the standards for the architecture.
4. Ensure that the architecture includes a data communications network that permits the required flow of information to and between Forest Service offices.
5. Ensure that the architecture, including networks, allows for sharing of information with other Government, State, and local partners.

## **6610.4 – Responsibility**

### **6610.41 – Chief and Deputy Chiefs**

The principal responsibilities of the Chief and Deputy Chiefs are set forth in FSM 6604.11 and 6604.12.

### **6610.42 – Chief Information Officer**

The Washington Office Director of Information Resources Management has been designated as the Agency's Chief Information Officer (CIO). The Department's CIO has delegated to the Forest Service CIO the authority and responsibility to oversee the procurement, installation, management, support, and updating of the corporate information technology (IT) architecture.

### **6610.43 – Washington Office Staff Directors**

1. All Staff Directors. In addition to the responsibilities set forth in FSM 6604.16, Washington Office Staff Directors are responsible for:

- a. Reviewing the facility requirements of computer applications to ensure that they are based on servicewide standards and cost-benefit comparisons.
- b. Providing training for and assistance on the use of corporate information technology (IT) architecture within their area of responsibility.
- c. Ensuring that systems and services used by applications do not duplicate the systems and services provided and managed by the Chief Information Officer (CIO).

2. Director, Information Resources Management Staff. In addition to the responsibilities set forth in FSM 6610.43, paragraph 1 the Director is responsible for:

- a. Monitoring and evaluating the overall IT needs of the Forest Service.
- b. Preparing and maintaining servicewide IT investment plans and replacement plans to satisfy present and projected servicewide system requirements.
- c. Developing and maintaining servicewide guidelines, standards, and a decision process regarding the enterprise architecture.
- d. Developing and maintaining a technical authorization process for the procurement of IT equipment and services by all Forest Service units, and providing assistance in obtaining external approval for such procurements.
- e. Providing governance processes for ensuring that all hardware and software complies with the requirements of the Forest Service enterprise architecture, is tested before deployment for compatibility with that architecture, and ensures that unauthorized hardware is not installed.

f. Maintaining a high level of technical expertise within the Information Resources Management Staff on the management, acquisition, and use of computer systems, and disseminating this expertise to other Forest Service units by providing current literature, training materials, and consultation.

g. Providing technical coordination for outside use of computer facilities.

h. Procuring and managing Washington Office the IT architecture and associated services.

i. Providing a technical interface with the Department of Agriculture computer centers and other government agencies that deal with computer technology.

#### **6610.44 – Regional Foresters, Station Directors, Area Director, and Institute Director**

In addition to the responsibilities set forth in FSM 6604.2, it is the responsibility of the Regional Foresters, Station Directors, Area Director, and Institute Director to provide facilities in support of the information technology (IT) architecture components.

#### **6610.5 – Definitions**

Many of the definitions in this section are based on definitions in the Federal Acquisition Regulation (48 CFR 39.2; FSH 6309.32). For a list of the abbreviations and acronyms for terms used in this section, see FSM 6610.51.

Accessory Equipment. See the definition for Peripherals under the Information Technology (IT) definition.

Acquisition. As used in relation to IT, the process of obtaining IT equipment, software, or services through procurement purchase, lease, donation, transfer, loan, and so on, regardless of cost.

Acquisition Approval Request (AAR). A waiver request submitted to the USDA Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) for IT acquisitions that exceed the threshold under the USDA moratorium on IT acquisitions (FSM 6615.01c).

Architecturally Compliant Products and Services. IT products and services that are included in the Forest Service enterprise architecture technical reference model (TRM).

Augmentation. The purchase or lease of equipment components to extend or otherwise upgrade previously acquired IT equipment. Replacement of a central processing unit (CPU) with a higher capacity or otherwise improved model is not considered to be augmentation.

Best Practices. As used in relation to IT, those techniques or methodologies that, through experience and research, have proven to reliably lead to a desired result. In software development, for example, a best practice is a well-defined method that contributes to a successful step in product development. Several best practices are widely followed throughout the software industry, such as an iterative development process, requirement management, quality control, and change control.

Commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS). Products (usually software) that are available commercially and that can be used, generally without modification, with existing IT and other systems.

Computers. Programmable digital, analog, and hybrid devices and components that perform electronic computations. These devices and components:

- a. Include user-programmable (intelligent) input/output terminals; personal computers (PCs) (which include desktops, laptops, and notebooks; handheld computers; and programmable data recorders, but
- b. Exclude calculators.

Corporate Infrastructure. In the Forest Service, this is synonymous with Technology Architecture.

Data Administration. A management activity through which data and information management policies and standards are established and administered. Data administration ensures that the data collected and maintained within an organization is structured, defined, and stored in such a manner that it is accessible and understandable to all segments of the organization that have a legitimate interest in the information.

Data Communications. The transfer of information between functional units by means of data transmission according to a protocol.

Database Administration. The implementation of data administration policies and standards as they apply to an organization's databases. Database administration directs how, where, and in what manner data are stored, maintained, and accessed.

Enterprise Architecture (EA). A description of the Forest Service business and mission (including the Agency's strategic intent); the processes established to accomplish the mission; the resources allocated to carrying out those processes (including technical architecture); and the governance, financial, and performance inputs and results associated with the conduct of these processes. Enterprise architecture includes these reference models: performance reference model, business reference model, service component reference model, data reference model, and technical reference model (TRM).

Forest Service Image. The complete set of software, including the operating systems, supplied by the Forest Service for use with servers and PCs (which include desktops, laptops, and notebooks). The Forest Service image is maintained and managed by the Washington Office Information Resources Management Staff.

Forest Service Technical Architecture. Hardware, software, and their physical and logical connections that make up the technology components of the Forest Service enterprise architecture.



Geographic Information System (GIS). An automated system that is designed to provide information by working with data referenced by spatial or geographic coordinates. A GIS system is composed of hardware, software, and procedures designed to support the capture, management, manipulation, analysis, modeling, and display of spatially referenced data for solving complex planning and management problems.

Geographic Information System (GIS) Implementation Plan. A management plan for acquiring and implementing GIS technology and for automating and managing shared resource inventory data needed to support the information needs of the unit. The implementation plan should provide direction regarding how a unit intends to acquire, implement, and maintain GIS technology; manage its resource information; and prepare its workforce with the needed skills.

Information Needs Assessment. A process through which a management team identifies the types of information the team needs to accomplish its mission, and the types of data needed to support that information. Information needs assessments are used as a tool to identify the data and information necessary to support resource management decisions, and the best methods of collecting and maintaining resource data and displaying needed information.

Information Technology (IT). General-purpose, commercially available, automated data processing components, and the hardware systems created from them, regardless of size, use, capacity, price, or method of acquisition. Four IT categories have been established:

- a. Equipment. Computers and ancillary equipment used by the Forest Service to meet its mission objectives.
- b. IT Services. Contracted services that are adjunct but essential to IT activities and that do not involve the actual computation or manipulation of data by a computer. This term may include data or code conversion, project management, facilities management, systems analysis and design, programming, equipment operation, equipment maintenance, and computer performance operation, but does not include typical office support functions (such as data entry, creation of CDs, word processing, or graphics design).
- c. Peripherals. Units or machines that operate in combination or in conjunction with a computer but are not physically part of it. Peripheral devices typically display computer data, store data from the computer, and return the data to the computer on demand, prepare data for human use, or acquire data from a source and convert it to a form usable by a computer.
- d. Software. Computer programs, procedures, or routines that are specifically designed to make use of and extend the capabilities of IT equipment. Software includes operating systems, assemblers, compilers, interpreters, database management systems, utility programs, office automation systems, GIS systems, maintenance diagnostics programs, and applications systems. The term encompasses all software, whether Government-owned or available commercially.

Information Technology (IT) Equipment Maintenance. The examination, testing, diagnosis, repair, or parts replacement function done to reduce the probability of IT equipment malfunction or outage (preventive maintenance); restoration of IT equipment to proper operating status (remedial maintenance); or modification of equipment to improve quality or extend performance (field engineering change).

Mean Time to Failure (MTTF). A computer industry defined measure of the average time a system or a component of a system works without faulting or failure.

Mission Critical. Essential to achieving the Agency's strategic goals.

Office Automation. The use of IT equipment, services, and software in an office environment to optimize office productivity. Examples include word processing, presentation software, spreadsheets, and e-mail.

Request for Technical Approval (RTA). Documentation that justifies the need to acquire products not included in the Forest Service technical architecture or IT services that exceed cost levels established elsewhere in this section (FSM 6615.01).

Resource Information Structure. A servicewide framework of categories or subject areas of data that provides a flexible means to organize, reference, access, and share information.

Resource Inventory Data. The basic facts, measurements, and observations that the Forest Service collects, stores, and uses to describe the natural and cultural resources that the Agency manages.

Technical Approval (TA). Authorization to acquire or use IT not yet included in the Forest Service technical architecture.

Technical Architecture. The set of hardware components, software tools and programs, and networking equipment and services that comprise the Forest Service's standard computing environment.

Technical Reference Model (TRM). A key piece of the Forest Service enterprise architecture that defines the complete set of IT equipment, software, and services approved for use within the Forest Service (including the Forest Service image) and that describes standards and policies for architectural compliance.

Telecommunications. The science and technology of communication by electronic transmission of information. Telecommunications service generally includes the transmission, emission, or reception of signals, writing, images, sounds, or intelligence of any nature, by wire, radio, or other electromagnetic means. Telecommunications facilities include equipment used for such modes of transmission as telephone, data, facsimile, video, audio, and such corollary items as distribution systems and communication security facilities.

### **6610.51 – Abbreviations and Acronyms**

The following is a list of the abbreviations and acronyms for the terms used in this chapter:

AAR – acquisition approval request.

CD – compact disk.

CIO – Chief Information Officer.

COTS – commercial off-the-shelf.

CPU – central processing unit.

EA – enterprise architecture.

GIS – geographic information system.

IT – information technology.

MTTF – mean time to failure.

OCIO – Office of the Chief Information Officer.

PC – personal computer, including desktop, laptop, and notebook computer models.

RTA – request for technical approval.

TA – technical approval.

TRM – technical reference model.

### **6611 – Equipment Replacement Plans**

An equipment replacement plan details how information technology (IT) equipment that is part of the corporate infrastructure should be replaced. It addresses how the replacements fit into strategic plans for technology investments and how the replacements should be adequately funded.

Some of the areas considered in an equipment replacement plan are:

1. Funding needed for replacement of IT assets as the assets reach the end of their useful life.
2. Enhancements of the current IT resources that are needed to support the mission and programs of the Forest Service.
3. Ways in which new technology (hardware and software) should be provided to support program needs.

## **6611.02 – Objectives**

The objectives for developing an equipment replacement plan are:

1. Provide a mechanism to guide capital investment decisionmaking.
2. Determine estimated cash needs for computer service activity.
3. Provide Forest Service line managers with information on the effects of computer replacement activities on their units.

## **6611.03 – Policy**

1. Develop equipment replacement plans at the end of each fiscal year. Plans must include detailed information for replacements planned for the following fiscal year and forecasts of anticipated replacements for the following 4 years.

2. Enter equipment information into the inventory component of the Enterprise Asset Management System (FSH 6509.11f, sec. 29) within 30 days after receipt of the equipment.

## **6611.04 – Responsibility**

1. Forest Service managers at all organizational levels are responsible for ensuring that all Forest Service-owned information technology (IT) is accounted for in the Enterprise Asset Management System.

2. The Assistant Director of Information Technology Management is responsible for:

- a. Recording and tracking all IT assets.
- b. Providing a basis for funding projections to ensure that the replacement costs of IT systems and personal computers (PCs) are funded.
- c. Accounting for the individual components of the IT system and prepare reports needed for making decisions about managing information resources.
- d. Developing the annual replacement plans for PCs, servers, and telecommunications hardware.

## **6611.05 – Definitions**

For definitions of terms and for a list of abbreviations and acronyms used in this section, see FSM 6610.5.

## **6611.1 – Replacement Plan Elements**

At a minimum, replacement plans must include the following elements:

1. Schedule of equipment upgrades and system replacements through at least a 5-year cycle. The schedule must include:

- a. The major equipment types and associated components making up an IT system.
- b. Quantity of equipment and associated components.
- c. Date of acceptance of the IT system.
- d. Cost of the component upgrade or component replacement using current contract prices, including transportation and installation.
- e. Projected year of replacement for each major equipment type and associated components making up an IT system.

2. Summary by fiscal year of planned expenditures for equipment upgrades, IT system replacements, and radio communication systems.

3. Schedule and estimated cost of new technology (hardware and software) planned to support program needs.

4. Justifications for equipment not being replaced within the replacement time periods specified in FSM 6611.2, Replacement Criteria.

#### **6611.2 – Replacement Criteria**

1. At a minimum, replace information technology systems at the end of their useful life. Useful life is considered to be:

- a. Servers: 5 years.
- b. Desktop PCs: 4 years.
- c. Laptop PCs: 3 years.

2. Component upgrades, component replacements, or component additions may extend, in some cases, the useful life of a server.

3. Consolidate smaller servers into fewer larger servers when practical, even if the useful life of the smaller servers has not yet been reached.

4. Replace equipment when costs for component upgrades, component replacements, or component additions to a device or class of devices (servers, workstations, printers, and so forth) for a given year exceed the remaining expected life of the device or class of devices.

## **6612 – Management and Administration of Information Technology Equipment**

The direction in this section applies to servers, personal computers (PCs, which include desktops, laptops, and notebooks), field data recorders, and comparable PC equipment and word processing peripherals.

### **6612.03 – Policy**

Personal computers must be purchased from national contracts unless a justification can be made that the items offered do not meet the Agency's business needs (FSM 6615).

### **6612.04 – Responsibility**

#### **6612.04a – Line Officers and Washington Office Staff Directors**

Forest Service line officers and Washington Office staff directors have the responsibility to:

1. Comply with applicable laws, regulations, and Department and Agency policies and procedures when procuring non-contract information technology (*<http://www.ocio.usda.gov/directives/#3000link>*).
2. Comply with Forest Service technical approval policy (FSM 6615, FSH 6609.12).
3. Train their employees to use and manage PC hardware and software effectively and appropriately.
4. Ensure that the terms for software licensing agreements are followed.

## **6613 – Facility Standards [Reserved]**

## **6614 – Training and Information Services [Reserved]**

## **6615 – Technical Approvals**

A number of constraints and federally prescribed procedures apply to the acquisition of information technology (IT) hardware, software, maintenance, supplies, and related services from sources outside the Forest Service.

1. All IT acquisitions that are not compliant with the existing Forest Service Enterprise Architecture require a technical approval. See FSM 6615.1 for direction on obtaining technical approvals for such IT acquisitions in the Forest Service.
2. The exercise of any delegation authorized in this section must comply with the provisions of the laws and regulations, contained in the authorities cited in FSM 6615.01 and in all related Agency, Department, and Federal requirements.

## **6615.01 – Authority**

### **6615.01a – Laws and Regulations Governing Information Technology Acquisition by Federal Agencies**

1. Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996 (40 U.S.C. 1401 note; Pub. L. 104-106). This law gives the authority to acquire information technology (IT) resources to the head of each executive agency and makes the agency heads responsible for effectively managing their IT investments. This law is intended to streamline IT acquisitions and emphasize life-cycle management of IT as a capital investment. The act defines the term “information technology architecture,” with respect to an executive agency, as an integrated framework for evolving or maintaining existing information technology and for acquiring new information technology to achieve the agency's strategic and information resources management goals.

2. Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794d). Section 508 of this act sets out broad requirements for accessibility, which apply to IT and other technology.

3. Regulations. Detailed regulations covering Federal IT acquisition and management are set forth in:

a. The Federal Management Regulations (FMR) at Title 41, Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter 102, Subchapter F, Telecommunications (41 CFR parts 102-171 to 102-190) set out Federal requirements related to IT and telecommunications. The FMR is the successor to the Federal Property Management Regulations (FPMR). The FPMR/FMR are incorporated in the Forest Service Directive System at FSH 6409.31.

b. The Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) at Title 48, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 39, Acquisition of Information Technology, section 39.2 (48 CFR 39.2) provide requirements implementing section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794d) and for the Electronic and Information Technology Accessibility Standards issued by the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board at 36 CFR part 1194. The FAR is incorporated in the Forest Service Directive System in FSH 6309.32.

### **6615.01b – Other Governmentwide Requirements Related to Information Technology Acquisition**

1. Office of Management and Budget (OMB). The following OMB documents may be accessed electronically from the OMB home page (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/>).

a. OMB Circular A-76, Performance of Commercial Activities. This updates the annual federal pay raise assumptions and inflation factors used for computing the government's in-house personnel and non-pay costs, as generally provided in the President's Budget for Fiscal Year 2004.

b. OMB Circular A-130, Management of Federal Information Resources. The following appendices in this circular set out requirements of particular interest for privacy and security concerns: Appendix I, Federal Agency Responsibilities for Maintaining Records About Individuals, and Appendix III, Security of Federal Automated Information Resources.

c. OMB Memorandum 99-20, Security of Federal Automated Information Resources. The purpose of this memorandum is to remind agencies that, consistent with the principles embodied in OMB Circular A-130, Appendix III, "Security of Federal Automated Information Resources," they must continually assess the risk to their computer systems and maintain adequate security commensurate with that risk.

2. National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). NIST Special Publication (SP) 800-23, Guidelines to Federal Organizations on Security Assurance and Acquisition/Use of Tested/Evaluated Products: Recommendations of the National Institute of Standards and Technology may be accessed electronically at the NIST home page (<http://www.nist.gov/>).

#### **6615.01c – U.S. Department of Agriculture Requirements for Information Technology Acquisition and Management of Information Resources and Telecommunications**

1. USDA Moratorium on Information Technology Acquisitions. Beginning in November 1996, the Department of Agriculture instituted a moratorium on certain types of information technology (IT) acquisitions. In a series of memoranda issued since 1996, the Department established procedures for determining the types of IT acquisitions subject to or exempt from the moratorium on IT acquisitions and the related monetary limits.

The following is a listing of the memoranda still in effect:

a. By memorandum to the Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment, dated January 17, 1997, Acting Chief Information Officer Anne F. Thomson Reed issued an exemption to the USDA Moratorium on IT Acquisitions for emergency situations such as firefighting, earthquakes, and floods. (See FSM 6615.3 for direction on the exemption process.)

b. By memorandum to Subcabinet Under and Assistant Secretaries and Agency Heads dated May 13, 2003, USDA Chief Information Officer Scott Charbo issued a revision to the USDA Moratorium on IT Acquisitions by placing limits on all equipment and software investments and lowering the Forest Service threshold from \$250,000 to \$25,000 for acquisitions requiring waivers. (For a list of items that require waivers, see FSM 6615.2.)

2. USDA Directives and Related Documents. (Departmental Regulations (DRs) and Departmental Manuals (DMs) may be accessed electronically at the USDA directives homepage (<http://www.usda.gov>). The following DRs, DMs, and issuances from the USDA Office of the Chief Information Officer set out requirements for USDA agencies regarding IT acquisition and management:



- a. DR 3111-001, Departmental Long-Range IRM Planning. This regulation establishes policy, procedures, requirements, and responsibilities of the Department and its agencies participating in the USDA long-range strategic information resources management (IRM) planning process. The terms "agency" or "agencies" used throughout this regulation include USDA agencies and staff offices.
- b. DR 3300-1, Telecommunications & Internet Services and Use. This DR establishes policies and assigns responsibilities for the management and use of all aspects of telecommunications services, equipment, and resources within the USDA.
- c. USDA OCIO CS-026, Capital Planning and Investment Control for Security, and its attachment, Guide to CPIC for the Cyber Security Infrastructure.
- d. DM 3560-001, Chapter 12, Part 1-Security Requirements for Capital Planning and Investment Control (CPIC). The material in this chapter, including Attachment A, is intended to be a reference document to be used in maintaining a comprehensive planning process for the security costs of information systems within each agency/mission area.

#### **6615.02 – Objective**

The objective of the technical approval process is to ensure that information technology (IT) purchased by the Forest Service, that is not compliant with the agency Enterprise Architecture, is compatible with and does not interfere with the agency's installed IT base, and that all IT brought into the Forest Service inventory is compatible with the tools, processes, and procedures used to manage the IT base, and meets Forest Service business needs in the most economical and efficient manner.

#### **6615.03 – Policy**

- 1. Ensure all Forest Service personnel obtain technical approvals as outlined in FSM 6615.2-6615.3 before acquiring information technology (IT) equipment, software, or services that are not in compliance with Forest Service Enterprise Architecture. For IT acquisitions requiring technical approval, proceed with the acquisition only after technical approval has been granted and the conditions of the approval, if any, have been fulfilled.
- 2. Adhere to the following order of preference for contract sources of IT services and equipment:
  - a. Forest Service, current Blanket Purchase Agreement's (BPA's),
  - b. Other USDA agencies, then
  - c. Other Federal agencies.
- 3. Do not split IT acquisitions or divide such acquisitions into parts in an attempt to circumvent the moratorium threshold (FSM 6615.01c).

4. Follow all applicable procurement laws, regulations, and direction for IT acquisitions (FSM 6615.01).

5. Ensure any acquired IT items do not adversely affect the integrity or operability of Forest Service equipment or systems. If items purchased using this authority are found to adversely affect the integrity or interoperability of Forest Service equipment or systems, promptly remove such items from those systems.

6. Adhere to any condition or requirement that is included in the communication granting a technical approval.

#### **6615.04 – Responsibility**

This section sets forth the responsibilities for the Forest Service technical approval process for the acquisition of information technology (IT) equipment, software, and maintenance or support services, which are collectively referred to as IT acquisitions. For direction on the technical approval process for telecommunications equipment and services, see FSM 6645 and FSH 6609.14.

#### **6615.04a – Unit Managers**

It is the responsibility of Forest Service unit managers at all organization levels to:

1. Ensure that all acquisitions of information technology related products, goods, or services are in full compliance with this directive.

2. Review and concur with all technical approval requests submitted electronically from their employees.

3. Ensure that all such requests receive technical approval.

4. Ensure that their units adhere to all conditions or requirements included in the communication granting any technical approval.

#### **6615.04b – Director of Information Resources Management**

The Director of Information Resources Management has the responsibility for:

1. Granting technical approvals.

2. Ensuring that the technical approval process uses best business practices to manage the acquisition of information technology (IT) equipment, software, and services to meet Forest Service needs and requirements in the most economical and efficient manner.

3. Verifying the mission-critical nature of information technology (IT) acquisitions that require requesting an acquisition approval from the USDA Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO), and submitting such requests.

4. Determining the content and maintaining the currency of the Forest Service Enterprise Architecture (FSM 6615.1).

5. Ensuring servicewide compliance with appropriate security requirements related to the IT technical approval process.

#### **6615.05 – Definitions**

See FSM 6610.5 for definitions of terms and FSM 6610.51 for a list of abbreviations and acronyms for terms used in this chapter.

#### **6615.06 – References**

Federal Enterprise Architecture Framework (FEAF).

#### **6615.1 – Forest Service Enterprise Architecture Technical Reference Model [Reserved]**

#### **6615.2 – Information Technology Acquisitions That Require Department and/or Forest Service Approval**

##### **6615.21 – Information Technology Acquisitions That Require Department Waiver**

Acquisition of information technology (IT) in the following categories requires preparation of an Acquisition Approval Request (AAR) by the Forest Service. The AAR must be submitted to the USDA Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO). See the following for the list of categories:

1. IT equipment, software, and services that exceed the \$25,000 threshold in the USDA IT acquisition moratorium (FSM 6615.01c) and that are not covered by an existing AAR.

2. IT equipment, software, and services that interface with or have an impact on USDA corporate IT solutions within the functional areas of accounting, budget, human resources, procurement, property, payroll, or travel.

##### **6615.22 – Information Technology Acquisitions That Require Forest Service Technical Approval**

1. A request for technical approval must be submitted electronically using the Technical Approval Request Database (TADB) accessible from the Forest Service Information Resources Management web site (<http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/irm/asset/>), for the acquisition of any:

a. IT Equipment Not Part of the Forest Service Enterprise Architecture. A justification is required to explain why Forest Service standard equipment is not adequate to meet the business.

b. Upgrades of Installed FS IT Equipment that Exceed \$2,500. A justification is required to explain why the item(s) are being acquired outside the Forest Service IRM

administered replacement planning process; upgrades of installed desktop, mobile or handheld computers being acquired outside FS IRM administered replacement planning processes except as provided for in FSM 6615.23.

c. Software Not Included as Part of the Forest Service Image, or Images. A justification is required to explain why software currently on the Forest Service image is not adequate to meet the IT needs. Software packages that are not part of the Forest Service image but have been approved for purchase are listed on the IRM web site (<http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/irm/asset/>).

d. Operating Systems and Server Software. Operating systems and server software that are not compliant with Forest Service Enterprise Architecture, including free operating systems such as those distributed under the GNU/Linux General Public License require a technical approval.

e. Software Upgrade or Maintenance. Any upgrade or maintenance to software previously granted technical approval with an acquisition cost of greater than \$2,500 requires a technical approval. Any upgrade or maintenance to software not previously granted technical approval and not covered by the provisions of FSM 6615.23, require technical approval regardless of cost. Upgrades to software covered by enterprise-wide license agreements that are exceptions to national procedures and schedules require a technical approval regardless of cost. All upgrades must be in strict accordance with software copyright laws and regulations.

f. Programming Services. Any IT programming service with an acquisition cost of \$2,500 or greater.

g. Networked Equipment. All IT equipment that may be connected to and addressable on the Forest Service Web/Intranet must be identified as such and granted technical approval prior to acquisition, regardless of cost unless those replacement items are identified as part of the Forest Service Enterprise Architecture.

h. Telecommunication Limits. All data/voice telecommunication acquisitions must follow the Telecommunication Network Stabilization Migration Program (TNSMP) (DR 3300-1).

i. Telecommunications Equipment and Services. Telecommunications (voice, network, radio, and video) equipment and services include telephone systems, routers, switches, handheld radios, mobile radios, repeaters, video conferencing equipment, DSL, cable modem service, cell phones, satellite phones, and so forth. These TAs can be granted by fiscal year and can include the aggregate numbers for a unit, rather than being required for each individual purchase. The requesting organization is responsible for tracking purchases to ensure that the limits of the TA are not exceeded. When submitting a bulk TA request for cell phones, specifically identify those that provide connectivity to the Forest Service network (for example, TREO, Blackberry, and so forth).

### **6615.23 – Information Technology Acquisitions That Do Not Require Forest Service Technical Approval**

Items in the following categories do not require Forest Service technical approval:

1. Accessory Equipment, Equipment Upgrades, and Software. IT equipment and software specifically identified as being compatible with the Forest Service Enterprise Architecture. Specific items and classes of items that fall in this area are listed and described on the Forest Service IRM web site (<http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/irm/asset/>).

2. Equipment Maintenance. Maintenance up to \$25,000 per year on any one acquisition for IT equipment.

3. Operating Services. Basic operating services that support day-to-day IT operations (such as systems administration, database management, CD production, graphics, data entry, and so on). These basic services do not include those activities described in FSM 6615.1, which require Department approval.

### **6615.24 – Preparation of Electronic Requests for Technical Approvals**

Requests for technical approval must be submitted electronically using the Technical Approval Request Database (TADB) that is accessible from the Forest Service Information Resources Management web site (<http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/irm/asset/>).

### **6615.3 – Emergency Situations**

In emergency situations where the Incident Command System has been implemented, information technology (IT) acquisitions needed for the emergency do not require a technical approval or a waiver from the USDA moratorium on IT acquisitions, as follows:

1. The exemption shall be used only to acquire services or equipment for short-term emergencies. Items needed only for a short term shall be obtained through leasing, rather than through purchasing. If the equipment, software, or services are retained, a technical approval must be requested within 30 days of when the emergency is over or demobilization occurs. If technical approval is not granted, the final disposition of the services or equipment (such as the sale of the item or termination of the lease agreement or services contract) must be tracked and recorded.

2. The exemption shall not be used to replace any existing technology with updated technology, such as the replacement of undersized or outdated non-Forest Service compliant devices, except when the existing technology has been destroyed or rendered unusable as the result of a disaster, and the conditions of the emergency require that replacement technology be acquired. In such a case, the non-Forest Service-compliant technology must be replaced with Forest Service-compliant technology if its use can satisfy the business need.

3. The exemption shall not be used to acquire equipment or services for day-to-day program management or other non-emergency activities.

4. If technical approval is obtained, the acquired equipment and software may be returned to a cache to be made available for any future emergency situation.