

**Forest Service Handbook  
National Headquarters - Washington Office  
Washington, DC**

**Forest Service Handbook 6609.13 – Application Developer's Handbook  
Zero Code**

**Amendment:** 6609.13-2008-1

**Effective date:** September 15, 2008

**Duration:** This amendment is effective until superseded or removed.

**Approved by:** Hank Kashdan, Deputy Chief

**Date approved:** September 12, 2008

**Responsible Staff:**

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

**05:** Removes obsolete definitions and adds new definitions for Major Application and Major Information System.

**10:** Throughout chapter removes obsolete references to other chapters of this handbook and adds as a reference FSM 6680.

Adds reference to the System Development Life Cycle (SDLC) Roadmap.

**20:** Removes entire chapter. Development procedures are defined by the System Development Life Cycle (SDLC) Roadmap, available online from the FS BAO web page, at <http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/irm/bao/>.

**30:** Throughout chapter removes obsolete references and direction and adds reference to FSM 6680 for direction pertaining to security. Makes minor edits in direction for clarity.

**31.3:** Clarifies records retention requirements and adds reference to FSH 6209.11, Records Management Handbook.

**31.32:** Removes code, caption, and associated direction for “The Application Security Certification Statement Document” and renumbers the two sections following.

**50:** Removes entire obsolete chapter.

**60:** Removes entire chapter direction related to application security certification is now provided in FSM 6680.

**70:** Removes entire obsolete chapter. Direction related to application security certification is now provided in FSM 6680.

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### 03 - Policy

Procedures in this handbook must be used to direct the development of computer applications intended for use within the Forest Service. Application development must occur only within the context of the Software Management direction as described in FSM 6620 and within the Forest Service Information Management Strategy defined below.

If an application is small or is intended for use by a small number of people then it may not be practical to expend the resources necessary to meet all the guidelines given in this handbook. Application development project managers should use their best judgment in such a case and document their intentional departures from these guidelines. However, no application is exempt from meeting any of the security requirements identified in this handbook (see section 31.3 for details concerning security requirements, and FSM 6680).

### 05 - Definitions

Application Controls. Controls which apply to a specific automated information system application to help assure that information processed is authorized, valid, complete, accurate, and that an audit trail exists.

Application Development. The activity of employing the full range of information principles, technologies, and procedures to build automated processes which support identified management objectives.

Corporate Database. In this context a database is a collection of information managed using a FS database management system (DBMS) such as ORACLE. A database is corporate if use of its data is shared by two or more staffs and a multi-staff management structure exists to maintain it.

Forest Service Information Management Strategy. The Forest Service strategy for managing information as an organizational resource in support of the agency's mission. This strategy is determined in part at each level of the organization. Its primary objective is to make it easy to share information throughout the agency without jeopardizing the information's security and integrity. It has hierarchical characteristics because the strategy decided upon at one level places constraints on the permissible strategies at lower levels. The strategy has three components:

- a. Information: specifies, for example, what information is corporate and which terms, codes, and definitions will be used to identify it.
- b. People: specifies, for example, standards for the human-computer interface.
- c. Technology: specifies, for example, what types of computer equipment and generic software will be widely available.

Internal Controls. The collection of the Application, General, and Management controls relied upon by an application to safeguard its sensitive data and ensure its proper, authorized use.

Major Application. As defined in OMB Circular A-130, a Major Application is one that “requires special attention to security due to the risk and magnitude of the harm resulting from the loss, misuse, or unauthorized access to or modification of the information in the application.”

Major Information System. As defined in OMB Circular A-130, a Major Information System is one that “requires special management attention because of its importance to an agency mission; its high development, operating, or maintenance costs; or its significant role in the administration of agency programs, finances, property, or other resources.” The USDA criteria for a Major Information System can be found in the USDA INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY CAPITAL PLANNING AND INVESTMENT CONTROL GUIDE for the applicable fiscal year.

Rapid Prototyping. A software development model which builds applications in successive stages or prototypes and uses these to illicit frequent user feedback. Each prototype implements another increment of the application's specifications. The increments are chosen small enough that the associated prototypes can be built quickly. Feedback obtained is used to refine the current prototype and/or the requirements specifications themselves.

When the feedback indicates that neither of these things remains to be done, the next prototype is built to incorporate the next increment of requirements.