

For: State Offices and Service Centers

**Preparation for Appraisal System Deployment**

Approved by: Acting Deputy Administrator, Management



**1 Overview**

**A**

**Background**

FSA's legacy computer architecture, used for constructing FLP Agricultural Real Estate appraisals, consisted primarily of Cannon laptops and Micro Computing Consulting Service's (MCS) appraisal software, version 7.8. The legacy hardware platform and software system were not year 2000 (Y2K) compliant. Therefore, FSA initiated actions to replace both the appraisal hardware and software system.

In FY 1998, FSA procured Dell laptops with docking stations for appraisers and staff with appraisal responsibility. In FY 1999, FSA procured a new appraisal software system that is Y2K compliant and suitable for the Common Computing Environment (CCE) architecture.

**B**

**Purpose**

This notice:

- informs State Offices and Service Centers of the acquisition of a new appraisal hardware and software system
- provides an overview of the hardware and software components procured for the new appraisal system
- reiterates the distribution directions for the appraisal laptops, as provided in the memorandum from Robert Springer, EDSO, dated July 21, 1999
- instructs State Offices to update property inventories and revise ADP security plans and contingency plans.

<p><b>Disposal Date</b></p> <p>October 1, 2000</p>	<p><b>Distribution</b></p> <p>State Offices; State Offices relay to Service Centers; Service Centers relay to FSA Appraisers</p>
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## Notice IRM-303

### 2 Appraisal System Components

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#### A

##### System Overview

The FSA Agricultural Real Estate appraisal system will operate on a Dell Latitude® laptop with docking expansion station. The computer hardware was:

- procured with FY 1998 funds
- deployed to State Office during FY1999.

A standard core load of office automation software was provided that shall now be supplemented with software required to operate the new appraisal system.

The new appraisal system will provide an interface to a digital camera and color ink jet printers. FSA will equip the duty station of each full-time FSA appraiser with a:

- Kodak digital camera, Model DC-265
- Hewlett-Packard **portable** color ink jet printer, Model HP 340
- Hewlett-Packard **stationary** color ink jet printer, Model HP 2500CM.

This equipment shall be reserved for the full-time FSA appraiser to complete the required agricultural appraisal reports needed to conduct FSA business.

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#### B

##### Deployment Schedule

Local deployment of all appraisal hardware and software components shall be completed before January 1, 2000, to ensure Y2K compliance.

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#### C

##### System Deployment and Scheduling

Detailed instructions are being prepared to facilitate software installation within the Windows® NT environment. These instructions will be packaged with the software when it is distributed. As applicable, these instructions will contain estimated installation times and required configuration parameters.

For planning purposes, be informed that the Windows® NT Administrator shall load the appraisal system software packages on the Dell Latitude® laptop.

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## Notice IRM-303

### 3 Equipment and Security Requirements

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#### A

#### Inventory Policy

State Office CCE point of contacts shall be responsible for confirming equipment delivery in the USDA CCE Equipment Acquisition Tracking System (EATS).

**Note:** See Exhibit 1 for obtaining deployment locations of the appraisal system ADP hardware.

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#### B

#### Security Measures

State Office CCE Teams and Service Centers, as applicable, shall follow 6-IRM, paragraph 28, to complete revised security plans protecting these ADP resources.

**Note:** Exhibit 2 contains updated security guidelines for handling laptops and digital cameras.

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### 4 Action

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#### A

#### State Office Action

State Office CCE point of contacts shall:

- ensure that the appraisal system ADP hardware is recorded in USDA CCE EATS
- ensure ADP equipment security policies are enforced.

State Office CCE Teams shall:

- ensure FSA full-time appraisers are equipped with the correct laptop computer required for the appraisal system

**Note:** If not, deploy a Dell Latitude<sup>®</sup> laptop with docking station.

- ensure that each FSA full-time appraiser has an individual Cybrarian user ID and password account
- inform the FSA full-time appraiser of the designated Windows<sup>®</sup> NT Administrator assigned to this work effort.

**Note:** Coordinate work schedules to complete software installation before January 1, 2000.

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## Notice IRM-303

### 4 Action (Continued)

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#### B

#### FSA Appraiser's Action

FSA full-time appraisers shall:

- arrange workloads to accomplish completing software installation before January 1, 2000
- provide the designated Windows<sup>®</sup> NT Administrator with your license number, the licensing State name, and the license expiration date
- provide the designated Windows<sup>®</sup> NT Administrator with your Cybraian user ID and password
- ensure that automated appraisal records are updated and current.

**Notes:** Remove all closed, canceled, or completed records from legacy software application. Make a backup copy of the appraisal records on diskettes. Procedural instructions for completing this record backup are in the MCS User's Manual for the appraisal software. If assistance is needed, contact the State Office automation staff for support.

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**Instructions for Downloading Appraisal System Hardware Deployment Schedule**

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The appraisal system ADP hardware is being tracked through the CCE tracking system for equipment. Deployment schedules are accessible through the USDA Service Center CCE World Wide Web (WWW) page. Access the web page as follows.

<b>Step</b>	<b>Action</b>
1	From a web browser, type in the location address: <b><a href="http://www.sci.usda.gov/cce/index.html">http://www.sci.usda.gov/cce/index.html</a></b> .
2	Select the "News Flash" option from the USDA Service Center CCE Homepage.
3	Select the Recent News article entitled, "Digital Camera Delivery Schedule Posted".
4	Download and review the MS Excel 97 spreadsheet file named, " <b>camprint.xls</b> ".

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## Security Reminders for Protecting Laptop Computers and Digital Cameras

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FFAS and KCMO Information Systems Security Program would like to remind all employees with laptop computers and digital cameras to protect the ADP hardware and Agency data from theft and damage.

Security guidelines and best practices for the ADP hardware components include:

1. **Do not** put classified data and information on a laptop computer without proper approval (see Notice IRM-286 and Notice IRM-300).
2. **Do not** use an automatic logon program (a program containing both the Government's LAN or mainframe computer logon identification and password) on the laptop. This will prevent exposing the Government's host computer system if the laptop is lost or stolen.
3. The top three ways laptop computers and digital cameras are damaged include:
  - dropping the unit
  - dropping something on the unit
  - spilling a liquid on the unit.
4. Avoid exposure to extreme temperatures and magnetized devices. Magnetic fields may destroy the software and data files. All employees, who travel, must be alert at all times to protect the laptop computer and digital camera from theft in airports, train stations, rental car offices, hotels, and etc. Two methods of laptop theft at the airport occur:
  - at the x-ray machine
  - when walking around carrying the laptop on a luggage carrier.
5. **Do not** check a laptop computer or digital camera as baggage when traveling. Keep the units with you at all times.
6. The data stored in a laptop computer, in a digital camera, or on diskettes **will not** be damaged by exposure to airport x-ray machines. Keep a close eye on these units as they travel through the x-ray machine. **Do not** place these units on the conveyor before you are ready to pass through the scanner. Retrieve the units immediately after leaving the x-ray machine. A security password program on the laptop should be installed to protect the data if lost or stolen.
7. **Do not** put these units in the overhead compartment of an airplane since they may fall out when the compartment is opened.

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**Security Reminders for Protecting Laptop Computers and Digital Cameras (Continued)**

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8. **Do not** leave these units unattended any place such as the office, car, taxi, bus, airport, train station, rental car office, hotel, and/or FSA customer's farm. A good security rule is to never let the unit out of sight unless it is locked up. When staying in a hotel, never leave a unit in the room unattended; if the room or hotel has a safe available, keep the equipment there. When traveling, keep it in your hand or strapped to your shoulder. The laptop or digital camera can be replaced, but the data stored in it may not. Always download picture images from the digital camera to the laptop. Always make diskette backups of software and data files on the laptop for disaster recovery purposes.
9. **Do not** store the backup diskettes with the laptop.

**If your FFAS laptop or digital camera is lost or stolen, employees must report it immediately to your supervisor, the police, and an FFSA Information Systems Security Officer for investigative purposes.**

Always keep identification information about the laptop computer and digital camera, such as serial number, make, and model with you separately, back at your office, and at home, for security and reporting purposes.

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