

BIA 101

A Short History and Organizational Structure of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)



BIA Trivia

- By what name(s) was the BIA originally known:
 - a) Bureau of Indian Programs and Accounts
 - b) Office of Indian Affairs or Indian Office
 - c) Bureau of Boss Indians Around
 - d) War Department for Indian Affairs



ANSWER

- **B- Office of Indian Affairs or Indian Office**
 - Named the Bureau of Indian Affairs by Secretary Calhoun, correspondence by the first agency head- Thomas McKenney were addressed to the Office of Indian Affairs or Indian Office



BIA Origins

- Oldest Bureau of the United States Department of the Interior -- 1824
- The Agency was originally assigned to the War Department under Secretary of War-John C. Calhoun
- In 1849 it was transferred to the Department of the Interior and became officially known as the Bureau of Indian Affairs



Brief Overview of Agency Mission

- Early to Mid 1800's- Negotiate land sales and treaties and improve relations with Indians.
- 1880- “Assimilation Era”
 - BIA increased staff and a presence in Indian Country
 - Initiated programs to dispense supplies, manage schools and leases, and provide health care, law enforcement, courts.



Brief Overview of Agency Mission

- Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) of 1934 for more tribal governance of their affairs (development of constitution and by-laws, etc.
- BIA expanded programs to include forestry, range management, agriculture extension, construction, land acquisition
- Provided preference in hiring to Indian applicants
- Staff and programs continued to grow to provide program management through the 1950's and 1960's



Brief Overview of Agency Mission

- 1970's-- Management emphasis towards Indian Self-Determination and Governance
- BIA as an “advisory agency” than one of direct management
- BIA staff reduced as tribes take over more of their programs and management direction under provisions contained in the Indian Self-determination and Education Assistance Act (et. Seq.) Public Law 93-638
- 95% of BIA employees are now Native Americans

BIA Mission Statement

- The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) mission is to:

"... enhance the quality of life, to promote economic opportunity, and to carry out the responsibility to protect and improve the trust assets of American Indians, Indian tribes, and Alaska Natives."





BIA Trivia



- With Indian Self-Determination, tribes take on all the responsibilities of the Federal Government
 - TRUE?
 - FALSE?



TRIVIA ANSWER

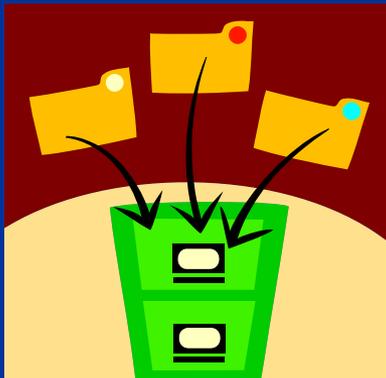


- FALSE

- **P.L. 93-638** allows tribes to take over day-to-day management of their affairs which the Federal Government had provided. The government still has a trust responsibility and maintains trust functions that cannot be relinquished (such as ensuring the protection and longevity of natural resources)

Simplified BIA Organization

- BIA has 12 Regions
 - Regional Offices have large geographic areas and numerous tribes
 - WESTERN REGIONAL OFFICE- AZ, NV, and UT
 - 42 Tribes- 12.8 Million Acres
 - Provide assistance and information to tribes and field offices (agencies).
 - Implement Washington DC office programs and funds to agencies and tribes.



Indian Lands in the United States



AMERICAN INDIAN - GEOGRAPHIC ENTITIES (1997)

Legal Entities:

- American Indian Reservations (AIR) are legal entities having boundaries established by treaty, statute, and/or executive or court order. They are identified by either their Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) or Federal reservation or the individual States for State Reservations.
- AIR (FEDERAL)**
GSA A-95 = 71,754,144
- Air (State)**
GSA A-95 = 1,389

Statistical Entities:

- Trust Designated Statistical Areas (TDSA) are geographic areas delineated by the 1990 census and published purposes by tribal officials or federally and State recognized tribes outside of Oklahoma that do not have a legally defined reservation or associated trust lands. TDSA's differ from only for data presentation purposes that generally contain American Indian populations under tribal jurisdiction and/or for which the tribes derive benefits and services to be provided.
- TDSA (FEDERAL)**
GSA A-95 = 1,474,442
- Tdta (State)**
GSA A-95 = 1,526,791

Statistical Entities continued -

- Tribal Federated Statistical Areas (TSA) are geographic areas delineated by the 1990 census and published purposes in Oklahoma by federally recognized tribes that do not have a legally defined reservation. TSA's differ from only for data presentation purposes that generally contain American Indian populations over which one or more tribal governments have jurisdiction. TSA's overlap the single "Tribal Area of Oklahoma" recognized for the 1990 census.
- TSA (FEDERAL)**
GSA A-95 = 11,406,750

GIS Data Sources:

- American Indian Reservations: 1992 U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Reservation Data File (LAW) (GSA A-95 = 71,754,144)
- Trust Designated Statistical Areas (TDSA): 1990 Census (GSA A-95 = 1,474,442)
- Tribal Federated Statistical Areas (TSA): 1990 Census (GSA A-95 = 11,406,750)
- State Reservations: 1990 Census (GSA A-95 = 1,389)

Legend:

- Red circle: BIA Regional Office Site
- Green circle: AIR Agency or Field Office Site
- Red line: BIA Regional Office Boundary

Region	Reservation	Trust Land	Tribal Area
Northwest Region	Adirondack Park		
	Alsea		
Rocky Mountain Region	Abingdon		
	Abingdon		
Great Plains Region	Abingdon		
	Abingdon		
Midwest Region	Abingdon		
	Abingdon		
Southern Plains Region	Abingdon		
	Abingdon		
Western Region	Abingdon		
	Abingdon		
Southwest Region	Abingdon		
	Abingdon		
Eastern Region	Abingdon		
	Abingdon		

SERVICES AT AGENCY OFFICES



- Superintendent is the responsible line officer
 - Programs include:
 - Administration and Human Services (Social Services)
 - Natural Resources (Irrigation, Range, Forestry, Soils, Fire Mgmt., Wildlife, Fisheries, Environmental Protection)
 - Real Estate Services (ownership, leasing, ROW, etc.)
 - Indian Self-Determination (PL 93-638 Contracts)
 - Tribal Operations
- Also: Probates, Law Enforcement, Criminal Investigations, Office of the Special Trustee (OST)



BIA TRIVIA



- **MARK ALL THAT ARE CORRECT:**
 1. BIA sends government checks out to tribal members monthly
 2. Tribal members do not pay federal taxes
 3. BIA provides contract oversight on programs administered by tribes under PL 93-638
 4. BIA is responsible for ensuring resources are protected for future generations, promoting economic opportunity and ensuring Native American trust assets are managed correctly
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ANSWER



- 3&4 are both correct
 - BIA sends checks (not government funds) to tribal members from funds accumulated in their Individual Indian Money accounts. These funds are generated through land leases, grazing permits, oil and gas royalties, mineral leases, etc. and are deposited into an individual's bank account managed by BIA. BIA manages these accounts and disperses money based on Federal law.
 - Tribal members pay federal taxes on income earned just like everyone else.

Land Types Managed by BIA

- Government
 - Lands owned by the US Government
- Tribal lands
 - The surface estate of land or any interest therein held by the United States in trust for a tribe, band, community, group or pueblo of Indians
- Allotted lands (Individually-owned Indian land)
 - Any tract, or interest therein, in which the surface estate is owned by an individual Indian in trust or restricted status
- Fee
 - Land that is owned by an individual (tribal or non-tribal) in fee status (i.e., land is on the tax roles of the local county and state)



BIA MANAGEMENT GOALS and CHALLENGES

- BIA provides primary Federal trust oversight of Indian lands
- BIA is the Agency of Record for Indian Trusts
- BIA serves a diverse land base and clientele



Final Points

- Every tribe is different
- BIA knows the political workings of each land base
- BIA wants to cooperate with other agencies to protect natural resources and fulfill trust responsibility.

