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03/14/02 03:32 PM

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Subject: FOIA/Privacy ASAP Conference

I'm forwarding the highlights Bill prepared on DOI's break-out session at the ASAP Conference which was held on March 5 in Las Vegas. I would appreciate your feedback regarding any of the issues which were raised. I'm especially interested in hearing from those folks who attended the Conference as I was unable to make it this year. Thanks.

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----- Forwarded by Alexandra Mallus/PIR/OS/DOI on 03/14/02 03:17 PM -----



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03/08/02 03:01 PM

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FOIA is to shed light on Government operations

- * More than 70 employees of the Department of the Interior attended the ASAP Conference.
- * 68 employees of the Department attended the "Interior Break-Out Session."
- * All DOI bureaus and offices, with the exception of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service had representatives in attendance.
- * With the exception of the Office of the Secretary, the bureau/office FOIA Officer was present.
- * Plans should be made for Alex Mallus, Sharon Michel & Lanel Crawley to attend next year.
- * The Department's E-Gov group should be invited next year.
- * The Department should advise the bureau/offices of a "final" completion date for:
 - i) the Department's revised regulations for E-FOIA of 1996;
 - ii) the Department's revised FOIA Handbook for E-FOIA of 1996; and,
 - iii) guidance for implementation of the October 12, 2001 "Ashcroft Memorandum".

- * Regarding the Ashcroft Memorandum, the attendees believe

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- * The bureaus/offices would like to receive policy papers on the Department's position on major FOIA issues.

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Today, there is a vast disparity of employees' grades in these three programs.

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In other Federal

agencies, the

Department-level Privacy Act program consists of numerous highly skilled specialist who work on specific areas of the Privacy Act, including policy, review and enforcement. It was announced that GAO will be conducting a review of the Department's Privacy Act program in several months.

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- * The OSM FOIA/Privacy Act Officer conducted a brief presentation on the forthcoming Electronic FOIA Tracking System.
- * At one session, the speaker announced that the mission of the Department of the Interior results in the most complicated FOIA issues.