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Subject: VIPR Update and Level 2 eAuthentication

To: Regional Foresters, Station Directors, Area Director, IITF Director and Deputy Chiefs

REPLY DUE MARCH 21, 2008

By now, most of you should be familiar with the Virtual Incident Procurement (VIPR) System. Many Acquisition and Fire personnel assisted in development of system business requirements in 2007. We would like to thank you for that valuable input and provide an update of what to expect in 2008.

VIPR is an acquisition system that automates the business lifecycle of preseason incident procurement instruments, such as EERAs, aviation contracts, and other national contracts. It is the front-end of the Incident Business Solutions (IBS) project, as such will feed information to ROSS, ABS, I-Suite, and our financial systems. VIPR will be the system of record for resources procured through the system and will provide historical data and reports capability.

VIPR's first deliverable is scheduled for November 2008. Most of the major functionality to solicit, award, and manage preseason EERAs will be in place.

In order to submit quotes through VIPR, vendors providing resources for incidents will need to obtain Level 2 eAuthentication. Obtaining Level 2 eAuthentication is essential in order to implement a defensible, legally binding eSignature function in VIPR. At this time, only vendors interested in preseason EERAs are required to obtain level 2 eAuthentication as we prepare for VIPR deployment this fall. **It is the responsibility of each region to support their vendors and assist them in obtaining Level 2 eAuthentication.**

Vendors will be required to establish an eAuthentication account with USDA. Once they establish an eAuthentication account they will be required to visit a Local Registration Authority (LRA) to verify their identity. Currently LRAs exist at USDA Service Centers. Regions should consider partnering with existing Service Centers or training Forest Service staff as LRAs. Once LRAs are identified, "sign-up fairs" within regional zones could be set-up or you may determine verification on an individual basis is more suitable. Each region has a different set of circumstances to consider such as the number of vendors and the relationship and locations of USDA Service Centers. The enclosure provides more detailed information on the process.

EAuthentication is critical to protect vendor information and institute system integrity in VIPR. Please send the strategy for attaining vendor Level 2 eAuthentication for EERA vendors within your region to Cheryl Emch/WO/USDAFS by **March 21**.



The design phase for VIPR began in January, with development, testing, training and deployment to follow. During these phases subject matter experts (SMEs) will be needed. Through coordination with regional liaisons, we have assigned regional acquisition SMEs to provide expertise on a monthly basis to work with WO SMEs and ensure we are responsive to the VIPR project team's needs.

February – Kathy Griffin, R5, Anieta McLendon, R8

March – Anieta McLendon, Sue Huston, R4

April – Sue Huston, Debby Wesselius, R1

May – Debby Wesselius, Dell McCann, R2

June - Del McCann, Peggy Toya, R3

July – Peggy Toya, Kermadine Barton, R6

August –Kathy Griffin, Tami Thompson, R9

September – Tami Thompson, Kermadine Barton

Functionality for future releases includes data exchange with ROSS, interagency capabilities, and managing aviation contracts and national contracts.

We're excited about the capabilities VIPR will provide to Acquisition and Fire staffs in providing resources for incidents. Please contact Cheryl Emch/ WO/USDA/FS or Laurie Sonju/WO/USDAFS with any questions or concerns. Systems specific questions can be directed to Larry Bowser/WO/USDAFS.

/s/ Bruce A. Hall acting for
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