

**FARM BILL STEERING COMMITTEE**  
**JULY 9, 2008**  
**JAMIE L WHITTEN FEDERAL BUILDING – ROOM 107A**  
**WASHINGTON, DC 20250**

Report submitted by Sharon Curtis, PT, Eastland Co, TX, NASCOE Representative

Most of the topics on the agenda and discussion were IT and Program related. Bottom line the agency needs a lot more money for IT licenses, software, and hardware and before the programs can get written so they can be delivered effectively and accurately to the public. IT management staff discussed the IT estimate is \$156 million for agency needs. It appears the agency needs an influx of money. The IT department is also more closely monitoring IT use and taking actions when necessary to improve web environment use. For example when 2008 DCP started, action was taken when problems began to redirect hardware to more proficiently handle the increased workload.

Comments made include this 2008 Farm Bill is a lot worse on the IT department than Farm Bill programs in the 2002 Farm Bill were. The programs can not be delivered manually. Comments made stated that the SURE and ACRE programs are very complex programs. Estimates are that if Farm Bill money is appropriated to fund SURE, it will be quite a while before software and obligations are complete so COF employees could begin program sign up and delivery.

Comments on the OMB A-123, Appendix A Assessment, included two topics that definitely need improvement. They are separation of duties at the county office level and the CCC-184's (checks) not being locked up in COF. Management expressed sincere thanks to all FSA employees for the improvements made to IPIA reviews as a result of using of the CCC-770's.

The following are 2008 Farm Bill programs and software that still have to be written and programs to deliver and administer.

- 2008 DCP & Payment Software & Reports
- 2009 DCP & Payment Software & Reports
- 2009 ACRE
- 2008 NAP & CAT Buy In
- 2009 Continued Coverage
- Socially Disadvantaged Farmer or Rancher
- Limited Resource Producer
- Beginning Farmer or Rancher
- 2009 AGI
- 2009 Remove Permitted Entity
- 2009 Direct Attribution
- Split Rice into long and medium grain
- Pulse Crops
- Reconstitutions
- Calculate Base & Yield for Pulse Crops
- SURE—must have RMA data sharing
- LFP—must have RMA data sharing
- Permanent Disaster Program
  - 1. Use RMA data closely

## 2. Adjusted APH must come from RMA

The business file must be on the web before 2009 direct attribution can be on the web. Resources are budgeted but we could use more resources. Consistent and fundamental file structure needs to be considered when writing all software.

All field representatives contributed in the discussions which included topics pertaining to software that works properly, testing software prior to issuance, NPS processing, varied level of COF employee technical abilities among COF staff, CCC-770's, eFunds control, transactions statements, training, software, policy, data warehouse queries for web programs, NAP changes, SURE program implementation and ACRE program implementation.

Mrs. Teresa Lassiter stated "Let's not forget who feeds us; lawsuits, restraining orders, everyday out plate is full". All FSA employees work for customer service. We have lot of opportunities are ahead of us.

There were 10 field employees present representing NADD, FLP, APFO, NASCOE, STO staff and COF staff.