4.1 What is the purpose of this chapter? This chapter explains how we authorize and publish handbooks.

4.2 What is the policy? We use handbooks as a component of the Service Manual to explain how to comply with Directives by using good and acceptable practices and procedures.

4.3 What is the scope of this chapter? This chapter applies to handbooks authorized in Service Manual chapters.

4.4 What is the authority for this chapter? The authority for this chapter is 011 DM 5.

4.5 Who is responsible for handbooks?

A. The Director authorizes handbooks when approving the corresponding Service Manual chapters.

B. The Assistant Director responsible for the content of a Manual chapter:

   (1) Has the authority to issue a handbook that corresponds with the chapter.

   (2) Approves revisions to authorized handbooks or determines if the Director should approve the revisions to a handbook.

C. The Chief of the division or office responsible for the content of the handbook:

   (1) Writes and updates the handbook as necessary.

   (2) Ensures that the handbook receives appropriate review and corresponds with a Manual chapter.

   (3) Coordinates with the Division of Policy and Directives Management to ensure the most recent version of the handbook is on the Internet.

D. The Chief, Division of Policy and Directives Management (PDM):

   (1) Reviews handbooks to ensure they:

      (a) Are written in plain language.

      (b) Do not conflict with other Service policy.

   (2) Publishes handbooks on the Internet with the corresponding Manual chapter.

4.6 Are there any rules governing the development of handbooks? Because divisions and offices use handbooks to provide detailed best practices and procedures, it is important that they are easily updated and current. The division or office responsible for writing a handbook makes the format and content decisions based on their audience and purpose. However, there are a few rules that handbook developers must follow:

A. Review recent handbooks on PDM’s Handbooks Web site to get ideas about effective formats and the organization of content that might work for your handbook.

B. Use plain language (see 116 FW 1 and the Government’s plain language Web site).
C. Make sure that:

(1) The information in the handbook does not contradict existing policy.

(2) Any citations and references in the handbook are accurate.

D. Put a cross-reference to the handbook in the authorizing Manual chapter.

4.7 What are the requirements for the formal review of handbooks?

A. We prefer that you develop a handbook simultaneously with the chapter that will authorize it and send them both through the surname process at the same time. (See 011 FW 3 for more information on how to put together a surname package.) After other reviewing officials surname the package, the Director reviews and authorizes the chapter and the initial release of the handbook.

B. If you finish developing a handbook after we release the corresponding Manual chapter, amend the Manual chapter to authorize the handbook. Put the handbook with the amendment in a surname package. After other reviewing officials surname the package, the Director reviews and authorizes the amendment and the handbook.

4.8 What are the requirements for updating a handbook?

A. After its initial authorization, you may make revisions to a handbook without the Director’s signature.

B. You should:

(1) Seek review from the appropriate program officials and Assistant Director before publishing a revised draft. If the revisions are significant, the Assistant Director may determine that the Director should approve the revisions to the handbook.

(2) Coordinate with PDM, which will post the revised version of the handbook online.

Date: May 12, 2006