



Executive Women in Government

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Lesia M. Banks

Lesia M. Banks currently serves as Chief of the Statutory Compliance and Research Division in the Office of Information Programs and Services at the United States Department of State. She is responsible for a portfolio that includes worldwide programs and a multi-million dollar budget for the purpose of centralizing the Department's compliance with the access provisions of various federal information access laws, including but not limited to, the Freedom of Information Act and the Privacy Act, Executive Orders and regulatory authorities and mandates governing the release to the public and the need to know community of official State Department records, the protection of individual privacy and the safeguarding of national security information.

Before joining the State Department in April 2007, Lesia served as Director, Freedom of Information and Privacy Act Staff, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)/Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. Previous to that position, she served as Departmental Privacy Officer for USDA where she was responsible for addressing Departmental Privacy issues, including privacy policy analysis and development and privacy program development and implementation. In 2004, she completed a five-month detail in the Executive Office of the President, where she worked on developing privacy policy.

Prior to joining USDA, Lesia served in numerous other Federal sector positions, including; Branch Chief at the FDA and the Securities and Exchange Commission. Her government career began in 1990 at the Department of Commerce where she eventually served as FOIA Officer to the late Secretary Ronald H. Brown.

Lesia has made FOIA and Privacy Act presentations on behalf of the American Society for Access Professionals and the Department of Justice, Legal Education Institute. She has also provided numerous FOIA and Privacy training sessions to USDA staff across the nation. In 2007, Lesia accepted an invitation to speak to the Thurgood Marshall Scholarship Fund Leadership Program participants, regarding career success in the Federal sector.

Lesia earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Sociology/Law Enforcement in 1987 from Averett College, Danville, Virginia. In June 2001, she graduated Cum Laude with a Master of Science degree in Business Administration from Strayer University, Washington, District of Columbia. Her thesis topic was "The Impact of Micromanagement on the Generation X Workforce." In June 2004, she was awarded the Strayer University Outstanding Alumni Award.

Currently, Lesia is a candidate for a Doctorate of Education degree in Organizational Leadership. She is writing her dissertation titled: "A Lesson in Loyalty: An Evaluation of the Factors That Impact Employee Retention."