



# INFO ACCESS



## Records Network Communications

Records Management  
Working Meeting  
June 9-10



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## Evaluation Response Draws Praise

by Michael L. Miller, IMSD

On July 7 the Office of Information Resources Management (OIRM) responded on behalf of the Agency to the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) records management evaluation report. In its response, EPA characterized the report as being "an accurate depiction of the challenges that the Agency's records management program is facing" and said the Agency was "in agreement with the recommendations provided by NARA for addressing these challenges." OIRM will be sending each SIRM, laboratory director, and records officer a copy of the completed Agency response.

NARA reacted positively to EPA's plan for improving its records management program. James W. Moore, Assistant Archivist for Records Administration, praised EPA for taking a positive approach in responding to the evaluation and developing a thorough plan for addressing deficiencies.

### Recommended Improvements

NARA evaluated EPA's records management program and recommended 48 improvements in five categories - overall program management, records creation and maintenance, records disposition, Superfund and contractor records, and electronic and other nontextual records (including audiovisual and microfilm).

OIRM has developed an action plan to address the recommendations throughout the Agency over a five year period. Priority will be given to:

- ◆ Reviewing and disseminating existing policy.
- ◆ Establishing records management contact networks in each program.
- ◆ Providing training.
- ◆ Revising the Agency's records disposition schedules.
- ◆ Establishing filing guidelines.

Long term initiatives include shifting the emphasis of records management from records disposition to records creation (especially when information systems are being automated), conducting internal records management evaluations, and revitalizing the vital records program.

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## Response from page 1

Although OIRM was responsible for drafting the Agency response, every Agency program had an opportunity to participate. OIRM sponsored a working meeting on records management held at the Region 5 office to get input on program needs and to coordinate initiatives across programs. In addition, each major Headquarters program, Regional office, Laboratory, and other facility developed its own implementation plan as well. NARA will monitor progress on each plan individually, using its own network of regional offices.

### What Will OIRM Do?

For OIRM, the basic task at this point is to provide the other offices with the guidance and tools to enable them to implement strong records management programs. Disseminating this information is a challenge in itself, given the broad range of people who are involved in records management. OIRM will be developing new ways to communicate with program staff and records managers, but will be using *INFOACCESS* to disseminate much of this information initially, so please watch for future issues.

## This is What We Should Have Said ...

In the box labelled "Examples of Personal Papers" on page 2 of the June issue, under the heading *These Are "Personal Papers,"* the second bullet should have read,

"Materials for your activities as a member of a union or a professional association."

What products can you expect to see from OIRM? The Chicago meeting identified three areas where records managers felt they needed immediate assistance:

- ▲ Basic records management responsibilities of each employee.
- ▲ Developing records disposition schedules and taking inventories.
- ▲ Basic filing procedures.

Over the next nine months OIRM will issue guidance packages in each of these areas. Each package will consist of a statement of what constitutes current Agency policy accompanied by supporting materials including copies of applicable guidance and Agency issuances, detailed implementation instructions, model forms that could be used, samples of completed products, and suggested readings. With these tools, programs will be able to undertake the real work of the evaluation - implementing the recommendations in individual offices.

## FY93 Initiatives

OIRM is also planning four other initiatives for FY93. The first is to begin circulating for informal and then formal approval the revised records disposition schedules for Regional programs, as well as those that apply either Agency wide or Headquarters wide. Second, OIRM will begin the systematic scheduling of the Agency's electronic information systems, and determine what policy guidance is needed for electronic records management. Third, OIRM will develop and circulate for comment a revised version of Chapter 10 of the *Agency Information Resources Management Manual* concerning records management. Finally, OIRM will undertake the development of additional in-house training classes in files maintenance and the management of electronic records.

The NARA evaluation comes at an opportune moment for the Agency because many programs both at Headquarters and in the Regions are moving. Historically, moves offer programs the opportunity to reassess their records needs. The action plans that programs developed to respond to the evaluation provide a framework for managing records better in current space and for redesigning how records can be managed in new space. ☼

## INFOACCESS

INFOACCESS, a forum to provide information and report on progress in information management across the Agency, is produced by the Information Access Branch of the Information Management and Services Division, Washington, DC under the direction of Michael Miller, National Records Management Program Manager. Please send comments and suggestions to: Mary Hoffman (contractor), Network Coordinator, PM211B, 401 M Street, SW, Washington, DC 20460. Telephone: (202) 260-7762. Electronic Mail: Hoffman.Mary.

# **FILE PLANS:**



## Developing a Regionwide File Plan

*This is a summary of a presentation given by Lynn Calvin, Region 5 Records Officer, at the EPA Records Management Working Meeting held in Chicago on June 9-10, 1992.*

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The records management staff in Region 5 developed a plan to reorganize their records as part of the planning for the move into the new Regional facility. The planning process took more than two years and the move itself took four months; it involved 1700 people and 52,000 of the Region's 64,000 feet of records. All of Region 5 moved except the Central Regional Lab and the Office of Regional Counsel. The following information comes from the staff that planned the Region 5 records reorganization.

### **Why Develop and Use File Plans?**

File plans, if properly implemented, are essential for staff trying to locate:

- ▲ A specific document (e.g. a letter from the state dated June 15, 1991).
- ▲ A specific document type you know exists (e.g. a permit, a ROD, the RI/FS).
- ▲ Documents, if any, of some particular type (e.g. all sampling done).
- ▲ Documents re: subject/action/process/program (e.g. permit review, compliance review).
- ▲ The forward & backward thread of organization events.
- ▲ A record of activities - to document the decision process.
- ▲ A record of activities to figure out what happened.
- ▲ A record of activities to prove we did what we should have done.

There are a number of steps involved in developing a file plan:

### **Step 1:    Identify the records**

Identify "files" - potential file series subject to classification, and the types of documents to be included in the "files."

### **Step 2:    Gather information about documents, files, and usage.**

- ➡ Collect information about the documents in the files:  
  
Who creates this document?  
  
If the document is external, who receives it & how?  
  
Who else in EPA/not in EPA gets copies directly from the originator (state, HQ, other agencies, contractors, etc) ?  
  
Who else does the creating/receiving office send copies to? Why, when?
- ➡ Collect information about the "files":  
  
Who creates the file? (In other words, who makes up the folder initially.)  
  
Is there any sort of list of what files should exist?  
  
What order are they in?
- ➡ Collect information about files usage. This gives you a feel for what materials should be filed together.  
  
How are the files used — for quick lookups or review?  
  
How often are the files used?  
  
What is the usage cycle?  
  
Who pulls the files when they are needed?  
  
Who refiles the files after use?

### **Step 3:    Develop file structures.**

File structures can be mnemonic, at least partially.

Group the material by use — not by document type. Correspondence is like an overheard conversation; the context is vital.

Locate key documents within the structure. They may help determine file breaks

Use a parallel structure between different files!!

Create functional not organizational divisions.

Continued on page 5

# **FILE PLANS:**



## **Design and Implementation**

*A compilation of information presented by Marilyn Ryall, Region 9 Records Officer, at the EPA Records Management Working Meeting held in Chicago on June 9-10, 1992, and information shared by Barbara Brown, Region 3 Records Officer, at the same meeting.*

A file plan is usually developed from information gathered in a survey of office files. Each record type is identified, the records matched with EPA schedules to determine the proper disposition of the records and a proper disposition authority. A copy of the plan should be placed in the first drawer of your filing cabinet or the first drawer of each set of file cabinets in your area of responsibility.

### **What is a File Plan?**

A File Plan is:

- ✓A subject classification system.
- ✓A list of records series and related retention periods.
- ✓A guide to where specific records are located.
- ✓A guide to the location of file stations - official, duplicate, personal, etc.

A file plan should be flexible enough for you to add or subtract items as necessary. You may discover that you have some series of records that are not covered by the file plan. If so, you should advise your records officer so that the series may be added to the plan and the proper disposition determined. You may also discover that some series of records are no longer being created, and if this is the case, please advise your records officer. It is very important that you coordinate any changes with your records officer.

### **Subject Classification**

A subject classification system is a hierarchical system of filing. Here is an example of how this type of system works:

Before classification the folders are arranged alphabetically in the files by headings like these:

|                 |                    |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| Annual and Sick | Grievances         |
| Awards -        | Military Leave     |
| Counseling      | Official Leave     |
| Court Leave     | Political Activity |
| Credit Union    |                    |

After classification has been imposed the files are arranged with related files as follows:

|     |                       |
|-----|-----------------------|
| 1   | Employee Relations    |
| 1-1 | Awards                |
| 1-2 | Credit Union          |
| 1-3 | Counseling            |
| 1-4 | Grievances            |
| 1-5 | Political Activity    |
| 2   | Leave                 |
| 2-1 | Annual and Sick Leave |
| 2-2 | Court Leave           |
| 2-3 | Military Leave        |
| 2-4 | Official Leave        |

### **Files and Records Disposition Plan**

A files and records disposition plan is set up to accomplish two things. One is to provide you with a File Code under which all the various documents in your office can be filed. The second is to make proper disposition of the records a relatively easy task when you set up your files for each fiscal year.

The plan contains four main elements for each type of record: a file code, a series description, disposition instruction, and a disposal authority. See the example on page 5.

## Sample File Records and Disposition Plan

### Grants Management Branch

| <u>File Code</u> | <u>Series Description</u>  | <u>Disposition</u>  | <u>Disposal Authority</u> |
|------------------|--|---|---------------------------|
| PM70-10          | <u>Timekeeper's Records</u> : (T&A) Reference copies only - official copy maintained by comptroller.                     | Break file each year.<br>Retain in office 1 yr.,<br>then destroy.   | N1/412/86/25/1            |
| PM70-11          | <u>Program Management File</u> : Records relating to the development, management, & evaluation of assistance agreements. | See below.  | NC1/412/85/25/1           |
| PM70-11A         | A. Policy & Regulation which establish & implement operational procedures for administration of assistance agreements.   | Permanent. Break file when material has been superseded or cancelled.<br>Transfer to FRC for 10 yrs.,<br>then offer to National Archives. | NC1/412/85/25/1A          |
| PM70-11B         | B. General Administrative Correspondence pertaining to normal day-to-day activities of Grants Administration Division    | Break file at end of year<br>Retain in office 2 yrs.,<br>then destroy.  | NC1/412/85/25/1B          |
| PM70-11C         | C. Inquiries Files   | See below.  | NC1/412/85/25/1C          |
| PM70-11C.01      | 1. Congressional   | Break file at end of year<br>Retain in office 2 yrs.,<br>then destroy.  | NC1/412/85/25/1C1         |
| PM70-11C.02      | 2. Controlled  | Break file at end of year<br>Retain in office 2 yrs.,<br>then destroy.  | NC1/412/85/25/1C2         |
| PM70-11C.03      | 3. Uncontrolled  | Break file at end of year<br>Retain in office 1 yr.,<br>then destroy.   | NC1/412/85/25/1C3         |

NOTE: Sample File Records and Disposition Plan shared by Barbara Brown, Region 3 Records Officer.

## Regionwide Plan from page 3

### Region 5 Experience

In Region 5 we conducted a survey and looked at everything! Here are some things we recommend to others who want to do what we did:

▲ All copies should be coded the same way, although internal arrangement can differ.

▲ Use the same alpha numeric for the same document in different contexts, even if filed in different arrangements.

▲ Use a single structure — administrative or programmatic organization is not that straightforward e.g. contracts for program activities.

Our file structure is still in the early testing stages, but we hope that it will be useful across the entire region when it is completed. ★



## Management Briefings Pay Off

*You've heard over and over that conducting briefings for management is an effective means of attracting attention for the records program, educating management about proper records practices and their responsibilities, and even increasing the budget for records. Some records managers in Regional and program offices are now confirming that it really does work!*

### Around the Agency

Rebecca Kemp reported that Region 4 recently conducted a very thorough records management briefing for their new Assistant Regional Administrator, Don Guinyard. Rebecca and her staff outlined what they have accomplished in the records area, where they are going in the future, and what they will need to get there. As a result they have been able to increase their contract staff for the last quarter of FY92 to help with a Regional records inventory. In addition, the ARA has indicated that he will further support the records program by signing a directive and including records in Division level staff meetings.

It is also working in Region 5. Regional Records Officer Lynn Calvin conducted a successful briefing for the Office of Regional Counsel (ORC). She related that it was her "single most successful management briefing ever." The briefing resulted in agreement about the need for additional staffing for records management activities in ORC.

Region 6 Records Officer, Nancy Yarberry, related that a successful briefing with the Deputy Regional Administrator and Division Directors will probably lead to a briefing for the Branch and Section Chiefs. Her briefing included a discussion of records management responsibilities, the current status of the records program, and Regional plans for system integration.

Records staff in the Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response (OSWER) are using briefings to educate program staff about the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) evaluation and the steps the Agency must now take to respond to the evaluation. OSWER records staff are also conducting briefings for program staff on preparing for moves and revising records disposition schedules.

### Tips From Veteran Briefers

Those who have conducted successful briefings around the network have shared the following ideas on the reasons why their briefings worked (or didn't work).

- ◆ Generally a briefing is more likely to be successful if records is the primary agenda item at a regular staff meeting, rather than the topic of a special meeting.
- ◆ When preparing for a briefing the records manager should identify the audience, know something specific about the problems of that group, and relate some horror stories that will resonate for them.
- ◆ A records manager should start by addressing the strengths of the program. That way even if the situation is disastrous, the records manager can tell the staff that they are fortunate that their problem is visible, and there are things that can be done to begin to resolve it. ✻

The Information Management and Services Division (IMSD) has several good general briefings available. If you are interested in finding out more about the briefings, or would like to obtain copies of them, contact Mike Miller at (202) 260-5911.

# Managing Electronic Records

by Michael L. Miller, IMSD



*Two issues have surfaced recently concerning electronic records. While Agency policy has not been developed to specifically address either one, records managers and staff need to be aware that the potential for problems does exist.*

## Electronic Mail

Agency policy clearly states that any form of documentation, regardless of medium, can be an Agency record. While electronic mail is not specifically addressed, one can draw the conclusion that if you use electronic mail to conduct Agency business, you need to be aware the electronic mail messages may be part of the "adequate and proper documentation" of the activity. If so, you need to ensure that the messages are retained for the same length of time as other documentation of the activity.

For example, if you provide technical guidance to contract staff via electronic mail, you need to retain documentation of that for the period of time your other contract records are retained - currently six years and three months. You can do this by creating a hard copy of the messages, or by filing them electronically to an electronic folder that you create for that purpose.

The important point to remember is that the All-in-1 system automatically moves inactive messages from your OUT and READ boxes and deposits them in your "Wastebasket" on a periodic basis. Once in the "Wastebasket" messages are only retrievable for 90 days. After that they are eliminated from the system entirely and cannot be recovered.

## Local Area Networks (LANS)

The same problem exists on many LANS. Inactive documents are deleted from the system on a regular basis, often after they have been inactive for one year. Staff need to be aware of this if they plan to use the LAN as their "filing cabinet" for documents they produce. If

they wish to do so, they need to ensure that the documents are filed in such a way that they can be retained for the period of time specified for that category of record.

To follow through with the contract records example, you may prepare contract-related correspondence on your LAN. Most programs would place a hard copy of the correspondence in the contract management file, but some staff want to keep paper to a minimum and choose to retain only an electronic copy. If that correspondence is necessary to document how the contract was managed (a letter accepting receipt of a deliverable), you need to ensure that the electronic copy is retained for six years and three months.

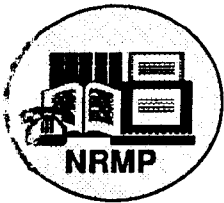
## What are Your Responsibilities?

As a Federal employee you are responsible for creating adequate and proper documentation of your activities and maintaining that documentation for the appropriate period of time. If you want to retain all or a portion of that documentation electronically, then you need to do three things:

- ◆ Ensure that the electronic documents are filed in such a manner that they will be retained for the retention period specified in the records disposition schedule without continuous intervention on your part.
- ◆ Ensure that there is a clear record indicating where the electronic documentation is found and how it can be retrieved.
- ◆ Follow the Agency computer information security guidelines appropriate to the importance of the information being retained in electronic form.
- ◆ Remember that All-in-1 is not a secure system, and it should not be used to convey sensitive or confidential contract information. \*

## Coming in Future Issues of INFOACCESS:

- ◆ **What are Working Papers?**
- ◆ **A Model for Setting Up a Project File.**



# Around the Records Network

## **ECAO TIU, Cincinnati - Slide Database**

Technical Information Unit staff have created a database for categorizing, tracking and searching items in their slide collection. The staff are also creating a slide circulation log, a form to add new slides to the collection, and labels that include the category, subcategory and title of each slide.

## **Region 4 - Off-Site Storage**

Records management staff are making arrangements to obtain convenient off-site storage for Regional and Superfund records. After EPA and contract staff reviewed the site, they involved staff from the Federal Records Center (FRC), asking them to evaluate the space and share their ideas on effective use of the space. EPA staff also invited some vendors to propose shelving variations for the space so they can select a shelving configuration that matches Regional & Agency requirements. Regional staff are confident that this process will serve to improve coordination between the Region and the FRC. If you would like to know more about this project, contact Doug Haire (contractor), at (404) 347-2416.

## **Region 4 - ORC's New Filing System**

After a year and a half of effort from the Total Quality Management's (TQM) Files Format Committee, the Office of Regional Counsel's (ORC) new filing system was officially implemented. During July, Lorrie Burroughs (contractor) and Kurt Schenck (contractor) conducted training sessions for over 60 ORC attorneys and support staff; they are now using the new system effectively. To complement the manual filing system, ORC records staff developed an automated records system using INMAGIC which is used to track circulation of active cases, identify records on the folder level, and assist in generating labels and inventory reports. As a result of the new filing system, the records staff has already been able to transfer over 30 boxes of closed cases to the Federal Records Center. If you would like additional information about the filing system, contact Lorrie Burroughs (contractor) at (404) 347-2436.

## **Region 6 - Superfund Records SWAT Team**

Region 6 has created a Superfund Records SWAT team to determine classifications for the records file structure. Two sites will be selected to pilot the new structure and file indexing. The team is also discussing procedural issues such as the disposition of paper and flow of paper in the Region. For instance they are concerned with the types of documents stored in the file room, what is in commercial storage, and what goes into long term storage and when. The draft file structure and draft procedures will be ready for review this summer.

## **Region 8 - Jackie on Detail**

Jackie Rivera, Region 8 Records Manager, is going on detail, first to the Regional Budget Office, and then to the Water Division, from July through November. You can contact Jackie through the Regional receptionist at (303) 293-1603.

## **Region 8 - Site Assessment Records**

Records management contract staff in Region 8 manage records for site assessment which includes preliminary assessment (PA) and site investigation (SI). The records are stored in a secured area and access to the records is only available with EPA permission. The files are organized by state and site, and are indexed in INMAGIC. There are approximately 380 sites indexed with 5,236 documents for Region 8. [The Montana documents are kept in the Montana office and are managed by EPA personnel.] Once a site is finalized on the National Priorities List (NPL) the PA/SI documents are transferred to the remedial file for the site. There are a number of ways in which a PA/SI can be set into motion, including information from the public, and company reporting of handling hazardous waste. A common misperception is that if a PA/SI is performed there is a pollution problem at the site. That is not always the case. For more information on the PA/SI records management project in Region 8, contact Carole Macy at (303) 294-7038.

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This section of INFOACCESS is used to report on upcoming meetings and projects currently underway in the Regions, Laboratories, and Headquarters. Anyone with contributions for this column should contact Mary Hoffman (contractor), Network Coordinator, at (202) 260-7762.

#### **Region 10 - Records World**

The Hazardous Waste Division Records Center Report was initiated to promote and report on the activities of the newly-opened (May 1) records center. The report, titled *Records World*, is issued monthly over the Word Perfect Office message system to all "subscribers." It hits the electronic streets by the middle of the month with a rundown of activities for the previous month.

The format is designed to be informative; generally, one topic is covered per issue. Regular features include summaries of activities pertaining to NPL and Removal site files and administrative records, CERCLIS and Federal Facilities files and guidance documents. All records managers contribute. One feature, "Records Management Topic of the Month," provides a forum for records managers' concerns. Topics for upcoming issues may include such wide-ranging issues as timely submission of AR materials, repository site visits and dating/titling of documents, and, beginning with the August issue, pertinent user and reference statistics will also be included. The report provides information on records management activities and serves to promote the importance of records management, the records center and its staff.

#### **HQ OSWER Records Management - Publications on Moving**

Lisa Jenkins and Bette Drury (contractor) developed a training packet and transparency set entitled, *Move Planning and Your Records*, for use in training OSWER staff how to organize their records and reduce the volume of records prior to a move. They also developed *Move Planning*, a step-by-step guide for planning a move, and *Move Checklist*, a one-page checklist of action items, to assist staff in planning for a move to a new facility. Contact Bette at (202) 260-6757 for more information. ♣

## **Tip of the Hat**

### **Great teamwork in Denver!**

Congrats to Carole Macy and her crew in Region 8. In February the Site Assessment team was awarded the Region's "Most Effective Team Award" in Superfund.

### **Author, Author!**

Look for Sandy York's (contractor) article, "An Automated Solution to the Superfund Documentation Problem," in the July 1992 issue of *Records Management Quarterly*. Congratulations, Sandy!

### **We're Going to Miss You, Gloris!**

Congratulations on your new job! Gloris Butler, IMSD, has been reassigned from her work with the Records Network to the Public Information Center (PIC) at Headquarters. We wish her all the best!

### **Welcome to new records staff around the network:**

◆ *Kennetta Calloway*, Records Officer, Office of the Inspector General, Headquarters.

◆ *Barbara Felton* (contractor), Records Manager, Pesticides Special Review and Reregistration, Office of Pesticide Programs, Headquarters/Crystal Mall II

◆ *Joe Moeltner* (contractor), Records Manager, Records Support, Information Access Branch, Headquarters.

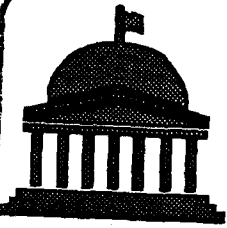
◆ *Jim Pirovano* (contractor), Records Information Specialist, Office of Solid Waste, Headquarters.

◆ *Dawn Roddy*, Records Officer, Office of Air and Radiation, Headquarters.

◆ *Deborah Ross*, Records Officer, Office of Water, Headquarters.

◆ Two librarians, *Ann Johnson* (contractor), at EPA's Central Regional Laboratory in Annapolis, MD, and *Janice Sims*, at EPA's Environmental Research Laboratory in Athens, GA, will be providing records management support for their laboratories.

◆ *Iantha Winick*, Records Officer, Office of Policy, Planning and Evaluation, Headquarters. ♣



## Headquarters Update

### HQ Records Management Council

The Records Management Council met on Thursday, July 23, 1992. The agenda included the following items:

- ▲ An overview of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) evaluation response with details about Information Management and Services Division milestones for the coming months.
- ▲ A report on the cleanup of records in the warehouse; reports are being prepared for distribution to program offices that currently have materials stored in the warehouse.
- ▲ A discussion of review procedures for records disposition schedules.
- ▲ A report on records management policy initiatives; a report was prepared outlining policy changes needed, including a better definition of the role of the program offices and the Records Management Council members.

The meeting concluded with a discussion about the future of the Council. It was agreed that the Council meetings will be held on a monthly basis and will include training sessions for members and other selected invitees. It was suggested that the topics for training could be coordinated with action items listed in the Information Management and Services Division's response to the NARA evaluation. Future Council meetings will be held in a Washington Information Center conference room. The next meeting is scheduled for August 19, 1992, from 9:30 am to 12:00 pm at WIC Conference Room 3-North.

### Bi-monthly Regional Teleconference

Several records managers from Regional, laboratory, and field offices phoned in on July 30th to discuss training needs, records management briefings, OIRM assistance in support of the Agency response to the NARA evaluation, and records disposition schedules revisions. The next teleconference has been tentatively scheduled for September 24, 1992 at 3 pm (Eastern time); phone number (202) 260-4230.

*Continued on page 12*

## A Regional Order for Records Management

The Draft Delegation of Authority - Records Management Policies and Procedures from Region IX, Regional Order R2160, establishes a records management program for the Region. It sets forth policies, procedures and standards for the conduct of the records management program; assigns responsibilities for the administration and implementation of the program; establishes records management work-at-home policies; and outlines the authorities that serve as a basis for the policies identified in the order.

All organizational elements in the Regional office are required to maintain an active, continuing program for the economical and efficient management of the records of the agency, in cooperation with the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) and General Services Administration (GSA). The program is based on the following policies. Regional staff will:

- ✓ Make and preserve records which contain adequate and proper documentation of the organization.
- ✓ Establish safeguards against the unlawful removal or destruction of records.
- ✓ Establish procedures for the participation of records management officials in developing new or revised agency programs.
- ✓ Establish recordkeeping requirements that prescribe a records maintenance program wherein complete records are files.
- ✓ Provide & establish effective recordkeeping controls.
- ✓ Submit to NARA schedules for recurring temporary and permanent records and lists of nonrecurring records that are eligible for destruction or archiving.
- ✓ Obtain NARA's permission prior to transferring unscheduled or contingent records to the FRC.
- ✓ Specify to contractors the delivery to the government of all data needed for adequate and proper documentation of contractor-operated programs.
- ✓ Ensure the use of the appropriate method of destroying temporary records.
- ✓ Institute a vital records program that identifies and provides for the protection of emergency operating records and rights and interests records.
- ✓ Develop and implement a program for the management of all electronic records created, received, maintained, used, or stored on electronic media.
- ✓ Comply with GSA and NARA regulations and standards in using micrographic technology.
- ✓ Establish a program for the management of audiovisual records.

The order also contains an appendix with definitions and clarifications of terms used in the text of the order. \*

# News, News, News

## ■ Changes in NARA Regulations

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) recently published revised regulations - Final Rule: *Federal Register*, May 28, 1992, p. 22431-22434. The new regulations cover a number of items, but most do not directly impact on our day-to-day operations. However, the last of the changes will impact on EPA records management.

The major changes, in order of appearance, affect:

- ◆ *The Privacy Act* - All SF-115s must carry a reference to the Privacy Act System number, if the records are covered by the Privacy Act. That will be officially handled by the Information Management and Services Division (IMSD), but if you are scheduling records you will need to note whether the records are covered by the Privacy Act.
- ◆ *Loans of Agency records* - if you are loaning records to another agency or other entity there are new rules governing that.
- ◆ *Transfers of records*, primarily audiovisual, cartographic and architectural, and electronic records - this will affect anyone transferring these types of records.
- ◆ *Retention of records more than 30 years old*. NARA strengthened its right to require transfer of such records, but EPA has a few years before it has to worry about this one.
- ◆ *Restrictions on transferred records* - this is the most important change from EPA's point of view because it guarantees that if EPA can justify restrictions on access to Agency records, NARA will abide by them for up to 30 years.

The National Records Management Program (NRMP) will be distributing copies of the revised rules in the near future, but you may want to copy them directly from the *Federal Register* yourself to ensure that you get a good copy. -- Michael L. Miller, IMSD

## ■ New Records Administration Training Courses from NARA

The National Archives and Records Administration's (NARA) records management training program is always looking for new ways to better serve the needs of Federal records managers. In response to suggestions, two new training courses have been developed:

*Introduction to Records Management* - a basic 1-day course which provides a quick overview of how to

manage records. Scheduled for September 17, 1992, cost- \$125 per person.

*Promoting Records Management* - a 1-day course which introduces techniques for "selling" a records management program and its values to agency managers and staff. Scheduled for September 28, 1992, cost- \$125 per person.

To register for one of these courses, send a training authorization through appropriate agency officials to Training Registration, Agency Services Division (NIA), National Archives, Washington, DC 20408.

If you have an idea for a records management training course, write or call the Records Administration Information Center, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC 20408; telephone (202) 501-6025. -- from NARA's *RECORDFACTS UPDATE*.

## ■ OERR Records Management Program

On April 20, 1992, Henry L. Longest II, the Director of the Office of Emergency and Remedial Response, signed OERR Directive 9203.1-01, establishing the Office's records management program. The directive establishes "a formal structure for building a consistent, efficient and legally defensible records management program for OERR." The stated objective of the directive is the development of the records management program that will enable OERR to examine records retention needs and legal responsibilities, understand procedures for retention and disposition, and track and archive Office records.

## ■ EPA History Program

In March 1992, the Management and Organization Division of the Office of Administration and Resources Management issued EPA Order 1000.27 to provide for the operation of an official history program in EPA. The principal objective of the program is to preserve the Agency's institutional memory and provide EPA managers and staff with a clear perspective of the past as an aid in dealing with current and future problems.

The Agency historian will maintain a small repository of key EPA historical documents; advise the EPA Records Manager in the preservation of historical records and other documents of historical value; provide a historical reference service; produce chronologies, narrative histories and other historical materials; and maintain liaison with other agencies and the academic community. For more information about EPA's History Program, contact Michael Gorn at (202) 260-5004. ★

## Update from page 10

### Records Management Policy

IMSD has completed its review of the Agency's overall records management policy framework. The final report, "Management Support and Analysis of Records Management Policy, Procedures & Guidance Documents" is available through IMSD, and comments and suggestions are welcomed. To get a copy of the report, please contact Joe Moeltner (contractor), at (202) 260-5272.

### Electronic Signatures Workgroup

The Electronic Signatures Workgroup has been meeting regularly every three months. A final draft of a proposed Agency policy for the use of electronic signatures is undergoing final review by Administrative Services Division and National Data Processing Division representatives. It is expected to go into Green Border Review shortly and may be approved as early as Fall 1992.

### RM Training

The last scheduled records management workshop for FY92 will be held on August 26-27 in the EPA Education Center at Waterside Mall. The National Records Management Staff is currently evaluating the training workshops held in 1992 and planning for the next fiscal year. If you have ideas for improving the sessions, or would like to suggest topics to be covered, contact Harold Webster at (202) 260-5912. ★

## Guest Columnist

*We encourage INFOACCESS readers to share their ideas, concerns and issues of interest to the EPA records community. If you would like to address records staff in this manner, contact Michael Miller at (202) 260-5911 or on dmail Miller.Michael-OIRM. ★*

## An Open Letter to EPA File Clerks . . .

Since I have been employed with the Environmental Protection Agency, I have been frustrated by the lack of communication. As a file clerk, I have been forced to find solutions for everyday and widespread records problems on my own. I have generally found that more could be done in the agency if staff and programs shared information. File clerks, secretaries and program staff do the bulk of the file work, and the concept of records management and Agency goals are the same for all. The Agency should not have to "reinvent the wheel," but rather copy and build on past successes.

I propose that both the Regions and Headquarters begin an Agencywide network specifically for file clerks and records staff. I would like to see both INFOACCESS and e-mail used to discuss everyday file needs. By using e-mail to exchange information, records staff would be able to get hands-on records management information. Records staff problem-solve for the divisions, sometimes encountering questions which have already been answered in other regions. By setting up a network of records clerks on e-mail, the Agency will maximize both time and resources.

Most programmatic work is similar. At Regional Records Workgroup meetings, I have noticed that the records staff has been faced with the same ongoing problems. A network of file clerks and records staff could furnish the necessary support, sometimes providing cross media solutions germane to specific regions.

Records management is comprised of many components. Even though every records clerk has different priorities and work habits, the problems faced by offices are universal. For this reason, I feel that records staff should not only get general records training, but ongoing training and updates on specific topics applied only in certain regions. Topics of this nature could include databases, file plans, file folders, color schemes, and barcoding.

It is equally important that file clerks and records staff keep getting assistance from records managers. Just as everyday problems need to be addressed, so do Agency records issues. I view file clerks as more than clericals. They are also conduits for the sections and divisions.

I would appreciate any assistance you could give me in setting up an agency network for file clerks and records staff. If you have any questions or comments, please contact me either by e-mail (Bernstein.John), or at (312) 886-7678.

*John Bernstein, File Clerk, Water Division, Region 5*

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