



NATIONAL
ARCHIVES

OFFICE *of the*
CHIEF RECORDS
OFFICER

Managing Permanent Records

Multi-Agency Records Management Inspection Report

National Archives and Records Administration
May 11, 2020

MANAGING PERMANENT RECORDS RECORDS MANAGEMENT INSPECTION

INSPECTION REPORT

INTRODUCTION

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) is responsible for assessing the proper management of records in all media within Federal agencies to protect rights, assure government accountability, and preserve and make available records of enduring value.¹ In this capacity, and based on authority granted by 44 United States Code (U.S.C.) 2904(c)(7) and 2906, NARA inspects the records management programs of agencies to ensure compliance with Federal statutes and regulations and to investigate specific issues or concerns. NARA then works with agencies to make improvements to their programs based on inspection findings and recommendations.

NARA inspected the management of permanent records at five agencies. The purpose of this inspection was to examine compliance with Federal records management statutes and regulations relating to permanent records and to assess the effectiveness of their records management policies and procedures. In particular, the inspection focused on the creation, management, and transfer of permanent records with an emphasis on electronic records, including email, and agency policies, procedures, training, and records schedule implementation. It further assessed the ability of these agencies to manage permanent electronic records in an electronic format, plans to digitize or convert analog records, and the transfer of permanent records to the National Archives. In conducting a multi-agency inspection of this type, the inspection sought to identify practices regarding permanent records that may also be common to other Federal agencies.

The five inspected agencies were: Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), Federal Communications Commission (FCC), General Services Administration (GSA), US Agency for Global Media (USAGM), and the US Agency for International Development (USAID). Specific feedback and applicable recommendations for each agency are included in Appendix A.

OVERVIEW OF KEY ASPECTS OF THE RECORDS MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS

There are basic fundamentals of records management regardless of records retention and disposition that include the knowledge of what types of records are being created and maintained, where they are located when needed for decision-making and government accountability, and ensuring their access and availability throughout their lifecycle. If these fundamentals are not in place or are not implemented properly, records are at risk of being lost and/or mishandled making them inaccessible to decision makers and others. This extends further for permanent records, as these have been determined to have value to the Nation beyond that of their original business needs. While in agency custody, permanent records must be identified, scheduled, preserved, and protected until they are eligible for transfer to the National Archives in accordance with NARA-approved retention schedules. Putting records management into practice

¹ 44 U.S.C. Chapter 29, <https://www.archives.gov/about/laws/records-management.html>.

involves intellectual control (i.e., knowing the content of the records, how and why they are created, and ownership) as well as physical control (i.e., safeguarding access and preservation). Achieving both intellectual and physical control requires governance in the form of policies, procedures, inventories, retention schedules, and internal controls.

Over the course of this multi-agency inspection, we found that several, and in some cases all, of the agencies:

- Lack strategic planning for records management programs as a whole, but particularly for the care and handling of permanent records;
- Are having challenges with electronic records management and the transition away from paper records;
- Lack well-structured and fully supported records management (RM) networks;
- Have outdated records management policies, procedures and retention schedules;
- Lack detailed inventories of permanent (and temporary) records and other governance necessary for intellectual control;
- Are not routinely transferring permanent records to the National Archives; and
- Are not consistently evaluating how well the RM programs were being implemented.

We also found various initiatives in progress due to agency relocation and consolidation, or downsizing at three of the five agencies. USAID, FCC, and GSA all mentioned having initiatives to clean up office space and records storage areas in preparation for office moves. This included conducting strategic records inventories, disposing of eligible temporary records, and transferring permanent analog records to the National Archives. While these activities are taking place in response to these particular internal drivers, the onus is on these agencies to continue implementing these same basic RM functions throughout the agencies as part of routine operations, especially in regards to permanent records.

TRANSITION TO ELECTRONIC RECORDS (M-19-21)

Since 2012, NARA and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) have provided goals for Federal agencies to modernize recordkeeping practices and transition to a digital government with the OMB/NARA *Managing Government Records Directive* (M-12-18), which was superseded on June 28, 2019, by OMB/NARA *Transition to Electronic Records* (M-19-21).²

The agencies inspected indicated that the OMB/NARA Directives have provided them with the necessary support to move towards fully electronic recordkeeping (for both permanent and temporary records). One agency, GSA, stood out from the others by actively piloting an electronic records management system for managing both permanent and temporary records. The other four agencies were in the early stages of determining strategically how best to achieve that goal. The agencies were also conducting a limited number of scanning projects for permanent records, making progress on the goals of M-19-21.

² OMB/NARA *Transition to Electronic Records* (M-19-21), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/M-19-21.pdf>.

Even with the current momentum taking place in these agencies, more progress needs to be made. This report makes 7 findings and 11 recommendations that will assist the agencies in mitigating the risk to records bringing their RM programs into compliance as they relate to permanent records. This report also provides guidelines for other Federal agencies in the proper management of permanent records.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

NARA noted several findings that appeared in all or most of the agencies that are vital to maintaining and improving an agency records management program and, more specifically, managing permanent records.

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS

Finding 1: The agencies lack a formal, approved, comprehensive strategic plan that clearly defines the goals of their RM programs, including the management of permanent records.

The majority of the agencies inspected lack a documented, comprehensive RM strategic plan that explains what the agency RM program needs to accomplish, what the major goals are, or a path forward for meeting those goals. Where there was evidence of strategic planning, it was largely focused on one particular initiative such as moving physical locations or adopting an electronic document management system.

36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1222.26(e) requires Federal agencies to develop policies, procedures, and strategies for ensuring that records are retained long enough to meet programmatic, administrative, fiscal, legal, and historical needs as authorized in a NARA-approved disposition schedule. While there is no NARA regulation specifically requiring that records management programs have strategic plans, OMB Circular A-130³ includes specific requirements related to strategic elements of RM programs that are to be included in the agency's Information Resources Management (IRM) Plan. As such, the Senior Agency Official for Records Management (SAORM) is responsible for setting the vision and strategic direction for the RM program, including incorporating the RM program goals into that plan (NARA Bulletin 2017-02).⁴

In practice, strategic planning is vital to establishing a coordinated technical framework, sponsorship, communication, and milestones for a compliant RM program. Additionally, with the M-19-21 requirement that, by 2022, Federal agencies must manage all permanent records in an electronic format and with appropriate metadata, having a strategic framework or plan in place to clearly define the direction the RM program will take, along with agency goals and milestones to get there, is as important as ever.

³ OMB Circular A-130, *Managing Information as a Strategic Resource*, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/whitehouse.gov/files/omb/circulars/A130/a130revised.pdf>.

⁴ NARA Bulletin 2017-02: *Guidance on Senior Agency Officials for Records Management*, <https://www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/bulletins/2017/2017-02-html>.

A comprehensive strategic plan is essential to properly identify, maintain, and transfer eligible permanent records to the National Archives in a consistent and coordinated way.

Recommendation 1: Agencies must develop and approve a formal, comprehensive RM strategic plan that includes the proper management of permanent records. (36 CFR 1222.26(e), OMB Circular A-130, and NARA Bulletin 2017-02)

ELECTRONIC RECORDS MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS

Finding 2: Agencies must comply with 1.1 of the OMB/NARA Memorandum *Transition to Electronic Records* (M-19-21), which calls for the management of all permanent electronic records in an electronic format by December 31, 2019.

Despite the agencies' positive responses on the SAORM Annual Reports, many agency mission programs have not met the 2019 goal of M-19-21, target 1.1, which requires Federal agencies to manage all permanent electronic records in an electronic format by December 31, 2019. Some parts of the agencies have started using document management functionality, but this is not a widespread practice throughout those agencies. There is also not a formal implementation plan for shared use and adoption of the systems. Some agencies have successfully implemented a document management system or Microsoft SharePoint to target high value business/operational needs for some of their unstructured data that will provide value to the agency mission and protect permanent records. While there is evidence of document management and records management in some of the programs, these initiatives and activities have not been scaled enterprise-wide or embedded into the information management culture of those agencies. On a basic level, agencies are still inventorying their permanent records to determine what types of records they have and, while extremely important in determining which electronic records management approach will best meet the RM needs of the agencies, most are not far enough along in this process to meet target 1.1 by December 31, 2019. Of the five agencies inspected, only GSA is piloting an electronic document management system with records management functionality for managing permanent records.

Recommendation 2: Agencies must develop and implement an enterprise-wide plan that will guide their agency in meeting target 1.1 of M-19-21.

Finding 3: Agency RM programs lack well-structured and fully supported RM networks.

36 CFR 1220.34 requires agencies to assign RM responsibilities in each program (mission) area to ensure that recordkeeping requirements and records maintenance, storage, and disposition practices are incorporated into agency programs, processes, systems, and procedures. Having a robust and fully supported RM network in place is important for identifying the permanent records being created and maintained in mission areas. This further supports the intellectual control of agency records, and ensures permanent records are appropriately managed and preserved until they are eligible for transfer to the National Archives.

All of the agencies, except for USAGM⁵, indicated the lack of a well-structured and/or fully supported RM network throughout their agencies. The role of records liaisons and custodians (or similarly titled positions) is required in agency policies and procedures; however, the positions are often left vacant or are not adequately resourced to effectively implement records management requirements. In addition, nearly all RM network staff have little to no time to spend on RM responsibilities, and some lack adequate RM training respective to their role.

A fully supported RM network is essential to the strength and success of RM implementation. The RM staff need the skills, time, resources, and authority to effectively manage their area of RM responsibility. In coordination with the Agency Records Officer (ARO), the RM network would improve the overall effectiveness and implementation of agency RM policies and procedures.

Recommendation 3: Agencies must assign RM responsibilities in each program (mission) area to staff with the skills, time, resources, and authority to effectively ensure incorporation of recordkeeping requirements and practices into agency programs, processes, systems, and procedures. (36 CFR 1220.34)

Finding 4: Agency policies, procedures, and records control schedules are out of date or in draft form.

A successful records management program has an established governance framework and communicated policies in place. Agency-wide directives and policies must inform all personnel who create, receive, access, or use Federal records of their records management responsibilities (36 CFR 1220.34(c)). Policies should be developed with all relevant stakeholders and must address the requirements of the Federal Records Act⁶, 36 CFR Chapter XII Subchapter B⁷, and other relevant guidance issued by NARA and OMB, such as OMB Circular A-130.

Having current, approved RM directives, policies, and procedures is essential to the success of any RM program and for providing guidance on the management of permanent records. Many of the RM directives, policies, and/or procedures submitted to NARA, while containing requirements for the management of permanent records, were outdated or in draft form. This is a very common finding among Federal agencies. The agencies in this inspection, for the most part, are aware of the need to update their directives, policies, and manuals, and some have already started the process. For example, FCC recently updated their RM and email directives and have an RM manual in draft form. GSA is in the process of updating their RM directive dated 2014 to include recent laws and regulations and new agency email policy. USAGM has draft versions of an RM policy and handbook that will update and consolidate previous policies and handbooks. In addition, USAGM has an approved email policy aligning with NARA's Capstone approach to email⁸. USAID's RM policy had undergone revisions in 2017 and again after our site visits.

⁵ USAGM indicated they have in each office a Records Liaison (RL) whose RM duties are either full-time or collateral.

⁶ 44 U.S.C. Chapter 31, Federal Records Act, <https://www.archives.gov/about/laws/fed-agencies.html>.

⁷ 36 CFR Chapter XII, Subchapter B, Records Management, <https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title36/36CXIIsubchapB.tpl>.

⁸ See NARA Bulletin 2013-02 at <https://www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/bulletins/2013/2013-02.html> for more information regarding the Capstone approach to managing email.

Subsequently, USAID policies were approved. DIA is working under a 2011 RM directive but has as an interim goal to issue policies and directives that align to a fully electronic government that supports the agency's mission.

In addition, most of the agency records schedules are in need of updates. FCC, USAGM, and USAID are all actively working with their NARA-assigned appraisal archivist to review and update their schedules for permanent and temporary records. GSA recently had their updated schedules approved by NARA. DIA, however, still has records schedules dating from the 1970s and 1980s and has yet to obtain approval of their Capstone schedule.

Recommendation 4.1: Agencies must create and/or update comprehensive RM policies and procedures covering the management of all records, including permanent records. (36 CFR 1220.34(c))

Recommendation 4.2: Agencies must review and update their respective records schedules to ensure schedules accurately reflect agency mission and procedures. (36 CFR 1220.34(g) and 36 CFR 1225.22)

Recommendation 4.3: Agencies must establish a routine process to review schedules for obsolete information and identify new or unscheduled records that need to be added. (36 CFR 1220.34(g) and 36 CFR 1225.22)

Finding 5: The agency RM programs do not have intellectual control of agency records including permanent records.

The agency RM programs are not fully aware of the types of permanent records that are being created and where they are maintained. Records management controls such as basic records inventories and file plans, if in place, were often created on an ad hoc and limited basis (e.g., for an office move), are outdated, or not being actively implemented. Potentially permanent records are being stored in multiple locations including shared network drives, Google drives, SharePoint, agency recordkeeping systems, on classified networks, and paper. Also, some agencies lack inventories of electronic information systems or they are missing critical information such as whether the systems maintained records. 36 CFR 1236.26 and NARA Bulletin 2010-02⁹ require agencies to maintain inventories of electronic information systems and to use them in the identification and scheduling of those systems.

Inventories and file plans are essential tools for compliantly maintaining agency records in *all* formats, and are especially important as agencies transition to fully electronic recordkeeping. Creating these tools would help the agencies gain intellectual and physical control of their records and would aid in developing and implementing records schedules. These would also aid agencies as they continue discussions on meeting the targets of M-19-21. At the time of NARA's site visits, FCC, GSA, and USAID were in the process of updating limited-scope records inventories and file plans. In support of this effort, USAID developed a system utilizing ServiceNow. The USAID automated tool increases accuracy, compliance, and productivity by digitally collecting RM information (e.g., record types, disposition, storage location, etc.) and

⁹ NARA Bulletin 2010-02: *Continuing Agency Responsibilities for Scheduling Electronic Records*, <https://www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/bulletins/2010/2010-02.html>.

continually updates the inventory of agency electronic information systems to include disposition information. Similarly, GSA was updating their electronic systems inventory to include disposition information. DIA and USAGM were operating on outdated and incomplete inventories and file plans.

Recommendation 5.1: Agencies must complete records inventories and file plans for all records in all formats in agency offices and business units. (36 CFR 1220.34(i) and 36 CFR 1225.12(b))

Recommendation 5.2: Agencies must create and/or update an inventory of all agency electronic information systems to include disposition information to ensure all systems are scheduled. (36 CFR 1236.26 and NARA Bulletin 2010-02)

RECORDS SCHEDULING AND DISPOSITION REQUIREMENTS

Finding 6: The agencies have permanent records overdue for transfer to the National Archives.

Records schedules approved by the Archivist of the United States provide agencies with the legal authority to properly dispose of temporary records and to transfer permanent records to the National Archives. All records scheduled as permanent must be transferred to the National Archives after the period specified in the approved schedule. Based on internal NARA data, all five agencies have permanent non-electronic records overdue for accession to the National Archives. DIA, GSA, and USAID also have permanent electronic records overdue for accession. These agencies are aware of schedule implementation issues and noted the challenges with transferring records through NARA's Electronic Records Archives (ERA). Agencies should obtain guidance from their NARA-assigned accessioning and appraisal archivists on the transfer of permanent records. Delaying the transfer of permanent records no longer needed for agency purposes increases the risk of loss, damage and/or deterioration of historically valuable records.

Recommendation 6.1: Agencies must identify and transfer permanent records overdue for transfer to the National Archives. (36 CFR 1226.22 and 36 CFR 1235.12)

Recommendation 6.2: Agencies must establish internal controls to ensure all permanent records are transferred on a consistent basis in accordance with NARA-approved records schedules. (36 CFR 1220.30(c)(1))

EVALUATION REQUIREMENTS

Finding 7: The agencies have not conducted routine, comprehensive RM evaluations of the identification, care, and maintenance of permanent records.

Federal regulations require agencies to conduct formal evaluations to assess the effectiveness of their records management program and practices (36 CFR 1220.34(j)). Records management evaluations conducted routinely allow the ARO to identify areas of noncompliance or risk in the management of permanent records. Evaluations provide data on whether staff are appropriately managing permanent records, and can provide an additional opportunity for training to ensure that these historically significant records are preserved until eligible for transfer to the National Archives. Documenting evaluations in the form of a report with corrective actions for follow-up

and review is important to ensuring that risks found to permanent records have been minimized.

At the five agencies inspected, general monitoring of records management program compliance is being done primarily on an ad hoc basis and as part of agency/office clean-up and moving operations. USAID and FCC RM staff both indicated they were conducting assessments, which included identifying permanent records, as part of preparations for moving. USAID also conducted assessments at their headquarters and at a few mission offices resulting in findings to be implemented in 2020. The USAGM ARO evaluated agency RM activities as part of a records clean-up and general RM awareness campaign. As part of this effort, the ARO identified and prepared permanent records for transfer to the National Archives. DIA RM staff had attempted to conduct an evaluation four years ago but discontinued their efforts due to a lack of management support for effectively completing the activity. The only agency that was conducting assessments in a more systematic fashion was GSA, whose RM staff had evaluated and provided RM assistance to 10 out of 11 regional locations with plans to complete the 11th by the end of the year. These evaluations included written reports with documented findings as well as clean-up operations to improve the management of permanent (and temporary) records. This one-time initiative was done to provide immediate support to improve regional RM processes, reduce the volume of paper records, and establish a baseline for future inspections

Recommendation 7: Agencies must conduct formal, routine and comprehensive RM evaluations to ensure permanent records are being managed in compliance with Federal regulations and remediate program activities found in need of improvement. (36 CFR 1220.34(j))

NOTEWORTHY PRACTICES

SAORM Support

The agency-designated SAORMs are working with agency records management and Information Technology (IT) staff to improve records management programs and identify necessary budgetary resources. For the most part, the SAORMs are working towards increasing awareness, strategic direction, and support from organizational horizontal senior agency leadership at multiple levels. SAORMs are also facilitating partnerships and cooperation with various functional offices within the agencies.

RM Involvement in New Systems

All five agencies mentioned having some level of RM involvement in the development of current and/or new systems. Some agency RM staff sit on investment review boards, while others provide information only regarding RM requirements. One agency, DIA, was developing a business case to reorganize the RM program tactically within their Information Management Office (IMO), possibly at the Office of the Chief of Staff level, to increase their visibility and impact. Having RM at the table for new systems development will be vital to these (and all) agencies as they move towards fully electronic recordkeeping and meeting the requirements of M-19-21, especially in terms of permanent records.

EDMS/RMA Implementation

While all five agencies are in varying stages of discussion and research to determine which electronic records management solutions are most appropriate for their needs, GSA is actively piloting an Electronic Document Management System (EDMS)/Records Management Application (RMA) that will be the enterprise solution for managing agency records once it is officially rolled out. The intent is that users will still be able to use many of their current systems which will connect to the EDMS on the back end, thus ensuring a more familiar and user-friendly process. Migration from decommissioned systems, shared network drives, and Google drives has already begun along with the classification and tagging of records to include metadata. The system pilot is still in its early stages and is showing promise as an effective way to manage agency temporary and permanent records.

Data and Records Clean-up

FCC, GSA, USAGM, and USAID are all actively cleaning up data and records largely in preparation for moving locations and, in relation to GSA, piloting an EDMS. These operations include physically cleaning up agency space and electronic records storage, inventorying records, boxing up inactive temporary records and preparing permanent records for transfer to the National Archives. RM staff at these agencies are using these opportunities to also provide additional hands-on guidance and instruction. USAGM and USAID have taken this concept one step further by conducting an enterprise RM Awareness Campaigns. USAID additionally conducted RM boot camps and briefings. For electronic records, GSA is proactively tagging records with standardized metadata, including whether the records are scheduled as permanent, and using naming conventions to aid in the roll-out and implementation of the enterprise-wide system. All of these steps improve the intellectual control of records and their management throughout the records lifecycle.

Legal Holds Process

At FCC, GSA, USAGM and USAID the Office of General Counsel (OGC) is notifying the ARO and appropriate staff of any legal holds on the disposition of agency records and is communicating the requirement to maintain the affected records as permanent until the hold is lifted. In addition, FCC maintains an intranet site that lists all of the current legal holds in place at the agency making it easy for the ARO and RM staff to check before implementing records disposition. At GSA, the OGC also notifies IT staff to ensure holds are placed on the back end on applicable electronic records. After the holds have been lifted, OGC notifies the AROs and agency staff that disposition of eligible records can resume. These practices are important internal controls for the prevention of the unauthorized destruction of records (see 36 CFR 1230).

CONCLUSION

The management of permanent records is most effective when conducted as part of a comprehensive records management program. While the focus of the inspection was on permanent records, how these records are being managed is representative of how all records are most likely being managed. Because of the long-term preservation needs, the management of permanent records is one of the biggest challenges agencies are facing, along with establishing and maintaining effective RM programs with limited staff and resources.

The five agencies inspected have many RM challenges and barriers given their various missions and the complexity of their internal processes and culture. Practices for managing permanent records in all five agencies have been manually intensive and have lacked adequate focus and resources. There are most likely similar RM challenges and barriers in most Federal agencies.

The recommendations in this report are intended to facilitate improvements that should minimize the risks to Federal permanent records to ensure they are readily accessible to support mission essential functions and the American people through their eventual transfer to the National Archives.

APPENDIX A

OVERVIEW AND RESULTS FOR EACH INSPECTED AGENCY

NARA is providing feedback as a tool for agencies to focus on how the consolidated findings and recommendations documented in the report relate to each respective organization. NARA also has provided specific tactical areas of improvement for each agency. Agencies should view these as a starting point and not all-inclusive for improving respective RM components and processes.

DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

Applicable Findings: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

Program Summary: The DIA Records Management and Information Services organization is embedded in the Office of Facilities and Services. The RM program is comprised of three divisions: Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)/Privacy Act Processing (21 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)), Declassification/Litigation Processing (9 FTE), and Records Management/Investigation Intelligence Record (IIR) Records Center (9 FTE). The DIA program is continuing to modernize its program through a wide variety of initiatives and plans. These initiatives include preparing for the repositioning of the RM organization more strategically within the IMO (if approved), rescheduling IIRs, declassification and conversion of analog records to digital format, and conducting initial strategic planning for system migration to Microsoft Office 365. NARA Bulletin 2017-02 states that the SAORM must directly and regularly work with the ARO (and other appropriate officials) to oversee the successful implementation of the agency's records management program. The SAORM is very engaged in all aspects of the RM program at DIA.

Specific Challenges/Barriers for Permanent Records: The RM program staff have been unable to conduct up-to-date records inventories and effective reviews of RM practices due to the DIA internal records management culture. There is an overall lack of support for a compliant RM program within the DIA lines of business. DIA, being part of the intelligence community, represents likely similar challenges and barriers for compliance with Federal RM requirements in those communities and specifically for transferring permanent records to the National Archives.

Legacy Analog Records

DIA has 24,000 cubic feet of permanent IIRs stored onsite at the DIA logistics facility. Currently DIA is conducting declassification review of these records and is also beginning an analysis to reschedule these records as temporary records.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

Applicable Findings: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

Program Summary: The FCC ARO has been in place more than 3 years at the time of the inspection. In March 2016, the RM staff consisted of the ARO, four specialists and one administrative personnel. Each of the specialists has the primary responsibility of working with our network of 42 records liaison officers representing the Commission's 17 bureaus and offices. The RM program has a network of four Records Liaison Officers (RLO) assigned in functional offices and their components. RLO responsibilities are all "other duties as assigned." Each of the RLOs are responsible for three bureaus, and the ARO is responsible for two (for a total of 14 bureaus). The FCC RM program's focus has recently been driven by the agency move in May/June 2020 and compliance with M-19-21. They are updating their RM manual, records inventories, file plans and records schedules. FCC is also rolling out a project planning methodology for improving the RM program that includes partnering with the IT project management office to manage and holistically plan FCC RM process improvements. FCC has entered into a collaborative effort with the Department of Energy to pilot Microsoft Office 365. The RM program has recently been invited to all new systems development projects including providing RM system requirements. Their Capstone schedule was approved by NARA on June 6, 2019.

Specific Challenges/Barriers for Permanent Records: A current limitation for FCC is the transfer of Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) records to NARA since ERA does not support transferring General Records Schedule (GRS) items. FCC has over 50 permanent authorities that have not resulted in transfers to NARA. Many are likely obsolete. There are numerous RM activities that are being discussed, piloted, and implemented. Currently, the pending move is the central focus including the RM logistics to support that initiative. While the site visit with FCC was positive and transparent, there is some basic RM strategic planning required with a project management methodology approach to align the required RM compliance issues with the operational needs of FCC. This includes updating and implementing foundational RM policies. FCC bureaus also lacked adequate oversight and controls. Some bureaus were given latitude to implement RM processes. Shared drives are comprised of temporary and permanent records without standards or controls in place. Most records at FCC are currently in paper and are still being produced in paper format. RM staff were unable to clarify if existing electronic systems are scheduled. The Legislative Affairs Office appears to be the only FCC office that actively transfers permanent records to NARA. This office has implemented SharePoint effectively to manage its program records.

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

Applicable Findings: 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

Program Summary: GSA's RM program is located in the Office of Administrative Services. Their practice is to have an RM network throughout the regions (mainly Senior Records Officers) and Records Coordinators for GSA business areas, though this is not always implemented. RM staff are mainly "other duties as assigned." The SAORM is actively engaged and providing support for GSA's RM program. They have active initiatives aimed at utilizing RM as a core component of improving GSA's mission and operations, moving and consolidating offices and facilities, and moving towards compliance with M-19-21. GSA has been designing and implementing an EDMS and conducting a digitization project with the Greater Southwest Region 7 in Fort Worth, Texas, the main pilot and management office for this effort. The Alfresco system will be their enterprise system for electronic records. The project started six years ago, which includes two years of planning. Currently, they are building records schedules in the EDMS and have migrated some 10 million records (mainly from old systems that were decommissioned). An additional major migration project is being planned for the legacy GREX Leasing Records System into an Alfresco environment. The Fort Worth regional office is the sandbox for rolling out this system. After digitization, the historical records will be transferred to NARA through hard drives. The RM program has conducted an extensive evaluation of 10 of the 11 regional and headquarters locations to support the consolidation of offices and facilities. Finally, GSA is working on updating electronic systems inventories and is currently updating RM policy to include guidance for managing all permanent records in electronic format.

Specific Challenges/Barriers for Permanent Records: GSA has around 5000 cubic feet of unscheduled records in NARA's Federal Records Center (FRC). Around half of these unscheduled records are likely tied to various legal cases of Indian Trust litigation dating back to the 1800s. These Indian Trust records were part of the GSA Indian Trust Office that has now been disbanded. These likely permanent records were boxed and sent to the FRC without regard to good RM procedures and standards. Based upon discussion with GSA RM staff there is a current lack of resources to schedule these records. The EDMS project and office consolidations are now higher priorities in the agency. GSA has concerns about ERA's capability to handle the volume of records they need to transfer and requires additional guidance on how to use Dublin Core standards.

US AGENCY FOR GLOBAL MEDIA

Applicable Findings: 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7

Program Summary: USAGM's RM program is located in the Office of Management Services. The ARO, who has been in the position for three years, is very hands-on providing support and RM services to the RM network and staff. The RM network consists of the ARO plus Records Liaisons in each office whose duties are either full-time or collateral. USAGM has been actively cleaning up records areas, creating inventories, and boxing up records for transfer alongside their RM Awareness Campaign. In addition, they are updating policies and procedures, adding new information and consolidating many policy/procedural manuals into one policy directive and one handbook making it easier for staff to locate information on the management of permanent records. USAGM is also looking into records management applications that will enable the agency to more effectively meet the goals of M-19-21, one of which entails utilizing the records management functionality within their current Microsoft Office 365 application.

Specific Challenges/Barriers for Permanent Records: There is an overall lack of governance and lifecycle management of permanent records. While they are working on inventorying records and updating records schedules, implementation of current schedules is lacking. The predecessor Record Group (RG) 306 for the US Information Agency was originally part of USAGM. This RG contains potentially permanent records stored at NARA's FRCs of which USAGM has no access. Collaboration is needed between NARA and the Media Asset Management Branch Chief of Voice of America division to transfer electronic digital media. This division has a tremendous amount of digital permanent records and needs targeted assistance to support transferring these permanent records to NARA. A limited amount of permanent records are being transferred to the National Archives per their NARA-approved records schedule. Limited resources and staffing were mentioned as additional barriers for the transfer of permanent records, as well as issues with using NARA's ERA.

US AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Applicable Findings: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

Program Summary: The RM program is located in the Bureau for Management, Office of Management Services, Information and Records Division. The ARO is new to the position, having started in April 2019. Each bureau/mission/independent office has an RLO, and each office has a files custodian; however, there is significant turnover leaving many positions vacant. RLOs perform RM responsibilities as a collateral duty. Several USAID bureaus and offices are moving in January 2020 to another office space, and are currently conducting office cleanup, inventorying, and some digitization to get ready for the move. The agency uses three main electronic records repositories in addition to network shared drives and Google drives for creating and maintaining agency records. They are early in the process of gathering requirements for an EDMS to combine all records repositories. They are also working to update records schedules to a big bucket schedule. Aside from those areas, their Capstone schedule was approved by NARA on March 7th, 2019

Specific Challenges/Barriers for Permanent Records: USAID is actively addressing issues regarding governance and lifecycle management of permanent records with RM training, briefings and boot camps. USAID is working on inventorying records and updating records schedules to simplify and automate RM processes in order to improve compliant implementation of current schedules. Notwithstanding, permanent records are not being transferred to the National Archives per their NARA-approved records schedule. Limited resources and staffing were mentioned as additional barriers for the transfer of permanent records.

APPENDIX B INSPECTION PROCESS

OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE

The objective of this inspection was to determine how well the five agencies that were included in this multi-agency inspection comply with Federal records management statutes and regulations relating to permanent records and to assess the effectiveness of their records management policies and procedures.

METHODOLOGY

NARA carried out this inspection by visiting select agency headquarters and field locations, and interviewing RM staff and program staff on the management of permanent records. In addition, the inspection team:

- Reviewed records management policies, directives, and other documentation provided by the agencies
- Used a detailed checklist of questions based on Federal statutes and regulations, and NARA guidance
- Reviewed responses to current and past annual Records Management Self-Assessments (RMSA), Senior Agency Official for Records Management (SAORM) annual reports, and Federal Email Management reports.

LOCATIONS AND OFFICES VISITED

Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), DIA Logistics Operations Center

Federal Communications Commission (FCC), Headquarters, Washington, DC

General Services Administration (GSA), Headquarters, Washington, DC

General Services Administration (GSA), Greater Southwest Region 7 Headquarters, Ft. Worth, TX

US Agency for Global Media (USAGM), Headquarters, Washington, DC

US Agency for International Development (USAID), Headquarters, Washington, DC

APPENDIX C

RELEVANT INSPECTION DOCUMENTATION

The inspection team received and reviewed copies of the following documentation provided by each of the agencies, if applicable:

- Organizational charts
 - RM program strategic plans, goals and objectives
 - RM policies, directives, manuals, standards and other RM-related issuances relating to the management of permanent records
 - Internal controls or guidance used to manage permanent records
 - Data/records management templates or other instruments used for managing the data/records lifecycle
 - Agency permanent records schedules
 - Documentation of RM training related to permanent records
 - Inventory of scheduled and unscheduled electronic systems that contain permanent records
 - Migration and metadata standards and practices in use for permanent records
 - Inspection, audit, or evaluation reports of RM permanent records practices and any follow-up actions
 - Notices of permanent records freezes or holds
 - Departing staff exit clearance procedures and/or checklist, particularly around safeguarding against unauthorized removal of records, the identification of permanent records eligible for transfer to the National Archives, including senior executive staff, political appointees, and other senior agency officials.
 - Records management language in contractual agreements
-

APPENDIX D AUTHORITIES AND FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS

AUTHORITIES

- 44 U.S.C. Chapter 29
- 36 CFR Chapter XII, Subchapter B
- 36 CFR 1239, Program Assistance and Inspections

OTHER GUIDANCE

- OMB/NARA *Transition to Electronic Records* (M-19-21)
- Other NARA Bulletins currently in effect - <https://www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/bulletins>

STATUTES AND REGULATIONS

36 CFR Chapter XII, Subchapter B, specifies policies for Federal agencies' records management programs relating to proper records creation and maintenance, adequate documentation, and records disposition. The regulations in this Subchapter implement the provisions of 44 U.S.C. Chapters 21, 29, 31, and 33. NARA provides additional policy and guidance to agencies at its records management website - <http://www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/>.

At a high level, agency heads are responsible for ensuring several things, including:

- The adequate and proper documentation of agency activities (44 U.S.C. 3101);
- A program of management to ensure effective controls over the creation, maintenance, and use of records in the conduct of their current business (44 U.S.C. 3102(1)); and
- Compliance with NARA guidance and regulations, and compliance with other sections of the Federal Records Act that give NARA authority to promulgate guidance, regulations, and records disposition authority to Federal agencies (44 U.S.C. 3102(2) and (3)).

FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS

Each agency will be required to submit to NARA a Plan of Corrective Action (PoCA), specific to their respective findings and recommendations listed above, that specifies how the agency will address each inspection report recommendation, including a timeline for completion and proposed progress reporting dates. Plans must be submitted within 60 days after the date of transmittal of the final report to the head of each agency.

NARA will analyze the adequacy of the action plans, provide comments to each agency on their plans within 60 calendar days of receipt, and assist each agency in implementing recommendations.

The AROs will be required to submit to NARA progress reports on the implementation of their respective action plans until all actions are completed. NARA will inform each agency when progress reports are no longer needed.

APPENDIX E
ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ARO	Agency Records Officer
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
DIA	Defense Intelligence Agency
EDMS	Electronic Document Management System
ERA	Electronic Records Archives
FACA	Federal Advisory Committee Act
FCC	Federal Communications Commission
FOIA	Freedom of Information Act
FRC	Federal Records Center
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent
GRS	General Records Schedules
GSA	General Services Administration
IIR	Investigation Intelligence Record
IMO	Information Management Office
IRM	Information Resources Management
IT	Information Technology
NARA	National Archives and Records Administration
OGC	Office of General Counsel
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
PoCA	Plan of Corrective Action
RG	Record Group
RLO	Records Liaison Officer
RM	Records Management
RMA	Records Management Application
RMSA	Records Management Self-Assessment
SAORM	Senior Agency Official for Records Management
USAGM	US Agency for Global Media
USAID	US Agency for International Development
U.S.C.	United States Code



NATIONAL
ARCHIVES

OFFICE *of the*
CHIEF RECORDS
OFFICER