



Office of the Chief
Records Officer for the
U.S. Government

Sent Via Email. No Hard Copy to Follow.

October 31, 2023

Dawn Watts
Agency Records Officer
Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
Office of Information & Technology
7451A Boston Boulevard
Springfield, VA

Dear Dawn Watts,

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) has received information alleging that the Customs and Border Protection (CBP), Office of Trade has been digitizing and destroying source records for Trade Allegation Records that are pending NARA approval under proposed records schedule DAA-0568-2019-0004. As there is no approved disposition authority for the disposition of these potentially permanent records, this may constitute an unauthorized disposition of records, particularly since the CBP does not believe that this project was conducted in accordance with the applicable NARA regulations. In accordance with 36 CFR 1230.14(a) NARA is requesting a report within 30 calendar days from the date of this letter inducing the following information:

- A complete description of the records with volume and dates if known;
- The office maintaining the records;
- A statement of the exact circumstances surrounding the removal, defacing, alteration, or destruction of records;
- A statement of the safeguards established to prevent further loss of documentation; and
- When appropriate, details of the actions taken to salvage, retrieve, or reconstruct the records.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. If you have any questions or wish to discuss further, please contact me at laurence.brewer@nara.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Laurence V. Brewer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'L' and 'B'.

LAURENCE BREWER

Chief Records Officer

for the U.S. Government

cc. Michelle Thomas, Department Records Officer, Department of Homeland Security



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January 8, 2024

Dawn Watts
Agency Records Officer
Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
Office of Information & Technology
7451A Boston Boulevard
Springfield, VA

Dear Dawn Watts,

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) has received the report from the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) in response to information received from the appraisal archivist that the Office of Trade has been digitizing and destroying source Trade Allegation Records that are pending NARA approval under proposed records schedule DAA-0568-2019-0004.

According to your report, the records in question were born electronic and all paper hard copy files are duplicates. We understand CBP RIM reached this conclusion based on an interview and witnessing a demo of the tool used to house the electronic source documents. The documents that they digitized and destroyed between July and August of 2023 were determined to be duplicate paper copies with no alteration or annotations and were found saved in an electronic case management system or in electronic shared folders.

Based on the information in your report, we consider this matter resolved. Thank you for your attention to this important matter. If you have any questions or wish to discuss further, please contact me at laurence.brewer@nara.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Laurence V. Brewer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'L' and a distinct 'V'.

LAURENCE BREWER
Chief Records Officer
for the U.S. Government

cc. Michelle Thomas, Department Records Officer, Department of Homeland Security