

August 14, 2003

MEMORANDUM TO: DISTRIBUTION

FROM: ASSOCIATE CIO FOR BUSINESS AND
 INFORMATION MANAGEMENT (IM-10)

SUBJECT: CHANGES IN RECORDS PROGRAM

This memorandum is to make you aware of proposed changes in the Records Management Program. The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) has developed a new approach to ensure government accountability in the handling of temporary records; i.e. records approved for disposal after a specified retention period has been met. Agency officials will be required to provide assurances that the rights and interests of citizens are protected and that records are managed efficiently and destroyed according to approved disposition instructions when their usefulness has expired.

A designated senior official within each Program Office will be required to sign all SF-115 forms, "Request for Disposition Schedule", that originate from the ir Program, including Field and contractor offices. By signing, the official will be assuring NARA that an internal review has been conducted and that all recordkeeping requirements associated with the creation and maintenance of records related to the program function have been taken into account. The Office of General Counsel will also be required to assure that the proposed retention periods are consistent with the minimum retentions required by applicable laws and regulations. In cases where proposed disposition instructions could be controversial, NARA may require agencies to manage and report on a public review process conducted through the Federal Register.

In order to help organizations prepare for this responsibility, in FY 2004 the Records Management Division will begin to coordinate all records management activities through Headquarters Program Offices. Support is currently provided directly to Records Managers in Field and contractor offices and Records Liaisons at Headquarters. A point of contact for your organization familiar with the Program's missions and functions, Field and contractor offices, and Records Management regulations will be required.

NARA proposes to use inspections and studies as tools to ensure that agencies economically and effectively create and manage their records to meet business needs; records, regardless of format, are kept long enough to protect rights, assure accountability, and document government activities; and, regardless of format, are destroyed in accordance with approved disposition instructions. Inspections will be conducted when high-level records management risks or specific problems are identified.

Please identify the senior official who will be responsible for providing the assurances required by NARA. This information should be forwarded to Susan Frey, Division Director for Records Management (IM-11) no later than September 15, 2003. Also, please provide the name of a point-of-contact for your organization who will work with IM-11 and your Headquarters, Field and contractor staff on records management issues.

cc: Field Records Managers
Headquarters Liaison Officers

Distribution:

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