National Archives and Records Administration

Bi-annual Report on Operations of the National Declassification Center
Reporting period: 1 January 2014 – 31 July 2014

The National Declassification Center (NDC) has been providing regular status updates on the retirement of the hundreds of millions of pages in its backlog since its stand up in 2010. When the center reached the 31 December 2013 Presidentially directed goal to address quality assurance problems within the 352-million-page backlog of accessioned Federal records at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), formalized reporting was concluded. However, the successful work of the NDC is just beginning, so we will continue to provide updates similar to our earlier reports: information on special review projects, inter-agency collaboration, and quantitative measurements.

Every year, more records require interagency declassification processing by the NDC as they become subject to automatic declassification and are accessioned into NARA. To address those new accessions, referred to as "rollover," the NDC will continue to apply streamlined declassification processes and quality-assurance measures.

For those backlog records that have yet to complete all NARA processes such as segregation of records exempted from automatic declassification, screening for privacy concerns, and archival processing (description, holdings maintenance), the NDC is considering several prioritization strategies that will have the greatest success for making access happen as quickly as possible given the currently available staff resources. The first option is a list of larger series' identification information to be posted on the NDC website http://www.archives.gov/declassification or NDC Blog in the next few weeks. With that posting, NDC will solicit public suggestions for prioritization of specified series on that list.

The NDC was established by E.O. 13526, "Classified National Security Information." Under the direction of the Archivist of the United States, the primary mission of the NDC is to coordinate the timely and appropriate processing of referrals of *25-year-old and older classified records of permanent historical value accessioned into the National Archives.*

Special Project Highlights:

- At the request of the White House, the NDC produced a CD that included a number of recently declassified records responsive to a request by the Brazilian National Truth Commission for records relating to human rights abuses during the 1964 – 1985 timeframe. Vice President Biden provided this collection to the Brazilian Government during his June 16-17 visit to Brazil and announced a broader special

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collection project to support the Brazilian Truth Commission's efforts. The NDC is working with the National Security Council and pertinent agencies within the declassification community as well as with other NARA staff on an expanded project, encompassing recently located unclassified records as well as records requiring final declassification processing.

- During the January – June 2014 reporting period, the NDC provided information about newly released entries on its website, including files from the Joint Staff, Department of Defense Representative at Panama Canal Treaty Negotiations, Atomic Energy Commission, United States Agency for International Development, Department of State, United States Marine Corps, and Treasury.

- After completing our declassification review and processing of information relating to life in the shadows of the Berlin Wall (for the 5^{0th} anniversary of President Kennedy's summer 1963 visit to Berlin), we held a seminar, including a panel discussion, related to the November 2013 opening of these records on January 14, 2014 (rescheduled from October 2013 due to the government shutdown). Information about these records can be found at   http://www.archives.gov/research/foreign-policy/cold-war/berlin-wall-1962-1987/.

Inter-Agency Collaboration:

- As we have noted in previous NDC reports, our greatest challenge for successful backlog retirement involved satisfying the requirements for Restricted Data/Formerly Restricted Data (RD/FRD) review mandated in the National Defense Authorization Acts for Fiscal Year 1999 and 2000 (Public Laws 105-261 and 106-65 respectively, known as "Kyl-Lott") and the Special Historical Records Review Plan Supplement to those two public laws. Addressing RD/FRD typically requires page-level review, a time- and personnel-intensive effort, which demands the greatest resource commitment. Because we have streamlined our approach and expanded both NARA and other government agency staffing, we are successfully addressing these materials as we process rollover records.

- We expanded our Interagency Referral Center work during this six-month reporting period. We also began using an automated referral notification process on our current Document Declassification Support System (DDSS) platform but with new and improved tracking data. Since 1 January 2014, 463,892 pages have been reviewed in the IRC, and 56% of those were declassified. This number represents only documents that have completed all referrals and are in the process of being re-filed.

- Through the NDC, the Presidential Libraries had previously prioritized 1,965,724 pages which include all material from the Truman through Johnson Libraries as well as certain

series within the Kissinger Personal Papers Collection, for completion of referral review through the Remote Archives Capture (RAC) project. As of July 2014, equity-holding agencies had completed review of and decisions had been delivered to the Presidential Libraries on 1,213,747 pages. In order to facilitate a more streamlined notification process for future prioritization, we have been working with the Office of Presidential Libraries and the Presidential Materials Division and the CIA to include Presidential Library referrals in the DDSS. Equity-holding agencies will be notified of prioritized pages from the Presidential Libraries available for referral review in RAC beginning in 2015.

Status of Workload and Production:

Because of the maturity and sophistication of our metrics program, we are able to report our accomplishments quantitatively. These production numbers reflect the number of rollover pages that have completed our initial assessment step in the NDC process. A subset of these pages has completed quality assurance for referral of national security information.

- Total rollover pages as of 1 January 2014: 36.9 million pages. The NDC refines the counts of projects, boxes and pages that comprise the "rollover," defined as those records accessioned 1 January 2010 – 31 December 2013 that are to be addressed in CY 2014. NDC staff deconflict data about series and reconcile legacy processing of series. This work often requires significant investigations using NDC databases, examination of project folders and legacy documentation, coordination with other NARA units, confirmation in the stacks, and final quality assurance review.

- Total pages successfully completing the NDC referral quality review process for national security information, including meeting the Kyl-Lott requirements as of 31 July 2014: 29.1 million pages.