

Agency ERA Adoption Report

Adoption Goal

According to NARA Strategic Goal 3, NARA will address the challenges of electronic records in Government to ensure success in fulfilling NARA's mission in the digital era. Central to achieving this goal is the acceptance and use of ERA by Federal agencies. The increased use of ERA to schedule, ingest, process, and store electronic records from Federal agencies, Congress, and the Executive Office of the President will result in better management of Federal records, in particular the preservation of permanent electronic records.

Adoption Plan

With the concurrence of OMB, NARA established the following targets in the fall of 2009:

- ERA will be the preferred method for scheduling records in any media regardless of classification and transferring permanent records to NARA by July 2011 and will be the mandatory method for agencies in 2012.
- NARA current strategy for achieving full deployment of ERA is to add the 30 member agencies of the CIO Council to ERA during the period from March 2011 through November 2011 (ERA Adoption Phase 1) and the rest of the agencies from July 2011 through September 2012 (ERA Adoption Phase 2).

Strategy

ERA Adoption Phase 1

NARA assigned a start month to each of 30 CIO Council Agencies: 25 agencies were assigned a specific month from March 2011 until November 2011 and five could start at anytime during the time period because they had participated in earlier ERA pilots. NARA sent letters to the 30 agencies on November 15, 2010. The ERA User Adoption Coordinator contacted the agencies separately and arranged kick off meetings. An internal NARA User Adoption Steering Group established a [web site](#), created [online training](#), and developed [manuals](#) and [FAQs](#). Kick off meetings included NARA staff working most closely with the agencies.

Rollout Month	Agency Name
March 2011	Department of Health and Human Services
	Department of State
	Department of Justice
April 2011	Environmental Protection Agency
	Small Business Administration
	Department of Transportation
May 2011	Department of the Army
	Department of Commerce
	Nuclear Regulatory Commission
June 2011	Department of Treasury
	Department of Interior
	Department of Housing and Urban Development
July 2011	Executive Office of the President, OMB, and other Federal White House agencies
	Department of Energy
	Department of Labor
August 2011	Department of Veterans Affairs
	U.S. Agency for International Development
	National Science Foundation
September 2011	Department of Defense
	Office of Personnel Management
October 2011	Department of Homeland Security
	General Services Administration
November 2011	Office of the Director of National Intelligence
	Department of the Air Force
	Department of Agriculture
Anytime Starting March 2011: FY 2010 Pilot Agencies	National Archives and Records Administration
	Department of the Navy
	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
	Department of Education
	Social Security Administration

ERA Adoption Phase 2

Because there are about 160 other agencies and agency components of the Federal Government, NARA asked the other agencies to select a month between July 2011 and September 2012 in which to start using ERA. NARA established an online sign-up process. Throughout the third quarter of FY 2011, NARA distributed user ids and temporary passwords and asked the agencies to log on to the site and sign up for a start month. The sign up process initially captured 75% of the agency population. NARA subsequently assigned the non-respondents to months of its choosing.

In a departure from the ERA Adoption Phase 1 approach, the User Adoption Coordinator schedules one kickoff meeting with all of the agencies scheduled to start during a particular month. The meeting is a virtual meeting where the participants call in and access any presentation materials.

Adoption Progress (as of September 30, 2011)

ERA Adoption Phase 1,

Through September 2011, 23 out of the 30 agencies have started using ERA, a 77% adoption rate. NARA defines a “start” as at least having staff members go through the training and obtain user accounts. As shown in the chart below, a number of agencies have done more than obtain user accounts; they have performed an extensive amount of work.

	ERA Users?	Scheduled Records?	Transferred Records?
Department of Health and Human Services	Yes	Yes	No
Department of State	Yes	Yes	Yes
Department of Justice	Yes	Yes	Yes
Environmental Protection Agency	Yes	Yes	Yes
Small Business Administration	Yes	No	No
Department of Transportation	Yes	Yes	No
Department of the Army	Yes	No	Yes
Department of Commerce	Yes	No	Yes
Nuclear Regulatory Commission	No	No	No
Department of Treasury	Yes	No	Yes
Department of Interior	Yes	Yes	Yes
Department of Housing and Urban Development	No	No	No
Executive Office of the President	Yes	No	No

Department of Energy	Yes	No	No
Department of Labor	Yes	Yes	Yes
Department of Veterans Affairs	No	No	No
U.S. Agency for International Development	No	No	No
National Science Foundation	No	No	No
Department of Defense	No	No	No
Office of Personnel Management	Yes	No	No
Department of Homeland Security	Yes	No	No
General Services Administration	Yes	No	No
Office of the Director of National Intelligence	Yes	No	No
Department of the Air Force	No	No	No
Department of Agriculture	Yes	No	Yes
National Archives and Records Administration	Yes	Yes	Yes
Department of the Navy	Yes	Yes	Yes
National Aeronautics and Space Administration	Yes	Yes	Yes
Department of Education	Yes	No	Yes
Social Security Administration	Yes	Yes	No

ERA Adoption Phase 2

Through September 2011, nine out of the 160 agencies have started using ERA, a 6% adoption rate. Only a handful of agencies have done more than obtain user accounts. Contributing to the slow start was the delay in deploying ERA Increment 5. Because Increment 5 was not deployed until August 29, NARA encouraged the agencies with July and August start months to actually begin work in ERA in September.

Although 160 agencies, combined with components within the CIO Council Agencies, represent the majority of the Federal Government, some agencies have not yet been assigned start dates yet. During the first quarter of FY 2012, NARA will analyze the list and schedule any agencies that do not yet have a start date.

Feedback from the Users

NARA has twice systematically solicited feedback from ERA users:

ERA User Experience Focus Group, June 2, 2011. The focus group consisted of eight agency users of ERA from the Departments of Navy,

State, Justice, Treasury, and Interior. The participants were asked five questions over a two-hour period:

- What has your experience been with ERA?
- What has worked well and not so well with scheduling records in ERA?
- What has worked well and not so well with transferring records in ERA?
- What has worked well and not so well with the Help Desk and NARA staff support?
- What has worked well and not so well with the website?

The group gave high marks to the Help Desk and NARA staff support as positive aspects of the ERA experience. On the negative side, the group characterized ERA as an overly complicated and confusing system to use. The most common complaint was the lack of a user manual that could be printed out and referenced while accessing the system. They thought the system had an overly complicated workflow and that it took numerous steps to create, submit, and subsequently manage the schedules and transfer requests. Some time consuming aspects of the system included the inability to find business objects, the process of populating the system with already approved records schedules, and communication with them from NARA about the status of ERA actions.

NARA followed up with an individual response to each participant indicating the actions NARA would take to address their concerns. Many of the concerns have been resolved, such as, a printable users' manual, and other concerns were addressed in the most recent Increment 5 deployment.

ERA User Experience Survey, September 30, 2011. From September 15 until September 30, 2011, NARA surveyed all of the active users of ERA. The online survey solicited feedback in a number of different ERA areas:

- Scheduling records using ERA
- Transferring records using ERA
- Seeking assistance from the Help desk
- Seeking assistance from NARA staff
- Seeking assistance on NARA's web site
- Account sign up process

Users were asked to rank their levels of satisfaction in the above in a range from "very satisfied" to "very unsatisfied." If users ranked a certain element "neutral" to "very unsatisfied," they were asked why

they gave a negative rating. NARA asked for feedback regarding their thoughts on positive aspects of system and their suggestions for improvement. Finally, they were asked to give their overall level of satisfaction with the system.

As of the writing of this report, when asked the question:

Overall, how would you rate your level of satisfaction with ERA? A total of 44% of the survey respondents were satisfied with ERA overall, with another 44% neutral about their ERA experience. Only 12% were unsatisfied with ERA.

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>20%</i>	<i>40%</i>	<i>60%</i>	<i>80%</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>1. Very Satisfied</i>		<i>0</i>					<i>0.00%</i>
<i>2. Satisfied</i>		<i>11</i>					<i>44.00%</i>
<i>3. Neutral</i>		<i>11</i>					<i>44.00%</i>
<i>4. Unsatisfied</i>		<i>3</i>					<i>12.00%</i>
<i>5. Very Unsatisfied</i>		<i>0</i>					<i>0.00%</i>