

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

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ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE ELECTRONIC RECORDS ARCHIVES (ACERA)

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NOVEMBER 6 and 7, 2012

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MINUTES

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PRESENT

DAVID FERRIERO, Archivist of the United States

SHARON DAWES, Committee Chairman

LAURA E. CAMPBELL, Associate Librarian for Strategic Initiatives, Library of Congress

DENNIS DAY, Director, Air Force Declassification Office

JERRY HANDFIELD, State Archivist, Washington State Archives

LESLIE JOHNSTON, Library of Congress

ROBERT E. KAHN, CEO and President, Corporation for National Research Initiatives

STEVEN LEVENSON, U.S. Courts

DANIEL PITTI, Associate Director, Institute for Advanced Technology in the Humanities,
University of Virginia

DAVID RENCHER, Federation of Genealogical Societies

KELLY A. WOESTMAN, Pittsburgh State University

ALSO PRESENT:

MIKE CARLSON, ERA User Adoption Coordinator

DAVID LAKE, ERA Communications Manager

QUYEN NGUYEN, ERA Program Management Office

MEG PHILLIPS, Electronic Records Lifecycle Coordinator

DON ROSEN, Director of Policy Analysis and Enforcement, Office of the Chief Records Officer

SCOTT STOVALL, ERA Program Director

GEORGE STRAWN, Director, NITRD

MICHAEL WASH, Chief Information Officer

DALE WICKIZER, CTO of NetApp

PAMELA WRIGHT, Chief Digital Access Strategist

November 6, 2012

Welcome and Comments from the Chair

Chair Dawes called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m.

Welcome Remarks

Archivist Ferriero welcomed those present to the Archives. Charley Barth, formerly co-chair of the ACERA, has been made the Director of the Federal Register at NARA. ACERA has two new members: Patricia Cruse (not present), Director of the UC Curation Center and the Director of Digital Preservation for the California Digital Library, and Stephen Levenson, representing the Administrative Office of the US Courts.

Bylaws

Having been moved and seconded, ACERA voted to adopt the minutes of its April meeting.

Ms Phillips spoke on adoption of ACERA's slate of bylaws. The intent is to ensure compliance with rules set out in the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), not to change the way the group functions. Draft bylaws were provided to the Committee to elicit ACERA's initial comments. These comments would be considered in preparation of a new set of bylaws to be presented to and approved by ACERA. Ms Phillips said the draft bylaws mention an Annual program of work, which differs from how ACERA has thus far operated.

Member Kahn suggested ACERA offices shall be determined by the chair and such other officials as the Archivist. He said rules on travel reimbursement need to be clarified.

ERA Program Update

Messrs Wash and Stovall provided the ERA program update. Mr Wash said, prior to ACERA's spring meeting, a contract protest had allowed only maintenance of ERA efforts, confounding progress. Since that time, progress has been made, mostly in establishing priorities and the environment in which to work on the system. A new, cloud-based

development and test environment is in process. Overall, performance issues are being identified and streamlined. Discussions on long-term ERA strategies are ongoing. Some aspects of this would be discussed at this meeting. Member Kahn identified some issues with respect to big data which will require further thought by the agency.

Mr Stovall spoke about ERA=s operational status. NARA has been working with IBM on ERA operations and maintenance since February of this year. The operational staff is taking control of the licensing, leading to refinements of those licenses, as well as better establishing their number. NARA projects about \$2.3 million in savings annually as a result of NARA operational staff efforts. Customer satisfaction with the IBM-run help desk remains at about 80%. The survey used to establish this number found upward trends in eight of eleven fields.

Operational challenges: the data center at the Allegany Ballistics Lab (ABL) is at or near capacity; Cooling is at capacity; Electrical consumption is [drastically spiraling](#); a lot of ERA equipment is at or near end of life. A failover plan, including the site for such a facility, needs to be developed.

Several members asked about the transition from HP (Lockheed Martin=s subcontractor) over to IBM. The transition has thus far been very smooth. Member Pitti said it is not good to be completely dependent on another group on a project like this; this expertise should be brought into NARA. Mr Stovall agreed, and said NARA is more in control of the operational environment than they were previously. Mr Wash said subject matter experts have been brought in at times to help with strategy development. [December](#) is the target date for having a data test that's imminently scalable in the cloud.[@](#) Member Kahn said the NARA cloud should be under NARA=s control. Desired enhancements to the NARA cloud were identified and three Technical Direction Letters (TDLs) were issued to effect them. Overall user satisfaction remains around 59%. Intellectual property claims raised by Lockheed Martin have been resolved in the government=s favor. A redaction tool (a desktop version of HighVIEW 5) has been developed for Presidential Records and is being installed on users= computers to begin the necessary work of redaction before Bush 43's records become FOIA-able in January 2014.

Business Priorities

Ms Phillips spoke about Business Priorities. The business priorities list which was developed by staff is based on areas of greatest interest to the users of ERA. Three priority areas were developed in January 2012: configure OPA storage and migrate existing OPA content to the new storage (completed); improve search and report capabilities in Base (ongoing); and making presidential EOP records available through OPA (ongoing). She solicited comments from ACERA on potential business priorities for Fiscal 2013. The resources of both time and money are constrained. She proposed four business priorities: move records from PERL to ERA-EOP; improve scalability of OPA; prevent ingest of classified electronic records into Base; improve flexibility of ingest processes in Base in addition to updating some of its systems. Member Kahn said solutions on data management should focus on the data itself; independent of the technology used to manage and manipulate it.

Federal Agency Adoption

Michael Carlson spoke on Federal Agency Adoption of ERA. The two-phase rollout of ERA was finished on September 30, 2012. All federal agencies have been briefed on how to obtain training in ERA. All have set up user accounts, though only about a quarter are active users of the system. Approximately 80% of surveyed NARA staff said they were unsatisfied or very unsatisfied with the program. The highest rated aspect of ERA is its help desk.

A break was taken between 3:04 p.m. and 3:29 p.m.

Presidential Directive on Records Management

Don Rosen spoke on a Presidential Directive on Records Management. In a directive signed November 28, 2012, President Obama challenged NARA to reform records management for the 21st Century, and called on NARA to develop and issue a records management directive. The Presidential Directive also required NARA to report back with recommended changes in laws, regulations, etc. on records management. The NARA

directive contains two goals relating to ensuring transparency and compliance, and a set of action items. Affected organizations are required to name a Senior Agency Official in charge of these efforts at the Secretary level; the Archivist will meet with the identified SAOs over the next several months. Email and, to a lesser extent, other media continue to present challenges. Communities of interest will be established next year to collaborate and share information. Member Kahn said issues of privacy and cybersecurity must needs be considered. Several commenters indicated that the NARA general records schedule should be overhauled. Chair Dawes asked what the resource implications of this work would be. Mr Rosen said this answer is in development. Several member said it is important that the SAOs appreciate the importance of the work and that there be incentives to complete it.

Discussion: How should NARA approach Directive Goal A3

Ms Phillips sought comment and ideas from ACERA with respect to compliance. Member Levenson said staff should develop a long-term vision. Member Kahn said NARA should play a leadership role as government creates an open architecture for records management, calling it a first principle. Member Redgrave noted the importance of economic viability to the success of the program. Member Kahn identified several aspects of successful big-data management programs. Several members suggested putting large technology firms to work to solve some of NARA=s larger challenges, as well as curators of manuscript collections in receipt of electronic donations of material.

ACERA stood in recess at 4:57 p.m.

November 7, 2012

Big Data Panel

Chair Dawes called the meeting back to order at 8:17 a.m. There followed a panel discussion on Big Data, with guest speakers George Strawn of NITRD and Dale Wickizer of NetApp. Mr Wash reminded ACERA of the Presidential Directive that all records will be stored in electronic form. The 2010 census took eighteen months and one truck to deliver 300

terabytes of data to NARA. The physical movement of data-storage media is a challenge; therefore, storing data at rest seems to make sense, but how to do this?

Dr Strawn said planning must include the perspective 10 years hence; where will best practice be? AMassive data implies massive parallel processing.@ NARA is moving from hard-to-access archives to everyone-can-access archives. Metadata should be of primary concern. Projects should be piloted to ensure success. Give special thought to managing federal contractors in the future.

Mr Wickizer said data transparency, as well as everyone-can-access archives, will lead to new advances in data management and retrievability. Given the present course of innovation, data generation will vastly exceed network capabilities over the next 10 years. Parallel processing will likely be part of the solution. Cutting data management staff would be short-sighted (though further technological solutions may be developed); they will need to be better equipped and the technology must become more automated. ADistributed collections are going to be the reality of the future.@ Migration to new technologies must be taken into account, as well as the cost of data management. Data and the media on which it is stored must be thought of as two separate entities. Perhaps a model based on different service levels would be viable. Member Handfield said, AThis human governance issues is a huge challenge.@ Reducing IT costs yields increased mission value for government agencies. Mr Wickizer said different contract arrangements may be more advantageous than others; encourage contractors to have some Askin in the game.@"

Online Public Access

Pamela Wright spoke about next steps and treatment of metadata in Online Public Access. Public expectations with respect to access have risen and become more demanding.

A new OPA IPT program was started in the fall, largely staffed by younger workers familiar with social media. Response to the Citizen Archivist transcription pilot tool has been Aphenomenal.@ In addition to the three V=s of volume, variety and velocity, NARA considers a fourth: veracity. Crowdsourcing initiatives need to be developed. Member Levenson reminded those assembled of the continued need to protect information people gave to the

government under the auspices of confidentiality. Member Kahn said infrastructure considerations are a primary concern. Questions of authentication persist.

A break was taken between 10:27 a.m. and 10:55 a.m.

Discussion: Benchmarking Electronic Records Processes

Ms Phillips moderated a discussion on Benchmarking Electronic Records Processes. At the Archivist's direction, NARA is continually rethinking against whom the organization benchmarks its efforts. In the prior discussion, Google was identified as NARA's competitor; to what extent is this true? Member Pitti said challenges need to be identified, broken down, and then confronted. Member Kahn identified three major concerns: problems encountered by real users and how they can resolve them; problems in stocking (ingest) the archive; and operational problems and their accompanying failure tracking. Transparency and privacy concerns must both be protected. Member Campbell encouraged further thought with respect to distributed cloud storage. Aerospace, credit card companies and pharma companies were called out as potential benchmarks, among others. Member Kahn encouraged further thought with respect to federated metadata registries. Member Rencher said crowdsourcing and peer review should be capitalized upon. Chair Dawes said metadata can be divided into two types: metadata for accountability and metadata for usability. Creating templates promoting data ingestion would streamline archiving processes.

ACERA voted to remove the eight-hours-a-day limitation on meetings from its bylaws.

ACERA voted to remove the allowance of subgroups from its bylaws.

Member Kahn said he will provide some thoughts in writing on the delineation of offices, the scheduling of meetings and terms of office. Member Pitti suggested holding day-and-a-half meetings in the future.

The meeting was concluded at 12:08 p.m.