

National Archives and Records Administration

Transmittal Memo

DATE: December 14, 2010

TO: Office Heads, Staff Directors, ISOO, NHPRC, OIG, OGIS

SUBJECT: NARA 1573, Preservation, Security and Transportation Standards for Exhibition of Original NARA Holdings

Purpose of this transmittal memo. This directive establishes policy and procedures on preservation, security and transportation requirements for exhibiting or displaying any original holdings of the National Archives.

Background: NARA preserves Federal government holdings and makes them available to the public in a variety of ways, including exhibition of original holdings. NARA staff has implemented a variety of preventive measures to protect the holdings from theft, loss or damage during the exhibition process in order to preserve them for future use. While NARA exhibit policies and procedures have changed substantially over time, NARA's comprehensive written exhibit standards have not been substantively revised since 1985. Directive 1573 consolidates NARA-wide policy on preservation, security and transportation for exhibition purposes into one document. Office heads will be responsible for implementation.

Explanation of significant changes: This directive consolidates preservation and security policy for exhibition and exhibition loans of original NARA holdings. It updates NARA policy for transporting NARA holdings for exhibition purposes including use of couriers and of privately-owned vehicles (POVs). It includes mandatory supplements on minimum preservation and security standards for exhibit of original NARA holdings and on transporting NARA holdings for exhibition purposes.

Canceled directives:

- Admin 201 Chapter 13 Appendix A. except for Section 7, par. 142 a, b, d and h and Section 8.
- NARA 1702, Transporting Holdings in NARA's Physical and Legal Custody dated September 1, 1999, is still in effect but it no longer applies to exhibitions or exhibition loans.

Effective Date. Effective upon signature.

Contact Information. If you have questions on this directive or supplement, please contact Nancy Davis (NWT-L) via nancy.davis@nara.gov, or at 301-837- 1947.

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Archivist of the United States

Attachment

National Archives and Records Administration

NARA 1573
December 14, 2010

SUBJECT: Preservation, Security and Transportation Standards for Exhibition of Original NARA Holdings

Part 1. General

1573.1 What is the purpose of this directive?

This directive establishes the policy, procedures, and minimum preservation, security and transportation requirements for exhibiting any original holding of the National Archives at NARA facilities and non-NARA institutions. Additional requirements may be necessary in unique situations, due either to the exhibit location or to the nature or value of the holding(s). Supplements to this directive are mandatory to ensure the safe exhibition and transportation of NARA holdings and are subject to the same review process as the directive.

1573.2 What are the authorities for this directive?

- a. The Archivist is responsible for the custody, use, and withdrawal of records transferred to the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2107, 2108, 2109, 2111 note sec. 101(b)(2), 2112(c), 2118, and 2203(f)(1); E.O. 12667; and 36 CFR 1228.
- b. 44 U.S.C. 2109 makes the Archivist of the United States responsible for the preservation of records or other documentary material transferred to the Archivist's legal custody.

1573.3 When are these standards applicable?

These standards apply whenever an original NARA holding is exhibited or displayed at a NARA facility or a non-NARA institution. These standards also apply to loans of original NARA holdings for exhibition purposes and to transportation of NARA holdings for exhibition loans or traveling exhibitions.

1573.4 Why is this directive necessary?

Exhibit of NARA holdings requires maintaining a balance between public access, security and preservation. Exhibition of NARA's holdings promotes civic education and facilitates historical understanding of our national experience. Exhibition also exposes holdings to extended use, handling, light exposure, physical shock, vibrations and environmental extremes that can be associated with exhibit or transport, and other stresses that have the potential to damage or accelerate deterioration of original materials. Appropriate handling, exhibition conditions and transportation methods are essential to preserve original NARA holdings.

1573.5 Related Directives

a. Directives relating to the exhibition of NARA holdings and the transportation of original NARA holdings for exhibit purposes include:

- (1) NARA 1612, Exhibition Loans and Traveling Exhibitions;
- (2) NARA 1571, Archival Storage Standards;
- (3) NARA 1561, Records Emergency Preparedness and Recovery in NARA Facilities;
- (4) NARA 1572, Preventing Theft and Vandalism of NARA Holdings in NARA Facilities;
- (5) NARA 702, Freight and Shipping Services;
- (6) Interim Guidance 233-1, Food and Drink near Archival and Records Center Holdings;
- (7) 36 CFR 1280 Photography in Public Exhibit Spaces regarding filming, photography and videotaping of NARA Holdings in National Archives Building, Washington DC.

b. NARA and non-NARA facilities exhibiting NARA holdings must comply with relevant sections of NARA 1571 and 1572. When relevant areas of a facility or a facility's operations cannot be brought into compliance with the preservation, security or facility standards required by 1571 or 1572, the custodial unit working with other NARA offices will determine whether or not mitigating actions, such as specially-designed case work or enhanced security measures, can be implemented to ensure protection of the holdings requested for exhibition. The custodial units consult with Preservation Programs (NWT) and /or the Space and Security Management Division (NAS) to ensure that the mitigating action addresses the preservation, facility or security issues of non-compliance.

1573.6 What NARA holdings are covered by this directive?

a. This directive applies to holdings in NARA's legal custody, including Federal records, Presidential and Vice Presidential records and donated historical materials (including artifacts), regardless of their location.

b. Congressional records are also covered and subject to special conditions as outlined in NARA 1612.

c. Affiliated archives and agency custodians of permanent records are advised to observe the Supplements to this directive.

d. This directive does not apply to the following holdings:

- (1) Records that a Federal agency has transferred to the physical, but not legal custody of NARA even if the records are scheduled as permanent (e.g. federal records in NARA's records center system).
- (2) Accessioned electronic holdings;
- (3) Classified records; and
- (4) Holdings that are held as courtesy storage, in NARA's physical but not legal custody.

1573.7 Definitions

- a. **Authorizing officials** - Individuals with authority to implement policy and/or to sign outgoing exhibition loan Agreements:
 - (1) The Office of Presidential Libraries (NL) directors;
 - (2) The Center for the National Archives Experience (NWE) with concurrence from the Document Conservation Division (NWTD) and the Office of Records Services – Washington, DC (NW) custodial units;
 - (3) Regional administrators or their designees in consultation with the Office of Regional Records Services (NR) central office, and;
 - (4) Directors of affiliated archives, with approval according to the requirements of the applicable Memoranda of Agreement.
- b. **Borrower** - A museum, archives, library or other educational institution whose purpose for borrowing NARA holdings is temporary exhibition for educational purposes, including NARA custodial units borrowing from each other.
- c. **Casework** - Cases, vitrines, frames, sealed exhibit packages or other enclosures that protectively house a holding while it is on public exhibit or display.
- d. **Conservation treatment or intervention** - Measures carried out by a trained conservator to stabilize or remediate damage to holdings and to prevent or minimize future damage to holdings.
- e. **Courier** - A NARA staff person or an individual designated by the NARA custodial unit who is trained to handle NARA holdings who hand carries or accompanies a NARA holding. The courier is authorized to take appropriate and necessary actions to ensure the safety and prevent damage of the holding during transport, installation/deinstallation and in the event of an emergency. The courier may carry out or supervise installation and deinstallation if the courier has specialized training and experience in handling original materials.

- f. **Custodial unit** - A NARA unit responsible for holdings.
- (1) Life-Cycle Control Units (LICONs) and units performing life cycle control functions in NW. NWE is not a custodial unit, but acts as NW's agent for NW exhibits and exhibition loans and therefore is understood to have the responsibilities of a custodial unit for the purpose of this directive.
 - (2) Presidential libraries and Presidential projects (NL);
 - (3) Archival units of NR; and
 - (4) Affiliated Archives. (See NARA 1502)
- g. **Exhibition** - The controlled public display of holdings with the intent of furthering civic education, the appreciation and understanding of the history of the Federal government and the United States or of local, national and international history and culture.
- h. **Display** - The public presentation of a holding. For the purposes of this directive, "display" and "exhibit" are interchangeable.
- i. **Exhibit Time** - The period of time the holding is actually on exhibit. The length of an exhibition loan may be longer than the exhibit time to allow for transport and preparation time.
- j. **Especially fragile holdings** - Holdings that are in an unstable condition due to inherent vice, previous damage, or accelerated deterioration, or holdings that are particularly vulnerable to damage due to their composition or format. Examples might include but are not limited to ivory, lacquerware, photographs on glass, panel paintings, pastel or charcoal drawings, composite artifacts, artifacts with vulnerable attachments, brittle paper, bound volumes, documents with attachments, loose or torn pages, and holdings with flaking surfaces, cracks, splits or frayed edges. The status of especially fragile holdings is determined by the custodial unit and/ or NWT and may require specific and additional preservation and/ or security measures. A holding may be determined to be too fragile for safe exhibit or transport.
- k. **Exhibition Loan** - Temporary removal of a holding from the NARA custodial unit's physical custody to the borrower for exhibition purposes for a specifically delineated period of time after NARA authorizing official and the borrower sign a written loan agreement.
- l. **Hand-carry** - Transport of a holding by an authorized NARA staff person or an individual designated by the NARA custodial unit during which the holding is in the possession of and handled by the authorized individual at all times.

- m. **High value holdings** - Holdings determined by the custodial unit to be of significant historic, legal, and/or monetary value. High value holdings may require specific and additional security and/or preservation measures.
- n. **Holdings** - Records as defined in 44 U.S.C. 3301 ("books, papers, maps, photographs, machine readable materials, or other documentary materials, regardless of physical form or characteristics"), historical materials as defined in 44 U.S.C. 2101(2), including artifacts, artwork, and other museum holdings, assassination records as defined in 44 U.S.C. 2107, and Presidential records as defined in 44 U.S.C. 2201(2) that are in the physical and legal custody of NARA. The terms "records" and "holdings" are general equivalents, and for the purposes here are interchangeable.
- o. **Inherent Vice** - deterioration that occurs due to chemical instability, incompatibility of the materials used, or design flaws by the maker. Often refers to a chemically unstable material such as unstable paper, plastic or fugitive dyes.
- p. **Preservation** - Strategies implemented to support the long term maintenance and continued existence of the holdings by preventing damage, minimizing deterioration of holdings, remediating damage, and by reformatting as appropriate to preserve the original holding or provide access. Preservation includes but is not limited to:
- (1) Control of deteriorating agents, such as heat, humidity, particulate dust, gaseous pollutants, visible light, ultraviolet and infrared radiation, and biological agents including pests and mold;
 - (2) Implementation of safe handling, transport, mounting, and use practices;
 - (3) Provision of protective storage and exhibit enclosures and mounting methods;
 - (4) Correction of any circumstances that would place the holdings at undue risk in the event of an emergency and planning for rapid and successful recovery of holdings damaged by an emergency event;
 - (5) Conservation treatment to repair existing damage, prevent or limit additional damage, and/or return the holding to an appearance closer to its original condition; and
 - (6) Reformatting to create facsimiles and preservation and access copies.
- q. **Records** - Defined in 44 U.S.C. 3301 ("books, papers, maps, photographs, machine readable materials, or other documentary materials, regardless of physical form or characteristics"). Includes all two and three dimensional artifacts held by NARA. The terms "records" and "holdings" are interchangeable.
- r. **Sensitive information** - private personal information that is not in the public domain or personal information that may be embarrassing to a private citizen. Sensitive

information is not appropriate for public exhibit but may be contained in a bound volume or a multi-page document on pages that are not intended to be placed on exhibit or may be associated with another type of holding. Holdings that contain sensitive information may require additional security measures.

s. **Specially protected holdings** - Holdings determined by custodial units to warrant a higher level of security than normally required. Specially protected holdings may require specific and additional security and/or preservation measures. See NARA 1572 for guidance.

1573.8 Responsibilities

a. **All individuals** involved in the exhibition, transportation and loan of NARA holdings are responsible for the safety and proper handling, transport and exhibit of original holdings.

b. **The Office of Presidential Libraries (NL), Office of Regional Records Services (NR), or the Center for National Archives Experience (NWE) for Office of Records Services--Washington, DC (NW):**

- (1) Oversee development and management of a nationwide system of public outreach, exhibition and education programs designed to further access to NARA holdings and promote civic education while ensuring their preservation and security; and
- (2) Implement policy, procedures and management controls as required by this directive and related directives, developing specific guidance as needed to address internal operating procedures within the Office programs.

c. **NL Library directors, regional administrators, and NWE director (NW), or their designees** (referred to as Custodial unit(s) in this directive) oversee management of exhibition programs at their facilities to ensure that the policies and procedures in this directive are implemented. The custodial units or other NARA staff designated by the director at each NARA facility:

- (1) Review all requests for exhibition of original NARA holdings, examine the condition of the requested holdings, establishes exhibition and transportation requirements consulting as needed with Preservation Programs (NWT) and Space and Security Management Division (NAS), and approve or deny the exhibit request;
 - (a) Consult NAS on security measures required for specially protected, high value holdings, and international loans and for security support services when needed.

- (b) Consult NWT on preservation requirements for especially fragile holdings, when a holding is damaged, or when a change in the environment places the holding at risk of damage and the extreme environmental concern cannot be resolved by the facility within 24 hours.
 - (c) NWE consults with NWTD on all exhibition and exhibit loan requests for NW holdings.
 - (2) Develop and implement standard operating procedures for exhibition and exhibition loan including documentation and tracking of holdings;
 - (3) Notify NWT and NAS as soon as possible when a potential or actual emergency threatens the facility, the area where any NARA holding is stored, prepared or exhibited within the facility, the transportation vehicle or route, or the NARA holding itself (see NARA 1561);
 - (4) Notify on-site security personnel, NAS and OIG as soon as possible of any reports relating to suspected loss, theft or vandalism (see NARA 1572); and
 - (5) Ensure that NARA's affiliated archives comply with exhibition requirements in the memoranda of Agreement and applicable parts of this directive.
- d. **Preservation Programs** (NWT) conducts an integrated, scientific preservation program. NWT:
- (1) Develops preservation policy for handling, exhibition, and transport of original NARA holdings;
 - (2) Reviews and recommends preservation requirements, reviews plans for and furnishes technical expertise and support on preservation requirements related to the design and construction of new or renovated exhibition galleries, exhibition cases and exhibition facilities;
 - (3) Conducts periodic review of NARA facilities for preservation compliance with this Directive, NARA 1571 Archival Storage Standards, and related Directives and guidance, and may inspect NARA exhibition spaces or a proposed exhibit venue prior to or during an exhibition loan process;
 - (4) Acts as the technical consultant on preservation related exhibition, transportation and handling requirements.
 - (a) Document Conservation Division (NWTD) performs these functions for NW holdings. NWTD reviews the condition of NW holdings, recommends treatment needs, establishes preservation

requirements for the safe display, transport and handling of original NW holdings, and provides technical assistance for implementing requirements.

(b) The National Preservation Program Office may provide these services for NL and NR holdings to ensure appropriate conservation treatment and preventive preservation procedures are implemented.

- (5) Conducts conservation treatments (NWTD for NW and NR). Reviews conservation treatment proposals for NL holdings and other NARA holdings not treated by NWTD;
- (6) Provides technical information on packing and transport of holdings and may undertake or oversee packing of vulnerable NARA holdings;
- (7) Acts as or approves and advises a special courier when a conservator is required to handle, install, or deinstall an original NARA holding;
- (8) Reviews records emergency recovery plans for NARA facilities annually (see NARA 1561); and
- (9) Assists NARA's affiliated archives to comply with exhibition requirements in the Memoranda of Agreement and applicable parts of this directive.

e. Space and Security Management Division (NAS)

- (1) Furnishes professional and technical advice on the design and construction of new or renovated archival exhibition facilities;
- (2) Conducts periodic building condition surveys as outlined in NARA 1571, Archival Storage Standards;
- (3) Reviews and recommends security requirements for exhibition and transportation of original NARA holdings. NAS consults with the custodial unit and may make security arrangements when exhibits or exhibit loans contain NARA holdings that are specially protected or high value, and when holdings are transported internationally;
- (4) Makes arrangements for or serves as the security escort as required for an exhibit loan of original holdings that are specially protected or of high value or when holdings are transported internationally, coordinating security arrangements with outside law enforcement agencies when necessary; and

- (5) Notifies OIG when informed that a holding is missing material or has suffered vandalism.

Part 2. General Provisions

1573.9 What are NARA's preservation policies for exhibit of original NARA holdings?

- a. The original holding must be in stable condition and able to withstand the exhibition or transportation process without damage.
- b. The custodial unit, in consultation with Preservation Programs, will determine whether the original is needed for exhibition. The goals of the exhibition, the condition of the holdings and their exhibit history, and the physical environment are among the criteria to be considered. Facsimiles are used when display of the original would involve undue risk. A digital facsimile or other copy of the original holding must be used for exhibit whenever a copy of the original will satisfy the exhibition purposes and/or a copy will protect the original from undue risk or possible damage.
- c. Specific preservation requirements for safe exhibit and transport based on examination of the holding must be identified by the custodial unit prior to a decision to exhibit that holding.
- d. Holdings must be handled, prepared, mounted and transported by trained staff using appropriate preservation methods.
- e. Transportation methods for exhibition loans or traveling exhibitions must provide for the safe transport of NARA holdings without any loss, damage or deterioration to the original holding.
- f. Locations in which original NARA holdings are stored, processed, prepared or exhibited must comply with NARA standards and must provide for the long-term preservation of the specific holdings. **See NARA 1573 Supplement A: Preservation and Security Standards for Exhibition of Original NARA Holdings for specific requirements on controlling the following:**
 - (1) Temperature and relative humidity conditions;
 - (2) Levels of visible light, infrared and ultraviolet radiation;
 - (3) Length of exhibit and cumulative exposure to light;
 - (4) Exposure to particulates, aerosols and gaseous pollutants;
 - (5) Presence of food and drink, construction or installation tools and material, and any other substance that may attract insects or stain or mar holdings;

- (6) Location, method and materials of mounting and exhibit including casework, exhibit enclosures and mounts;
- (7) Unnecessary or inappropriate handling and vibration, shock, impact, and other physical stresses;
- (8) Access to and uses of the space in which holdings are stored, processed, prepared or exhibited; and
- (9) Potential for damage from a natural or man-made emergency or a facility-related malfunction.

g. If conditions in the exhibition gallery or space cannot comply with NARA requirements or if the holding requires a specific environment for its long-term preservation, then specially designed casework may provide the required conditions. Consult as needed with NWT and/ or NAS on whether or not casework can meet security or environmental requirements and on the design and construction of such casework.

h. Document the condition of the holding before and after exhibit or transport.

i. Monitor the condition of the holding and its environment continuously throughout the exhibition, exhibit loan and transport process. Report and address any change in the holding's condition or its environment.

1573.10 What are NARA's security policies for exhibit of original NARA Holdings?

Monitor and protect NARA holdings from unnecessary access and other hazards at all times throughout the exhibition and transportation process. See NARA 1573 Supplement A: Preservation and Security Standards for Exhibition of Original NARA Holdings for specific requirements.

- a. Protect all NARA holdings with a monitored 24-7 security system. Additional measures may be required to protect specially protected holdings or other high value holdings. (See NARA 1572)
- b. Physically control access to NARA holdings.
 - (1) NARA holdings are generally exhibited in dedicated exhibition galleries inside secured exhibit cases, frames secured by a wall hanging system, or other exhibit enclosures.
 - (2) For holdings on open exhibit outside of an exhibit enclosure, NARA requires barriers, a perimeter alarm, pressure alarms, or other equivalent measures.
 - (3) NARA holdings not on exhibit are stored in secure rooms within a secure facility with controlled and documented access to the holdings.

- c. When determining the method and required level of security for transporting holdings, consider the value of the holdings and their vulnerability to theft or loss. Consult NAS when transporting high value or specially protected holdings and for international loans.
- d. Verify presence of holdings on exhibit at least daily when the facility is open and staffed. NARA staff, NARA security contractors, or staff from the borrower may perform this function, which is typically a walk-through of the gallery or exhibit space.
- e. Maintain and document a clear chain of custody throughout the exhibition and transportation of NARA holdings.

1573.11 What are NARA's policies for transporting original holdings for exhibition purposes?

- a. Holdings requested for exhibition loan must be in a stable condition and capable of withstanding shipment.
- b. Protection and preservation of NARA holdings must be the primary consideration by the custodial unit in selecting packing, shipping and transportation methods. Packing and transportation methods must be appropriate to the condition, fragility, size, volume, and value of the holdings being shipped. Refer to NARA 1573 Supplement B: Transport of Original NARA Holdings for Exhibition for specific guidance.
- c. A NARA courier or a courier under NARA's direction may be required to transport specially protected, high value, or especially fragile holdings, to assist with installation and deinstallation, or to confirm that the exhibition requirements are being met by a borrower.
- d. All shipments and transportation must comply with Federal statutes, regulations, and international law. Consult NGC as appropriate.

1573.12 How are records created by this directive maintained under the NARA records schedule?

- a. NL, NR, and NW custodial units maintain records under item file numbers 1424-1, 1424-2, and 1424-3 and under item 1610, Exhibit Case Files and 1613, Exhibit Loans, file numbers 1613-1, 1613-2, and 1613-3.
- b. NGC maintains records under file number 1103-1, General Legal Advice, but if litigation results, use file no. 1103-2a, Litigation – General and Replevin Case Files.
- c. NAS maintains records under file numbers 646-1, Survey Inspection of Government Facility, and 646-2, Survey Inspection of Private Facility and 1442 Records Storage and Security Files.

d. NWT maintains records under item 1436 Preservation Project Case Files, file numbers 1436-1 and 1436-4; and under item 1437 Preservation Research and Testing Files file number 1437-1.