

Today is Tuesday, August 24, 2021.

Bimonthly BRIDG meeting with NARA.

>> Good morning everyone welcome to the August 24th meeting. I am Arian Ravanbakhsh, serving as the moderator for today's meeting from the Office of Agency Services at the National Archives and Records Administration hosts these information discussion group or BRIDG meetings to present information relating to Federal Records Management. BRIDG is co-produced by the Office of Records and Federal Records Center Program and live streamed to the audience by our YouTube channel. Generally meetings consist of a scheduled program of presentations with an open forum at the end of the meeting to ask questions of the presenters or any related Federal Records Management topics of interest. Viewers are encouraged to post questions in the chat or by sending E-mail to [rm.communications@nara.gov](mailto:rm.communications@nara.gov). You are welcome to make comments in the chat. All comments are subject to moderation. We ask that you keep the comments relevant to the topics being discussed. Copies of the presentation slides is found in the information box below and on the BRIDG page on the Archives website. You will find links to the transcript of today's meeting when available and previous meetings. If you have comments about BRIDG or other questions, you can use that same E-mail address to pass those along to us. With that, I would like to start by introducing Lawrence Brewer to open the meeting. Good morning, Lawrence.

>> Lawrence: Thank you. Good morning everyone. Hope you all are enjoying your summer, your vacation or if lucky still looking forward to it. If you are like me, you are looking forward to fall and college football and all of the wonderful things that fall brings, including a break in the weather, cooler temperatures we can enjoy it as we make that transition. So, we are here to talk about records management. We have got a great agenda. If we could flip the slide we will look at what we have got on deck. So, I have a few announcements that I would take care of in just a couple of minutes. And then, very excited to have with us today our host for the meeting Jay Trainer, executive for agency services, who will join me and talk about the draft strategic plan NARA is working on for FY22 to FY26 then forwarded by Gordon Everett, the director of the center's program with updates on where things are with the FRCP at this time. And last segment we will have is a piece delivered by Margaret Hawkins, director of the records program talking about tribal consultations and forms associated with that activity. Before we get into the program I will go over a couple of announcements just to bring to your attention issuances that have come out and news you might want to jot down for the calendar. First, I will start with a General Records Schedule and what we are doing with records related to COVID. Last week, in case you didn't see it, we sent out a memo letting you know we are expediting the transmittal of new GS items for vaccine

attestation and related COVID testing records. The creation of the records, as I am sure most are aware, is required by the model safety principles issued by the Safer Federal Workforce Task Force. And it's applicable to all federal employees contractors and certain public visitors. So our goal in getting this General Records Schedule done so you can implement it to have it out by the end of the calendar year.

So, I also want to clarify that separate from that schedule we have been working on another transmittal related to COVID records we announced back in March, we are working on updates to GRS 2.7 employee health and safety records, which will also include revisions reflecting our shared experience and records we are now created as a result of COVID.

So, stay tuned for more on that, if you have any questions about the GRS feel free to send it to the mailbox for the GRS team at GRSteam@nara.gov.

The next, we are excited to get you know we will have a new Capstone form that will soon be required. We have a newly revised NA1005, which is the Capstone E-mail verification form and we have developed it in Excel, which will replace the current PDF version.

So the form will be required for all new and resubmitted Capstone verification forms. We send out a memo shortly on the change expected to be available as soon as September 1st. So at this time, we are recommending its use, however beginning October 1 it will be required. So we developed the form based on your feedback and a lot of the comments that we received from many of you to create a form that is more usable, searchable, manipulatable and usable from your perspective. Given it's in Excel, fairly straight forward to use, we are going to have resources to assist you in how to use it properly. It is in Excel and provides a lot of advantages in term of sort and data manipulation that you get with Excel not available in the PDF version of the form.

And then last announcement, very quickly one wanted to let you know an upcoming webinar, we are partnering with the Office of Information Services within the National Archives, essentially RIT shop, to sponsor webinar for potential paths for transferring permanent electronic record from the cloud to NARA. The webinar will be held on September 29th. We are still working on the details, but be on the lookout for an announcement we will post to our blog on Records Express and send out communication via memo to the same, you know, address RM Communications, and generally hit your mailbox with any news we have out of our office, heads up September 29, more information coming on that webinar.

Before we get to the program I just wanted to let you no he if you have any questions on any of these topics, pleas send them in via chat or E-mail to RM communications we will get an answer during open Q and A at the end of the program. Next slide we will move on to the program.

So, as I said very happy to have Jay Trainer, the executive for agency services, to share the stage with me on talking about the draft strategic plan.

There is quite a bit to talk about, and I am sure some of the goals, some of the objectives will be of more interest to you than others, but we are going to cover the whole plan so that you have full awareness of what we are working on. And after the briefing, we would love to hear from you if you have any comments or suggestions for the plan before it becomes final.

Next slide please.

Just a little bit of background I am sure most people are aware. Every federal agency is required to develop a new strategic plan every four years and publish in the second year of each president's term. That's where we are. One of the things that we have made a commitment to and have done in previous strategic plans is making it available externally and soliciting comments from public stakeholders on and agencies on things that we can do and things that we should consider to make the plan even better.

So, at this point, the proposed plan was circulated for external comment, and then the next milestone in terms of its review is deliver it to OMB in September, with the publication date effective in February of 2022.

Now, one thing I do want to comment on, since I did mention OMB, we do expect to have discussions with OMB about where we are with the requirements and targets established in OMB NARA memo M-19-21. We are all I am sure very familiar with those targets and a lot of the goals due in September of 2022.

So, one of the things that we have said before now, just want to reiterate, we do understand the impact that COVID has had on all of us as we work towards these goals. However, just a reminder, because it is a joint memo, NARA cannot independently revise requirements of the memorandum. So, our goal is to get the plan and the joint memo in alignment as soon as possible. And we will work on that. And we will be working on that and having discussions with OMB, and in the meantime my advice to all of you is to keep working towards those goals of fully digital government to the greatest extent possible given how we are working today, hopefully we will be able to bring the memo strategic plan all into alignment some time soon and certainly before we finish our strategic plan process in February.

Next slide, please.

So, a little bit more on the background of the plan. And I think this probably applies to every other agency in terms of how we use strategic plans.

We spend a lot of time talking about the plan with the Archivist of the United States with the senior leaders of the National Archives. Making sure that the plan supports NARA's leadership agenda. Really, critical point here is that it allows us to do long-term planning. So much of what we do in the government, we work from fiscal year to fiscal year. The plan gives us a framework to be

able to plan five years out.

So, along with that, we are able to establish performance targets and we can use the plan to engage externally so we can make people aware of what we are focused on in the National Archives and get feedback that helps us do a better job to meet our mission. The strategic goals that we have in the new plan remain in place from the previous plan they are the same four goals, Jay will talk about those in more detail in a bit. We modified the descriptions of the goals to emphasize our commitment to equity initiatives, customer experience, and even incorporates many lessons that we have learned as we have been working through COVID-19.

Next slide, please.

So, my last slide before turning it over to Jay, just wanted to put our mission, vision and values. These remain the same as they were in the previous plan. We still value engagement with the public, and then focusing on preserving and providing access to high value government records. We do want to as it says in the vision, acknowledge that there are many different American Experiences. And this is a change from the previous plan where the previous plan focused on the national experience through all of the work that we have been doing with the task force with the Archivist commissioned is that we are acknowledging many different American Experiences we want to make sure that we acknowledge that and provide that level of attention to the differing perspectives.

Our values remain the same we are still very focused on collaboration both internally and externally. Innovation and continuous learning continue to be values that drive us forward.

So, with that I am going to pause and turn it over to Jay Trainer to talk about transformational outcomes and the goals.

>> Jay: Thank you Lawrence. Next slide, please.

NARA's proposed transformational outcomes describe the organizational culture that NARA must build in order to meet the challenges of the future, improve our organizational performance, and better serve the American people.

We have retained the transformational outcomes, as Lawrence mentioned, from our current strategic plan, and they are one NARA, out in front. An agency of leaders. Which is mostly focusing on our inward operations.

A great place to work. Which is focusing on our inward operations.

A customer-focused organization. And an open NARA. And, again, these transformational outcomes are in our current strategic plan and we are proposing to carry them over into our new strategic plan. Next slide, please.

Similarly, NARA strategic goals identify the four key areas in which NARA feels it must excel in order to efficiently and effectively deliver on our mission in the modern environment. Again, we retained the strategic goals from our current strategic plan which are: Make access happen. Connect with customers.

Maximize NARA's value to the nation. And internal one which is: Build our future through our people.

Next slide, please.

So, make access happen is where we affirm that public access to our records is NARA's core mission.

And it's the higher calling that gives purpose and meaning to all of our work. The employees of the National Archives, but also the users of the National Archives. In make access happen, we are reaching beyond our traditional role of making records available for other to discover and making access by delivering increasing volumes of records to the American public online using flexible tools and accessible resources that promote public participation, engaging with our customers and reaching out to underserved communities to find opportunities to improve the customer experience and promote equity through our mission. This is the bigger change from our current strategic plan and that's the trying to promote equity.

The last strategic objective which is by fiscal year 2026, 95% of customer requests will be ready within the promised time. This has been a traditional measure at NARA. And it cuts across the Federal Records Center Program, the Archives, and the Presidential Libraries reference services.

This objective as Lawrence has mentioned about learning from the pandemic has certainly been and will continue to be challenged by the pandemic.

Next slide, please.

Our next goal under connect with customers, challenges us to continuously improve customer service. Cultivate public participation and generate new understanding of the importance of records in a democracy.

We continuously engage with and learn from our customers. We include individuals, communities, organizations, and for this audience most importantly other federal agencies.

So let's go to the next slide and back to Lawrence.

>> Lawrence: Okay. Thanks Jay. Goal 3, maximize NARA's value to the nation is a really important one for the office of Chief Records Officers and for all federal agencies. Because this is where a lot of the records management work happens. So, in light of that I am going to read just as reminder because I think it includes really cue language, the language that describes the goal itself before I talk a little bit about the objectives that are here on the slide. Goal three, maximize NARA's value to the nation recognizes that public access to government information creates measurable economic value, which adds to the enduring cultural and historical value of our records. We are modernizing records management practices across federal government, advancing digital preservation of archival records and supporting transition to digital government. NARA will explore new technology to find low-cost practical solutions to improve

processing, accessory view, and redaction and digitization to accelerate delivery of electronic digitized records to the public. So, in the language in the goal has been modified we have updated we have included a lot of the activities that we have been focused on in the last several years. And we have made it sort of the looking toward, this is what we are going to be focused on.

So I am going to talk about the first objective but before I do, I would like to cover the second and third before wrapping up with the first one. So, the second objective NARA will reduce the time it takes to start complex FOIA requests for unclassified records is an objective which targets that designed to improve the timeliness of FOIA requests that are handled by our office within the National Archives.

The third objective, is a really important one, and this is where it gets into the activities and the development that we are doing with ERA 2.0. So, we want to make a commitment here that we will advance the existing controls to enable digital preservation and do the planning and mitigation so that we can provide access to electronic records which will be preserved and made available through the RA.

So, that commitment is something that is front and center part of the plan. And will be important going forward.

So, now back to the first one.

NARA will provide the policy requirements and oversight to support a transparent, inclusive and fully digital government.

So, as I noted this covers the work of our office. And really hones in on all of the activities that are allowing us to work with all of you to bring about a fully digital government, eliminating to the greatest extent possible the reliance on paper, and really getting the entire government working with the public, stakeholders other agencies, in the way that we expect to be working in 2021 and out to 2026.

So, we are under this subjective working on a number of strategies that will include new and ongoing work on guidance, and oversight, of agency records management programs. But we are also spending some time focusing on with this objective, how we want to reach that goal with strategies that will address equity issues in our appraisal and scheduling practices. And greater transparency for the data that we collect from all of you and share with the records management community and the public.

So, we are going to continue as part of our forward looking strategic plan the work that we have been doing with FERMI to develop records management requirements and work with the vendors to incorporate those requirements into applications and cloud offerings, we will continue to do more inspections, assessments and system audits of your programs and try to provide value and best practices and lessons learned. And we are going to expand our efforts to

provide standards for the digitization of permanent analog records whereas we have focused with the current standards on reflective technologies we will be working on adding transmissive technologies to try to cover as many permanent analog records as possible with new standards. Additionally, I wanted to add that we also intend to learn more about how agencies are working and will continue to work as a result of COVID-19. By looking into collaborative tools and platforms that agencies are now using to work with each other. And really digging into what the records management implications are. And the potential gaps in NARA's guidance in how we use collaboration tools and resources. So, we are kicking off a records management assessment, some of you may be aware because we have conducted some focus groups along with that were posted by GSA. And we tend to continue that work because coming out of this pandemic, it's just even more important to really understand how we work, how the records support the way that we work. And making sure that we have the right guidance out to all of you to make sure that records are well managed. There is a lot of other ideas we are kicking around for our records management portfolio over the next several years. And I would just encourage you if you have suggestions or comments please get in touch with us off line after the meeting we would love to hear from you and see if there is anything we should be considering as part of the next strategic plan.

Next slide, please.

So, the last slide is goal had I am not going to spend a ton of time on this goal because it is primarily an internal facing goal.

And it relates to building our future through our people. And can you see from the objectives that are listed on this slide, the strategies and targets that have been established do get into coaching, into promotion and hiring and improving diversity, and I think when you look at the last one, I think that is probably you know, a really significant initiative where we are really trying to build a culture within NARA that incorporates all of the objectives here where we are trying to engender a NARA workforce that is built upon civil interaction equity inclusiveness that promotes engagement and connectedness of everybody that works for the National Archives to the strategic plan to the agency's mission in making sure that everybody feels a part of what we are trying to do as an agency. So, a lot of work here that I think will certainly be foundational work for all of the staff that works in the National Archives. And it is now in draft for everybody to look at and for all staff, and public stakeholders to comment on as we go forward towards making this final in February of 2022.

So, that's an overview of the plan and the number of key points that Jay and I wanted to highlight. We flip to the next slide we are now at the point where we can take questions if you have any about anything that we have talked about on NARA's draft strategic plan.

>> Thank you, Lawrence. We do have a couple of questions that have come in. As a reminder, users can E-mail them to [rm.communications@nara.gov](mailto:rm.communications@nara.gov) or use the YouTube chat features. We are agencies that need exception or waiver for M-19-21 are -- we were told sooner rather than later but is there a target date?

>> Lawrence: That is a good question. As you know, we did issue a bulletin that provides further guidance related to M-19-21 in additional detail on the exception process. We didn't set a deadline, however, we are encouraging I think the language that you used in reading the question is still accurate. We would encourage you to send in your request for extensions or exemptions whichever is appropriate.

So, if the agencies are asking us we are encouraging to do the analysis, provide the information that is cited in the bulletin. And we will cue them all up and -- and review them with NARA management, and make sure that we get a decision back to you.

One of the things that we have not done because of the note that I mentioned earlier and the coordination that we need to do with OMB, we have been sort of cuing them up and you know, getting them to the point where we could discuss them and coordinate with OMB and we are not quite there at that point yet. But I think it would be beneficial if you believe that you will need an exception or an extension to please look at the bulletin, do the analysis, and then get them in to the required mailboxes cited in the bulletin.

>> Thank you. We have another question. Are agencies considered customers in the upcoming strategic plan?

>> Jay: So let me make sure I answer it quickly with "yes." Everything that we do in relationship with federal agencies is not reflected in the strategic plan there are strategic objectives that we are trying to meet but federal agencies should see themselves in the strategic objective under make access happen. Connect with customers, and the one that Lawrence covered in-depth under maximize our value to the nation of the work that federal agencies do with the Office of the Chief Records Officer.

>> So, thank you Jay, I will put out another call for questions. We will note we did get a comment. In many ways going forward is important to agencies a more satisfied NARA team leads to better support of our agency's needs in the long-run.

>> Lawrence: Amen. I would agree.

>> We have no further questions. If one does come up, please continue to submit them and we will circle back and bring them up at the end of the presentation.

With that, we will move to the next item on the agenda, updates from the Federal Records Center Program. And for those updates, please welcome Gordon Everett, director of the Federal Records Program.



>> Good morning to everyone. I hope everyone is well and staying safe and hope folks did get a vaccination. It's been 17 months since we have had these adjustments in our work life since mid March last year. And it continues on as you see.

While the Federal Records Center Program we were in the midst of reopening, many of our centers up to a phase III level where we could accommodate much more business. Obviously, with what is going on with COVID, it has changed some of the things, and have made us regress in how we were planning that opening.

As of Monday, we have 9 record centers that are closed. We have 8 that are operating in what we call phase I where we have up to 20% of staff in that building at a time. That's not just Federal Records Center, that's staff, all of NARA staff. We have to kind of work together in getting the head count right for those buildings. None of our -- so that's all of our buildings. All 17 buildings the record center program are either, 9 are closed, 8 are in phase I.

So, while those buildings are closed, we do handle emergency reference requests. If you do have an emergency request, please make that request in ARCIS. We also have to ask you to reach out to us there are phone numbers on that emergency request where there is emergency contact for each of the record centers. So, that we can engage with you verbally and in ARCIS to track that emergency request and get that handled for you while the building is closed. We do get folks to go in to handle those type of emergency requests. You know, we do follow the COVID metrics in each county that we operate, whether they are NARA facilities, and you know, our standard -- some folks ask what are the standards. You know, our standards, we look at are if there were 100 new cases per 100,000 population or if, you know, it's greater than 10% positivity rate over the past 7 days, that's a troubling statistic for us and we will regress and pull our people back from having to go in to work in those buildings.

And that's how we look at it.

Fortunately, we are trying to keep our staff safe as possible. And we are sure your agencies are doing the same for yourself. I will restate again, if there are emergency reference requests we will definitely try to get those handled reach out to us via ARCIS and phone communication we have an emergency contact list that you can receive if you haven't received it that reach out to your contact manager or we can send it out so you know who to reach for each record center in cases of emergency. So, with that, that's all I have at this point, are there any questions for me?

>> We do have one that's come in via the YouTube. How will the President's mandate that federal employees either be vaccinated or tested regularly impact operations at the Federal Records Centers?

>> Gordon: Well, we are like every other agency obviously -- if Jay wants to

chime in -- every other agency, you know, our employees are asked to, you know, they can do attestation to determine, they can say they are vaccinated or not. And we are just following, you know, the federal operation on that. So, if we get back to a position where we will, you know, wide open. We will have employees who hopefully are all vaccinated if not we will be following you know the lead from OMB and the White House on operations. Jay, you want to jump in on that one?

>> Jay: You are correct Gordon. We are aware of the mandate and we are implementing it up to this point our workforce for emergency services that Gordon talked about where we progress to phase I or phase II was based on volunteers. We have a lot of staff that will volunteer to come in, but as we implement the mandate on vaccination, I think you would see us moving away from the volunteer status to return to work. But we are the same as the rest of the country. I think we all need more people to get vaccinated so the health metrics improve to battle the variants that come up from COVID-19.

>> Thank you, Jay. We have been getting several questions via YouTube maybe for Gordon or both of you. What constitutes a case of an emergency?

>> Gordon: Well, you know, the customer determines makes the case for the emergency. We don't. You know, the customer determines the need if it's an emergency for them. So, we don't make -- we don't constitute what is an emergency.

>> Okay. Related to that, can those emergency requests be sent back via transfer once the agency is done with the records?

>> Gordon: Well, I -- Chris may be on. An operations director may be on at this time. Chris, are you there? If he is not, let me say this: That transfer cannot -- probably cannot be sent back -- it just depends what phase we are in, the number of people we have working, it very -- very difficult, you know, we are trying to handle reference requests and those things first. We haven't opened the doors wide open to transfers coming back in, however, it depends on the center. A conversation can be had with the director of that center, and if the resources are there, we may be able to get it back in. If not, we may ask you to hold onto it.

>> Related to that, maybe separately: What is the process of returning boxes? We have over a hundred boxes that need to go back to the FRC.

>> Gordon: It's the same thing.

You know, these are new transfers, you can do all of the paperwork now for any transfers that are coming into the record center. We have folks who are teleworking, who can review those transfers and give approvals, however, the actual physical shipping of those, we are going to have to work out with the FRC. There has to be a conversation to see when we can get that scheduled to come in. Again, based on the resources in the FRC. You know, if you are

sending us refiles or returning records it's kind of the same thing at this point. The doors are not wide open. And it's based on the resources in the center. So, there has to be a conversation between our T and D folks and -- and, you know, obviously the customer, if they are trying to send some records back. And folks, it just depends on the records center and the resources in the different record centers, the resources available.

>> Thank you, Gordon. We have questions about the FY2022 service and storage rates, when will NARA release those. I guess that's the same as the FY2022 IAA documents.

>> Gordon: That is the same -- the process -- we are in that process now. There was some meetings with our CFO and financial folks in the last couple of weeks as we look at that. We are in that process and we hope to have that out to you before the end of the fiscal year. A determination has not been made yet on the 2022 rates. That is in process. We will get it out to you as quickly as we can, once we have everything approved.

>> Has the -- here is another one: Has the national personnel record center in St. Louis received additional support or funding to decrease the backlog of Veterans request for official military personnel files?

>> Jay: I can handle that, Gordon. Yes, we have. They have -- we have received extra funding. We talk about the value of collaboration in our strategic plan. We talk about partnership with federal agencies and we have had what I think is a pretty good relationship has become a great relationship with the VA and the Department of Defense, the armed services, et cetera. So, we have taken steps to address the backlog using external funding and external support. I will say the major ingredient that will help us improve the servicing of personnel requests in St. Louis will be for the country to improve the health metrics with the pandemic. The State of Missouri where we are located for the national personnel records center was one of the first ones hit very hard by the Delta Variant. And again, as we see the health metrics improve that will allow us to bring even more resources to bear on the backlog at the NPRC.

>> Thank you, Jay. We have been getting a lot of questions around the 2022 deadline and different aspects of them. I think in the interest of consolidating some of these questions. We will just kind of move them to the end when we are going to address that at large. They do seem to be revolving around how -- will NARA still be able to handle records shipped given that we have been closed. And things of that nature.

>> Jay: Okay.

>> Gordon: You want to push that to the end you said, or --

>> Unless -- I will open it up if you want to comment on it now, Gordon.

>> Gordon: You know, I would say this, it just depends when we open up. We will be making -- we are still on target currently on M-19-21, so, you know, we

will be there. I am sure there will be a point that folks will have to plan, you know, those records the huge amount of records coming in. We have to plan that that and plan that with agencies, but we certainly would like to know well in advance and have some conversations with agencies as we bring those records in. Obviously they are all going to be in the door by December 31st of 2022 not likely. But obviously will we have the approvals of those coming in, it may be some time we take to bring those in, in an efficient manner. The plan is to get the records in. If the customers want us to secure and manage those records, we will get those records in.

>> Thank you, Gordon. We do have sort of a hypothetical assuming the pandemic does design in say FY22 third quarter will the FRCs have sufficient staff to process the wave of incoming boxes.

>> Gordon: I will give you hypothetical response. Assuming everything is, you know, backed is that what they are asking? And if we are, if we are with our staff and we have all of our staff come back, you know, yeah, assume everything is well we will be back and we will have sufficient staff to do that. Yes.

>> Thank you, Gordon. I do see that Pam has been answering comments in the YouTube chat, we appreciate -- I appreciate that. I think we are getting to most of them. If we still have any, please submit those, and we will keep Gordon and Jay around to the end and hopefully we will pick them up then.

>> Gordon: Okay. Thank you.

>> With that, I would like to welcome Margaret Hawkins to present on tribal consultations.

>> Margaret: Thank you Arian. Welcome everyone. I appreciate you making it to BRIDG this morning. Next slide. So I am here today to talk about a new requirement for submitting record schedules this has been promulgated through an AC memo that's linked here and you can also find it on our website. So, I will talk a bit about the requirement. Its background and its implementation. So, just to start with just laying out what the requirement is it is beginning as of August 1, all newly certified submitted schedules will require an indication of what I am just going to generally call tribal consultation status. Which means we need to know does your records schedule require consultation with tribal entities; and if yes, has it been completed. If not, what is the plan for that. I am going to go into all of this in a little more detail. I kind of just wanted to say what the basic requirement is. Next slide.

So, before we get into the details of this, you may be wondering why do we have this new requirement. And it's as a result of a presidential memorandum on tribal consultation that came out of just this spring. And that -- or actually in January, I'm sorry. In January, and it reinforces a long-standing Executive Order EO13175 that was issued November 2009. And this Executive Order mandates

regular and robust communication with Tribal Governments in the development of federal policies that have tribal implications. So, this EO is covering a large swath of activities in the government and mandated the tribal consultation for a variety of government activities.

So, when the presidential memorandum was issued in January NARA developed its draft NARA Tribal Consultation Plan it is on our website should you wish to see it. And it indicates NARA's commitment to tribal consultation, including a requirement for record schedules, so that's why we are here today. NARA has a lot of activities we are got the Federal Record Centers we are digitizing our holdings. We are opening facilities. We are closing facilities. There is a wide variety of activity that is may take place in NARA that may end up requiring tribal consultation. But here today I am just here to talk about the requirement for records schedules.

Next slide.

So, as I mentioned earlier, one of the major things is that we are requiring written indication of tribal consultation status upon certifying and submitting a schedule. If it's not needed, we just need a simple statement noting that it's not needed. As I note down at the bottom of the slide E-mail communication is sufficient. We do require it in writing. It does not have to be formal correspondence. It does not need to be, you know, signed by the head of the agency or anything like that. What we are requiring from the records officer or the senior agency official for records management an E-mail stating for instance, that tribal consultation is not needed. If on the other hand, you have conducted a tribal consultation and you have results from that. You would also convey that to us in writing. If it's not needed and not conducted we would need to know what your plan is for that. We will not be necessarily keeping schedules open on the books for years. If someone is just sorting through this. But if you have a clear plan we may leave those schedules on the book. On the books.

And as I mentioned before, these would be submitted at the time of schedule certification.

For instance, I am the certifying official for General Records Schedules. And about 8:30 this morning I certificated identified a schedule for the COVID-19 attestation and vaccine records that Lawrence had mentioned in his announcement upcoming later in the fall.

When I -- when I hit the button, in the ERA as many of you are familiar with doing that. Then I sent E-mail to the appraiser for that schedule stating tribal consultation was not needed for these records. We will talk a little bit more as I go through about how those determinations might be made. It's a fairly simple process. I did those right after one after the other.

Next slide.

So, let me -- now that I have talked a little bit about the logistics of how it's done.

You know, an obvious question would be: What might have tribal interest? And really what we are looking at is schedules with what I am I put up here a clear connection to tribal interests.

We are not looking for type of -- looking for hypothetical tenuous connections on how a records schedule may impact tribes we are looking at something that is very clear.

For instance, when I was doing the COVID attestation certification this morning, you know, this is -- these are records that affect federal employees, visitors just more general population.

So, that would not have a clear connection to tribal interests specifically.

The other thing is, another example is all people, generally speaking, are affected by IRS taxation policy and IRS forms. We wouldn't expect the IRS to say, hey, members of tribes may be filling out these forms; therefore, we should consult with them. That's what I would call sort of just way too broad of a connection.

So, we are not looking at -- the question is what are we looking at. That's where we really expect agencies to be consulting with their own agency tribal coordinator. Our tribal coordinator is Jay Vasanco, also our Chief Operating Officer the Executive Order requires that all agencies have a senior agency official for tribal consultation and coordination.

So, you should have one in our agency. Also, you would want to be consulting with agency program offices. They are the ones who are conducting the business processes that may affect tribal entities and will presumably be able to work through that issue.

NARA is not going to be able to -- for 283 federal agencies -- figure out each and every business process that may have tribal implications. We are really looking to agencies, you know, your records you know your business processes, to be making these determinations.

Also, it has come up in a question, you know, well, we wouldn't want to be just sending E-mails to tribal entities. There is over 500 of them. There is probably a national clearinghouse we should be using. We shouldn't just be sending out E-mails that came in as a question a day or so ago. Completely agree with that. Tribal Governments are sovereign governments. They -- they most agencies who interact with them routinely have very robust offices with protocols, procedures, it's handled very carefully. We would never expect a records officer just to be you know trying to send E-mail out to 500 tribal entities it is not something to conduct without consultation within your agency. Next slide.

So I talked about right now we are -- if you have a schedule that you are submitting you would be sending an E-mail stating whether or not tribal consultation is required. In the future, we will be building this into ERA 2.0 it's going to be at the schedule level. And we will -- it's going to be very simple as

it's in draft right now is -- will be a pick list where you will have a field for tribal consultation required, you say no which is for instance let's say this ERA 2.0 when I certified the schedule this morning I would say no. Or I say yes. Or yes and completed. Next slide.

So, I also wanted to talk a little bit about where this is not required. This is not required for any schedules that were submitted before August 1, 2021. When I say submitted and certified, I mean newly submitted and certified. We have, I am going to say, maybe four or five come in since August 1, not including the one I just submitted this morning. Consultation is also not required for Capstone forms while we have NA1005 for verification of Capstone the underlying disposition is handled through the GRS. So, that was GRS was signed and transmitted before August 1. When we do an update at some point. And recertify it. We will be handling that at the National Archives since we are the certifying agency.

Also, let's say you do conduct tribal consultation, you are not required to submit internal documentation about it. But we would need to know what I will call the upshot of it is what transpired. If you did submit package of information about it, it will be added to the schedule case file in NARA just for your information.

Next slide.

All right. I am already to questions. I guess we can open it up to questions.

>> Thank you, Maggie. As a reminder, put your questions in the YouTube chat or E-mail them to [rm.communications@nara.gov](mailto:rm.communications@nara.gov). Are you looking at previously submitted or previously approved schedules for possible tribal issues?

>> Margaret: As I mentioned, we are this requirement is for those submitted beginning August 1st, however, I would encourage any agent satisfy if they have approved schedule that they have concerns about the disposition and how it might relate to tribal interest to consult within their agency. As I mentioned before, you have a tribal office you have the program offices but we are not requiring it.

>> Thank you. Here is another question that's come in: Will ERA 2.0 include a check box for tribal consultations to cut down on the amount of E-mail to keep track of for draft disposition authorities?

>> Margaret: As I mentioned on one of the slides, we will be handling that yes. The answer is yes, to make it short. Yes, we will be in ERA 2.0 and there will be a drop-down pick list to indicate the tribal consultation status. Other questions?

>> I don't see any at this time. But stick around Maggie, we will give people an opportunity to stick in their questions. If we go to the next slide, please, we will open up the general with question and answer portion of today's meeting and have questions from the chat or sent to us that we haven't gotten yet. I will invite Lawrence to come back and tackle the first question. The digitization standards for permanent records, when will the draft be approved? Any

updates would be appreciated.

>> Lawrence: Thanks Arian, that's a good question. I touched on when talking about goal 3, the digitization continues to be a focus for us. We are still in the last stages of adjudicating comments and expect that they will be sent over to OMB for final review. I wish I could give you an ETA on when they are going to be published, but as you all know, OMB works on a different timeline that we do not control. And we need to wait to see what concerns they may have when they see our final adjudication of all of the comments we received. All I can say is stay tuned, we are actively working on it. And hope we can get this resolved and published and final as soon as possible.

>> Thank you, Lawrence. We do have a couple of questions around the exception exemption process; do agencies have to resubmit SF115 and exception package for records previously approved to be scanned and destroyed?

>> Lawrence: So, that's a good question. And it does relate to the previous question about digitization. So, we have been saying all along continues to still be the case that the standards need to be published in regulations as final and that's where we are. We are still working through that. In order for agencies to be able to apply disposition and dispose of the source paper records.

So, there is going to be two paths we envision for how this will work. If the standards are fully met, once they are published by the agency doing the scanning, then there will be a simple path to disposition using GRS that we are developing. For agencies who have scanned records, the legacy records have been scanned do not meet those standards then we will have to work with you on with a schedule and make sure that we can review that as part of that process before disposition can be applied. So, this is all going to be clarified, we are working on some guidance products and more information relating to the various paths. And the implementation that will begin to take place once the standards are published. But we need to get that to point first, and then we can talk with you all about what the follow-on guidance for agencies in terms of implementing the standards will look like.

>> So thank you. Related also to the exception process, did we have a template for points we would like to be covered in requests for exemptions.

>> Lawrence: Yes. We received that question before. And I know everyone is looking for an easy path for, you know, how we are going to submit exceptions. Hey, I am guilty of that as well. We really made a conscious decision when we issued the bulletin covering information about exceptions to the requirements in M-19-21. One of the things that we had talked about internally, and I am sure we have talked about with agencies as well, is that all of the requests that we have received and that we are going to continue to receive differs substantially from one request to another. It's very difficult to apply a standardized template



for agencies to use when submitting these requests. One of the things that we have been doing is working with agencies and there is contact information in the bulletin, on what is the kind of information that needs to be submitted. There are some basic pieces of information like scheduling authority, scope complexity that needs to be a part of the justification that goes along with the exception. We can work with you on that. It's -- it's just that each request is complex, and really needs to be worked through case by case so if you have any questions about whether or not you have enough information or too much information, please get in touch with us and we can provide you feedback to help you develop your request.

>> So thank you. I have got another digitization related question. Is there any status or change to the requirement also included with the digitization regulations regarding that all agencies must review schedules 10 years old or older every five years, is this expected to go through as is?

>> Lawrence: So, yes. This is Lawrence again. There is no update on that requirement. We did issue the communication and we -- as we communicated before, we are making that commitment. That agencies review on this regular timeframe schedules to make sure they are current and applicable.

So, we are expecting that the regs that includes that information is expected to go through as is, we haven't received any concerns and from what conversations I have had with agencies, I think most agree it is a good requirement. And really something that is needed.

>> Thank you, Lawrence. And sort of just one more, probably be helpful if you reiterated the process by which the 2022 deadline would need to get modified.

>> Lawrence: So, the process is one where we need to coordinate with OMB. The targets that are established in M-19-21 were issued by joint memo with OMB and NARA. NARA cannot independently make changes to the target we discussed it within NARA, we understand the impact it has had. We have not yet had conversations with OMB at a very detailed level to discuss changes to the requirements that are currently in M-19-21.

As I noted, we are working with them on our draft strategic plan and I expect that we will have those conversations to make sure that we can bring the strategic plan and M-19-21 or what successive memo comes out from the administration if a successor memo comes out from this administration that will bring those in alignment.

>> Thank you, Lawrence. I think we will move off of sort of 19-21 topics and exceptions we have a question on the draft strategic plan. Does civil interaction equate to activism and is that appropriate for federal employees?

>> Lawrence: So, that's an interesting question related to goal 4. And that objective.

The answer is no. Really what this objective is about is an internally facing

objective about NARA's workplace culture. It relates more generally to civility and how NARA staff treat each other. And really focuses on mutual respect. So, this has been a priority for the Archivist of the United States trying to build a culture where we are a civil NARA, and work with each other in a way that we expect to be treated. And it's not about anything external it's not about activism it's about building a workplace where we would all want to get up in the morning and go to work and feel good and positive about where we are when we come to work.

>> Thank you, Lawrence. I think we have covered the ones we have in the queue on those topics. Is Gordon still here -- is for Gordon still here?

>> Gordon: Yes.

>> Okay. Gordon, we will put you on the hot seat now. Are there any plans to make updates to ARCIS; and if so, when we can expect the updates?

>> Gordon: As a matter of fact, there are plans for a -- just a -- I don't know want to say a whole new ARCIS there are plans to update our plans for ARCIS that we hope to have completed some time during 2023 is the plan, I'm sorry. Let me see, is it 2023, it's to be in the next fiscal year, sometime in 2022 is the plan. We will have a new platform will that change how our customers interface I don't think so right away, at least having ARCIS up on the new platforms have greater usability. We will have to look at and see if there is a way to develop additional uses for customers. I do know many customers would like to get reporting and those things out of ARCIS for now, those reports and things that you need can be generated about your account manager or our customers don't have access to those reports in that way, if there is something that you need or want out of ARCIS currently reach out to your account manager and have them pull build or develop some sort of reporting for you they can do on some sort of frequency.

>> Thank you. Another one: Given the pandemic and only partial openings at Federal Record Centers are the centers able to do disposals with their contractors or have disposals and also permanent transfers been put on hold during the pandemic? In other words, if disposals and transfers have been delayed could that also delay intake of records due to space issues at the record centers.

>> Gordon: There is some disposal being done, there is some that is delayed. Obviously we have to have the resources in the building to get it done.

We are not doing it at the level that we normally are in each of the centers. But there is a report that I see almost weekly where there is some disposal that is being done. On the transfers, I would have to say those are going to be delayed also, obviously because of resources.

So, you know, it is just something that we are trying to work through.

>> Thank you, Gordon. I think there is a related question about, what is the backlog? Is it one year? I guess you have -- what is the estimated backlog for

destructions?

>> Gordon: Oh, I don't have that handy. Let me say this -- I don't know if Chris is on the phone. Let me say this, if -- I am not sure where the concern is for the customer, however, let me say this, once a backlog and the customer concurs with the backlog, just want to remind customers if we don't get it done, or get the disposal done within 90 days, you are no longer charged for those records. So there is no storage charge to you on those records if that is the concern of the questioner. I am not sure if that is the concern.

But, again, you know, we will dispose of records as we can with the resources. We are disposing of records as I speak in the centers that are open that have the resources to do it. But I will go back to if the concern is, hey, we are not disposing something that you have concurred on the 13001 and spreadsheets T and D send you the billing for the storage stops after 90 days.

>> Gordon, Chris is online, if you can hear me. The disposable backlog is north of a million cubic feet right now, which is substantial. We have faced larger challenges in the past. We are working within operations to develop plans to Friday to get caught up in 22. It's all dependent on the wonderful COVID bug and how quickly we can reopen and mobilize. But we are very much aware of the backlog, as Gordon said it drops off after the 90-day cycle. We will try to manage this effectively as we can as we reopen the FRC.

>> Gordon: Thank you, Chris.

>> Yes, thank you, Chris. I want to shout out, we did get a compliment the staff at Washington National Record Center has done outstanding job with the Peace Corps with records request and thank you to everyone.

>> Gordon: Thank you. Thank you to Shannon and his team.

>> Maggie -- I think that's all for Gordon. Turn the hot seat over to Maggie, if she is still available.

>> Margaret: I am still here.

>> Thank you. Good morning. Has the appraisal moratorium lifted based on the Crew versus NARA ICE litigation if so can scheduling go forward?

>> okay. So, first off, I will answer the question and then give a little background on where the question may have emanated from. There has not ever been a moratorium on appraising scheduling records as a result of the Crew litigation. Since January, when the judge made his ruling, we have sent approximately 75 schedules to the Federal Register just since January. And of that 75, a large percentage of those have already made their way through the public commenting process and have been approved by the Archivist. So I am concerned there may be a sense out there we are not appraising and scheduling records, because we are.

And just for those who may not know what is being referred to, a couple of years ago we -- NARA and Department of Homeland Security, specifically ICE, was

sued over records schedule related to detainees. And the judge vacated in January -- made a ruling and vacated several of the items and their disposition, which we are now reexamining with ICE. But it did not -- there were no broad sweeping government-wide actions to come out of that and no moratorium on scheduling. However, we have been reexamining our appraisal processes. And we are in the midst of a large project to do so. In the meantime, we have been carrying on with our work with some internal adjustments and will be continuing to work on that project through the fall.

And I would say for agencies, the impact has probably been minimal. We may be asking more questions. We are certainly look -- we always look closely at schedules for request a fair number of revisions and that's continued. But in general, though, we are processing schedules.

>> Thank you. I think this question came up in the context of the FOIA discussion and the strategic plan, I will throw it out to you Maggie: What is the oldest archived document that is still confidential?

>> Margaret: All right. That's kind of a fun question. So, there is a couple of things here. So, one -- kind of honing in on what is the oldest document can be a little tricky because NARA in the accession holdings we track things at the series level not so much the document level. However, I did reach out to someone while we were hearing the other presentations and answering questions, and kind of just from a sort of more global government standpoint, the ICECAP which is the, let's see if I -- I will have to look at my notes here. Interagency Security Classification Appeals Panel, known as ICECAP. We like that acronym because it's easier to say. The ICECAP intakes requests for mediation adjudication of disputes over agencies keeping records classified and the ICECAP has allowed a handful of agencies to hold records up to a hundred years old and plus. In particular, there are some related to Fort Knox, and in particular some related to the National Security Agency. So, those may not be accessioned in NARA they may be in agency custody or they may be in NARA custody. So, some documents just to sum up can be quite old, although the goal is of course to have them declassified much earlier than that more in the 25-year timeframe.

>> Thank you. That was a very interesting answer. I just want to acknowledge we have a comment Tommy, we have got your comment, I will read it and see if anybody wants to respond. It takes time for a federal agency to pull classified hard copy permanent records from a records center, declassify the records and then offer the declassified records to NARA as a direct offer for accessioning. As OMB memorandum M-19-21 currently stands, that process doesn't work if they try to accession hard copy permanent records after 31 December, 2022 unless the federal agency takes the extra step to digitize the hard copy permanent records. Would there be allowance made in such cases? I will just

throw that comment out if anybody wants to take it as a jump ball.

>> Margaret: So, I will answer it. What this relates to is agencies doing permanent withdrawals from the record centers. And as Tommy mentions, removing them going through the declassification process which can be lengthy and then making direct offers to NARA. And what -- what I would encourage is any agency since NARA has not made a blanket exception for these although it's been asked, and certainly Lawrence is sitting here and can take the information same with Jay Trainer it's not been granted I would encourage any agency who is facing that to put it in their exception request. Their specific exception request. So, it seems like some agencies are going to need to be the first one to do that. Lawrence I don't know if you wanted to add anything to that.

>> Yeah, I think that question is always going to be, as I mentioned, talking about exceptions. They are all different they are all very unique case by case scenarios that we need to think through together. So, for that question and anything related to it or similar in -- in you no he -- a specific agency scenario, all I can say you just need to get in touch with us. We will discuss with you what the specific scenario is. And we can give you some advice based on that scenario.

>> Thank you. We do have a question about the GRS and COVID. Will NARA in working on the COVID vaccination attestation General Records Schedule efforts also be working with GSA to develop a government-wide form for the attestation and have that form marked appropriately to reflect health privacy categories once completed. A follow-up if NARA plans to work with GSA to establish such a form with the GRS it's helpful so agencies do not expend efforts for do so agency by agency.

>> Margaret: We at NARA are only responsible for providing disposition. So, we will be moving forward on that. It would be up to GSA to develop a form government-wide if they choose. If they do, presumably it would be covered by the GRS regardless if it's a form or an agency has an individual one.

>> Thank you. So this is a question for Gordon or Lawrence about ownership and legal liability for disposal delays greater than 90 days. What happens if records are approved by everyone to be destroyed but are still available if a discovery order comes in?

>> Gordon: I am going to punt to the Chief Records Officer on that one.

>> Lawrence: I think the question really gets to the 90-day disposal cycle I can respond more generally you can respond from the FRC perspective. More generally this is kind of records management. You know the records are available and discovery comes through they have to be provided, that's why we spend so much effort making sure that the schedules, manuals, the implementation are all in alignment so records are destroyed in the schedule when they are scheduled to be destroyed. That's timely disposition is really

important. So, I think there may be an angle I am not going to touch on related to (inaudible) FRC -- more generally, and certainly how we do training and how agencies manage their records, there is a legal requirement to provide records that are needed for legal action if those records are available.

>> Thank you. And I will just open this question and you can -- either one of you can take it. What is the expectation for permanent hard copy records residing at a Federal Records Center by December 31, 2022. Will NARA expect that the transferring agency arrange for digitization if that is the case will the transferring agency be able to obtain digitization services from NARA.

>> Gordon: I think we have said before you can transfer any records into us prior to -- prior to that date. They do not have to be digitized coming in. That's why we said, you know, send those records in, and they do not have to be digitized before they come in. After that date, permanent records coming to NARA will need to be digitized after that date any temporary records will not come into the FRCP.

>> Thank you, Gordon. I will put out a last call for questions. As we are getting near the bottom of the hour here. Maggie can you post a definition of ICECAP what the acronym stands for?

>> Margaret: So, I can't post anything in this session but I can speak more slowly I realized I rattled it off quickly it's a lot it's the Interagency Security Classification Appeals Panel.

So, Interagency Security Classification Appeals Panel. ICECAP. And you can go read up on that and look at some of what their decisions have been, and what some of the decisions are. Also, I would actually point people to a recent blog post I found it completely fascinating. One of the analysts took a document and went through and explained what was still classified and why. It's very detailed for a blog post. And it's quite interesting and it really gives a lot of insight into the declassification process. And it was, I think it came out last week ISU, I can't remember what it stands for.

>> The Information Security Oversight Office.

>> Information Security Oversight Office. I just use the acronym. The Information Security Oversight Office has a wonderful blog, and I believe it was -- it came out a week or so ago.

>> Is it the one on Soviet chemical weapons, Maggie?

>> Margaret: Yes.

>> I will post that in the YouTube chat for everyone on YouTube, they can grab that blog there.

>> Margaret: Great.

>> Any other questions? We go through our list to make sure we captured everything.

I think we have got everything. As a reminder to folks, please feel free to submit

your BRIDG comments to [rm.communication@nara.gov](mailto:rm.communication@nara.gov). If I could have the next slide, please.

And we will just remind everybody that the next BRIDG meeting will be Tuesday, October 19, 2021. I want to thank everyone for their participation via our chat. We had a lively discussion there by submitting their questions. With that, I will turn it over to Lawrence, if you want to close the meeting.

>> Lawrence: Thanks, Arian. Nothing more to add. I want to echo Arian, thanks for your lively feedback and the number of questions that we received. We will be able to follow-up and make sure the materials are posted online, including the recording. For all of those people, given it's August, are on vacation, they can go back and re-listen to this BRIDG meeting in full. Thank you again. Looking forward to seeing you next fiscal year October 19. Until then, sent out communications to to RM Communications. Have a great day everyone.

(End of meeting).