



# National Archives and Records Administration

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Date : July 13, 2007

Reply to  
Attn of : Office of Inspector General (OIG)

Subject : Management Letter #07-11, The Independent and Objective Oversight of the Electronic Records Archive Program

To : Allen Weinstein, Archivist of the United States (N)

The purpose of this memorandum is to formally bring to your attention information specific to the Electronic Records Archive (ERA) program. A recent briefing by the Chief Information Officer (CIO) amplifies ongoing concerns regarding the possibility of success of this mission critical program. While this office has consistently defined the ERA as the number one management challenge for this agency, the program now finds itself beset by delivery delays, cost overruns and staffing shake-ups. The prospect for success, however "success" is currently defined, is uncertain.

Since inception of the ERA program, the Office of Inspector General (OIG) has lacked the resources necessary to meet our statutory mission as defined in §2 of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (as amended), which states an OIG:

- (1) conducts and supervises audits and investigations relating to programs and operations of the establishment;
- (2) provides leadership and coordination and recommends policies for activities designed (A) to promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in the administration of, and (B) to prevent and detect fraud and abuse in, such programs and operations; and
- (3) provides a means for keeping the head of the establishment and the Congress fully and currently informed about problems and deficiencies relating to the administration of such programs and operations and the necessity for the progress of corrective action.

To address these responsibilities, §6(a)(7) of the Act defines that an Inspector General is "to select, appoint, and employ such officers and employees as may be necessary for carrying out the functions, powers, and duties of the office . . . ."

In a briefing document dated December 1, 2001, this office defined that "[t]he OIG has had limited input into the ERA program from its genesis to the point where we are at today. Resources have not been assigned to the OIG to facilitate our independent analysis of the program and to serve as a basis to report to the Archivist, Congress and the American people on the status of the ERA program." The document went on to warn that "stakeholders actively involved in designing, building and coordinating the deployment of ERA may be blinded from identifying issues that exist and call out for identification."

Annual budget requests for dedicated OIG resources to apply to the ERA program have gone unfulfilled to the point where today the OIG continues to lack the capability to conduct necessary

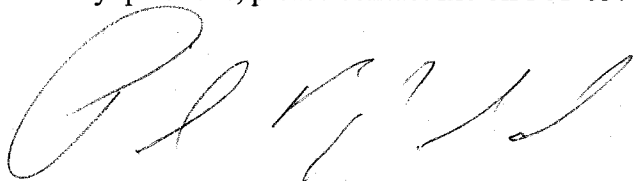
audits and investigations in this mission critical program area. These acute resource constraints have been reported consistently in our Semiannual Reports to Congress. For example in the reporting period April 1, 2003- September 30, 2003 we stated the following:

*The Inspector General has actively and persistently sought funding to hire personnel with specific expertise to monitor the design and implementation of the Electronic Records Archive (ERA) program. These funding requests have not been addressed. The urgency of obtaining these resources is bolstered by external reports presented to the Archivist in this reporting period by the General Accounting Office (GAO) and National Academy of Science (NAS). As we have identified the ERA program as the top management challenge, we continue to emphasize our belief that this program commands OIG coverage in compliance with the requirements of the Inspector General Act.*

Whereas no such resources have been provided, the OIG has no ability to define what has caused schedule delays and clouded the definition of and prospects for success of the ERA program. In fact, we find it alarming that the prospect for timely receipt of Lockheed-Martin deliverables were defined to the OIG as favorable by the Executive Officer for the ERA program in May 2007 when two months later we were briefed by the CIO that the program is beset with operational delays, funding set backs and material staffing issues.

An NHE staffing chart lists over forty NARA employees. Funds committed to Lockheed-Martin run into the millions. Funds and associated dedicated ERA related FTE's for the OIG since ERA program inception is zero. In order to enhance the opportunity for future program success and to assess the basis and potential legal implications of delays, failed deliverables, cost overruns, etc., I request that the OIG be provided with the resources necessary to meet the needs of our stakeholders.

We look forward to your response as to how you plan to address this condition. Should you have any questions, please contact me on 301-837-1532.



Paul Brachfeld  
Inspector General