



**NASA's Response to Managing Government Records Directive  
Senior Agency Official (SAO) Annual Report – 2020**

I am pleased to provide NASA's SAO Annual Report for 2020.

Our Agency has made tremendous progress toward digital government through data management governance and continued deployment of enterprise-wide systems and services that will enable better management of resultant digital records. We understand the importance of managing our records to preserve the legacy of NASA's exciting work and missions. Thus, though slowed by COVID, we are proud to continue transferring permanent records to the National Archives.

We appreciate your contributions and leadership of federal agencies as we all strive to improve our electronic records management. NASA and I look forward to collaborating with you and other agencies in the coming year toward our common goals.

You may contact NASA Records Officer, Patti Stockman, with any questions concerning our submitted SAO Report.

**Agency Records Officer:**

Name:	Patti Stockman
Agency Name:	NASA
Component:	Headquarters
Office:	Office of the CIO
Title:	Agency Records Officer
Mailing Address:	Office of the CIO 300 E Street SW Washington, DC 20546

Regards,

**JEFFREY SEATON** Digitally signed by JEFFREY SEATON  
Date: 2021.03.16 11:02:02 -04'00'

Jeff Seaton  
NASA Chief Information Officer



*Senior Agency Official for Records Management  
2020 Annual Report*

Provide the following information (required):

- Name of SAORM Jeff Seaton
- Position title NASA Chief Information Officer
- Address 300 E Street SW, Washington, DC 20546

**What agencies, bureaus, components, or offices are covered by this report and your position as SAORM and which will be reporting separately?**

*Please provide a list, and also indicate any that are new or have been changed due to reorganization or other circumstances.*

The SAO is responsible for Records Management (RM) in the entire Agency.

**1. Has the COVID-19 pandemic changed any policies or practices related to records management at your agency?**

- Yes
- No
- Do not know

*Please explain your response (include details of specific challenges, if applicable):*

COVID-19 and resultant teleworking did not create the need for any changes in records management requirements or processes.

**2. Does your agency have an established information governance framework that connects records management, data management, and other agency information lines of business? (A relationship between CIO, CDO, SAORM, DRO/ARO, RM Staff)**

- Yes
- No
- Do not know

*Please provide details on what support is needed:*

Several years ago, the Office of the Chief Information Officer (CIO) established NASA's Information Management (IM) Program to leverage tools, policies, and governance for the flow of information throughout the Agency – independent of the vehicle, system, platform, or tools through which it flows, and regardless of who owns the information. The overall aim of the IM Program is to establish an enterprise-wide understanding and strategy for management of key information assets and tools to optimize NASA information resources. The IM Program oversees functions of Records Management, Forms Management, Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA), the Scientific and Technical Information (STI) Program, Data Architecture, Federally Funded Research Publication Access, and Library Services. Each of these functional areas have working groups that guide decision-making and/or escalate issues to an Information Management Program Board, the Data Governance Board (DGB), or the Enterprise Change Control Board – each of which play unique roles in NASA's overall IT Governance Structure.

During the past year, the NASA DGB chaired by NASA's Chief Data Officer was established and chartered under the purview of the CIO who is the SAORM. The DGB sets and enforces NASA priorities for managing data, including records, as a strategic Agency asset to support its mission. Board members and ex-officio members are all top managers of every Agency mission and non-mission organization.

The DGB will set and enforce priorities for managing data as a strategic asset with domain prioritization of data sharing and Information Technology (IT) transformation efforts to address business needs across the NASA enterprise. With heavy involvement and support of CIO personnel, including IM staff, the Board's focus is on interoperability and data standards, strategic direction of data and information, and data products. The DGB will facilitate making data available to decision makers for informed decisions utilizing advanced analytics, artificial intelligence, machine learning, and other emerging technologies.

**3. Has your agency made progress towards managing all permanent records in an electronic format with appropriate metadata by December 31, 2022? (M-19-21, 1.2)**

Yes

No

Do not know

*Please explain your response (include specific goals and example metrics):*

NASA has made tremendous progress by developing and acquiring recent Data Governance Board approval of Agency core metadata standards for all new and existing data, including records. They closely parallel the Dublin Core standard and will ensure consistent tagging

Agency wide. The next step is distribution of the standard across organizations and implementation in data repositories . Many mission-oriented and other NASA data have existing metadata, but not necessarily the recently approved core tags.

Implementation of these standard tags will ensure consistency and facilitate records protections, search and retrieval, e-Discovery, and disposition for both temporary and permanent records, and all data.

When COVID interrupted, the Agency was partnering with NARA Special Media archivists on a plan to transfer Agency-wide Institutional digital and analog imagery in 5-year blocks to the National Archives. This transfer initiative will resume when both agencies are again operational with on-site staff. Not all of these analog records will be transferred by December 2022 and will be included in NASA's request for exceptions.

In addition, NASA has selected an enterprise Digital Asset Management (DAM) system by Dalet for the storage/management of moving imagery with its metadata. We are exploring the feasibility of also moving still digital imagery assets to the same DAM system. One NASA Center has digitized 162,000 photographic negatives in the last 3 years as well as 7,405 rolls of microfilmed documents toward the goal of retaining permanent records in electronic format.

NASA Centers are refining their inventories of records, identifying the business sources of the records, and pressing organizations to ensure fully digital processes and resultant records. The Agency has been moving toward fully digital processes over the past decade. For example, one NASA Center estimates that approximately 75% of its records produced in the last two years were entirely created and maintained electronically. They have conducted organizational audits, created metrics and are scrutinizing use cases to ensure thorough compliance with the December 31, 2022 mandate. This Center has digitized 398 boxes of legacy analog records, all now ready for transfer to the Archives under currently approved transfer requests (TRs) when Archives staff is able to accept them. That Center is digitizing an additional 21 boxes of legacy records to also be transferred to Archives at Laguna Niguel.

On the other hand, the Agency has roughly 7,200 cubic feet of permanent analog records stored in onsite facilities. Centers have plans to digitize many of them; however, COVID disrupted these plans and many of these permanent records will not be digitized or transferred from NASA by 2022. NASA also has considerable volume of analog imagery for which the Agency lacks resources to digitize, but which must ultimately transfer to the Archives.

Thus, while NASA is making good progress, particularly toward managing all new permanent records digitally, the Agency will not divest itself of all legacy permanent analog records.

NASA will be submitting a request for some exceptions to M-19-21, in accordance with guidance provided in NARA Bulletin 2020-01.

**4. Has your agency made progress towards managing all temporary records in an electronic format by December 31, 2022? (M-19-21, 1.3)**

Yes

No

Do not know

*Please explain your response (include specific goals and example metrics):*

Response explanations for Question 3 regarding (a) the newly approved NASA metadata standard, (b) the Agency selection of a DAM system for storage of digital imager with metadata, and (c) NASA efforts to ensure Agency business processes result in digital records are all also applicable to our management of temporary records management in digital formats.

In addition, NASA has deployed Office 365 across the entire agency and we anticipate a large percentage of the agency's temporary electronic records will ultimately reside in Office 365 repositories. With this in mind, NASA is conducting a two-year engagement to design and implement NARA-compliant records management functionality in Microsoft Teams, SharePoint Online, OneDrive, and Exchange. This implementation will include both in-place and records repository-based information lifecycle management methodologies and will support the agency's new metadata standard, as well as typical Federal records management requirements, such as eDiscovery, FOIA, and Privacy Act processing.

However, the Agency has nearly 19,000 cubic feet of temporary analog records stored in onsite facilities. Efforts to reappraise, destroy, or otherwise determine proper disposition of these records were interrupted by COVID. For multiple reasons, while NASA is making good progress, the Agency will not divest itself of all legacy temporary analog records.

NASA will be submitting a request for some exceptions to M-19-21, in accordance with guidance provided in NARA Bulletin 2020-01.

**5. Is your agency investing resources in IT to support the transition to electronic recordkeeping?**

Yes

No

Do not know

*Please explain your response. If Yes: Please include specific examples of resources and how this will support records management processes. If No or Do not know: Please explain.*

The NASA CIO has established an agency Digital Transformation team that strongly supports initiatives to provide enterprise-level innovations through digital tools. Included in this is the modernization of records management, not only through providing the ability to create and maintain electronic records, but with the ultimate objective to maximize automation of the management of those records to the fullest extent possible. This endeavor with RM is still largely exploratory, particularly in the RM area, but the agency is committed to building the framework for overall digital transformation.

A significant start was the Agency's investment in Information Governance Solutions' Virgo software into which the NASA Records Retention Schedules (NRRS) were migrated. This transformed the schedules from a set of numerous complex Microsoft Word tables into an accessible and searchable database format that will facilitate better management of e-records.

The OCIO hired an additional IT staffer who is fully dedicated to analysis of records management capabilities and issues in the enterprise wide Microsoft Office 365 suite of products, including the Teams and SharePoint environments. We anticipate that his work will result in informed purchases of additional IT tools to improve management of e-records across the Agency.

NASA is moving to more Enterprise-based solutions in which records will be managed with commonality. The Agency is in the process of establishing a standardized approach to Enterprise platform management. By creating a centralized governance and service management structure for platforms like Salesforce, ServiceNow and SharePoint Online, the Agency is able to create consistent methodologies for the intake, dissemination and retention of data.

**6. To meet the requirements of M-19-21, 1.3, related to records storage facilities, does your agency have plans to use commercial storage to replace agency-operated records centers and NARA Federal Records Centers by December 31, 2022? (M-19-21, 1.3)**

- Yes
- No
- Do not know

*Please explain your response (include specific goals and example metrics):*

Several NASA Centers that maintain analog records in onsite records storage facilities are working to disposition analog records from their Agency holdings. Centers were working toward quarterly milestone goals they had set to disposition those records. However COVID-19 halted their progress.

Date	Permanent/Temporary	Volume Onsite Holdings	Percentage Decrease
4Q2019	Temporary	21,859 cu ft	
4Q2020	Temporary	18,970 cu ft	13%
4Q2019	Permanent	8,358 cu ft	
4Q2020	Permanent	7,216 cu ft	14%

We note that “records centers” are defined by 36 CFR 1220.18 as a facility operated by the Archivist of the United States. Thus, no NASA records storage facilities are technically considered records centers.

Such NASA facilities are primarily large staging areas. However, NASA storage areas, while not having official NARA approval for records storage, have enjoyed tacit NARA concurrence. First, is Glenn Research Center (Ohio) records storage in underground WWII bunkers on their Plum Brook Station. Because these are underground, they are fully climate-controlled and not subject to flooding or other national disaster conditions. Second, is a records storage facility built by NASA Stennis Space Center in Mississippi following Hurricane Katrina to the facility standards now specified in 36 CFR 1234. Regional NARA staff have always expressed opinions that these storage areas possess satisfactory conditions for records storage, and a NARA representative followed and encouraged the building of the Stennis facility. Other NASA Centers store records in areas that meet most 36 CFR 1234 requirements.

NASA will not be able to meet the December 2022 milestone for eliminating our analog records holdings, nor will we transfer the remaining records to FRCs or commercial facilities. The Agency is developing a request for Agency exemptions from M-19-21 requirements following the criteria set forth in NARA Bulletin 2020-01.

**7. Does your agency have policies and procedures that include documentation to ensure records of newly appointed and outgoing senior officials\* are properly captured and/or processed and not improperly removed, altered, or deleted including electronic records and email?**

\*Senior officials are the heads of departments and independent agencies; their deputies and assistants; the heads of program offices and staff offices including assistant secretaries, administrators, and commissioners; directors of offices, bureaus, or equivalent; principal regional officials; staff assistants to those aforementioned officials, such as special assistants, confidential assistants, and administrative assistants; and career Federal employees, political appointees, and officers of the Armed Forces serving in equivalent or comparable positions.

- Yes
- No
- Do not know

*Please explain your response (include specific details of policies and procedures):*

NASA records management personnel brief incoming senior managers and their administrative staff on federal records and their responsibilities for the management thereof. They are provided with a brochure containing highlights of their responsibilities. Examples of such records are given and particular emphasis given to the importance of not using personal accounts for NASA business communications.

Prior to administration turnover, records management personnel provide in-person consultation with senior management and administrative staff to ensure the capture of the records of outgoing management.

Also, there is an exit checkout process for all departing employees, including managers, that assures and documents the capture or transition of records from one custodian to another continuing custodian. This assures proper records disposition.

**8. Do you, as the SAORM, see challenges within your agency in meeting the goal of fully-electronic recordkeeping?**

- Yes  
 No  
 Do not know

*Please explain your response (include details of specific challenges, if applicable):*

NASA expects to meet the goal of creating and managing all records electronically by the December 2022 milestone. However, our largest challenge is that of eliminating all legacy analog records by that date.

Because NASA has been a prolific records originator, but financial priorities of the Agency are in meeting Agency space and science missions, we do not foresee necessary resources to either digitize all legacy analog records, nor finance their movement to FRCs or commercial records centers. There will be a significant volume of analog records that will not have met their retention by the M-19-21 milestone and, therefore, we anticipate the Agency continuing to hold them until they meet their required retentions.

**9. Do you have suggestions for NARA to improve its engagement with you as the SAORM?**

- Yes  
 No  
 Do not know

*Please explain your response (include any comments on previous NARA SAORM engagements, topics for future engagements, or other suggestions):*