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# 2014 Senior Agency Official for Records Management Annual Report Analysis

National Archives and Records Administration

November 23, 2015

## Executive Summary

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The vision of the 2012 OMB/NARA *Managing Government Records Directive (M-12-18)* is to reform records management across the Executive branch and to develop a 21st-century framework for the management of government records. The *Directive* outlines specific goals and calls on federal agencies to improve transparency, efficiency, and accountability in recordkeeping practices.

The *Directive* required agencies to designate a Senior Agency Official for Records Management (SAO) responsible for meeting the goals of the *Directive*. The SAO is required to submit an annual report outlining their agency's progress toward implementing the goals of the *Directive* to the Chief Records Officer for the U.S. Government.

NARA provided SAOs with a reporting template for 2014. The template focused on three major areas. Agencies were asked to provide updates on their progress toward: 1) implementing methods of training staff on records management responsibilities by December 31, 2014; 2) managing all email electronically by December 31, 2016; and 3) managing permanent electronic records electronically by December 31, 2019.

The reporting period was open from October 15, 2014 to December 15, 2014. NARA sent the template to all SAOs at the department level and all independent agencies. We received reports from 84 agencies, for a response rate of 94%. The analysis of the 2014 SAO Annual Reports shows agencies are:

- Using a variety of tools and methods in working towards managing all email in electronic format by 2016. The majority of SAOs (93%) reported they would meet this goal by the end of 2016.
- Exploring the Capstone<sup>1</sup> approach (NARA Bulletin 2013-02) for managing email. A substantial number of agencies reported they were considering or implementing the approach. This observation was also noted in the 2014 Records Management Self-Assessment.

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<sup>1</sup> In August 2013, NARA issued a new policy for managing email called "Capstone" ([NARA Bulletin 2013-02](#)). Capstone is an innovative approach to managing email. It is not a technology. When adopting the Capstone approach, agencies must identify those email accounts most likely to contain records that should be preserved as permanent. Agencies determine Capstone accounts based on their business needs. Capstone officials will generally be the top-level senior officials of an agency, but may also be other key decision makers at lower levels of the agency.

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- Exploring ways to manage permanent electronic records in electronic format by 2019. The majority of SAOs (87%) reported they would meet this goal. Agencies mentioned using a variety of similar electronic records management approaches under different terms such as electronic document management systems (EDMS), electronic records management systems (ERMS), or records management applications (RMA) to try to meet this goal. While many agencies have formed working groups to meet this goal, a number of agencies are in the initial planning phase.
- Addressing records management training. The vast majority of agencies reported making substantial progress in implementing records management training methods for all staff. Further, many agency records officers have obtained NARA's Certificate of Federal Records Management Training.
- Seeking assistance from NARA regarding how to successfully implement the *Directive*. In particular, small and micro-agencies cite limited resources and personnel as challenges they face in successfully meeting electronic recordkeeping requirements.
- Using commercially available software products. Many software products were mentioned, and agencies indicate they are using existing, commercial products instead of developing custom software applications.

In summary, agencies are moving towards the 2016 goal of managing email records electronically. Email management has become a visible, important priority for agencies and several SAOs indicated they had awareness briefings with agency heads on the importance of properly managing email. Agencies are also taking strides to improve records management training, especially ensuring that all agencies' records officers have been through NARA's Certificate of Federal Records Management Training program.

Agencies are still considering plans and strategies to meet the 2019 goal. Agencies are asking for clarification on how to meet the goal. NARA will use the 2014 SAO Annual Reports in developing guidance, policies, and projects to help federal agencies improve records management as they transition to a digital government.

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## 2014 Senior Agency Official for Records Management Annual Report Analysis

### 1. BACKGROUND

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) jointly issued the *Managing Government Records Directive (M-12-18)* on August 24, 2012. The *Directive* required all agencies to designate a Senior Agency Official (SAO) to oversee the records management program and the implementation of the *Directive* at their agency.

Each agency was required to name their first SAO by November 15, 2012. The *Directive* also requires each agency to reaffirm its SAO annually. NARA maintains a [list of current SAOs](#) on its website. The SAO must annually report to NARA on their agency's progress toward implementing the goals of the *Directive*.

### 2. METHODOLOGY

In early October 2014, NARA emailed the 2014 SAO annual report template directly to SAOs and copied agency records officers. The reporting period ran through December 15, 2014. The template contained 10 questions. The first set of questions focused on managing email, permanent electronic records, and new cloud program initiatives. NARA asked four questions concerning the training requirements outlined in the *Directive*. NARA continued to ask for information on best practices and what NARA could do to assist agencies in meeting records management challenges.

### 3. ANALYSIS OF REPORTS

The reports varied in length and detail. Some agencies provided brief generalizations while others provided substantive responses. Generally, larger agencies appear to be addressing the provisions of the *Directive* and meeting deadlines. However, many small and micro-agencies report difficulty in meeting *Directive* goals due to limited resources and personnel. NARA used both statistical and narrative analysis to draw conclusions. Responses were compared to other questions to identify trends described in this report.

## Responses to 2014 SAO Reporting Template

This section contains NARA's analysis of each question on the 2014 SAO Annual Report. This section includes excerpts of agency responses where appropriate. NARA received 84 reports for a 94% response rate. In addition to an overall report, the Department of Defense submitted responses for each of their constituent components. Individual responses of the components are included in the statistical and narrative analysis of this report where appropriate. Five agencies did not submit reports after multiple contacts by NARA:

- AbilityOne Commission
- Department of Commerce
- Denali Commission
- Presidio Trust
- US Office of Special Counsel

*Question 1 – Please list all agencies and components covered by this report and your position as SAO.*

NARA used this question to identify the specific agencies, bureaus, and components covered in each SAO report. This information also helps NARA identify gaps in SAO coverage. Most agencies outlined the specific components covered by the report. However, it is not always clear if responses to other questions consider the practices below the headquarters level at an agency.

*Question 2 – Is your agency going to meet the Directive goal to manage both permanent and temporary email records in an accessible electronic format by December 31, 2016? (Goal 1.2)*

The majority of SAOs (93%) reported they would meet this goal by the end of 2016. This section includes analysis of individual DoD components.

Agencies reported various approaches to meeting this goal. For example, some agencies have adopted a Capstone approach to managing their email. Others describe approaches that are not automated and require employees to actively manage email. Some agencies reported they are still printing and filing their email into paper recordkeeping systems, which they will have to change in order to meet the goal outlined in the *Directive* to manage all email records in an accessible electronic format.

Specific approaches described in the reports include:

- Adopting or considering the Capstone approach
- Working with NARA to schedule or update schedules for email records.
- Relying on end users to determine the records status of an email. Many agencies are trying to automate this decision.
- Seeking enterprise-wide solutions.
- Establishing a working group or tiger team.
- Purchasing and implementing commercially available products.

Question 2 provided the opportunity for SAOs to briefly describe how they are managing email. The following table contains descriptions from agencies that appear to have robust and comprehensive approaches to meeting this goal. The information contained here may prove useful to other agencies looking for real world examples of managing email.

Selected Agencies that Appear to have Completed the <i>Directive 1.2</i> Goal or have Articulated Clear Plans to Meet the Goal	
Agency Name	Summary of Report Response
<b>Department of Defense (DoD) – Department of the Navy (DON)</b>	The DON reports that it has met this goal for shore-based staff by using an electronic records management application (ERMA). DON reports they are looking to increase capabilities by deploying the Department of the Navy Tasking, Records, and Consolidated Knowledge Enterprise Repository (DON TRACKER). DON TRACKER will increase user's capability to preserve emails in a compliant system to support records management and litigation requirements. All DON employees with internet will have access to DON TRACKER. DON reports they are drafting a Capstone schedule for submission to NARA.
<b>National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)</b>	NARA reports that it has already implemented a system for managing all of its email records electronically. NARA's email system consists of two separate cloud-based COTS products that work together to manage all NARA email. Email services are provided separately from email records management, which is provided by a DoD-5015.2 v3 certified Records Management Application (RMA). NARA's email records are managed according to the Capstone approach. Those NARA users whose roles and activities result in mostly permanent records are designated as Senior Officials accounts. Their emails are retained as permanent records. They remain in the RMA system for 15 years before being accessioned into NARA's archival holdings. The email records of all other NARA accounts are classified as temporary and retained in the RMA for at least 7 years before being deleted. NARA will follow the Capstone GRS when it is approved. The emails maintained in the RMA have been designated as the record copies. Once an email has been captured into the RMA, the email

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	that resides in the original email system is considered a convenience copy and may be retained or deleted by individual users.
<b>US Access Board (USAB)</b>	The USAB is a small agency using a cloud based email system. Inbound and outbound emails are journaled from an exchange server to the cloud vendor's server. The email system processes the emails and indexes the files into a document database where the text and attachments of the email are captured. Permanent and temporary email records are declared and categorized based on metadata and content defined by the agency records schedule. Once an email is declared a record and categorized, it can no longer be deleted or modified in the records management repository by an end user. The USAB Record Manager is responsible for reviewing and approving records identified for disposition to ensure records are categorized appropriately and disposition periods are set correctly.
<b>US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC)</b>	The SEC reports that it is drafting email recordkeeping functional requirements that apply to either existing or future SEC email repositories/tools. The baseline requirements use the Capstone approach and are not technically specific. The SEC reports the requirements are scalable in order to be applicable to any technical solution that would have the capabilities to implement records retention for email. It is the SEC's hope that permanent, temporary, and non-record email could be managed automatically to a significant extent.

*Question 3 – Has your agency begun to implement plans in order to meet the goal to manage all permanent electronic records in an electronic format by December 31, 2019? (Goal 1.1)*

The majority of SAOs (87%) reported they would meet this goal. This section also includes analysis of each individual DoD component.

The status of agency implementation of this goal is difficult to determine as the target completion date is several years away. Many agencies reported that they were forming working groups, reviewing policies, and looking at their technical infrastructure as they prepare to meet this goal. Other agencies are focusing their time and energy on meeting the near-term email goal before turning their attention to managing all permanent electronic records electronically.

Some agencies report making substantial progress towards this goal and a few stated they already manage all of their permanent electronic records in an electronic format. The majority of agencies report that they are in the planning stages and are currently:



- Conducting inventories to identify permanent records.
- Working with NARA to schedule records.
- Seeking information to purchase or implement electronic document management systems; electronic records management systems, or records management applications.
- Seeking enterprise-wide solutions.
- Using working groups to study and determine approaches.
- Looking for software solutions.

Question 3 provided the opportunity for SAOs to briefly describe how they are planning on managing permanent electronic records in an electronic format. The following table contains descriptions from agencies that appear to have taken significant steps towards meeting this goal. The information contained here may prove useful to other agencies looking for real world examples of managing their permanent electronic records.

Selected Agencies that Appear to have Completed the <i>Directive 1.1</i> Goal or have Articulated Clear Plans to Meet the Goal	
Agency Name	Summary of Report Response
<b>Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)</b>	<p>The EPA reports that it on schedule to meet this goal. It reports using the following methods and approaches to meet this goal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EPA system owners will continue to transfer permanent electronic records directly from EPA systems to NARA once files are closed.</li> <li>• EPA procured, installed and configured a commercial records repository infrastructure, and has built applications and system-to-system connections to capture certain types of electronic records.</li> <li>• EPA worked with the Agency Records Community to develop and collect a set of performance metrics for electronic records. These metrics will assist EPA in monitoring progress towards meeting the 2019 goal. These metrics, such as the number of records saved in their email system each week, are used by the Records Liaison Officer (RLOs) to track progress in their program or region.</li> <li>• EPA will incorporate electronic records management requirements into internal business processes through a series of activities with internal stakeholders, including identifying business processes where electronic records management is needed, providing guidance for electronic records management, and promoting the adoption and increased use of systems that have already incorporated electronic records management, where appropriate.</li> <li>• EPA is developing desktop records management tool to save non-email electronic records into the records repository.</li> </ul>

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	<p>EPA is developing and updating policies and procedures, and approaches to articulate EPA’s commitment to moving toward electronic records and to help meet the December 31, 2019, target date. These activities include, consolidating records retention schedules, updating records management policy, developing social media records guidance and best practices, developing enterprise information management policy (EIMP) metadata standards, developing digitization procedures and standards, providing information on the move to electronic records to the records liaisons and the larger EPA records community and placing this information on the EPA’s records intranet site, and communicating EPA’s commitment to electronic records management in mandatory records management training.</p>
<p><b>Government Accountability Office (GAO)</b></p>	<p>The GAO reports managing all of its physical records and electronic records and mission- and business-related emails in its enterprise-wide system, DM/ERMS. Since 2010, permanent emails created by the Executive Committee are preserved through commercial archiving software. The emails will be maintained in that tool until eligible for transfer to NARA according to the timeframe stipulated in the GAO records retention schedule. The GAO is researching the feasibility of upgrading to web-enabled software. This version enables the management of multiple file formats, automated workflows, and auto-categorization.</p>
<p><b>US Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC)</b></p>	<p>The NRC reports that it is already managing its permanent electronic records in its electronic recordkeeping system, the Agency-wide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS). The NRC is focusing on the following improvement efforts to effectively support and manage electronic recordkeeping:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ADAMS Records Management – Configuring life cycle management controls on ADAMS documents to apply record retention and disposition parameters.</li> <li>• Digitization – Implementing processes and procedures to continuously reduce the amount of paper-based information.</li> <li>• File Taxonomy – Developing a structured and consistent way to describe and organize information.</li> <li>• Record Retention Updates – Establishing record retentions that are understandable, based on agency lines of business, and can be implemented in an electronic environment.</li> </ul>
<p><b>US Security and Exchange Commission (SEC)</b></p>	<p>Most of the SEC’s filings are maintained in an electronic format in the Electronic Data Gathering, Analysis, and Retrieval (EDGAR) system. All public data in EDGAR is scheduled as permanent. The SEC and NARA have completed one electronic transfer of EDGAR records.</p> <p>The SEC reports they are working to digitize all of their permanent records that currently exist in hard-copy and analog formats in a manner acceptable for accessioning to NARA. They have also created a tracking database to maintain a dynamic and evolving inventory of electronic information systems that contain federal records. The SEC is working to identify unscheduled records and schedule them.</p>

	<p>Further, the SEC reports working to identify an enterprise-wide document management system (EDMS) solution to capture records historically maintained in a hard-copy format. The SEC has drafted and circulated baseline records management requirements that can be used for EDMS initiatives which will capture and maintain federal records.</p>
<p><b>US Sentencing Commission (USSC)</b></p>	<p>The USSC reports nearing the completion of conversion from a traditional, largely paper-based records management system to a 100% electronic system for permanent records that will be sent to NARA. That conversion has been occurring since 2010. It has completed optical character recognition (OCR) scanning of the vast majority of its historical paper records. The scans are then uploaded into a DOD 5015.2 compliant Records Management Application (RMA). It expects to have all existing paper records scanned into the new system by the spring of 2015.</p> <p>Beginning in mid-2015, the USSC will start transferring many of their electronic files into the RMA system, including all files that qualify as permanent records. It will also train USSC employees to save future electronic records into the new system. The new system has a drag-and-drop feature that allows users to move files from the “documents” side of the system to the “records” side of the system; the latter is based on the USSC’s NARA-approved records disposition schedule. All files transferred to the “records” side of the system will be in a single, standard format.</p> <p>All scanned paper records and electronic records will be easily searchable in the new system, using a robust search engine. All paper files are being scanned using high quality OCR scanners and software, which allow for a full text search of the scanned documents. In the very near future, USSC plans to start transferring permanent records to NARA in an appropriate electronic format. It has recently been in contact with NARA about transferring records from 1985 when the Commission was originally organized.</p>

*Question 4 – Has your agency implemented any new cloud services in FY 2014? (Goal A4.1)*

In total, 41 agencies (40%) said they had implemented a new cloud service in FY 2014. The *Directive* Goal A4.1 states that agencies shall “*embed records management requirements into cloud architectures and other Federal IT systems and commercially available products.*” In the 2013 report, NARA asked agencies to identify existing cloud services. In 2014, NARA asked if agencies launched any new cloud initiatives. Agencies reported cloud usage mainly for email, administrative records, and hosting websites.

*Question 5 – Will your agency designated Agency Records Officer(s) hold the NARA Certificate of Federal Records Management Training by December 31, 2014 (Goal 2.3)*

In total, 81 SAOs indicated their AROs received the certificate, received an exception from NARA, or met the requirements for an exemption.<sup>2</sup> This section includes analysis of individual DoD components.

Of the agencies that responded negatively, most expected to meet this requirement by the end of 2015. Common factors reported for not meeting the requirement include:

- Recent designation or hire of a new ARO.
- Partial completion of the Knowledge Area (KA) classes or online tests.
- Other job duties taking precedence.

*Question 6 – Will your agency have a method to inform all employees of their records management responsibilities with suitable records management training for all appropriate staff by December 31, 2014? (Goal 2.4)*

In total, 68 SAOs reported that they have methods and training in place to inform employees of their records management responsibilities. For this section NARA staff analyzed the overall DoD report and not the individual component responses. Agencies with more mature records management programs appeared to generally use more formal methods for employee training than agencies with newer programs.

For the agencies that described their training programs, many are well established. Most training occurs through computer-based learning programs, but some agencies also incorporate other methods. Agencies described training offered as standalone records management training or integrated into existing processes and classes.

Agencies reported using the following methods to provide records management training:

- Offering training during employee on-boarding and orientation.
- Modifying existing learning management system classes, e.g., Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA), Security Awareness, or Privacy Act training classes.
- Forming inter-agency or internal working groups to plan training approach.

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<sup>2</sup> A detailed list of the exemption and exception requirements can be found in Questions 7 and 8 of NARA Bulletin 2014-03, Guidance on Agency Records Officer Training Requirements: <http://www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/bulletins/2014/2014-03.html>

Agencies cited the following reasons for not having training methods in place by the deadline:

- Full implementation will not roll out until the close of 2015.
- The records management program is new or under development.
- They are small or micro-agencies with limited resources to provide such training.
- The records officer is a recent hire.
- They are waiting for training currently being created by NARA and the Federal Records Officer Network (FRON)

More detailed information about training programs can be found in NARA’s annual Records Management Self-Assessment (RMSA): <http://www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/resources/self-assessment.html>.

<b>Selected Agencies with Noteworthy Responses Regarding Their Implementation of Records Management Training</b>	
<b>Agency Name</b>	<b>Summary of Report Response</b>
<b>Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS)</b>	In 2014, IMLS focused on training staff in their respective responsibilities as either records creators or records liaison officers. The training revolved around current activities and the newly developed IMLS Records Management Policy. The IMLS Records Officer created working groups and electronic notifications to ensure staff are kept abreast of new activities and upcoming training opportunities.
<b>Railroad Retirement Board (RRB)</b>	Each RRB employee completes a records management module as part of FISMA mandated information security training. The Records Officer is monitoring the generic agency records management training program being developed for use by all agencies by NARA as part of the Federal Records Officer Network (FRON). RRB will likely adopt the recommended training classes/concepts.
<b>Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA)</b>	TVA informs employees of their records management responsibility via offering on-line courses entitled Introduction to Records Management, Becoming a TVA World Class Records Liaison, and Electronic Signature/Approval. TVA also provides classroom and individual training upon request.

*Question 7 – Please list any suggested areas or topics that NARA should incorporate into its training offerings for Agency Records Officers.*

For 2014, the template included two opportunities for agencies to suggest topics or other ways NARA can improve its records management program. NARA received 76 suggestions from agencies and DoD components for question 7 which often mirrored suggestions agencies provided in question 8. Accordingly, the analysis of question 7 is included under question 8.

*Question 8 – Please describe how NARA could improve our records management training program.*

NARA received 80 suggestions from agencies and DoD components for question 8. Responses for both questions 7 and 8 were often interrelated and touched on several themes within a single suggestion. Themes identified in these two questions are analyzed together and summarized below:

- Update electronic records management training.
- Update the Knowledge Area (KA) classes.
- Provide training on NARA’s scheduling and appraisal processes.
- Provide training for specific records management roles.
- Provide tailored training for small agencies.
- Provide more online delivery.

Agencies requested that training focus on hands-on lessons using actual real-life case studies, best practices and lessons-learned at both the headquarters and component level. Agencies repeatedly asked for more online training offered at a free or reduced cost.

The suggestions often reflect the growing maturity and complexity of the records management profession. Suggestions emphasize the need for training on strategic implementation of electronic management programs, how records management professionals fit into an agency’s information governance strategy, and how to communicate with stakeholders from a variety of backgrounds.

<b>Selected Responses Regarding Suggestions for Records Management Topics and Improving Records Management Training</b>	
<b>Agency Name</b>	<b>Summary of Report Response</b>
<b>Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB)</b>	The CFPB would like to see training on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managing Documents and Records in the Cloud</li> <li>• Social Media Records</li> <li>• Information Governance Beyond Records Management</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk and Security</li> <li>• Electronic Records Management System Development and Implementation</li> </ul>
<b>Department of Homeland Security (DHS)</b>	<p>DHS would like to see training on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Records management (RM) program office design and staffing, including strategies for attracting, recruiting, and retaining RM talent.</li> <li>• Methodologies for ensuring agency HR offices recognize complexity/scope of the modern records discipline in grading and classification decisions.</li> <li>• Specialized skill sets needed in anticipation of NARA 2019 goal.</li> </ul>
<b>US Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC)</b>	<p>The NRC suggests NARA offer leadership, acquisition, and information systems management training to agency records officers. These skill sets are becoming more critical to effectively manage the records program resources.</p>

**Electronic Records Management**

Agencies repeatedly suggested NARA provide training that addresses the growing complexity of electronic records management. In addition to traditional records management knowledge, agency records officers are now expected to have a basic understanding of electronic records formats and media, methods to ensure access and integrity of the records, information technology infrastructure, and records management software. Many responses highlight the need for AROs to understand “the IT side of the house” and to train as “information management officers with particular emphasis on electronic records management.”

Specifically, agencies requested the following topics be incorporated into NARA’s training offerings:

- How does NARA migrate permanent electronic records?
- What happens to electronic records over time?
- How to manage emails from the IT perspective?
- How to implement electronic records management technology and automation?
- How to manage records within cloud computing environments?
- How to implement the Capstone approach to email records management?
- What are the new acceptable electronic records formats for transfer to NARA?
- What are NARA’s electronic records metadata requirements?
- What are the strategies for ensuring Agency Records Officers are included in agency responses to lost, damaged, and/or stolen electronic records; and the subsequent actions AROs and agencies should take?
- How can an agency retrieve records from missing or deleted emails; damaged hard drives; or when stolen by hackers?

- What are electronic records management strategies for lines of business, contracts, procurement processes, and electronic signatures?
- What is NARA's policy on allowing the destruction of paper records that have been digitized?

### **Update to the Knowledge Area (KA) Classes**

Beyond incorporating more electronic records management and *Directive* implementation into the KA classes, several other trends were identified in the analysis of the responses. Many agencies would like to see mandatory refresher training courses in order to maintain compliance with the *Directive*. The suggestions often point out the benefit of addressing this material annually as standards, regulations, and best practices change. Some agencies went further and suggested converting NARA's Certificate of Federal Records Management Training to an industry standard certification. It was even suggested that NARA partner with formal certification programs to offer courses.

Agencies also made suggestions that aim to improve the courses as they are currently structured. These suggestions included:

- Limiting the number of attempts to pass the test before retaking the in-person class.
- Making users take classes in KA order.
- Offering all the classes in a single week and not spread out over several months.
- Streamlining classes and removing redundant course material.
- Providing hands-on access to ARCIS and ERA for participants to use.
- Offering more classes in Washington, DC instead of in College Park, Maryland.
- Offering more options for online training.
- Extending the requirement to obtain the certificate beyond the agency records officers to higher level employees who work with federal records in the agencies.

### **Training on NARA's Scheduling and Appraisal Processes**

These suggestions often asked NARA to provide practical, step-by-step, training on the scheduling and appraisal processes. Most of the suggestions were straightforward and asked NARA to provide "proven real world examples" of how to schedule systems, write big bucket schedules, draft Capstone and other email schedules, write schedules in plain language, and generally demonstrate the complete scheduling process. Several agencies also asked for NARA to provide training to agencies in archival appraisal. As suggested, the training is intended to enable authorized agency records management professionals to develop supporting documentation for decisions that would accompany the proposed schedules to NARA. The



successful implementation of this appraisal training would hopefully reduce the timeline of approving records schedules.

### **Training for Specific Records Management Roles**

Many of the suggestions called for more training on specific roles. This included training for agency records officers, records custodians, records liaisons, Senior Agency Officials and other executives, IT professionals, all agency staff, contractors, and more. Specific suggestions ask NARA to:

- Develop a basic overview course that is mandatory for all federal employees.
- Develop “IT for Records Managers” and “Records Management for IT” training that addresses terminology, management principles, policy considerations, and governance/oversight models.
- Provide courses geared toward the records management responsibilities of senior management and staff.
- Provide basic records management and role-based training for federal employees, including specific training for CIOs, senior level officials, program managers, IT professionals, and supervisors to cover general records responsibilities for these positions.

### **Tailored Training for Small Agencies**

In the 2014 SAO reports, small and micro-agencies continue to ask for more assistance from NARA. These agencies cite their small staff size as a significant barrier to implementing records management into their agencies. These agencies often request basic assistance, guidance, and training so that they can implement electronic records management programs with limited or no additional resources.

### **Online Delivery**

Agencies of all sizes repeatedly asked NARA to deliver more online training. Many suggestions relate to NARA providing a standard online orientation for federal records management rules that apply to all federal employees. Responses show that agencies want online training because it is easier for employees to attend as they do not need to travel to a NARA facility.

Agencies want NARA to investigate alternative methods such as “webinars, blogs, QR-codes, and videos” to provide training. Four agencies specifically mentioned NARA’s YouTube channel as a resource they utilize. They cite this platform as a good method for conveying both

full KA classes and shorter, more basic classes with wide agency applicability. While these agencies described the positives of using this system, one agency noted using .com domains can cause problems on protected networks or can be otherwise blocked by agency firewalls.

*Question 9 – Please provide a brief description of any best practices, lessons learned, or model program activities that your agency has developed while moving to digital government and adopting electronic recordkeeping.*

Most agencies left this response blank or provided little detail. Some agencies did share best practices, lessons learned, and model program activities. Agencies largely focused on work that is going well in their organizations, although there were a few examples of records management efforts that did not succeed.

We did not quantify the number of times agencies reported best practices or lessons learned because they were generally unique to each agency. However, we did see the trend that agencies are focusing on how to expand and improve automation to ease the burden of records management on the end user. A few agencies mentioned managing records in place by incorporating electronic records management requirements into existing systems rather than depositing all records into one records management application. Agencies are also focused on how to build networks within their organizations and advocate for records management with leadership. Below are some overall trends in best practices identified by the NARA working group:

- Automation, auto-classification, auto-categorization
- Creating a records liaison group
- Engagement through records management training

The following table contains specific examples of some noteworthy practices, lessons learned, and model program activities described in the reports:

<b>Automation, Auto-classification, Auto-categorization</b>	
<b>Agency Name</b>	<b>Summary of Report Response</b>
<b>Department of the Interior (DOI)</b>	The Department of the Interior has found the following steps useful in implementing a Departmental Records Management Schedule and auto-categorization: 1. Identify and review existing approved records schedules. Ensure that records schedules are up-to-date and applicable.

	<p>2. Crosswalk records schedules to Federal lines of business within the agency. Useful guidance includes the National Information Exchange Model (NIEM) and North American Industry Classification Code Systems (NAICS), which covers most lines of business for the federal government.</p> <p>3. Align those schedules and Lines of Business (LOB) to the agency mission and identify stakeholders for those mission areas.</p> <p>4. Simplify the records schedules based on commonality factors (retention, business relationship to other records). Simplification includes reducing and consolidation of variance of retention periods, as well as, the simplification of the actual schedules. Variances should be documented for potential future action (e.g., statute, business need).</p> <p>5. Prepare a Departmental Records Schedule that aligns records with Lines of Businesses and mission. Keep it high level so the component offices retain their identity but identify key common points across bureaus that will map to the Agency or Department (i.e. Administrative, Policy, Legal, Mission).</p> <p>6. Incorporate auto-categorization for electronic records using the new records management structure. Initially, start with a significant portion, like email, and continue across the electronic records management horizon. <i>Keep email separate from other electronic documents since other electronic documents have varying retention requirements.</i></p> <p>7. Fully integrate with all record media. A records management system needs to have an approach that includes all records “regardless of media”. The approach or methodology for this management style may vary.</p> <p>8. Incorporate Records Management Practices into the Agency Information Life Cycle/or and Systems Development Life Cycle, including standardized and specific contract language, change management processes and actions from your legal oversight groups (Solicitor, FOIA, IG, Ethics).</p> <p>9. Integrate a Change Management and Communications Program. A lesson-learned example is that there must be consistent communication but the communication must be appropriate to the respective level of the organization (e.g., political appointee communication will be different that an operational employee communication).</p>
<p><b>Creating a Records Liaison Group</b></p>	
<p><b>Department of Homeland Security (DHS)</b></p>	<p>In October of 2011, the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) leadership recommended that an Information Governance Segment Architecture be initiated in order to establish an efficient and integrated capability across DHS to include Records Management (RM), Legal and the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)/Privacy. The three Lines of Business (LOBs) came together around the need for the proper identification, management, and disposition of information held by DHS. The Segment has oversight by the Executive Steering Committee (ESC) comprised of executive leadership from each of the three lines of business at the Headquarters level. The Committee provides governance, oversight, guidance and approval across the Department to the Information Governance Domain) ensuring successful development, operation and coordination of investments. The vision of the Segment is to establish an efficient</p>

	<p>and integrated Information Governance capability across DHS. The specific goals of the Segment included: Identify organizational gaps and opportunities for improvement, including policy, process, training, and technology needs; Define a target state that supports those requirements and objectives; Reduce complexity and increase interoperability across technology platforms by leveraging existing enterprise services; and, Develop a transition plan to pilot and then migrate to a DHS-wide Information Governance capability. The Information Governance Working Group (IGWG) brought together the insight and functional expertise of DHS Components in the areas of RM, Legal, and FOIA to support the Segment and analyze the current state of Information Governance and identify opportunities to lead the Department toward the target state. The Transition Plan is completed and approved and lays out the current state of Records Management, FOIA, and legal activities across DHS. The Plan identifies a target state and outlines six Strategic Improvement Opportunities (SIOs) and 19 recommendations and steps forward to mature Information Governance. Moving forward, this Plan serves as a high-level, step-by-step guide for the Department to reach the target state.</p>
<p><b>Engagement Through Records Management Training</b></p>	
<p><b>Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (PBGC)</b></p>	<p>In addition to creating new Online Records Management Training, PBGC has developed Records Management Workshops that have been used as a way to engage different areas of the agency in meeting Records Management requirements. The objectives of each workshop are clearly defined and the expected outcome is identified. For example, some of the recent workshops have focused on records identification and resulted in updated file plans. PBGC has seen a tremendous value in these workshops and plans to continue using them to improve records management within the agency.</p>

*Question 10 – Please describe ways that NARA can help your agency meet the Directive goals.*

NARA is interested in ways to improve our service and to learn how we can help agencies with their records management programs. The SAO annual reports provide an opportunity for agencies to offer suggestions on how NARA can help. This year 78 SAOs included suggestions for NARA. This section also analyzed the overall DoD report and not the individual component responses. The top three topics were for NARA to:

- Improve guidance and communications
- Assist smaller agencies
- Provide examples of technical solutions.

#### 4. REPORTED PROGRESS TOWARDS MEETING *DIRECTIVE* GOALS

Due to differences in the questions between the first SAO Annual Report in 2013, and this 2014 report, it is difficult to compare the responses with any precision. However, we can generally conclude:

- Most SAOs continue to report a high rate of progress toward meeting the goal of managing all email electronically by the end of 2016. In the 2013 SAO Annual Report, 83% of SAOs indicated they were making progress towards this goal. In the 2014 SAO Annual Report, 93% of SAOs reported they would meet this goal.
- Most SAOs continue to report a high rate of progress toward meeting the goal of managing electronic permanent records in an electronic format by the end of 2019. In the 2013 SAO Annual Report, 70% of SAOs indicated they had started addressing this goal. In the 2014 SAO Annual Report, this number had risen to 87%.
- Most SAOs (74%) reported compliance with the *Directive* requirement for records officers to obtain the NARA Certificate of Federal Records Management Training.
- Most SAOs (81%) reported they had methods in place to inform employees of their records management responsibilities.

#### 5. CONCLUSION

The SAO reports provide valuable insights into the status of individual records and information management programs and the overall federal records management community. The annual reports reveal approaches and achievements by agencies toward meeting the *Directive* goals.

In the 2015 SAO Annual Report, NARA will continue to ask agencies for information on their status towards meeting the *Directive* goals. Agencies will be requested to provide more information on best practices, lessons learned, and solutions to records management challenges. The SAO annual report format focuses on the big picture of how the agency is meeting the requirements in the *Directive*. Detailed information about agency records management programs can be found in the annual Records Management Self-Assessment.

For many agencies, one of the outcomes of the SAO reporting process has been closer coordination between the agency records officer and SAO. Such involvement by the SAO is instrumental in providing support to the program staff. The SAOs are crucial to achieving the *Directive's* vision of moving federal recordkeeping from a system rooted in a largely paper

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environment to a modern, efficient, open and accountable electronic information and records management system.

NARA remains committed to the successful implementation of the *Directive* and continues to offer assistance to agencies in support of the transition to a digital government. Agencies are encouraged to contact NARA for assistance or clarification in meeting the goals of the *Directive*.