

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about GRS 5.6, Security Records

July 2017

1. What is the purpose of GRS 5.6?

This schedule provides disposition authority for records about managing the protection of an organization's personnel, assets, and facilities.

2. Whom do I contact for further information about this schedule?

Please contact NARA's General Records Schedules Team at GRS_Team@nara.gov with questions about this schedule.

CHANGES FROM THE OLD GRS

3. How does GRS 5.6 differ from the old GRS?

GRS 5.6 adds 12 new items to the GRS and supersedes 46 items found throughout old GRS 10, 11, 12, 18, and 21. It aggregates a number of the law enforcement and other security functions in old GRS 18 into the items for routine security operations records (item 090) and accident and incident records (item 100).

Schedule items 210, 220, 230 and 240 are completely new to the GRS. These items cover records of executive branch agencies responsible for implementing insider threat protection programs under Executive Order 13587, Structural Reforms to Improve the Security of Classified Networks and the Responsible Sharing and Safeguarding of Classified Information.

TERMS USED IN THIS SCHEDULE

4. What are Facility Security Levels?

Facility Security Levels (FSLs) are assigned by agencies to facilities and any property assigned a security awareness status by Government agencies. The FSL determination is an estimation of the level of risk at a facility. See [The Risk Management Process for Federal Facilities: An Interagency Security Committee Standard](#) (August 2013, 1st Edition).

QUESTION RELATED TO ITEMS 060 and 061

5. What is the significance of the \$500 over/under threshold amounts identified in the item titles?

Unclaimed personal property becomes the property of the Government 30 days after being found. Documentation of personal property valued over \$500 must be kept for an additional 3 years from the date that title to the property vests in the Government to allow time for the former owner to file a claim. While agencies may choose to keep records of all unclaimed personally owned property for 3 years, lost-and-found documentation for property valued at less than \$500 may be disposed of 30 days

after the property is found.

QUESTION RELATED TO ITEM 070

6. Why are the Interagency Security Committee member records retained for 10 years?

The Department of Homeland Security's Interagency Security Committee recommends a minimum retention period of 10 years for these records, as stated in [Facility Security Committees: An Interagency Security Committee Standard](#) (January 1, 2012, 2nd Edition), page 22.

QUESTION RELATED TO ITEM 090

7. Why has the retention period for surveillance records been reduced from 6 months to 30 days?

Many agencies told us the 6-month minimum retention requirement expressed by old GRS 21, item 11 (Routine Surveillance Footage, N1-GRS-98-2, item 37) posed storage challenges because of the file size and attendant storage requirements of such recordings. Agencies felt that a 30-day requirement met both their business needs and storage capabilities. Since this item has the flexibility statement added to the instruction, agencies wanting to continue with the 6-month retention may continue to do so.

QUESTION RELATED TO ITEM 140

8. What is a "TEMPEST Checklist"?

A TEMPEST Checklist is a form used to meet certain security requirements. TEMPEST refers to the investigation, study and control of compromising emanations from telecommunications and automated information system equipment.¹

QUESTION RELATED TO ITEMS 170 and 171

9. What is the difference between items 170 and 171? How do I know if my agency has "delegated investigative authority"?

The difference is whether an agency relies on another agency to conduct investigations (item 170) or conducts its own investigations under authority delegated from the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) or similar organization (item 171). Your agency's personnel security office can tell you your agency's delegated authority status and the agreed-upon retention period for the investigation reports. Item 171 provides disposition authority for records created by those agencies holding delegated authority. Item 170 should be used by all other agencies.

QUESTION RELATED TO ITEMS 210 THROUGH 240

10. What is an insider threat?

An insider threat is the potential that an employee, contractor, or other person with authorized access to a Federal agency "will use his/her authorized access, wittingly or unwittingly, to do harm to the

¹ DoDM 5105.21-V2, October 19, 2012, page 41

security of the United States. This threat can include damage to the United States through violent acts, espionage, terrorism, unauthorized disclosure of national security information, or through the loss, denial or degradation of departmental resources or capabilities” (Defense Security Service Regulation, Number 05-06, January 30, 2014, page 14).

QUESTIONS RELATED TO ITEM 230

11. My agency already follows the GRS for its personnel records and some of the documents included under this item are personnel records but have shorter retention periods. Which takes precedence: other GRS items with shorter retention periods or the GRS 5.6, 25-year retention period required in item 230? Wouldn't it be easier to keep all these records for a flat 25 years to meet the future needs of the insider threat program in my agency?

Item 230 covers *copies* of certain Human Resources (HR) records collected by an insider threat program for a unique business purpose. The original records held by the HR office remain scheduled under HR schedules. Copies of the same record may be retained by different offices for different time periods. Each copy documents a separate business function.

12. Twenty-five years is too long for my agency to keep insider threat information. How do we request a shorter retention period?

Your agency is welcome to submit an agency-specific records schedule following its normal procedure. The schedule should include a justification for deviating from the GRS. The GRS Team reviews all proposed agency schedule items covered by the GRS and determines if the agency can properly use its own authority as a GRS deviation. NARA may deny requests if the proposed agency retention period differs from the GRS and the agency retention period will put the records or the agency at risk.

Since the GRS establishes a legal minimum retention period for similar records across the Government, we request your agency's general counsel sign off on any agency-specific schedule requesting to keep records beneath the 25-year threshold. If we receive numerous requests to keep records shorter, we may reduce the GRS retention period for records held under this item. Thus, it is important for your agency to contact us at GRS_Team@nara.gov regarding any GRS items that do not meet business needs.