



RECORDS MANAGEMENT OVERSIGHT  
INSPECTION REPORT  
2014

National Transportation Safety Board  
Records Management Program

NATIONAL ARCHIVES *and* RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

Issued December 19, 2014

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2014, the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) inspected the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB). NARA conducted this effort under the authority granted it by 44 United States Code (U.S.C.) 2904(c)(7) and 2906 to inspect records management programs and practices of Federal agencies. This inspection was prompted by NTSB scores on the Records Management Self-Assessment (RMSA).<sup>1</sup> Past scores on NARA's RMSA consistently put NTSB in the high risk category (score of 35 on RMSA 2012, 50 on RMSA 2011, 39 on RMSA 2010, and 56 on RMSA 2009). This inspection was also warranted because of the following:

- NTSB has not submitted schedules in more than 15 years.
- NTSB indicates on the RMSA that they do not have any permanent records.
- It is unclear what NTSB has been doing with their records in terms of disposition.
- There has been internal consolidation of field offices.
- An electronic document management system (EDMS) is currently being implemented for all NTSB records.

The overall objective of this inspection was to determine if the records management programs at the NTSB are in compliance with regulations under 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Chapter XII, Subchapter B.

The NTSB is an independent Federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation, railroad, highway, marine and pipeline. The NTSB determines the probable cause of the accidents and issues safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, the NTSB carries out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinates the resources of the Federal Government and other organizations to provide assistance to victims and their family members impacted by major transportation disasters.

The NTSB has five Board Members, each nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate to serve five-year terms. A Member is designated by the President as Chairman and another as Vice Chairman for two-year terms. The Chairmanship requires separate Senate confirmation. When there is no designated Chairman, the Vice Chairman serves as Acting Chairman.

The NTSB began its shift to electronic storage of docket items with an in-house developed application in the early 1990s. In 2002, the NTSB implemented its docket management system (DMS), a contractor developed system, to manage dockets electronically. Over the past few years the NTSB has continued its shift from paper-based business processes to electronic-based business processes. In addition to upgrading the original DMS, the NTSB has introduced the

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<sup>1</sup> Records Management Self-Assessment Reports 2009-2012, National Archives and Records Administration, <http://www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/resources/self-assessment.html>.

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Correspondence Control, Notation and Safety Recommendation (CNS) System and an enhanced Aviation Database Management System (ADMS) to collect and manage records electronically. Collectively, these systems support a shift from a paper-based environment to an electronic-based environment built around an electronic document management system (EDMS). NTSB has made major progress in migrating all records maintained at the agency to the EDMS. The records management program has the full support of the Chief Information Officer (CIO).

During the course of the inspection, NARA visited or had briefings from multiple NTSB program offices at NTSB Washington, D.C. headquarters and the NTSB Training Center in Ashburn, Virginia. The NTSB program staff and the enthusiastic RM staff demonstrated dedication to ensuring records are managed throughout their lifecycle. While we found a very engaged records management program, we found areas of concern that need attention.

## **FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This report contains 12 findings and makes 14 recommendations. The main concerns covered in this report include:

1. Records inventory, scheduling and disposition process require further development and implementation.
2. Records management procedures and training require further development and implementation.
3. Evaluations or formal assessments should be conducted to ensure compliance with policies, procedures and standards.
4. Electronic records policies and procedures should be developed and implemented, which includes incorporating records management in all electronic system designs, migration and managing shared drives.

A complete list of findings and recommendations is included as Appendix C.

To ensure completion of the recommendations, as part of the inspection process, NTSB will be required to develop a Plan of Corrective Action (PoCA) that specifies how the agency will address each report recommendation, including a timeline for completion of the corrective action(s) for each recommendation. NARA will analyze the proposed remedial actions and work with NTSB to ensure the adequacy of its PoCA. Upon approval of the PoCA, NARA looks forward to continuing a cooperative relationship with NTSB and assisting with the implementation of the recommendations.

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**NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD  
RECORDS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**

**INSPECTION REPORT**

**INTRODUCTION**

**BACKGROUND**

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent Federal agency responsible for investigating and determining the probable cause of every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation. The NTSB develops recommendations in order to prevent future accidents or reduce their negative effects.

The NTSB promotes transportation safety, assists victims of transportation accidents and their families, conducts safety studies, and prepares accident reports. NTSB investigations are used to determine factors common to a series of events and to identify safety improvements or evaluate the worth of transportation related devices or policies.

Since its inception in 1967, the NTSB has investigated more than 139,000 aviation accidents and thousands of surface transportation accidents. It has issued more than 13,800 safety recommendations to more than 2,300 recipients in all transportation modes as a result of its investigations.

The NTSB has several lines of business. These lines of business are:

- Office of Aviation Safety (AS)
- Office of Highway Safety (HS)
- Office of Marine Safety (MS)
- Office of Railroad, Pipeline, and Hazardous Materials Investigations (RPH)
- Office of Research and Engineering (RE)
- Office of Communications (OC)
- Office of Administration (AD)
- Office of Administrative Law Judges (ALJ)
- Office of the Chief Information Officer (CIO)
- Office of Equal Employment Opportunity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EEODI)
- Office of the Chief Financial Officer (CFO)
- Office of General Counsel (GC)
- Office of the Managing Director (MD)

### **Structure of the NTSB**

The NTSB has five Board Members, each nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate to serve 5-year terms. One Member is designated by the President as Chairman and another as Vice Chairman for 2-year terms. The chairmanship requires separate Senate confirmation. When there is no designated Chairman, the Vice Chairman serves as Acting Chairman.

The Board may hold an investigative hearing as part of a major transportation accident investigation. The purpose of the hearing is two-fold; first, to gather sworn testimony from subpoenaed witnesses on issues identified by the Board during the course of the investigation, and, second, to allow the public to observe the progress of the investigation. Hearings are usually held within six months of an accident but may be delayed for complex investigations.

The Office of the Managing Director assists the Chairman in the discharge of the Chairman's functions. The office provides overall leadership for the management of the agency, including production, strategy, and support functions. The office ensures that NTSB resources are allocated appropriately.

The NTSB's headquarters office is located in Washington, DC. The NTSB also has investigators located in Ashburn, Virginia; Denver, Colorado; Anchorage, Alaska; and Seattle, Washington. The Office of Aviation Safety has staff throughout the United States.

### **The NTSB "Go Team"**

At the core of NTSB investigations is the "Go Team," the purpose of which is to begin the investigation of a major accident as quickly as possible, assembling the broad spectrum of technical expertise that is needed to solve complex transportation safety problems. The team can number from three or four to more than a dozen. The Go Team's immediate boss is the Investigator-in-Charge (IIC). Each investigator is a specialist responsible for a clearly defined portion of the accident investigation.

Under direction of the IIC, each of these NTSB investigators heads what is called an "investigative group" in one area of expertise. Each is, in effect, a subcommittee of the overall investigating team. The groups are staffed by representatives of the "parties" to the investigation, the Federal Aviation Administration, the airline, the pilots' and flight attendants' unions, airframe and engine manufacturers, and the like. Eventually, each investigative group chairman prepares a factual report, and each of the parties in the group is asked to verify the accuracy of the report. The factual reports are placed in the public docket.

### **Investigative Hearing**

The Board may hold an investigative hearing as part of a major transportation accident investigation. The purpose of the hearing is two-fold; first, to gather sworn testimony from subpoenaed witnesses on issues identified by the Board during the course of the investigation, and, second, to allow the public to observe the progress of the investigation. Hearings are usually held within six months of an accident but may be delayed for complex investigations.

### **The Remainder of the Investigation and Final Report**

More months of tests and analysis eventually lead to the preparation of a draft final report by Safety Board staff. Parties do not participate in the analysis and report writing phase of NTSB investigations; however, they are invited to submit their proposed findings of cause and proposed safety recommendations, which are made part of the public docket. The Board then deliberates over the final report in a public Board meeting.

Once a major report is adopted at a Board Meeting, an abstract of that report - containing the Board's conclusions, probable cause and safety recommendations - is placed on the Board's web site under "Publications". The full report typically appears on the web site several weeks later.<sup>2</sup>

## INSPECTION OBJECTIVE

In 2014, NARA inspected elements of the records management program at the NTSB. NARA conducted this effort under the authority granted it by 44 U.S.C. 2904(c)(7) and 2906 to inspect records management programs and practices of Federal agencies. The overall objective of this inspection was to determine if the records management programs at the NTSB are in compliance with regulations under 36 CFR Chapter XII, Subchapter B. At a more granular level, the inspection sought to determine if the records management programs at NTSB are in compliance with:

- 36 CFR 1222.34 Agencies must implement a records maintenance program so that complete records are filed or otherwise identified and preserved, records can be readily found when needed, and permanent and temporary records are physically segregated from each other or, for electronic records, segregable.
- 36 CFR 1224.10(a) Agencies must ensure that all records are scheduled in accordance with part 1225 of this subchapter, schedules are implemented in accordance with part 1226 of this subchapter, and permanent records are transferred to the National Archives of the United States.

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<sup>2</sup> The description of NTSB's function, organization, mission, and business processes are taken from the NTSB's Performance Accountability Report dated 2013.



- 36 CFR 1224.10(d) Agencies must incorporate records retention and disposition functionality during the design, development, and implementation of new or revised recordkeeping systems (whether paper or electronic). See § 1236.6 of this subchapter.
- 36 CFR 1226.10 The application of approved schedules is mandatory except as provided in § 1226.16 and 1226.18. Federal records must be retained as specified in the schedule to conduct Government business, protect rights, avoid waste, and preserve permanent records for transfer to the National Archives of the United States.
- 36 CFR 1226.22 All records scheduled as permanent must be transferred to the National Archives of the United States after the period specified on the SF 115 (Standard Form 115: Request for Records Disposition Authority) in accordance with procedures specified under § 1235.12 of this subchapter.
- 36 CFR 1232.14(a) Agencies must ensure that the requirements of 36 CFR part 1234 are met. Special attention must be paid to ensuring appropriate storage conditions for records on non-paper based media (e.g., film, audio tape, magnetic tape), especially those that are scheduled for long-term or permanent retention, as those records typically require more stringent environmental controls (see 36 CFR parts 1236 and 1237).
- 36 CFR 1235.12 Permanent records must be transferred to the National Archives of the United States when: (a) The records are eligible for transfer based on the transfer date specified in a NARA-approved records schedule, or (b) The records have been in existence for more than 30 years (see also § 1235.14).
- 36 CFR 1235.14(a) Agencies may retain records longer than specified on a records disposition schedule only with written approval from NARA.
- 36 CFR 1236.6 Agencies must: (a) Incorporate management of electronic records into the records management activities required by parts 1220-1235 of this subchapter; (b) Integrate records management and preservation considerations into the design, development, enhancement, and implementation of electronic information systems in accordance with subpart B of this part; and (c) Appropriately manage electronic records in accordance with subpart C of this part.

## SCOPE AND PURPOSE

The purpose of this inspection was to determine if the NTSB records management program had sufficient policies and procedures to appropriately manage active and inactive records, make the transition from paper to electronic records management, and ensure the transfer of permanently valuable records to the National Archives.

## METHODOLOGY

To meet the objective of assessing whether the NTSB is managing their records appropriately the inspection team examined NTSB's records management activities in light of applicable records management sections of the 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Chapter XII, Subchapter B. To ensure that our inquiries into NTSB's records management practices were systematic and grounded in regulation, the NARA inspection team relied on an internally produced set of records management questions that correlate directly to the CFR (These questions are included as Appendix E of this report). Each of the NTSB business lines was given a chance to respond to questions, provide documentation, and to demonstrate various aspects of their records management programs.

As part of the pre-inspection process, the NARA inspection team conducted its own background research. Additionally, NTSB provided documentation for various elements of its records management practices and procedures many of which were useful to the inspection team as background information. Others were more central in documenting and supporting the findings and recommendations of this inspection. A summary list of pre-inspection documentation requested for this inspection can be found in Appendix A.

During the course of the inspection, NARA visited or had briefings from multiple NTSB program offices at NTSB headquarters and at the Region office in Ashburn, Virginia.

## STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

NTSB staff was asked to discuss each of the following areas and to provide any supporting documentation as needed. Discussions during site visits included mission or program staff as necessary to help records management staff describe implementation of records management policies, standards, procedures, retention schedules and other tactics, including the realm of electronic recordkeeping.

The findings and recommendations of this report are broken down into four topical areas: Section 1, Records Scheduling and Disposition Requirements; Section 2, Recordkeeping Requirements; Section 3, Program Requirements; and Section 4, Electronic Records Requirements.

In accordance with 36 CFR 1239 this report contains:

- (1) An executive summary;
- (2) Background and purpose of inspection;
- (3) Inspection methodology, including offices visited;
- (4) Findings;
- (5) Corrective actions needed and other recommendations; and
- (6) Any necessary appendices, such as summaries of each site visit or the inspection instrument.

## **FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

During the course of the inspection the NTSB staff demonstrated the desire to ensure records are maintained and information made available. The main method being deployed to achieve this goal is shifting from a paper-based environment to an electronic-based environment using an electronic document management system (EDMS). NTSB has made major progress in migrating records to the EDMS. Some of the major migrations have included docket management (OpenText), accident investigation records (Sharepoint), correspondence control, notations, and safety recommendation records (Sharepoint). NTSB plans to implement the OpenText application governance and archiving (AGA) module for both EDMS environments. The majority of NTSB work is done outside of the traditional office environment. Maintaining these records in an EDMS enables NTSB staff to create and access information needed to perform their function regardless of location. The records management program appears to have the full support of the Chief Information Officer (CIO).

However, there are several areas of concern that are basic to the foundation of a solid and dynamic records management program.

### **SECTION 1: RECORDS SCHEDULING AND DISPOSITION REQUIREMENTS**

A compliant, effective, and efficient Federal records management program requires that each agency ensure that all records are covered by a NARA-approved records retention and disposition schedule so that records are retained as long as needed for business purposes; to meet legal and fiscal requirements; and to preserve records with permanent and enduring value. Agencies must also ensure that these records schedules are implemented and that records are disposed of in accordance with these NARA-approved schedules.

***1.1 Finding: NTSB does not currently have a consolidated records inventory that includes information about where records are physically located, that identifies vital records, and that includes other information about records essential to a comprehensive inventory.***

*1.1. Recommendation: NTSB should conduct a thorough office by office and/or line of business comprehensive inventory of all records regardless of media. The inventory should include the identification of vital records. (36 CFR 1220-1226)*

***1.2 Finding: NTSB is not scheduling its records. As such, the agency is at risk of destroying records prematurely, maintaining records longer than necessary, and failing to transfer permanent records to the National Archives when appropriate.***

The NTSB responded to past RMSA's indicating that it does not create or maintain permanent records; and therefore does not transfer records to NARA. The only way for an agency to properly make this determination is through submitting records retention schedules to NARA. The NTSB has not submitted a schedule to NARA in 15 years. By not following this basic records management function, the NTSB decreases its ability to ensure records management processes account for business information needs; aid in accountability, as well as, risks failure to transfer permanent records to NARA.

To facilitate the use of records retention schedules, 36 CFR 1225 and 1226 prescribe the requirements for implementing records disposition. The requirements include disposing of inactive temporary records when retention periods have expired and transferring permanent records to the National Archives when retention periods have been met. Effective disposition of records requires having usable records retention schedules. Prior to developing and implementing records retention schedules, an active and vibrant records inventory must be maintained that results in the development, implementation and maintenance of compliant records schedules.

*1.2 Recommendation: Develop, coordinate and implement a records retention scheduling program to improve records disposition for NTSB permanent and temporary records.*

***1.3 Finding: NTSB does not adequately respond to notifications of records eligible for disposal from the WNRC.***

NTSB stores its inactive records at the Washington National Records Center (WNRC). As a matter of routine, the Federal Records Centers (FRCs) send disposal notices out to agencies for all records eligible for destruction. It is the customer agency's responsibility to verify that disposal of these records can take place by signing and returning disposal notices to the FRC. The FRCs do not dispose of any records without this final approval. The NTSB records management staff were unaware of the procedures, and while they have been receiving the disposal notices, they have not been appropriately responsive to them.

*1.3.1 Recommendation: Establish policies and procedures for handling disposal notices from the FRC in a timely fashion.*

*1.3.2 Recommendation: Coordinate with the FRC to handle existing disposal notices in order to dispose of all eligible records.*

## **SECTION 2: RECORDKEEPING REQUIREMENTS**

A compliant, effective, and efficient Federal records management program is based upon the establishment of recordkeeping requirements for records in all media. Recordkeeping requirements include clear guidance and the appropriate determination of what constitutes a record and distinguishes records from non-record material and personal papers. Recordkeeping requirements should specify the creation and maintenance of specific records to document agency operation and activities; ensure that all records are covered by a records retention and disposition schedule; protect records from removal or alienation; define records management responsibilities; and provide training.

### ***2.1 Finding: NTSB has weak to non-existent procedures in place for ensuring a compliant records management program.***

NTSB's records management program is implemented through operations bulletins that contain a mixture of policy and guidance. Policy, however, needs to be supported by procedures that instruct staff on how to comply with existing policies. No written procedures currently exist to tell staff how to implement NTSB records management policies and guidance; however, staff appears to be aware of whom to ask if they have a records-related question.

*2.1.1 Recommendation: Develop, update and implement applicable 36 CFR 1222 compliant standards, policies and procedures.*

*2.1.2 Recommendation: Disposition records according to 36 CFR 1222 and NARA-approved records schedules.*

### ***2.2 Finding: NTSB does not offer records management training to new employees.***

NTSB has drafted a records management briefing for new employees, but the briefing is not yet being given. However, employees are alerted via an operations bulletin as to their responsibilities vis-à-vis records.

*2.2 Recommendation: Complete and implement the new employee records management training. (36 CFR 1222.24)*

### ***2.3 Finding: NTSB does not have a records management exit briefing for departing staff and senior officials.***

*2.3 Recommendation: Complete and implement an RM exit briefing and process for departing staff and senior officials. (36 CFR 1222.24)*

***2.4 Finding: The NTSB records management training program is under development.***

According to 36 CFR 1220.34, agencies are required to provide “guidance and training to all agency personnel on their records management responsibilities.” The OMB/NARA Managing Government Records Directive (M-12-18) also requires that agencies establish records management training.

At the time of the inspection site visit, an online records training module for all employees was under development. Upon completion, all staff will be required to take this training annually. NARA supports the development of this training as well as the requirement that employees take the training annually.

*2.4 Recommendation: NTSB should update NARA on the progress of the training program development and provide a demonstration when completed.*

**SECTION 3: PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**

A compliant, effective, and efficient Federal records management program requires senior management support at the highest levels; a clear definition of program objectives, responsibilities, and authorities; allocation of sufficient resources to administer the program; assignment of the program to an appropriate office within the agency’s organizational structure; continuous training for records management staff; and regular internal evaluations to monitor compliance and program effectiveness.

***3.1 Finding: NTSB’s Records Management Program does not conduct periodic evaluations of records management practices. (36 CFR 1220.34)***

Conducting periodic evaluations provides documentation on how well various offices comply with records schedules and other aspects of records management. They provide opportunities to identify areas that need improvement as well as areas that are working well and could serve as models to other parts of the program. In conducting evaluations, the NTSB records management program can increase its visibility, building opportunities for briefings, training, and additional dissemination of records management information.

*3.1 Recommendation: NTSB should conduct evaluations to measure the effectiveness of records management practices within the agency and to ensure compliance with NARA regulations. (36 CFR 1220.34)*

#### **SECTION 4: ELECTRONIC RECORDS REQUIREMENTS**

A compliant, effective, and efficient Federal records management program requires incorporation of the management of electronic records into records management activities; integration of records management functionalities and preservation considerations into the design, development, enhancement, and implementation of electronic information systems; and appropriate management of electronic records.

The NTSB is developing and implementing an EDMS that will facilitate managing the agency's records and information. The EDMS system provides the NTSB means to electronically manage the vast majority of agency records while providing public access to most of the agency's records and information. Once the NTSB fully implements the EDMS RM module, they will have a fully integrated records and information management system ensuring the effective and efficient use of the agency's information resources.

However, in order to be successful there are several things that need to be considered.

***4.1 Finding: Records management considerations are not incorporated into NTSB's Electronic Document Management System (EDMS), also known as the Docket Management System (DMS).***

The records management program staff at NTSB is working closely with IT staff to establish an EDMS with records management requirements. However, at the time of inspection, it was not yet in place.

*4.1 Recommendation: NTSB should implement plans to incorporate a records management module into its EDMS thereby providing records management functionality including the scheduling and disposition of records. NARA should be notified when this effort is completed. (36 CFR 1236)*

***4.2 Finding: NTSB lacks agency policy on the integration of records management considerations into the design and development of electronic information systems.***

The Code of Federal Regulations requires that "recordkeeping functionality be built into electronic information system[s]" (36 CFR 1236.20). This functionality is also required by the Information Management Policy, part (k) that is contained in OMB Circular A-130. NTSB has weak to non-existent procedures in place for ensuring that the appropriate records management requirements are included in the review and approval process for new electronic information systems or enhancements to existing systems. NTSB needs to develop policy and procedure to ensure recordkeeping functionality is incorporated in all electronic systems.

*4.2 Recommendation: Develop and implement policy to incorporate records management functionality requirements into existing and future electronic information systems. (36 CFR 1236.20)*

***4.3 Finding: There are no policies and procedures related to storing records and information on shared drives or for the proper storage of electronic records generally.***

NTSB's electronic records consist of unstructured data maintained on shared drives that are generally managed and "owned" by the various program/line of business offices. RM staff does not provide guidance or training on the use of shared drives. In addition, no policy or procedures exist to identify records or indicate location of the official record copy. NTSB needs to properly maintain electronic files in accordance with NARA standards.

*4.3 Recommendation: Assist offices in creating and documenting standardized electronic filing practices for electronic records stored on shared drives, including file structures, naming conventions, taxonomies, and acceptable formats. (36 CFR 1236)*

***4.4 Finding: Long-term temporary and potentially permanent electronic records are maintained on a wide variety of media and have never been migrated to new media as required for preservation and accessibility.***

Most NTSB agency program records are maintained electronically using a wide variety of media. Occasionally, as the need arises, some records are migrated to new formats and media. However, this activity is not done in a routine or planned manner, which could contribute to loss of information or the inability to retrieve records due to obsolescence of hardware and/or software.

*4.4 Recommendation: Develop and implement electronic records migration policies and procedures to transfer data from the obsolete media to new media. (36 CFR 1236.14)*

## CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY

Although the agency is proactive in implementing technology to manage its records and information holdings, a lot of foundational work must be developed and implemented to ensure compliance with Federal regulations. Some of this work will be critical to the successful rollout of the EDMS and the RM module. First, a records inventory, scheduling and disposition process requires further development and implementation. After completing those activities NTSB should develop and implement records management procedures and training. Regular evaluations or formal assessments should be conducted to ensure compliance with policies, procedures and standards. Finally, electronic records policies and procedures should be developed and implemented, which includes incorporating records management in all electronic system designs, migration and managing shared drives.



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**APPENDIX A**  
**RELEVANT PRE-INSPECTION DOCUMENTS**

The inspection team requested that NTSB provide NARA with copies of:

- All current NTSB records management directives, orders, bulletins, and similar authoritative issuances;
  - Revisions to disposition authorities or manuals not yet submitted or approved by NARA;
  - The current master file plan;
  - Any current guidance/memoranda formally assigning responsibility for development and implementation of guidance for the management of electronic media;
  - Any current Electronic Document Management Systems and/or Records Management Applications technical requirements documents; and
  - Any RM requirements incorporated into IT design and development.
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## **APPENDIX B AUTHORITIES AND FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS**

### AUTHORITIES

- 44 U.S.C. Chapter 29
- 36 CFR Chapter XII, Subchapter B
- 36 CFR 1239, Program Assistance and Inspections

### FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS

- ACTION PLAN

NTSB will submit to NARA a Plan of Corrective Action (PoCA) that specifies how the agency will address each inspection report recommendation, including a timeline for completion and proposed progress reporting dates.

The plan must be submitted within 60 days after the date of transmittal of the final report to the head of the agency.

- PROGRESS REPORTS

NTSB will submit to NARA progress reports on the implementation of the action plan until all actions are completed.

- NARA REVIEW

NARA will analyze the adequacy of NTSB's action plan, provide comments to NTSB on the plan within 60 calendar days of receipt, assist NTSB in implementing recommendations, and inform NTSB when progress reports are no longer needed.

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## APPENDIX C

### COMPLETE LIST OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Section 1: Records Scheduling and Disposition Requirements

*1.1 Finding: NTSB does not currently have a consolidated records inventory that includes information about where records are physically located, that identifies vital records, and that includes other information about records essential to a comprehensive inventory.*

1.1 Recommendation: NTSB should conduct a thorough office by office and/or line of business comprehensive inventory of all records regardless of media. The inventory should include the identification of vital records. (36 CFR 1220-1226)

*1.2 Finding: NTSB is not scheduling its records. As such, the agency is at risk of destroying records prematurely, maintaining records longer than necessary, and failing to transfer permanent records to the National Archives when appropriate.*

1.2 Recommendation: Develop, coordinate and implement a records retention scheduling program to improve records disposition for NTSB permanent and temporary records.

*1.3 Finding: NTSB does not adequately respond to notifications of records eligible for disposal from the WNRC.*

1.3.1 Recommendation: Establish policies and procedures for handling disposal notices from the FRC in a timely fashion.

1.3.2 Recommendation: Coordinate with the FRC to handle existing disposal notices in order to dispose of all eligible records.

#### Section 2: Recordkeeping Requirements

*2.1 Finding: NTSB has weak to non-existent procedures in place for ensuring a compliant records management program.*

2.1.1 Recommendation: Develop, update and implement applicable 36 CFR 1222 compliant standards, policies and procedures.

2.1.2 Recommendation: Disposition records according to 36 CFR 1222 and NARA-approved records schedules.

*2.2 Finding: NTSB does not offer records management training to new employees.*

2.2 Recommendation: Complete and implement the new employee records management training. (36 CFR 1222.24)

*2.3 Finding: NTSB does not have a records management exit briefing for departing staff and senior officials.*

2.3 Recommendation: Complete and implement an RM exit briefing and process for departing staff and senior officials. (36 CFR 1222.24)

*2.4 Finding: The NTSB records management training program is under development.*

2.4 Recommendation: NTSB should update NARA on the progress of the training program development and provide a demonstration when completed.

### Section 3: Program Requirements

*3.1 Finding: NTSB's Records Management Program does not conduct periodic evaluations of records management practices. (36 CFR 1220.34)*

3.1 Recommendation: NTSB should conduct evaluations to measure the effectiveness of records management practices within the agency and to ensure compliance with NARA regulations. (36 CFR 1220.34)

### Section 4: Electronic Records Requirements

*4.1 Finding: Records management considerations are not incorporated into NTSB's Electronic Document Management System (EDMS), also known as the Docket Management System (DMS).*

4.1 Recommendation: NTSB should implement plans to incorporate a records management module into its EDMS thereby providing records management functionality including the scheduling and disposition of records. NARA should be notified when this effort is completed. (36 CFR 1236)

*4.2 Finding: NTSB lacks agency policy on the integration of records management considerations into the design and development of electronic information systems.*

4.2 Recommendation: Develop and implement policy to incorporate records management functionality requirements into existing and future electronic information systems. (36 CFR 1236.20)

*4.3 Finding: There are no policies and procedures related to storing records and information on shared drives or for the proper storage of electronic records generally.*

4.3 Recommendation: Assist offices in creating and documenting standardized electronic filing practices for electronic records stored on shared drives, including file structures, naming conventions, taxonomies, and acceptable formats. (36 CFR 1236)

*4.4 Finding: Long-term temporary and potentially permanent electronic records are maintained on a wide variety of media and have never been migrated to new media as required for preservation and accessibility.*

4.4 Recommendation: Develop and implement electronic records migration policies and procedures to transfer data from the obsolete media to new media. (36 CFR 1236.14)

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## **APPENDIX D**

### **OFFICES VISITED DURING INSPECTION**

- Site visits:
  - June 17-18, 2014: NTSB Headquarters – Washington, DC
  - June 19, 2014: Field Office – Ashburn, VA

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## APPENDIX E SELECTED COMPLIANCE QUESTIONS

The following is a list of questions based on the CFR and other NARA guidance used to gather information during the course of this inspection. The questions are divided into specific records management topics.

### *Senior Agency Official*

- Does NTSB have a Senior Agency Official (SAO) designated in response to M-12-18 OMB/NARA Managing Government Records Directive?
  - If yes, does the Records Officer have any direct communication with the SAO or is this done through other levels of management?

### *Records Management Program Structure*

- Does the records management program continue to report to the Office of the Chief Information Officer?
- Is the records management program adequately represented within senior management? (Determined by the inspection team during the course of the inspection)

### *Records Officer*

- Does the RO have formally assigned responsibility for the development and implementation of agency-wide programs to identify, develop, issue, and monitor recordkeeping requirements for the agency?
- If no, who at NTSB is formally assigned this responsibility?
- Describe the responsibilities and duties of the NTSB Records Officer, including but not limited to the following:

Does the NTSB Records Officer (RO):

- Identify unscheduled records and submit to NARA requests for disposition authority through ERA?
- Approve and review SF 135s for records stored off-site by NARA's Federal Records Center Program?
- Mandate records management training for all staff, covering especially employees' responsibility to identify and manage the Federal records in their control?
- Conduct audits, reviews, and/or evaluations?
- Work with IT to ensure records management functionality is incorporated into systems? If yes, is the RO recognized as a stakeholder in the design and development process for IT systems?

### *Records Management Program Staffing*

- In addition to the RO, does NTSB have other staff with full-time records management responsibilities? If yes,
  - How many?
  - What responsibilities do they have?
  - Is records management included in their position description?
  
- Does NTSB have a network throughout the agency to assist the RM program? (NARA refers to these as Records Liaison Officers (RLO), but agencies may have a different title.) If yes,
  - Where do the Records Officer and Records Liaison Officers fit into the organizational structure?
  - Are there RLOs in each office or program? If yes, is there an established description of what RM expects the RLO to do? If yes, please provide a copy.
  - Are the RLO duties included in the official duties or is it an ad hoc ‘other duties as assigned’ fashion?
  - Please describe the relationship between the RO and the RLOs including forms of communication, how often, and if this is an established working group that interacts with each other.
  - What support from office heads or program supervisors does the RLO receive in support of the performance of tasks assigned by the RO?
  - How much of their time is devoted to performing records management duties?

### *Knowledge and Skills*

- For the RO and RLOs determine the adequacy of professional development, training, and resources they are provided to fulfill their responsibilities.
  - Please describe the level of familiarity with 36 CFR and Federal recordkeeping requirements, and knowledge of basic records management terms, definitions, and concepts, consistent with their duties for the Records Officer, other RM Staff and RLOs.
  - Does the NTSB provide training and other opportunities for professional development to maintain core competencies?
  - Does the NTSB provide internal training in RM and NTSB RM policies specifically tailored for RM staff and RLOs? If yes, from whom do they receive this training and how often? Please provide samples.



*Records Management Guidance:*

Obtain copies of all NTSB records management directives, orders, bulletins, and similar authoritative issuances and evaluate their adequacy.

- Does NTSB have policies and procedures readily accessible on the intranet? How are updates to policies and procedures disseminated to staff?
- Are records management responsibilities for records management staff defined in the guidance?
- Does NTSB have a records management orientation for new employees, and are employees informed that they are responsible and accountable for keeping accurate and complete records of their activities? Are exit briefings conducted for departing employees and senior officials?

*Controls and Oversight:*

- Does NTSB have written procedures for oversight activities to ensure the proper management of records?
- Does NTSB conduct surveys of the operation of the records management program at all organizational levels? Does this include an inventory of business processes and existing records to identify any unscheduled records?

*Creation, Maintenance, Storage, and Disposition:*

- Does NTSB have written guidance for handling information that is restricted from release under the Privacy Act or for records containing other information exempt from disclosure under FOIA?
- Does NTSB have written guidance for handling classified records and information and for ensuring segregation from unclassified records and information?
- Does NTSB have written procedures that address records management controls in alternate work site locations? What records issues have been identified and addressed?
- Do NTSB procedures, directives, and other issuances cover the record status of working papers/files and drafts?

*Oversight Records:*

- For what industries or organizations does the agency conduct oversight?
- Does the agency receive any records from the organizations over which it has oversight?
  - If yes, describe the records received, including format and media.
- What records series does the agency create and maintain for its oversight function?
- Are these records maintained in hard copy or electronic media?
- Are any of these records permanent? If yes, are they maintained as hard copy or electronic records?
- Are these records maintained separately from other agency records?
- How does the agency manage Confidential Business Information (CBI), PII, Classified or sensitive information received from organizations over which it has oversight?
- Does the agency manage these records differently from other agency records?
  - Audits
  - Inspections
  - Guidance and regulations
  - Performance records
  - Reports
  - Contracts

*Files Maintenance:*

Determine if NTSB is maintaining an accurate, current, and NARA-approved agency records schedule covering all records in its custody. Does the records schedule cover records in all media? Are they implementing the schedule?

Determine if records management related guidance provides adequate standards and procedures for classifying, indexing, filing, and retrieving records. Specifically, is there guidance concerning the grouping of “like” records (those defined as a series of records in the agency records schedule), the annual cutoff and retirement (removal from prime office space of records no longer necessary for daily business) of records, and the identification of records upon retirement necessary for their future retrieval?

Determine whether this standardized reference guidance has been sufficiently disseminated. Specifically, are those within the agency who are responsible for identifying, retrieving, and refiling records aware of this guidance?

- Does NTSB guidance specify a well-defined filing structure through specified file labels for records to be used on file folders?
- Does NTSB guidance specify well-defined file structures, naming conventions, and taxonomies for electronic records? Does it ensure that these file structures, naming conventions, and taxonomies are used by staff when establishing and implementing electronic recordkeeping systems?
- Does the NTSB file plan include disposition instructions and citations to records schedules?
- Does NTSB have procedures in place to ensure that permanent records are identified and filed separately from temporary records?

*Inactive Records Storage:*

- Is NTSB storing permanent or unscheduled records at commercial or agency storage facilities, and has the agency created documentation sufficient to identify and locate files?
- Is NTSB storing records under the appropriate conditions based on the retention period of the records and in compliance with 36 CFR 1232.12?
- Are non-textual records being stored in environmentally appropriate space?
- Before transferring records to a records storage facility has the agency created documentation sufficient to identify and locate files?

*Records Disposition:*

- Which records management staff are responsible for the activities related to the disposition of records?
- Who approves destructions/removals of records? Are records authorized for disposal only as provided in agency records schedules?

- Has NTSB issued a handbook, guidance, or a directive that contains records disposition policies and procedures as well as the NARA-approved records schedules?
- Are permanent records transferred to NARA according to the NARA-approved schedules?
- Are temporary records destroyed when NARA-approved retention periods expire?
- What controls does the NTSB have in place to prevent unauthorized removal or alienation of records?
- What controls exist to ensure that records are not destroyed prior to their approved retention period or while they are covered by litigation hold or freeze?
- Are unauthorized destruction/dispositions reported to NARA?

*Electronic Records Management Requirements (Not Including E-mail):*

Obtain copies of any guidance/memoranda formally assigning this responsibility.

Determine if NTSB staff who work regularly with electronic records are familiar with all electronic records management guidance that has been issued.

- Has NTSB assigned responsibility for development and implementation of guidance on the management of all records created, received, maintained, used, or stored on electronic media?
- Has NTSB integrated the management of electronic records with other records and information resources management programs?
- Does NTSB ensure that records management functionalities are incorporated into the design, development, and implementation of its electronic information systems?
- Does NTSB have procedures in place to ensure that records management requirements, including recordkeeping requirements and disposition, are addressed before approving new electronic information systems or enhancements to existing systems?
- Does the records management staff work with information technology staff and does records management staff participate in the design, development, and implementation of new electronic information systems?

Determine if NTSB has any procedures in place for ensuring that records management requirements, including recordkeeping requirements and disposition, are addressed before approving new electronic information systems or enhancements to existing systems. Obtain copies.

If the records management official issues written comments concerning new or enhanced electronic information systems, obtain copies. Determine if such comments are used in evaluating systems or enhancements.

*Migration:*

Determine if NTSB has procedures in place for identifying electronic records that have been created on media that is becoming obsolete.

- Does NTSB have migration strategies for electronic records and information and associated metadata?

*Shared Drives and Unstructured Data:*

- Does NTSB have policies and procedures that address records and information stored on shared drives? If yes, do the policies and procedures cover permissions, access controls, and acceptable formats for long-term records and information?
- Does the record management staff work with information technology staff to ensure the integrity of the shared drives?

*ERMS/RMA:*

- Does NTSB or any office/component unit within the agency currently have a fully functioning Electronic Records Management System (ERMS) or a Records Management Application (RMA) for maintaining and preserving electronic records?

*Cloud Computing:*

- Does NTSB or any office/component unit use cloud computing technologies? If yes, what records management safeguards have been put in place?
- Does RM staff maintain any inventory of records that are being stored in the cloud?

*Training:*

- Has NTSB developed and implemented an internal training program for records management staff covering their roles and responsibilities pertaining to records creation, maintenance, and disposition activities including the application of agency records management guidance?

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**APPENDIX F**  
**ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

CIO	Chief Information Officer
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
DMS	Docket Management System
EDMS	Electronic Document Management System
ERMS	Electronic Records Management System
FOIA	Freedom of Information Act
FRC	Federal Record Center
IIC	Investigator-In-Charge
IT	Information Technology
NARA	National Archives and Records Administration
NTSB	National Transportation Safety Board
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
PoCA	Plan of Corrective Action
RO	Records Officer
RM	Records Management
RMSA	Records Management Self-Assessment
WNRC	Washington National Records Center

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