



Senior Agency Official for Records Management FY 2015 Annual Report

The *Managing Government Records Directive (M-12-18)* requires Senior Agency Officials (SAOs) for Records Management to provide an annual report to NARA. This report demonstrates how your organization is achieving the goals of the *Directive* and other important initiatives as identified by NARA.

NARA uses the reports to determine the overall progress of the Federal Government in meeting the goals of the *Directive*, including implementing proper email management and transitioning to electronic recordkeeping. Additionally, NARA uses the report for information sharing purposes to provide best practices and model solutions with Federal agencies.

The reporting period begins on November 16, 2015, and reports are due back to NARA no later than COB January 29, 2016.

Please note that NARA will post a version of your 2015 SAO report on the NARA website. This action is in the interest of transparency in Government and to promote collaboration and communication among agencies. Please let us know whether there is a specific justification as to why your report cannot be publicly shared (in whole or in part).

Instructions for Reporting

- This template covers progress through fiscal year (FY) 2015.
- Please be brief and precise in your answers. Limit answers to each question to no more than 500 words.
- Please complete the eight questions/items on the following pages and send the report to prmd@nara.gov. Include the words “SAO annual report” and your agency’s name in the subject line of the email.
- If you are responsible for records management in multiple agencies, components, or bureaus, please determine how you will submit reports to NARA. While NARA prefers a comprehensive report, you may submit separate reports for each component.

Provide the following information (required):

Name of SAO: **Brent E. Newton**

Position title: **Deputy Staff Director**

Address: **One Columbus Circle, N.E., Suite 2-500, Washington, D.C. 20002**

Office telephone number: **(202) 502-4565**

1. What are the agencies, components, or bureaus covered by this report and your position as SAO?

Please list them below: **United States Sentencing Commission (USSC).**

2. Is your agency going to meet the *Directive* goal to manage all email records in an accessible electronic format by December 31, 2016? (*Directive Goal 1.2*)

Yes No

2a) *Provide a list of actions your agency, components, or bureaus have taken to meet this goal. Include specific information on your progress regarding:*

- *establishing formally approved email policies,*
- *use of any automated systems for capturing email,*
- *providing access / retrievability of your email,*
- *establishing disposition practices for agency email (either destroy in agency or transfer to NARA), and*
- *possible implementation of the Capstone approach for applicable agency email.*

In 2015, the USSC began the implementation of a new electronic information and records management system – referred to as the “eCommission system” – which includes management of emails that qualify as records. Any existing hard-copy emails (in paper files) that qualify as permanent records are now scanned into OCR pdf files and uploaded into the eCommission and then placed in the appropriate records disposition category. Any electronic files of emails that qualify as records are now uploaded into the eCommission and then placed in the appropriate records disposition category. Commission staff have discretion either to save any email that qualifies as a temporary record in the eCommission system or, instead, to manage such temporary email records by maintaining them in their Outlook email archives. Only permanent email records – of

which there are relatively few – are required to be uploaded into the eCommission system and eventually sent to NARA.

2b) *Provide a list of the actions your agency, components, or bureaus plan to take in 2016 to meet this goal.*

We will continue to implement the policy described in Question 2(a).

3. Has your agency taken actions to implement the 2014 amendments to the *Federal Records Act* requiring Federal employees to copy or forward electronic messages (including email, texts, chats, and instant messaging) that are federal records from their non-official accounts to official accounts within 20 days?

Yes No

Please provide a brief description of the actions taken, such as establishing policies and providing training.

Commission employees have been instructed not to use personal emails, texts, etc., for Commission business and, if they do, they must immediately forward such emails or texts to their Commission accounts.

4. Describe your agency’s internal controls for managing electronic messages (including email, texts, chats, and instant messaging) of the agency head and other executives (including appropriate advisers, and other senior management staff).

All senior Commission employees (Commissioners and senior staff) have been trained repeatedly – including very recently – about the importance of preserving all permanent records in whatever form (including email communication) and assuring that they are uploaded to the eCommission system. Regarding emails in particular, the Commission has created an email address – eRecords@ussc.gov – to which employees can forward any email that they believe may qualify as a permanent record. Our electronic records specialist, Brittany Davis (who has been trained and certified as a records specialist by NARA) regularly monitors eRecords@ussc.gov.

5. Is your agency going to meet the *Directive* goal to submit records schedules to NARA for all existing paper and other non-electronic records by December 31, 2016? (*Directive Goal 2.5*)

Yes No

5a) *Provide a list of the actions your agency, components, or bureaus have taken to meet this goal.*

5b) *Provide a list of the actions your agency, components, or bureaus plan to take in the future to meet this goal.*

The USSC submitted its proposed Comprehensive Records Disposition Schedule (CRDS) to NARA in 2010. It was published in the Federal Register and ultimately was approved by NARA. The Commission has used that CRDS since 2010 and will continue to do so in 2016.

6. Is your agency going to meet the *Directive* goal to manage all permanent electronic records in an electronic format by December 31, 2019? (*Directive Goal 1.1*)

Yes No

6a) *Provide a list of the actions your agency, components, or bureaus have taken to meet this goal. Include specific information on your progress regarding:*

- *establishing formally approved electronic records policies,*
- *use of any automated systems for capturing electronic records,*
- *providing access / retrievability of your electronic records, and*
- *establishing disposition practices for agency electronic records.*

6b) *Provide a list of the actions your agency, components, or bureaus plan to take in the future to meet this goal.*

The USSC has converted from a traditional, largely paper-based records management system to a nearly 100% electronic system for permanent records that will be sent to NARA. (The sole exception will be electronic magnetic tapes of our Annual Criminal Datafiles, which cannot be uploaded into the eCommission.) That conversion has been occurring since 2010. We have finished scanning the vast majority of our historical paper records – using OCR scanners – and uploading them into an Oracle electronic documents-and-records-management system that is DOD 5015.2 compliant. That system is called “Oracle WebCenter Content”; we use an “Oracle WebCenter Content: Records” module specifically for records management. (The two components make up the “eCommission” system discussed above.) We currently are in the process of transferring many of our electronic files (*e.g.*, pdf, Word, Word Perfect, Excel, and Power Point files) into the eCommission system – including all files that qualify as permanent records. Our records specialist, Brittany Davis, is responsible for moving the documents uploaded into the eCommission from the “documents” side to the “records” side of the eCommission (if the documents qualify as “permanent” records), pursuant to our CRDS. Once a file is moved to the “records” side, it will be disposed of in accordance with the CRDS (*i.e.*, depending on the document’s creation date, it will be sent to NARA in electronic form). An electronic copy of all records will remain in the eCommission after they are sent to NARA.

We have trained Commission employees to save future electronic records into the new system. The manner in which such records are to be uploaded into the eCommission is very user-friendly: Commission employees simply save the final version of a file with an “_EC” (for eCommission) – e.g., “2015SAOReport_EC” – and a software program that our IT department created will automatically upload all _EC files into the eCommission overnight. All scanned paper records and electronic records will be easily searchable in the new system, using a robust search engine. All paper files have been scanned using high quality OCR scanners and Tele-Form software, which allow for a full text search of the scanned documents. We are currently in the process of transferring permanent records to NARA in an appropriate electronic format in accordance with our CRDS.

7. Please provide any insight to your agency’s efforts to implement the *Managing Government Records Directive* and the transition to a digital government.

Provide a brief description, including any positive or negative outcomes, challenges, and other obstacles.

After several years of experimenting with an electronic information and records management system that would facilitate Commission employees’ management of information generally and permanent records in particular, we have finally begun implementing our customized eCommission system described above. So far, it has been well received by Commission employees because of its ease of use (in particular, the “_EC” feature) and the robust search engine that it offers.

8. With regard to records management, is your agency preparing for the upcoming change in Presidential administration?

Yes No

8a) *Provide a list of the actions your agency, components, or bureaus have taken to ensure records of departing senior officials will be appropriately managed during the upcoming change in Presidential administration.*

8b) *Provide a list of the actions your agency, components, or bureaus plan to take in the future to ensure records of departing senior officials will be appropriately managed during the upcoming change in Presidential administration, including ensuring that federal records are not improperly removed from the agency.*

NOT APPLICABLE. Our agency is not an executive agency. Rather, it is an independent agency located in the judicial branch. Commissioners’ terms and senior staff members’ tenures have no relationship to changes in presidential administrations.