



National Archives and Records Administration

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National Archives and Records Administration's (NARA) Implementation of the E-Government Act of 2002 – Report for FY 2007

Section 1. Implementation of Electronic Government Initiatives

A. Describe how the initiative is transforming agency operations

Every day the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) touches the lives of people all over the nation. From the visitors who come to see the Declaration of Independence, Constitution, and Bill of Rights in Washington, DC...to the genealogists searching for clues to their family history in one of our regional archives...to the students learning about a President and his administration at one of our Presidential libraries...to the Government officials seeking assistance in managing the records of their agency...to the military veterans using our online services to request a copy of their service records—our customers are not limited by age, race, or socioeconomic status. We assist anyone with a need for or interest in Government records, and their requests are as diverse as the records we hold.

Yet, changes in the Federal Government, in our society, and in the nature of records themselves drive us to make changes in the way we do business and how we address the needs of all our users. As our nation's record keeper, we see the constantly changing benefits and demands of technology shaping the way the Government does business.

The dramatic emergence of electronic Government has brought to the forefront new records management issues that have implications beyond government business. Electronic records will continue to increase exponentially in both volume and in the number of electronic records formats over the next decade. The ability to find, organize, use, share, appropriately dispose of, and save records of all kinds—the essence of records management—is vital for the effective functioning of the Federal Government.

The Electronic Records Archives (ERA) is a comprehensive, systematic, and dynamic means for preserving electronic records, free from dependence on any specific hardware or software, and will improve preservation of and access to computer-based records into the future. The system will manage the entire lifecycle of electronic records – from their ingestion into the system through their preservation and dissemination to customers. Over the next decade, ERA will become increasingly capable, enabling NARA to process and make available valuable Government electronic records. ERA is designed to support access by authorized users within NARA and across the Federal government, as well as any individual anywhere who has access to the Internet.

Our holdings are constantly growing as the proliferation of Government electronic records continues. New records are arriving faster than they can be processed. At the same time, the public demand for access is increasing. The expectation of easy online access to our holdings continues to grow.

The American public expects information to be delivered almost instantly to their desktop with more and more information available via the Internet. Perhaps ERA's greatest impact will be the ability to

acquire, preserve, secure, and provide access to the rapidly increasing volume of electronic records created by the Federal Government. NARA expects the annual average yearly transfer volume to ERA to grow from an initial level of 0.06 petabytes (PB) to 54.94 PB, the equivalent of 13.74 trillion pages of text. In the same time period, NARA expects the records accumulated and stored within ERA to grow to 227 PB, the equivalent of 56.75 trillion pages of text.

Public demand for access to government information is increasing. Visits to NARA's web sites increased by nearly 50 percent since 2005, with more than 32 million visitors so far in 2007. Public access to ERA is expected to begin in FY 2009, which will exponentially increase the volume of web visits. ERA will permit much broader retrieval of electronic records by users, including originating entities, public users; and users engaged in archival activities, such as accession, preservation, description, etc.

The ability to find, organize, use, share, appropriately dispose of, and save records—the essence of records management—is vital for the effective functioning of the Federal Government. Electronic records management presents unique challenges not only in storage and access, but most especially in the areas of preservation and access involving digital images, digital sound, e-mail with attachments, geographic information systems, web sites, and other electronic record formats.

ERA will transform the way that NARA currently works with Federal Agencies to manage their records and business information, regardless of format. The system, through its supporting workflows and communications tools, will allow agency records managers and NARA staff to collaborate on a number of archival and records management functions that are currently done manually.

As the ERA's system capabilities increase over time, NARA staff will be able to provide more consistent, informed, and timely assistance to agency records officers, and will ensure NARA identifies, preserves, and makes available archival records for future generations.

B. Explain how your agency maintains an ongoing dialogue with interested parties to find innovative ways to use information technology for the initiative

To ensure continued engagement and partnership with ERA stakeholders, NARA holds monthly meetings with Federal agencies that will be using ERA, engages in a robust program of communications, advocacy and outreach with the wider archival community, including non-Federal entities, and provides support to quarterly meetings of the Federal Advisory Committee on the Electronic Records Archives (ACERA). NARA participates in the Transcontinental Persistent Archives Prototype (TPAP) with the San Diego Supercomputer Center, the University of Maryland, and the University of North Carolina. NARA also contributes to the InterPARES 2 (International Research on Permanent Authentic Records in Electronic Systems) project by identifying and characterizing records in interactive, dynamic and experiential computing environments. NARA's InterPARES work also includes work on and leading-edge problems related to preserving authentic, reusable, electronic records in computer assisted engineering, design and manufacture of complex systems.

C. Identify external partners (e.g., Federal, State or local agencies, industry) who collaborate on the initiative

NARA is partnering with four Federal agencies (Bureau of Labor Statistics, National Nuclear Security Administration, Naval Oceanographic Office, Patent and Trademark Office) that will serve as early adopters for ERA Increment 1, which will provide basic transfer, storage and search and retrieval capabilities for their Unclassified and Sensitive But Unclassified electronic records. NARA will progressively open the system to all agencies.

In addition to the research activities described above, NARA is a member agency of National Science and Technology Council's Subcommittee on Networking and Information Technology Research and Development (NITRD).

In similar research collaborations, NARA's ERA Program supports a portfolio of collaborative research that includes:

- evaluations with the San Diego Supercomputer Center, the National Center for Supercomputer Applications, and the Pittsburgh Supercomputer Center of innovative systems technologies and advanced decision support systems demonstrating promise to reduce future operational costs for processing the very large, fast growing electronic records that support electronic government and continuity of government operations;
- investigation with the US Navy and the Department of Defense of advanced technologies to support long term robust access to complex engineering electronic records and data; and
- computer security technology test beds with the US Army Research Laboratory providing the sound foundation for high confidence safeguarding of electronic records responsive to the Nation's security and defense.

The ERA research program also participates in supporting the President's agenda for achieving the purposes of the Next Generation Internet Research Act of 1998 (Public Law 105-305). The research enriches the knowledge base required for management and preservation of electronic records and fosters the development of advanced technologies for the management of electronic records supporting current operations of government, and for the preservation and sustained access to valuable records in the National Archives, Presidential Libraries, and other agencies.

D. Identify improved performance (e.g., outcome measures) by tracking performance measures supporting agency objectives and strategic goals;

ERA will become operational during late FY 2008. During FY 2009, it is anticipated that the system will support agency performance improvements, including:

- Increasing the percentage of archival electronic holdings accessible on line by 10%
- Increasing the percentage of customers satisfied with ERA by 5%
- Decreasing the per megabyte cost of managing electronic records

E. Quantify the cost savings and cost avoidance achieved through implementing the initiative (e.g., reducing or eliminating other investments in information technology)

Pending availability of requested funding, the ERA system will result a life cycle benefit through 2020 of \$14,875,035,746 compared to continuing operations of existing systems. The total net present value for ERA is \$9,792,536,406.

F. Explain how this initiative ensures the availability of Government information and services for those without access to the Internet and for those with disabilities

NARA provides Internet access at most of its facilities to ensure availability of Government information and services for those without access to the Internet. NARA specifies Section 508 compliance in all contracts, including small acquisitions to ensure that assistive technology, devices, and services are available to all NARA employees and members of the public with disabilities who use NARA information technology equipment in NARA facilities. Contractors are required to design, develop, implement, maintain and upgrade all technologies to demonstrate full compliance with all existing accessibility legislation.

G. Explain how the project applies effective capital planning and investment control procedures.

The ERA capital planning and investment procedures are incorporated into the ERA governance structure. The ERA Program falls within the oversight of the NARA ERA Oversight Group (NARA EOG), the Information Technology Executive Committee (ITEC), and the Chief Information Officer (CIO).

The EOG consists of the Archivist, the Deputy Archivist, the Assistant Archivists for Administrative Services, Presidential Libraries, Regional Records Services, Records Services, as well as the Directors for the Congressional Affairs and Communications Staff and the Policy and Planning Staff and provides senior management oversight for ERA. The EOG meets weekly to review the financial and technical status of the program and to measure its progress towards stated program and agency goals and objectives.

The Information Technology Executive Committee (ITEC) is comprised of senior NARA decision makers who manage the NARA Capital Planning and Investment Control (CPIC) process and the NARA IT investment portfolio, which includes the ERA investment. Twice yearly, NARA's Capital Planning and Investment branch reviews and assesses IT projects, including ERA, from a financial investment perspective. The ITEC also ensures that ERA budget requests incorporate capital planning and investment control principles including development of a comprehensive independent government life cycle cost estimate, economic analysis (return on investment), business case analysis, analysis of alternatives and use of an ANSI/EIA Standard Earned Value Management System.

The NARA Chief Information Officer (CIO) oversees management of the ERA program and provides direct supervision to the ERA Program Director (PD). The PD ensures that ERA complies

with the acquisition rules, requirements, guidelines and system management practices of the Federal government.

Section 2 – Agency Information Management Activities

A. Your agency’s Information Resources Management (IRM) Strategic Plan.

Our IRM Strategic Plan for 2007 is at www.archives.gov/about/plans-reports/info-resources/

B. Final determinations, priorities, and schedules. Also include your agency’s dissemination product catalogs, directories, inventories, and any other management tools used to improve the dissemination of and access to your agency’s information by the public;

Our determinations, priorities and schedules are available on our web site for public comment at www.archives.gov/comment/web-priorities.html. The public may send comments through a link on the same page that lists the priorities and schedules.

NARA’s most effective channel for communicating with and disseminating information to its diverse customers is its website, www.archives.gov. On that site, we have links to our online researcher tools (which include catalogs of our archival holdings) found at www.archives.gov/research/tools; and our up-to-date press release page at www.archives.gov/press. Our printed publications page at www.archives.gov/publications offers books, research papers, catalogs, teaching aids, and more resources that provide information about the National Archives and its holdings, works about professional archival practice, and scholarly works on people and events of historical interest.

C. Your agency’s FOIA handbook, the link of your agency’s primary FOIA website, and the website link where frequent requests for records are made available to the public;

- Our FOIA Handbook is at <http://www.archives.gov/foia/foia-guide.html>
- NARA’s primary FOIA website is at <http://www.archives.gov/foia/>
- Our Electronic Reading Room, the website for frequent requests, is at <http://www.archives.gov/foia/electronic-reading-room.html>

D. A list of your agency’s public websites disseminating research and development (R&D) information to the public, describing for each whether the website provides the public information about federally funded R&D activities and/or provides the results of Federal research.

Our website relating to R&D is at www.archives.gov/era/research. This website is dedicated to research on electronic records and conducted in support of the Electronic Records Archives. The website describes information about ERA-funded R&D activities and also provides links to research information relating to the ERA **Virtual Archives Laboratory VAL**, **Partnerships and Collaborations**, **Technical Reports**, and **Research Papers**.

E. An inventory describing formal agency agreements (e.g., contracts, memorandum of understanding) with external entities (e.g., partnerships with state and local governments, public libraries, industry and commercial search engines) complementing your agency's information dissemination program, briefly explaining how each agreement improves the access to and dissemination of government information to the public;

1. NARA has partnered with Google to make 100 moving image titles from our collection available through Google Video and through the Archival Research Catalog (ARC). The agreement was announced on February 24, 2006. More information is available at <http://www.archives.gov/press/press-releases/2006/nr06-64.html>

2. On June 8, 2006, NARA announced a partnership with EMC to digitize the entire collection of papers, documents, photographs and audio recordings of President John F. Kennedy, eventually making them accessible to citizens throughout the world via the Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum's web site. More information is available at <http://www.archives.gov/press/press-releases/2006/nr06-112.html>

3. NARA entered into a partnership with the University of Texas to create a Presidential Timeline web site to make digital copies of presidential documents available online. The Presidential Timeline was designed and developed by the Learning Technology Center in The University of Texas at Austin College of Education, in conjunction with the Presidential Libraries and Terra Incognita Productions. The Presidential Timeline Project was made possible through a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities with additional support from The Lyndon Baines Johnson Foundation and The University of Texas Libraries. The web site was launched in February, 2007. See <http://www.archives.gov/press/press-releases/2007/nr07-59.html> and www.presidentialtimeline.org for more information.

4. NARA's Southwest Region entered into an Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Genealogy Society of Utah (GSU) to permit digitization of some Naturalization records, Dawes Commission Applications for Allotment and Applications for Enrollment to the Five Civilized Tribes. GSU had previously microfilmed such records onsite in accordance with our regulations at 36 CFR part 1254 on private microfilming, but now GSU is beginning to scan the records in lieu of the microfilm. An electronic copy (CD or DVD) of the scanned image is provided to NARA-Southwest Region upon completion of certain milestones.

5. On January 10, 2007, NARA announced that it has partnered with iArchives/Footnote to digitize selected records from our holdings, with a focus on microfilm publications. This non-exclusive agreement will enable researchers and the general public to access millions of newly-digitized images of the National Archives historic records on a subscription basis from the Footnote web site (<http://www.footnote.com/nara.php>) The digitized materials will also be available at no charge in National Archives public research rooms including those at the Presidential Libraries and regional archives across the country. After an interval of five years, all images digitized through this agreement will be available at no charge through the National Archives web site. More information is available at <http://www.archives.gov/press/press-releases/2007/nr07-41.html>. The agreement itself is available at <http://www.archives.gov/iarchives/iarchives-digitization-agreement.html>

6. On July 30, 2007, NARA announced another non-exclusive agreement with CustomFlix Labs, part of the Amazon.com, Inc. group of companies to make thousands of historic films from the National Archives available for purchase on Amazon.com. While the public can still come to NARA's College Park, MD research room to view films and copy them at no charge, the new agreement will make our motion picture holdings much more accessible to millions of people who cannot travel to the Washington, DC area. More information is available at <http://www.archives.gov/press/press-releases/2007/nr07-122.html>

NARA is now seeking public comment on its draft *Plan for Digitizing Archival Materials for Public Access, 2007-2016*. This draft plan outlines our planned strategies to digitize and make more accessible the historic holdings from the National Archives of the United States. The draft plan for comment is available at <http://www.archives.gov/comment/digitizing-plan.html>. When finalized later in FY 2008, NARA will maintain the digitization plan on www.archives.gov.

F. An inventory that describes your agency's NARA-approved records schedules(s) or the link to the publicly-posted records schedules(s), and a brief explanation of your agency's progress to implement NARA Bulletin 2006-02. For the brief explanation please report the number of systems for which a record schedule was submitted to NARA in FY 2007 and the number of systems still requiring records schedules.

NARA's records schedule is found at <http://www.archives.gov/about/records-schedule/index.html>

NARA has integrated procedures in both its capital planning and systems development life cycle processes to ensure the inclusion of records management requirements in newly developed information systems. NARA has identified 33 information systems in steady-state operation that should be scheduled. Of those, 12 are already scheduled, 2 are currently in progress and 17 remain to be scheduled. The NARA Records Management Staff has developed a plan for scheduling these remaining systems by September 30, 2009.