



Great Lakes Wave



Photo by Anthony Beard

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Online Agency Records Schedules

By James Hurst

What do such agencies as Army, Navy, Air Force, the Department of Energy, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Federal Highway Administration, and the National Archives and Records Administration have in common? They all offer online versions of their records schedules. Also, the General Records Schedules, available for use by all Federal agencies, are online (see web address below).

Advantages? You don't have to leave your desk or worry about having to share the schedule with other employees. You can simply go online to find important information, such as records series descriptions, cut-off and transfer instructions, and retention periods. The schedules are easily updated when changes occur or new series are added. There are no restrictions on access to online schedules.

Disadvantages? Sometimes an older version of the schedule may still be available after a newer version appears; make sure you access the latest version. Ensure that schedule changes and additions cite approved Standard Forms 115,

Request for Records Disposition Authority.

Online schedules are electronic and are thus susceptible to power outages and computer failure. It is still a good idea to maintain a hard copy of agency schedules in case of technical failures. Keeping a hard copy may be an agency requirement. Also, you should continue to file any textual updates and make appropriate annotations in the hard copy of the schedule.

The formats for online schedules vary greatly. NARA's schedule, for example, simply lists chapters and chapter titles, with a keyword search option, while the U.S. Army schedule has more elaborate search modes, i.e., via keyword, directive, type of record, etc. Getting familiar with the format makes usage easy.

Finding online agency schedules is simple. In the absence of a web address, you can usually employ a search engine, such as Google, and use general search terminology, such as, "records retention schedules for Navy." Use this

method to determine whether your agency has put your records schedules online.

Examples of online schedules and their addresses include the following:

Army – <https://www.arims.army.mil/> (or search for "ARIMS")

NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) – http://www.ofa.noaa.gov/~ames/Records_Management/records_mgmt.html

EPA – <http://www.epa.gov/records/index.htm>

Navy – <http://doni.daps.dla.mil/secnav%20manuals1/5210.1.pdf>

Department of Energy – <http://cio.energy.gov/records-management/disposition.htm>

General Records Schedules – www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/

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Targeted Assistance is a customer oriented, problem-solving approach to front-end records and information management problems facing Federal agencies. Your agency and NARA form a partnership to solve records management challenges. Together, we develop a project with a well-defined purpose; tangible products; definite milestones; and a time frame for completion. Projects can last from several days to several months.

For more information about Targeted Assistance in the Great Lakes Region, please contact: Galen R. Wilson at 937-425-0613 or galen.wilson@nara.gov for Ohio, Indiana, and Michigan or John Stewart at 773-948-9024 or john.stewart@nara.gov for Illinois, Wisconsin, and Minnesota.

You can also visit <http://www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/initiatives/targeted-assistance.html>.

NARA's Media Neutral Records Policy

By John Stewart

NARA has adopted revisions to its regulations that provide greater records scheduling coverage for both new and existing agency records and reduce workloads for agencies. The new policy makes all new records schedules media neutral, unless otherwise specified, and allows some previous paper-based schedules to be applied to electronic records.

The new policy is reflected in revisions to 36 CFR 1228.24 and 36 CFR 1228.31. The revised sections provide that all new schedules after December 17, 2007 are to be media neutral, unless specified otherwise; and allow previously approved schedules for certain hard copy records to be applied to current electronic versions. The new regulations also specify when approved records schedules for paper records do not apply to current electronic versions of the same records, and establish notification requirements necessary

when an agency replaces previously approved permanent records with electronic records.

The goal of these revisions is to shift the scheduling focus from traditional paper-based records to current multimedia and mixed formats. This new emphasis will provide greater coverage for both new and existing agency records; reduce workload for agencies and NARA; and formalize scheduling practices that have been in place since the 1990s.

NARA also has amended GRS 20 to provide agencies expanded authority to apply previously approved records schedules to electronic records, and to dispose of hard copy records that have been converted to an electronic format. NARA has added disposition instructions for ad hoc printouts and documentation associated with permanent electronic records. The new authority and instructions resulting

from changes to GRS 20, items 2, 3, 11, and 16 are described in more detail in Transmittal No. 18, released in December 2007, which is available at www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/ardor/records-schedules.html.

The next steps for NARA's National Records Management Program are to develop operational procedures for notification to NARA when an agency is replacing approved paper-based permanent records with electronic records. NARA will be working with agency records managers to answer questions about the new policy, and will also be developing supplemental guidance on implementing the media neutral policy.

Are Your Agency's E-Records Scheduled for Retention?

By Joseph Suster

Think your agency's records retention schedule is complete and comprehensive? Many agency records managers at the regional and field office level may be unaware of a provision within the E-Government Act of 2002 mandating that Federal agencies schedule for retention all their electronic records existing as of December 31, 2005, by the end of Fiscal Year 2009. That's less than 18 months away.

To be included in this scheduling initiative are not only various agency databases with inputs, outputs, and master files, but also e-mail, web sites, digital photographs, scanned images, PDFs, geographic information systems (GIS), and other e-record formats. Surprisingly, some agency staffers don't even consider items such as e-mail and web sites to be records

requiring scheduling. In many instances, they are wrong. NARA is having each of its nine regions, including the Great Lakes, appraise a minimum of 15 electronic records collections (of any kind) by September 2008. The Great Lakes Region is particularly focusing on the unscheduled electronic records of the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (Indianapolis) and the Railroad Retirement Board (Chicago).

As part of NARA's Targeted Assistance to Federal agencies, records management analysts are available to help any office in the Great Lakes Region that has electronic records requiring scheduling and appraisal. Such services could include inventorying electronic records onsite, drafting a Standard Form 115, Request for Records Disposition Authority, or helping to apply

NARA's General Records Schedule 20 - Electronic Records to common, administrative electronic files. To request assistance with managing electronic records, whether created 20 years ago or just last week, contact either Galen Wilson, 937-425-0613 (agencies in Ohio, Michigan, and Indiana), or John Stewart, 773-948-9024 (agencies in Illinois, Wisconsin, and Minnesota), for more information.

E-Forum Coming to Chicago!

The 2008 edition of the Great Lakes Region's Electronic Records Forum will be held in downtown Chicago on Wednesday, August 13, at the Ralph G. Metcalfe Federal Building.

This year's theme will feature case studies documenting the implementation of electronic records management systems (ERMS) to Federal agency record keeping practices. Representatives from two government agencies currently utilizing ERMS have been invited to share their implementation experiences. As always, attendance at this year's forum will be open to all and free. For more information, please contact Joseph Suster at 773-948-9040 or joseph.suster@nara.gov.



Training Information at Your Fingertips

By Marybelle Yeazel

NARA's National Records Management Training Program is supported by a learning management system (LMS). Course listings, search capability, registration, and payment are all handled online. (*Access to this site requires the use of Internet Explorer*). This is one stop-shopping for NARA training, forums, and conferences.

The first time you get online to sign up for training you will be prompted to fill out a user profile and input a user ID and password. Once you have done this, you will be able to sign up for classes across the country without picking up the phone. You can enroll in web-based training events, attend them, and never have to leave your office. You can find training points of contacts for all NARA regions. You can also sign up for the RACO conferences and much more using LMS.

NARA launched LMS in the fall of 2006 and by May 2008 the payment process is scheduled to be online. Then you will no longer need to fax back or call in credit card information; you will be able to do it with a few easy keystrokes and mouse clicks.

Below are just a few of the things you can do using LMS :

- View all records management training schedules
- Enroll in classroom and web-based training events
- View your learning progress (courses completed and/or exams passed) in "my learning history"
- Check or change the classes for which you're enrolled (through "my enrollments")

- Print out certificates for those classes you've completed (through "my enrollments")

- Access RM training resources

To get started, just go to

<https://nara.learn.com/recordsmanagement-training>

and you are off and running on your quest for RM training!

If you have questions or need assistance with the use of LMS in the Great Lakes Region, please contact Marybelle Yeazel at 937-425-0624 or marybelle.yeazel@nara.gov.

FY 2008 Workshops

Register for workshops and briefings through: <http://nara.learn.com/recordsmanagement-training>

For information, contact Marybelle Yeazel at 937-425-0624 or marybelle.yeazel@nara.gov for Ohio courses or Joseph Suster at 773-948-9040 or joseph.suster@nara.gov for Illinois courses.

Date	Course Title	Location
May 5-6, 2008	Creating and Maintaining Agency Business Information (KA2)	Dayton, OH
May 7-8, 2008	Records Schedule Implementation (KA4)	Dayton, OH
June 3, 2008	Basic Records Operations	Chicago, IL
June 4-5, 2008	Emergency Planning & Response for Vital Records & Essential Information (EVE)	Chicago, IL
July 15, 2008	Basic Records Operations	Dayton, OH
July 16-17, 2008	Emergency Planning & Response for Vital Records & Essential Information (EVE)	Dayton, OH
July 21-22, 2008	Records Scheduling (KA3)	Chicago, IL
July 23-24, 2008	Asset & Risk Management (KA5)	Chicago, IL
July 25, 2008	Records Management Program Development (KA6)	Chicago, IL
August 19-20, 2008	Advanced Electronic Records Management	Chicago, IL
August 21, 2008	Basic Records Operations	Chicago, IL
August 27, 2008	Basic Records Operations	Dayton, IL

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Visit us on the Web

By Galen R. Wilson

NARA's Great Lakes Region proudly announces the launch of its enhanced and improved web site. We were greatly tempted to extol its virtues elsewhere, but we opted to share it with you first. Here's the good things available at <http://www.archives.gov/great-lakes/>.

The first thing you'll notice is the engaging masthead. It wasn't easy trying to condense everything about a six-state region (Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota) into three image-bytes that would collectively shout "Midwest!" But we think we succeeded with pictures of pleasure boats docked in harbor, Chicago's night skyline, and a red barn set amid green pastures.

Our primary goal was to make the site easy to

navigate and responsive to users' most common questions. Four main-page entry points lead you to what we can do for you.

Select "Regional Archives" to learn about 80,000 cubic feet of permanent records in our Chicago facility. Here are details about what's available for hard-copy research and on microfilm. These films are of original records at NARA's main facility in Washington, DC, selected for the Great Lakes Regional Archives collection because of either high reference use or a particular Midwest connection.

Select "Records Management Program," (RM) to find details about what our RM staff can do to assist records managers in agency offices make their own programs run smoothly. A list of services we offer, a tour of topics in which

we have particular expertise, and some testimonials from agencies that have utilized our assistance may give you some ideas as to how we can help you. This is a serious offer and we hope you'll investigate its potential to help you accomplish your work. The RM pages also link you to a host of records management training opportunities available to you not only in this region but nationwide.

A click on "Federal Records Centers" (FRC) takes you to the region's three FRCs: one in Chicago and two near Dayton, Ohio. Here are menus of services the FRCs offer in storing non-current records, reference on those records, and disposal of records when they have fulfilled their legal retention period.

And there's so much more. We hope you enjoy the site, find it useful, and visit often.

