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THE STRATEGIC PLAN OF THE

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

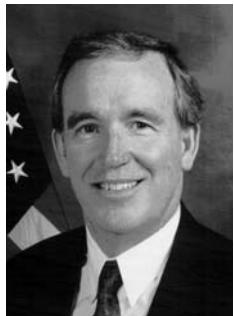*1997 - 2008*

Revised 2003

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THE STRATEGIC PLAN OF THE

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In 2000 I transmitted the first update of NARA's Strategic Plan to the President, the Congress, and the American public with a profound sense that much was riding on its success. While that feeling continues as I transmit the next update of that plan, I believe firmly that we are on the right course toward achieving our 10-year plan.

The National Archives and Records Administration is our national recordkeeper. It is a public trust that safeguards the records on which people of a democratic republic depend for documenting their individual rights, for ensuring the accountability and credibility of their national institutions, and for analyzing their national experience. Both the Government and the public rely on NARA to meet an almost unlimited range of information needs from records. Such records are essential for congressional oversight committees to evaluate agencies, for veterans to prove their entitlements to such benefits as medical care, and for citizens to discover their families' histories. These are just a few of the many uses made of U.S. Government records. The records we preserve and make available every day directly affect the lives of millions of our citizens as well as the understanding we have of our nation's history.

More of these records are being electronically created and maintained than ever before, and we anticipate exponential growth in the number of electronic records we need to be able to care for in the coming years. This Strategic Plan acknowledges the significance that electronic records—their maintenance, preservation, and accessibility—play in NARA's role as the national recordkeeper. We are just as responsible for caring for the billions of electronic records in our custody as we are for our most famous documents, America's great Charters of Freedom—the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, and the Bill of Rights. Meeting that responsibility in an era of records proliferation, technological change, and financial challenge has been and remains the purpose of our Strategic Plan. How well we meet our responsibility depends on the success of the specific strategies in this plan.

Our plan has been a sound guide that has helped us align priorities and assign resources. While I am aware that some enormous challenges lie ahead, I take great pride in the progress we have made, as described later in these pages. Credit for our progress starts with the exceptional commitment and work of the NARA staff. Also our progress owes much to new partners and key stakeholders who are helping us move toward our plan's key goals. And through the plan's first six years, we are particularly grateful to the Congress and the Administration for under-standing the value of our services and providing essential support.

To update our plan, we asked for help from our customers within and outside the Government, our key stakeholders, and members of our own staff. We made use of lessons we learned in the first six years of our plan's implementation. And we also incorporated guidance and suggestions from Government and private industry on ways to better measure the results of our efforts and the benefits our customers want to realize. The feedback we received reinforced the soundness of the directions we have been taking, but also provided detailed suggestions for improving implementation, and pushed us to achieve results that focus on mission outcomes at an even faster pace.

This updated plan does several things. It identifies things that are now achievements rather than objectives, such as launching our new Internet-accessible catalog describing our holdings, opening the 1930 census records, and reopening the newly renovated Rotunda and re-encased Charters of Freedom. It identifies efforts under way to meet objectives, such as our progress toward creating a viable Electronic Records Archives, implementing initiatives to redesign Federal records management, and making increasingly more of our records and services available to our customers through the Internet. Our updated plan also accounts for the different world in which we find ourselves after September 11, 2001, with efforts identified for working closely with Federal agencies that create classified records and ensuring the security of our nation's records by making improvements in the infrastructure of NARA's information technology systems and facilities. Finally, we have removed from the plan references no longer relevant and have updated statistics and examples. Again, I am grateful to all who helped to keep our plan current, challenging, and sound.

This document now identifies what we must do during the next four years to keep faith with the trust that a democratic nation has placed in us. We must reach this plan's ambitious goals because NARA is not an ordinary agency. We serve not just today's citizens, but all who are yet to come. We must preserve past documents already in our care, but also prepare to manage tomorrow's records in new and challenging forms. If Americans are to have faith in their public institutions, the records of those institutions must be secure, open, and accessible. Ensuring that they are is what NARA does. This updated plan will help us do it even better in the future.

JOHN W. CARLIN
ARCHIVIST OF THE UNITED STATES

CONTENTS OF THE PLAN

THE NEEDS OF USERS

Every day, thousands of people use NARA's records and services in multiple ways.
People from all over the nation, indeed the world, have entered the Rotunda for the Charters of Freedom in the National Archives Building in Washington, DC, to see the originals of the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights. As a reaffirmation of our nation's faith in the values these documents express and the form of government they gave us, we have re-encased them for continued preservation and rededicated the renovated Rotunda for their continued display.

Other people learn about the administrations of Presidents from Hoover to Clinton from documents and exhibits in Presidential libraries we maintain. In our regional facilities around the country and our two archival facilities in the Washington area, historians study the Civil War, other scholars review records assembled by congressional committees, investigators trace assets looted from Holocaust victims, film producers find images for documentaries, veterans locate proof of their entitlement to benefits, researchers mine scientific data for longitudinal studies, citizens use court records to secure legal rights, journalists listen to Nixon Oval Office tapes, and Americans check immigration and census records to fill gaps in family histories. Moreover, lawyers, business executives, consumer groups, environmentalists, and others consult the *Federal Register* and *Code of Federal Regulations* that we publish, and government officials request assistance in managing their records and call the Federal records centers we operate from coast to coast to retrieve records they need for conducting business. And other customers request information as diverse as the records we hold, view online and traveling exhibits of our documentary treasures, and participate in public programs and educational activities in our facilities nationwide. Significantly, more and more people are using our services and gaining access to our records through the Internet, whether by requesting copies of records through *inquire@nara.gov*, commenting on regulations at *regulations.gov*, downloading milestone documents at *ourdocuments.gov*, searching online databases of records and information, or engaging in a host of other activities through *archives.gov.*

How well can we continue to serve all these users? The hard truth is that we face major challenges. Changes in our society, changes in the Federal Government itself, and changes in the nature of records make it necessary for us to devise new plans and find new strategies to succeed. In addition to keeping up with influxes of paper records, we must cope with growing quantities of computer-generated records in multiple formats. We must continue working to stay abreast of accelerating technological change, take advantage of opportunities that technologies offer, and meet increased expectations for electronic access to records.

THE LEGACY OF PAPER

The influx of paper will not end any time soon. Federal agencies are now using computers, but the Government is far from the paperless operation that has been predicted. In addition to the valuable paper records we already have, to which we want to continue to provide ready

access, records yet to be turned over to us will continue for decades to be accumulations from the paper age. Moreover, the transfer of such records was accelerated by the last decade's Government cutbacks. As agencies streamlined, programs ended, and military bases closed, their records wound up on our doorstep much sooner than if the programs had continued. Also, the paper and electronic records of the various independent counsels come to us as their investigations close. By the very nature of our business, our work will grow because even a downsized government continues to generate records.

More and better space is needed to house Federal records. Our resources are currently committed to a system designed primarily to store and provide access to paper records. We operate 3 records services facilities in the Washington area, 20 records services facilities spread nationwide from Atlanta to Anchorage, and 10, soon to be 11, Presidential libraries. These buildings house more than 25 million cubic feet of documentary material—literally billions of pages, photos, films, etc. That material has increased in volume by more than 10 percent in just 3 years, by 30 percent in the past decade, and we have been adding more than 500,000 cubic feet of mostly paper-based records per year. In the past, the cost of that space and its maintenance had consumed nearly half of our budget, which did not include money for the major repairs, the additional space, or the upgrading to provide appropriate space for records preservation needed by nearly every NARA facility. Under our Strategic Plan, and with the support of the Administration and Congress, we have now implemented a program in which agencies reimburse us for the storage and retrieval services we provide for records still in their legal custody. Within the constraints of a cost-competitive environment, we now have more flexibility to provide the records center space agencies need.

Quality archival space remains a need, however, along with improved ways to provide ready access to records. We have a superb state-of-the-art facility in College Park, Maryland, which provides appropriate conditions for archival records preservation and use. But many of our facilities do not. Most are full or nearly full right now. Only a fraction of the archival materials in those facilities are in space that has all the appropriate environmental controls. And space in many of these facilities is not suitable for staff or researchers. We have projects underway to address our most pressing space problems at the original National Archives Building in Washington, DC, the Southeast Regional Archives facility in Atlanta, Georgia, and the Pacific Alaska Regional Archives in Anchorage, Alaska. Moreover, we have begun planning for the transfer of the millions of 20th-century veterans' records scheduled to become archival records over the next several years to ensure their preservation for continuing use by veterans, their families, genealogists, and historians.

THE IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY

Electronically generated records present an even greater challenge. Our society continues to invest heavily in electronic information systems. Government computers have been and increasingly are generating electronic records in various forms. The reality at the beginning of the 21st century is that most records are created electronically and may be maintained in a variety of formats. Included are thousands of major Federal agency databases that must be

maintained electronically to preserve their usefulness. Included are critical continuity of operations records that the Government must be able to access electronically for defense and homeland security. Included are vast scientific "archives" of information accumulated by Federal agencies that track the weather and explore outer space. Included is Census 2000, which is critical for determining entitlements to Federal payments, and other databases for tracking the effect of new laws such as accounting reform. Included also are millions of e-mail messages that no one will fully understand in the future unless we preserve both the messages and transmission information about them. As the volume of electronic records we hold continues to accelerate rapidly—from a few thousand files in 1990 to several billion records today—so too does the range and diversity of the records. Historically, electronic records transferred to us for preservation have mostly been in the form of databases. Now we must resolve records management, preservation, and access issues involving digital images, digital sound, e-mail with attachments, geographic information systems, web sites, and other electronic record formats.

Users increasingly expect immediate electronic access to information. Recent legislation and the push for electronic government has raised expectations and increased demands for online records and services. We must master the challenges of preserving electronic records in a way that makes them usable; that is, available in systems through which users can locate needed records, retrieve them, and read them. Also, we must be able to ensure the authenticity and reliability of electronic records. Provision will need to be made for controlling the creation, transmission, and maintenance of electronic records to guard against tampering and ensure a full and accurate representation of the transactions, activities, or facts to which they attest.

Solutions are in sight but much remains to be done. Following our Strategic Plan, we have formed partnerships with other government agencies, other countries, and universities. These partnerships have enabled us to achieve significant breakthroughs in the application of computer science and advanced technology to our goals of ensuring that electronic records are well managed, properly preserved, and readily accessible for as long as needed. These breakthroughs, achieved in research we sponsored at the San Diego Supercomputer Center and the Georgia Tech Research Institute, provide the foundation for our vision of the archives of the future— the Electronic Records Archives, which will be a comprehensive, systematic, and dynamic means for preserving virtually any kind of electronic record, free from dependence on any specific hardware or software. The Electronic Records Archives, when operational, will make it easy for our customers to find records they want, and easy for us to deliver those records in formats suited to customers' needs. Our partnerships with the Department of Defense, the National Science Foundation, and many others will help us realize this vision by building on the successful results of previous research and prototypes as well as allowing us to tap into leading-edge resources and world-class expertise in laboratories and universities around the country. Our excitement about building the Electronic Records Archives is tempered by our recognition that realizing its promise will require continued technological advances and mitigation of the key risks of such a significant undertaking. It also will require that we sustain a high level of commitment and receive the resource increases that will be needed to provide ready access to essential evidence in electronic form across generations of information technology and for future generations of Americans.

THE REQUIREMENTS OF STAFF

Throughout NARA, talented and dedicated people are working hard to meet the goals of our Strategic Plan. They need continued opportunities to focus their energies, learn new skills, make use of new technologies, and develop partnerships for solving problems. We must continue to build an organizational culture that respects diversity, encourages creativity, and values risk-taking, communication, commitment, and loyalty.

We must recruit new kinds of staff with new kinds of expectations. Our planning must include preparation for training leaders for tomorrow. We must help current staff members with traditional archival training to add skills necessary for working with new technologies. And we must replace valuable staff members whom we will be losing to retirement with staff prepared by experience to deal with records in both traditional formats and a variety of new formats in this electronic information age. Moreover, we must partner with universities and professional associations to determine educational requirements for 21st-century archivists. Also, a new generation of recruits for whom the computer is a central work tool may expect more flexible work situations than traditional offices provide, and more independence, responsibility, flexibility, and opportunity for the use of creativity. We must assess these needs in preparing for effectively recruiting and training people with the technological understanding, content knowledge, and comfort that we need for future success. And we must seek ways to recruit and retain them in a competitive job market.

We recognize that in today's world no agency can do its job alone. The demands for more efficiency, more service, and more productivity means that we must search for creative ways to collaborate with others in fulfilling our mission. Managing the documentary evidence generated by others is inherently a collaborative effort. We need to increase our partnerships with universities, libraries, professional associations, commercial entities, and other Federal agencies to develop technologies and make records available online. Fortunately, we have built a foundation for such collaboration through work on several projects with external partners, such as the Department of Education, the Government Printing Office, the Department of Defense, the Patent and Trademark Office, and the National Science Foundation within the Federal Government, and the San Diego Supercomputer Center and the Georgia Tech Research Institute outside the Government. The National Historical Publications and Records Commission, which we administer, works in partnership with State Historical Records Advisory Boards and the Council of State Historical Records Coordinators, among others. Our headquarters staff collaborates on programs with the nearby University of Maryland, as our Presidential libraries do with universities near them. And corporations, foundations, and other private-sector donors are in partnership with us, the Foundation for the National Archives, and our Presidential library foundations to fund facility renovations, major exhibitions, and special programs.

All of us at NARA want to do more than just maintain the status quo. We are proud of our institution and its role. It is not enough in our planning just to find ways to dig out from under the paper avalanche and catch up with new technologies. We want to excel, not just survive. We want to meet challenges, not just react to pressure. We want to get ahead of and even influence the technological curve. We want to build an organization that will actively

deliver value, not just respond passively to whatever requests may come. We want to foster openness and trust among our staff and improve communication inside and outside the agency. We want to prepare NARA for strong and active leadership in providing records services in this century.

THE RESULTS OF PLANNING

We have made much progress since first issuing this plan. We have made this progress because of the support we have had from the Administration, the Congress, and interested constituents, and because of the work of our staff and our partners. The previously mentioned Electronic Records Archives, just a dream at the plan's first writing, has become feasible, and the program has taken significant steps to advance critical research, conceptualize system design, define requirements, and develop a comprehensive capital asset plan. Through initiatives on records management and electronic government, we are improving our records management policies and guidance and helping Federal agencies develop practical recordkeeping solutions and better manage their records, particularly their electronic records. We have successfully operated a fee-for-service Records Center Program for three years, during which we expanded both our storage capacity and our services to agencies. We increased the ability of individuals to use our services and find out about our holdings via the Internet by launching a redesigned web site and online databases that allow researchers to search descriptions of our records and directly access selected digitized collections and authentic electronic records. Numerous facility projects, including the renovation of the original National Archives Building, are underway or nearing completion, and we have completed the conservation and re-encasement of the Charters of Freedom—the Declaration of Independence, Constitution, and Bill of Rights. We have taken significant steps to improve the quality and the speed of our service to veterans on military service records, and established a preservation program to ensure these important records still exist for future generations. And internally we have linked individual performance to strategic outcomes, improved staff diversity, expanded the electronic capabilities of the Federal Register, and strengthened the security and reliability of our computer systems.

From our present state, we still have a long way to go. We still must bring many preservation, space, and access projects to full fruition. We must provide better guidance faster on electronic records management. We must leverage our involvement in electronic government initiatives, the development of the Federal Enterprise Architecture, and the creation and implementation of records management standards. And we must be more persuasive at the highest levels of Government about the value of Federal recordkeeping overall, especially in an electronic environment. Records are assets to be managed like other property assets. Agencies need them not only to meet legal and congressional requirements but to do their jobs better and satisfy public needs for authentic information. Records are essential for the accountability of a democratic government. We must see that the right, authentic records are available whenever needed, in accessible formats, for as long as needed, throughout their lifecycle.

Failing to do so is not an option. The records entrusted to us include the nation's great Charters of Freedom, the very foundation of our democracy. But we also are responsible for

the accessible preservation of millions of other Government records on which people depend—records needed for everyday business such as tax returns, contracts, passports, and patents; records used by millions of naturalized Americans to verify their citizenship; records used by millions of military veterans to document their entitlement to benefits; records used by the Congress and the courts and the press in assessing agencies' accountability; records that all kinds of scholars study to assess objectively what we have done as a nation and what we can learn from our national experience.

Without such records, how can Americans document their rights, their entitlements, their identities? How can citizens inspect what Government officials have done and hold them accountable? And how can students and teachers in our schools know or be able to understand our past? Without the documents of democracy—from the Charters of Freedom to the Census 2000—we would no longer live in a democracy, for a society whose records are closed cannot be open, and a people who cannot document their rights cannot exercise them. At the National Archives and Records Administration, we work to ensure that anyone can have access to the records that matter to them. That is our mission and our pledge to the American people.

THE STATEMENT OF STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

We began strategic planning by standing back, looking at our legislation, identifying the basis of our mission, vision, and values, and expressing them as succinctly as we could in a guiding statement of strategic directions, as follows:

Strategic Directions for the National Archives and Records Administration

Vision

The National Archives is a public trust on which our democracy depends. It enables people to inspect for themselves the record of what government has done. It enables officials and agencies to review their actions and helps citizens hold them accountable. It ensures continuing access to essential evidence that documents

- the rights of American citizens,
- the actions of Federal officials, and
- the national experience.

To be effective, we at NARA must determine what evidence is essential for such documentation, ensure that government creates such evidence, and make it easy for users to access that evidence regardless of where it is, or where they are, for as long as needed. We also must find technologies, techniques, and partners worldwide that can help improve service and hold down costs, and we must help staff members continuously expand their capability to make the changes necessary to realize the vision.

Mission

NARA ensures, for the Citizen and the Public Servant, for the President and the Congress and the Courts, ready access to essential evidence.

Goals

- *One:* Essential evidence is created, identified, appropriately scheduled, and managed for as long as needed.

- *Two:* Electronic records are controlled, preserved, and made accessible for as long as needed.

- *Three:* Essential evidence is easy to access regardless of where it is or where users are for as long as needed.

- *Four:* All records are preserved in an appropriate environment for use as long as needed.

- *Five:* NARA strategically manages and aligns staff, technology, and processes to achieve our mission.

Values

To succeed in our mission, all of us within NARA need to value the following:

- *Risk-taking:*   experiment, take chances, try new ways, learn from mistakes, be open to change

- *Communication:*   propose ideas, dialogue with others, develop trust, and act openly, honestly, and with integrity

- *Commitment:*   be responsible, accountable, and always willing to learn

- *Loyalty:*   support the mission, help fellow workers, proceed as a team, and recognize that our government and our people truly need our service

The pages that follow expand on the concepts in this statement. These concepts, along with our assessment of our legislative mandates and constituent demands, external influences and internal resources, and obstacles and opportunities, are the foundation from which we developed the goals and strategies that follow.

STRATEGIC VISION

With the 20th century behind us, we see a particular opportunity, and feel a special responsibility, for securing the history of what may be remembered as the American Century, and for documenting what could be for this nation an even greater one.

Consider what the United States has attained: In earlier centuries, our predecessors fought a war for Independence, created a remarkably durable democratic republic, and held it together in a bitter Civil War. In the 20th century, the United States and its allies led free nations to victory in two world wars and a long cold one; put men on the moon; transformed life's conditions through scientific discovery, commercial enterprise, and government action; and at the century's end was the planet's preeminent nation.

Documentation exists of our national trials and triumphs. We must not lose it, as civilization lost the public records of ancient Rome to the Vandals. Today's threats are more insidious. Acidic paper, nitrate-based film stock, and storage in space unprotected from temperature fluctuations result in the disintegration of both paper documents and photographic images. The problem is compounded by mushrooming quantities of computer-created records in multiplying formats, so easy to delete, so endangered by the physical instability of computer tapes and disks, and so dependent on hardware and software that become obsolete, rendering unreadable the records that survive.

Over the years of this plan, we want to stem the losses already occurring in our nation's recorded history, begin to document the 21st century fully and efficiently, and take advantage of new technologies to extend our rich resources to every office, school, and home. That is our vision. The effort to get there is noble, necessary, and difficult. It is noble because it takes the long view, seeking to assure Americans their just place in the history of nations. It is necessary because it supports the continuation of free government through public confidence that the records that enable citizens to document their rights and entitlements, hold public officials accountable, and assess their nation's historical experience are secure. It is difficult because it depends on establishing working partnerships with all Federal agencies for effective records management programs that encompass all media in which our nation's records are created.

STRATEGIC MISSION

The mission of the National Archives and Records Administration is rooted in legislation codified under Title 44 of the United States Code. Therein resides the authority of the Archivist of the United States, as head of the National Archives and Records Administration, to provide guidance and assistance to Federal officials on the management of records, to determine the retention and disposition of records, to store records in centers from which agencies can retrieve them, and to take into archival facilities and Presidential libraries, for public use, records that are, in the language of Section 2107, "determined by the Archivist of the United States to have sufficient historical or other value to warrant their continued preservation by the United States Government."

As defined in Section 3301, these records are:

> all books, papers, maps, photographs, machine readable materials, or other documentary materials, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received by an agency of the United States Government under Federal law or in connection with the transaction of public business and preserved or appropriate for preservation by that agency or its legitimate successor as evidence of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, or other activities of the Government or because of the informational value of data in them.

Title 44 further specifies the kinds of records that Federal officials must create and preserve with NARA's guidance. Section 3101 stipulates that:

> the head of each Federal agency shall make and preserve records containing adequate and proper documentation of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, and essential transactions of the agency and designed to furnish the information necessary to protect the legal and financial rights of the Government and of persons directly affected by the agency's activities.

Definitions in Section 2901 extend recordkeeping requirements to elements of the legislative and judicial branches, as well as executive branch agencies, and Section 2203 requires similarly that the President of the United States "assure that the activities, deliberations, decisions, and policies that reflect the performance of his constitutional, statutory, or other official or ceremonial duties are adequately documented."

Thus, NARA shares responsibility with Federal officials throughout the government for "adequacy of documentation"—for seeing that certain kinds of records are created, kept, and made accessible. In Title 44 NARA has an additional and unique role to file centrally and to publish Federal laws and administrative regulations, the President's official orders, and the structure, functions, and activities of Federal agencies through the daily *Federal Register*. In Section 2504 NARA, through the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, has the responsibility for encouraging the collecting, preserving, editing, and publishing the papers of "outstanding citizens of the United States, and other documents as may be important for an understanding and appreciation of the history of the United States." Finally, in Executive Order 12958, as amended, NARA, as administrator for the Information Security Oversight Office, plays a crucial role in promoting and enhancing the system that protects classified information while at the same time providing for an informed public by ensuring that the minimum information necessary to the interest of national security is classified and that information is declassified as soon as it no longer requires protection. All this we have summed up in a simple, succinct statement of mission that both reflects our statutory mandates and expresses our sense of their significance:

> **The mission of the National Archives and Records Administration is to ensure, for the Citizen and the Public Servant, for the President and the Congress and the Courts, ready access to essential evidence.**

This statement acknowledges our statutory responsibility for records in all three branches of the Federal Government. The statement acknowledges our statutory responsibility to help Federal officials manage records effectively for their own use as well as for the public's. And the statement acknowledges our commitment to making it as convenient as we can for officials and the public to get access to what sections 3101 and 3301 call "evidence" of "essential transactions" of the Federal Government.

The statutes quoted above speak of protecting rights, of maintaining adequate and proper documentation of what officials responsible to the public do, and of preserving records of historical and other value. Accordingly, we have defined "essential evidence" in our mission statement not just as documents needed for court cases, but as material generated by or received by the Federal Government, that documents

- the rights of citizens,
- the actions of Federal officials, and
- the national experience.

Documentation of the rights of citizens means material that enables them to establish their identities, protect their rights, and claim their entitlements. Documentation of the actions of Federal officials means material that enables them to explain past decisions, form future policy, and be accountable for consequences. Documentation of the national experience means material of importance for understanding and evaluating the effects of Federal actions.

Essential evidence is not limited in form. It can include

- written paper records,
- maps, drawings, and pictorial materials of documentary value,
- records generated in multiple formats by computers,
- artifacts as well as papers in Presidential library collections, and
- donated manuscripts, Federal Register publications, and other materials that help document rights and entitlements, Federal actions, and historical experience.

We use the term "essential evidence" to sum up, not to supplant, statutory definitions of records or traditional archival concepts. Recognizing that we cannot save everything, nor need to do so, our commitment to essential evidence in our mission statement underscores the particular importance we attach to safeguarding, within the body of Federal and Presidential records, those materials, informational as well as evidentiary, in technical archival terms, that document the identities, rights, and entitlements of citizens, the actions for which Federal officials are accountable, and the effects of those actions on shaping the national experience.

NARA alone is the archives of the Government of the United States, responsible for safeguarding records of all three branches of the Federal Government. The Smithsonian Institution maintains archives of its own as well as artifacts from a wide range of sources, on a wide range of subjects, including American history; and the Library of Congress preserves private manuscript and pictorial collections, as well as books, of an equally wide range. But neither the Library of Congress nor the Smithsonian has a mandate to protect Federal and Presidential

records, or exercises responsibility for seeing that the activities of the three branches of the United States Federal Government are accessibly documented. Historians and other researchers make use of the holdings of NARA, the Smithsonian, and the Library of Congress, but there is virtually no overlap in what we statutorily have the responsibility to collect and preserve. NARA alone is mandated to provide ready access to essential records of what the Federal Government does—why, how, and with what consequences. Our mandate is unique.

STRATEGIC GOALS

Our strategic goals flow from our strategic vision and mission and mirror the lifecycle of records. To ensure ready access to essential evidence for as long as needed, NARA must be involved in the management of records throughout their lifecycle. The lifecycle of a Federal or Presidential record runs from its creation or receipt by a Federal agency, court, or office, through its maintenance and use in the business of that part of the Government, to its eventual destruction or its continuing use as an archival record. Because actions taken at the time of a record's creation may affect its ultimate preservation and continuing use, we must be a leader and advocate for records management (goal 1) and address the challenges of electronic records (goal 2). And to ensure that we are meeting our responsibilities to our customers, we must make it easy for people to use the records we preserve (goal 3), maintain these records in appropriate conditions (goal 4), and manage our resources wisely to achieve our mission (goal 5). A detailed explanation of our goals and the strategies we will use to reach them follows in Section III.

III. WHAT MUST WE DO TO GET THERE?

To achieve our strategic goals, we will pursue the strategies outlined below.

STRATEGIC GOAL 1: **ESSENTIAL EVIDENCE IS CREATED, IDENTIFIED, APPROPRIATELY SCHEDULED, AND MANAGED FOR AS LONG AS NEEDED.**

Strategic Overview

Only by advocating the importance of records management and assisting agencies with the management of their records from the time when those records are created can we ensure that essential documentation is available for the Government itself, today's citizens, and future generations. The records management program that NARA currently administers was designed primarily for people who created, maintained, and used paper records. It has served us well for several decades, but while agencies continue to generate paper, most records are created electronically and remain in an electronic format for at least a portion of their lives. This change has been accompanied by a number of other developments in the Federal recordkeeping environment.

- Software manufacturers specialize in providing expanded tools for creation and modification of electronic documents, but tools to manage these records lag behind. As a result, agencies are trying to manage most records in paper filing systems, despite the fact that some of the new electronic formats cannot be rendered well (and in some cases cannot be rendered at all) in a paper environment.

- E-mail often replaces phone conversations and face-to-face meetings that would not have been included in files in the past, resulting in more records being created.

- E-mail replaces written memoranda, letters, and other types of written, "formal" communications.

- Photocopy machines and other devices that quickly and cheaply duplicate all types of paper-based information have made possible a proliferation of copies.

- The ease with which records can be disseminated, revised, and reused to support knowledge management complicates the job of managing the records to document business processes.

- Changing technology and a decline in the number of people who specialize in filing agency records places greater records management responsibilities on program staff whose main focus must be to carry out the mission of the agency, not manage records.

- The advent of electronic records brought a third party—information technology (IT) staff—into the process of records creation and management. IT staffs manage the systems that contain electronic records and do so according to their own practices, which are sometimes different from records management practices.

To meet the challenges posed by these developments, NARA is redesigning Federal records management. We are working with our Federal partners in records management to ensure that Federal agencies can economically and effectively create and manage records necessary to meet business needs, records are kept long enough to protect rights and assure accountability, and records of archival value are preserved and made available for future generations.

We must protect records from the time of their very creation to ensure their accessibility for as long as they are needed to meet the needs of Government agencies and the public. Moreover, better front-end records management and effective recordkeeping systems will support government business operations (particularly electronic government activities), help agencies meet legal responsibilities, and result in more efficient and responsive delivery of public services, which will improve performance and save money for the agencies themselves and the Federal Government as a whole.

Specific Strategies

A. We will create mutually supporting relationships with Federal agencies, the White House, the Congress, and the Courts that advance these institutions' missions and effective records management.

B. We will demonstrate that effective records management adds value to agency business processes. Our guidance, training, and assistance to agencies will focus on using records management as an important tool for supporting agency business processes.

C. We will stress that there is no one level to which all records must be managed. Resources, techniques, and tools will be allocated based on business needs for the records as information assets, legal requirements (e.g., the Federal Records Act, the Freedom of Information Act, and the Privacy Act), risks, and resources.

D. We will stress that agencies may choose a variety of means to manage their records, including traditional records management programs, automated tools, or other approaches. Our concern will be how well records are managed, not whether agencies have all the elements of a traditional records management program.

E. We will base our approach to records management on the ISO Records Management Standard 15489.

   1. We will focus on the importance of trustworthy records, and we will stress the concepts of authenticity, reliability, integrity, and usability found in the ISO Standard.

   2. We will stress that records management processes occur throughout the records lifecycle, rather than in a fixed, sequential manner.

   3. In developing regulations, policies, and guidance, we will stress the importance of agencies documenting their business processes, assessing the value of their information assets, and using risk assessment to determine appropriate records management approaches.

F. We will use resource allocation and risk management to determine records management priorities.

   1. We will focus on those records that are essential to the government as a whole for accountability, protection of rights, and documentation of the national experience. This will

help NARA and Federal agencies to focus attention and resources on a smaller number of government functions.

2. We will establish priorities for committing NARA records management resources based on three criteria: the degree to which records relate to rights and accountability, the degree to which they create records with archival value, and the degree to which records in a program area are at risk.

G. We will partner with Federal agencies and others to develop, adapt, or adopt products and practices that support good records management. Our experience shows that we are more effective in partnerships than working alone. Potential partners include standards organizations, state and local governments, other countries, and the private sector.

H. We will provide leadership, in partnership with other key stakeholders, to focus agency attention on electronic records needs and to guide and support solutions to electronic records issues and problems.

I. We will change our own records lifecycle work processes to minimize and simplify routine scheduling requirements and support more effectively and efficiently the needs of our customers.

STRATEGIC GOAL 2:	ELECTRONIC RECORDS ARE CONTROLLED, PRESERVED, AND MADE ACCESSIBLE FOR AS LONG AS NEEDED.

Strategic Overview

More and more we communicate electronically. That means our records—records of critical importance to every one of us—such as tax returns, court case files, policy documents, and patent applications, are increasingly electronic.

In the Federal Government, electronic records are as indispensable as their paper counterparts for documenting citizens' rights, the actions for which officials are accountable, and the nation's history. Effective democracy depends on access to such records. But we will lose the millions being created daily in a dizzying array of electronic forms unless we find a way to preserve and keep them accessible indefinitely. Despite much effort, there seemed to be no feasible way to do that. Until now.

Research promoted by NARA within a major coalition of Federal and private-sector research partners has at last demonstrated that an Electronic Records Archives can be built. And with support from the White House, the Congress, Federal agencies, communities of concerned professionals, and other financial, technological, and implementation partners, NARA is at work to build it.

The entire Federal Government—indeed, today's "information society" at large—has a stake in our success. The Electronic Records Archives will authentically preserve and provide access

to any kind of electronic record, free from dependency on any specific hardware or software. It will deliver greater quantities of information, quickly and for as long as needed, to every office, library, school, and home in America with an Internet connection. It will give increased reality to e-Government. And Electronic Records Archives technology promises to be useful to many kinds of archives, libraries, agencies, and businesses, regardless of size.

Specific Strategies

A. We will be a leader in innovation in electronic records archiving.

  1. In coordination with our Federal agency partners, we will develop policy and technical guidance to enable responsible electronic records creation and management.

  2. The Information Security Oversight Office, which is administratively part of NARA, will recast existing policies governing the classification and declassification of information to reflect the Government's electronic operating environment.

  3. With help from our research partners, we will develop and maintain the technical capability to capture, preserve, describe, access, and appropriately dispose of any Government electronic record.

B. We will manage a coherent, nationwide, and sustainable system for permanent archival electronic records of the Federal Government.

C. We will develop the capability to manage Federal agency electronic records within the NARA Records Center Program.

D. We will ensure that anyone, at any time, from any place, has access to the best tools to find and use the electronic records we preserve.

STRATEGIC GOAL 3:   ESSENTIAL EVIDENCE IS EASY TO ACCESS REGARDLESS OF WHERE
                     IT IS OR WHERE USERS ARE FOR AS LONG AS NEEDED.

Strategic Overview

In a democracy, the records that constitute our archives belong to the citizens, and providing ready access is no incidental service. While managing Government records better and meeting the challenges of electronic records, we also envision expanding opportunities for individual citizens, educational institutions, and Federal agencies to make use of them. We see ourselves more aggressively informing and educating our customers about the services we offer and the essential evidence to which we can provide access. New technologies are making it easier to

reach all users in their homes, schools, and workplaces nationwide. We are increasing partnerships with Government agencies at all levels, and with university and corporate communities, to take advantage of these new means to bring the holdings of the National Archives to people no matter where they are. We also are enhancing the educational usefulness of documentary material to the extent that partners will help us with funding and additional expertise.

For more than six decades it has been the role of the National Archives to preserve and provide access to the records of the American people. And yet millions of Americans do not know that the National Archives exists or that it holds Government records in trust for their use. We cannot be passive about the importance of records in all our lives. We believe the time has come to open the doors to a new National Archives—one in which people *experience* the National Archives and take from that experience something to motivate them to care more deeply about democracy, to learn about our individual stories, and to make use of the American spirit that lives on through our records. Through the National Archives Experience, a dramatic and powerful project being developed with the support of the Foundation for the National Archives, we are creating the kinds of experiences that will inspire and teach people how our nation's past, through the records we hold, can become a living instrument for directing our nation's future.

Specific Strategies

A. We will expand current efforts to build a nationwide, integrated online information delivery system that educates citizens about NARA and our facilities, services, and holdings. This system also will extend opportunities for educational uses of documentary material, make available digital copies of high-interest documents, and contain an online ordering capability.

> 1. We will implement policies and standards that facilitate development of an integrated, agency-wide information infrastructure.

> 2. We will expand and enhance our web site, which is our portal for increasing electronic access to our holdings, information, and services.

> 3. We will seek access partners to expand our online products, including digital copies of records, indexes, publications, and exhibits.

B. We will work in partnership with the Government Printing Office to ensure that all Federal Register online and print publications are current and easy to search and use.

C. In addition to expanding electronic access to our holdings, we will ensure microfilm or digital copies of our holdings of interest to genealogists and others are more broadly available in our research rooms nationwide.

D. While recognizing the need to protect national security interests and personal privacy rights, we will represent within the Government the public interest in seeing that material is not classified or otherwise closed unnecessarily or longer than necessary.

E. We will work in partnership with former Presidents to ensure that Presidential records are available for research as soon as possible after the opening of a Presidential library.

F. With the support of public-private partnerships, we will create the National Archives Experience, both physically and on the Internet, to expand access to our holdings and educate the public about the importance of Government records in a democracy.

G. We will develop and improve our systems and processes for quickly receiving and answering records requests, particularly at the Military Personnel Records Center in St. Louis.

H. We will work in partnership with the grant program of the National Historical Publications and Records Commission to increase nationwide public access to historical records by strengthening the nation's archival infrastructure through Federal-state-local collaboration, funding research and development on preserving and making accessible important documentary sources in electronic form, and publishing major documentary collections.

STRATEGIC GOAL 4:   **ALL RECORDS ARE PRESERVED IN AN APPROPRIATE ENVIRONMENT FOR USE AS LONG AS NEEDED.**

Strategic Overview

We cannot provide public access to records for as long as needed unless we can preserve them for as long as needed. Few people realize that the records they use in our research rooms or through our web site are there only because archivists have inspected them, given special preservation treatment to those that needed it, stored them in acid-free containers, and housed them in space that will protect them from insect damage and destructive fluctuations in temperature and humidity, as well as from fire, flood, and theft.

To provide future access will require rectifying several problems confronting NARA right now. Throughout our facilities, collections of photos, films, and paper documents are already in jeopardy because of high use and physical fragility. For example, climate-controlled, protected archival space is needed for millions of U.S. military service records, dating from the 19th century through the World Wars to the present, now stored in an environmentally inadequate records center, and thousands of cubic feet of other archival records in regional records services facilities across the country. And many of our facilities are simply out of space altogether.

To fix our current facilities, to ensure appropriate protection and preservation of their records, and to expand storage capacities adequately to meet demands for more space already upon us will require more resources. Our ability to meet our storage and preservation challenges for records in all formats will be a key factor in the future course of our agency.

Specific Strategies

A. We will take cost-effective steps to protect our archival and records center holdings in appropriate space, while also providing an appropriate working environment for our staff.

   1. We will complete the renovation of the National Archives Building in Washington, DC, to make essential infrastructure improvements, expand public-use space, and ensure accessibility for all citizens.

   2. To ensure we have a strong regional archival system, we will work in partnership with local institutions and officials to build new archival facilities when cost-effective and necessary to do so, and we will develop plans to improve storage conditions nationwide.

   3. We will develop plans to ensure that modern military service records are protected by housing them in archival space with environmental controls, and we will implement a special preservation program for the many fragile and fire-damaged records.

   4. We will update architectural and storage standards for NARA Presidential libraries.

   5. We will work with Presidential library support organizations to increase private funding for major renovations and additions to Presidential libraries.

   6. We will ensure that all NARA records centers meet our facility standards within the regulatory timeframes.

B. We will implement an improved preservation program nationwide to ensure that our most at-risk holdings get priority attention and that all holdings are protected in the most appropriate, cost-effective manner.

STRATEGIC GOAL 5:   NARA STRATEGICALLY MANAGES AND ALIGNS STAFF, TECHNOLOGY, AND PROCESSES TO ACHIEVE OUR MISSION.

Strategic Overview

We must have the capacity to adapt continuously to change. Technological innovations continuously provide challenges in our work as well as opportunities to improve it. Changes in demographics and individuals' approaches to work result in an ever-evolving work environment. That means we must aggressively recruit and develop a diverse, flexible workforce, help staff to learn new skills and make use of new technologies, and develop partnerships for solving problems. Our technological infrastructure must be capable of supporting re-engineering, process innovations, and communications among our staff members and between us and the agencies and citizens we serve nationwide. NARA management must create a work environment that encourages creativity and excellence, respects diversity, and values risk-taking, communication, commitment, and loyalty.

Specific Strategies

A. We will ensure that we hire, develop, sustain, and retain staff according to the competencies needed to achieve our strategic goals.

   1. We will undertake Human Capital Management planning for key positions and redesign our human resource development processes for our entire workforce.

   2. Valuing and encouraging diversity in our workforce, we will recruit and promote people with a broad range of educational backgrounds, work experiences, and career interests to meet our strategic needs.

   3. We will create career development programs and explore curricular partnerships with agencies, universities, and others to develop leaders for the agency's future, to educate staff about electronic technologies, lifecycle records strategies, rigorous new business processes, and other strategic competencies, and to provide learning opportunities for staff at all levels nationwide.

   4. We will redesign our performance appraisal processes to assign clear responsibilities for stewardship, ensuring that both managers and staff are accountable for their work.

B. We will work with our employees' union to assist staff in making transitions if their jobs are affected by the implementation of our plan.

C. We acknowledge that we do not have all the answers on how best to achieve the tasks set out in this plan.

   1. We will seek out new approaches, best practices, and partnerships, particularly on electronic records issues, from Federal, state, and local government agencies, universities, professional associations, private businesses, and other nations' archival institutions.

   2. We will expand opportunities for our customers to inform us about information and services they need.

D. We will build a practical, affordable automated system for tracking and using records throughout their lifecycle. This system will integrate and make available information gathered about records during the process of creation, scheduling and appraisal, maintenance in records centers, destruction or archival accessioning, preservation, and continuing use.

E. We will streamline our production processes for publishing Federal Register publications and implement a means for Federal agencies to submit Federal Register documents to us electronically.

F. We will build a reliable, expandable, high-capacity, cost-efficient information technology and communications infrastructure to support our work processes and public access to our holdings.

G. We will reduce the proliferation of uncoordinated projects by instituting a rigorous process for analyzing their benefits, costs, and relevance to the needs of users and to priorities in our plan.

In previous sections of this Strategic Plan, we have indicated where we want to go and what we must do to get there. This section provides more detail on our planned accomplishments—the long-range performance targets we will use to measure success, the performance indicators we will use to measure progress, the outcomes we expect to see, and the key external factors that could affect our success. Each target also is linked to the appropriate measurement area and category of the Federal Enterprise Architecture's Performance Reference Model (PRM), Version 1.0.

The targets and indicators listed here are not the only measures we will use to gauge our progress; our annual performance plans will track additional measures and milestones. At the strategic level, the long-range performance targets below will tell us, our stakeholders, and the public whether we are on track to accomplish the goals of this plan. The targets are organized by strategic goal for ease of reference.

STRATEGIC GOAL 1: **ESSENTIAL EVIDENCE IS CREATED, IDENTIFIED, APPROPRIATELY SCHEDULED, AND MANAGED FOR AS LONG AS NEEDED.**

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1. By 2008, 95 percent of agencies view their records management program as a positive tool for asset and risk management.

This target is a measure of the success of NARA's redesign of Federal records management. The expected outcomes of the redesign are that Federal agencies can economically and effectively create and manage records necessary to meet business needs, records are kept long enough to protect rights and assure accountability, and records of archival value are preserved.

Performance indicators	• Success rate of targeted assistance partnerships
	• Effectiveness of training and certification programs
	• Results of inspections and studies
PRM linkage	Mission and Business Results: Management of Government Resources
Key external factors	Federal agencies must implement their part of targeted assistance partnerships. Records management professionals must be self-motivated to attend training and complete the certification program.

2. By 2008, 95 percent of approved capital asset plans have approved records schedules by the time those systems begin creating records.

This target is a measure of the effectiveness of the records management tools developed as part of the redesign of Federal records management. The expected outcomes of scheduling records by the time of their creation are that Federal agencies can economically and effectively manage records necessary to meet business needs, records are kept long enough to protect rights and assure accountability, and records of archival value are preserved.

Performance indicators	• Number of Federal Enterprise Architecture Business Reference Model functions covered by model schedules
	• Use of records management service components in agency enterprise architectures
PRM linkage	Mission and Business Results: Support Delivery of Services
Key external factors	The Office of Management and Budget must support using the capital planning process to promote records management.

3. By 2008, 95 percent of customers are satisfied with NARA scheduling and appraisal services.

This target is a measure of the effectiveness of changes to the records scheduling and appraisal process. The expected outcomes of re-engineering the scheduling and appraisal process are that Federal agencies can economically and effectively create and manage records necessary to meet business needs, records are kept long enough to protect rights and assure accountability, and records of archival value are preserved.

Performance indicators	• Median time to process records schedule items
	• Percentage of records schedule items submitted and approved electronically
	• Cost to process records schedule items
PRM linkage	Customer Results: Customer Benefit

STRATEGIC GOAL 2:	**ELECTRONIC RECORDS ARE CONTROLLED, PRESERVED, AND MADE ACCESSIBLE FOR AS LONG AS NEEDED.**

1. By 2008, NARA's Records Center Program accepts and services electronic records.

This target is a measure of NARA's success in providing modern records center services. The expected outcome is that Federal agencies can economically and effectively manage electronic records necessary to meet business needs, and electronic records of archival value are preserved.

Performance indicators	• Number of customers using Records Center Program electronic services
	• Customer satisfaction with Records Center Program electronic services
PRM linkage	Mission and Business Results: Management of Government Resources

The Records Center Program operates in a competitive business environment in which Federal agencies choose their records center services provider.

2. By 2008, 80 percent of scheduled archival electronic records are accessioned by NARA at the scheduled time.

This target is a measure of our success in accessioning electronic records. The expected outcome of promptly accessioning archival electronic records is that they will be preserved for future generations.

Performance indicators
- Size of accessioning backlog
- Number of electronic records accessioned in new formats

PRM linkage
Mission and Business Results: Management of Government Resources

Key external factors
Federal agencies must schedule their electronic records.

3. By 2008, 80 percent of archival electronic records are managed at the appropriate level of service.

This target is a measure of NARA's ability to preserve and provide access to electronic records effectively. The expected outcome of preserving archival electronic records at the appropriate level of service is that they are effectively preserved for future generations to document their rights, hold Government officials accountable, and learn about the national experience.

Performance indicators
- Percentage of electronic records preserved in a persistent format
- Percentage of electronic records available online
- Number of users of electronic records online
- Customer satisfaction with levels of service

PRM linkage
Mission and Business Results: Management of Government Resources

Key external factors
The results of existing and future research and development into electronic records preservation may change the requirements for an electronic records preservation system.

4. By 2008, the median time from the transfer of archival electronic records to NARA until they are available for access is 35 days or less.

This target is a measure of the time it takes NARA to process electronic records. The expected outcome is that electronic records of archival value are available promptly for use.

Performance indicators
- Number of electronic records transferred
- Cost per transfer

PRM linkage	Processes and Activities: Cycle Time and Timeliness
Key external factors	The results of existing and future research and development into electronic records preservation may change the requirements for an electronic records preservation system.

5. By 2008, the per megabyte cost of managing archival electronic records through the Electronic Records Archives decreases each year.

This target is a measure of the cost of electronic records preservation. The expected outcome is that the Electronic Records Archives (ERA) economically preserves archival electronic records for future generations.

Performance indicators	• Number of electronic records preserved and managed by ERA • Number of ERA users • Cost per ERA transaction
PRM linkage	Technology: Financial
Key external factors	The results of existing and future research and development into electronic records preservation may change the requirements and costs for an electronic records preservation system.

STRATEGIC GOAL 3:	ESSENTIAL EVIDENCE IS EASY TO ACCESS REGARDLESS OF WHERE IT IS OR WHERE USERS ARE FOR AS LONG AS NEEDED.

1. By 2007, access to records and services and customer satisfaction levels meet or exceed NARA's published standards.

This target is a measure of how well we are meeting our Customer Service Standards. The expected outcome is that NARA customers are satisfied with our service.

Performance indicators[1]	Timeliness of services Quality of services Cost of services
PRM linkage	Customer Results: All categories
Key external factors	Unexpected increases in records holdings or public interest in groups of records can significantly increase workloads, response times, and wear on public-use equipment.

[1] Appendix A contains a complete listing of customer service targets.

2. By 2007, 70 percent of NARA services are available online.

This target is a measure of the ability of NARA customers to use our services regardless of their location. The expected outcome is that more people, nationwide and worldwide, have easy access to our services.

Performance indicators	• Number of services online
	• Number of online users
	• Cost per user
	• User satisfaction with online services
PRM linkage	Customer Results: Service Accessibility

3. By 2008, 80 percent of NARA archival holdings are described in an online catalog.

This target is a measure of the availability of descriptions of NARA archival holdings to all users regardless of location. The expected outcome is that researchers find the descriptive information they need about our archival holdings in one convenient location.

Performance indicators	• Number of cubic feet described
	• Number of artifacts described
	• Number of electronic records described
	• Number of catalog users
PRM linkage	Customer Results: Service Accessibility

4. By 2007, Government-wide holdings of 25-year-old or older records are declassified, properly exempted, or appropriately referred under the provisions of Executive Order 12958, as amended, through a series of ISOO-led interagency efforts.

This target is a measure of the implementation of declassification policies by Federal agencies, led by the Information Security Oversight Office (ISOO), which is administered within NARA. The expected outcome is that more records are properly declassified and available for public use.

Performance indicators	• Number of pages declassified
	• Number of pages exempted
	• Number of pages referred
	• Cost per page declassified
PRM linkage	Mission and Business Results: Support Delivery of Services

| *Key external factors* | Security concerns related to the war on terrorism may divert resources from declassification efforts or lead to the withholding of additional records. |

5. By 2007, NARA archival holdings of 25-year-old or older records are declassi-fied, properly exempted, or appropriately referred under the provisions of Executive Order 12958, as amended.

This target is a measure of the availability to the public of previously classified NARA archival holdings. The expected outcome is that more archival records are declassified and available for public use.

Performance indicators	• Number of pages declassified
	• Number of pages referred
	• Cost per page declassified
	• Number of pages released

| *PRM linkage* | Mission and Business Results: Management of Government Resources |

| *Key external factors* | Security concerns related to the war on terrorism may divert resources from declassification efforts or lead to the withholding of additional records. |

The Kyl and Lott Amendments require that we re-review, page-by-page, up to 200 million pages of records already released to the public to ensure that no Restricted Data and Formerly Restricted Data was inadvertently released. This review is diverting resources from normal declassification work.

Special declassification projects also are reducing the amount of declassification that can be accomplished with existing resources. Instead of examining entire records series for declassification, many of our declassification staff are required to examine individual with-drawn classified documents to determine their relevance and coordi-nate their declassification with the appropriate agencies.

The CIA must continue to provide technical support to enable the review of documents by other agencies. Agencies must conduct reviews of their equities before the records can be processed for release.

6. By 2007, 10 percent of records of a two-term President or 15 percent of records for a one-term President are open and available for research at the end of the five-year post-Presidential period specified in the Presidential Records Act.

This target is a measure of the availability of Presidential records to the public. The expected outcome is that more Presidential records are available sooner for public use after a President leaves office.

Performance indicators
- Number of cubic feet processed
- Number of artifacts processed
- Number of electronic records processed
- Number of reference requests

PRM linkage Customer Results: Service Accessibility

Key external factors We do not have legal custody of the records of the President and Vice President until the end of the Administration. Our access to current Presidential and Vice Presidential records to prepare them for transfer to NARA is at the approval of the incumbent President and Vice President. Once the records are in our custody, progress in processing and inventorying the records may be hindered by an unusually large number of special access requests or subpoenas.

7. By 2007, 90 percent of all NHPRC-assisted projects produce results promised in grant applications approved by the Commission.

This target is a measure of the success rate of projects funded by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, which is administered within NARA. The expected outcome is that the public gains wider access to the entire range of records on which the understanding of American history depends.

Performance indicators
- Number of documentary editions, traditional and online
- Volume of records preserved and made accessible

PRM linkage   Processes and Activities: Quality

Key external factors   The NHPRC rigorously evaluates grant applications on the basis of the relevance of projects to the NHPRC's strategic objectives and the ability of applicants to produce promised results. Nonetheless, results ultimately depend on the grantees rather than on the NHPRC.

STRATEGIC GOAL 4:   **ALL RECORDS ARE PRESERVED IN AN APPROPRIATE ENVIRONMENT FOR USE AS LONG AS NEEDED.**

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1. By 2009, 100 percent of NARA's archival holdings are in appropriate space.

This target is a measure of the quality of NARA's archival records space. The expected outcome is that archival records are preserved for public use.

Performance indicators	• Volume of archival holdings
	• Storage cost per cubic foot
PRM linkage	Mission and Business Results: Services for Citizens
Key external factors	Public, White House, and congressional support for our space planning activities is vital to develop and implement proposed plans.

2. By 2009, 100 percent of NARA records centers comply with the October 2009 regulatory storage standards.

This target is a measure of the quality of NARA's records center space. The expected outcome is that agency records are preserved for as long as needed.

Performance indicators	• Volume of records center holdings
	• Storage cost per cubic foot
PRM linkage	Mission and Business Results: Support Delivery of Services

3. By 2007, 50 percent of NARA's at-risk archival holdings are appropriately treated or housed so as to retard further deterioration.

This target is a measure of the preservation of NARA's at-risk archival holdings. The expected outcome is that at-risk records are preserved for public use.

Performance indicators	• Volume of at-risk archival holdings
	• Volume of at-risk archival holdings in cold storage
	• Volume of at-risk archival holdings that receive conservation treatment
	• Preservation cost per cubic foot
PRM linkage	Mission and Business Results: Services for Citizens
Key external factors	Unusually large increases of new at-risk records, increases in the cost of leasing cold storage space, and growing or shifting public demands for the use of at-risk records could delay achievement of performance objectives. Limitations on the availability of appropriate cold storage facilities and commercial treatment labs will affect our ability to address audiovisual holdings requirements.

1. By 2008, the average time a leadership position remains unfilled is 30 days or less.

This target is a measure of the success of our recruitment and staff development programs in meeting strategic needs. The expected outcome is that the public perceives no decline in NARA programs and services due to turnover in leadership positions.

Performance indicators	• Quality of applicant pools
	• Percentage of staff with development plans
	• Percentage of staff achieving development goals
	• Quality of development programs
PRM linkage	Mission and Business Results: Management of Government Resources

2. By 2007, the percentages of NARA employees in underrepresented groups match their respective availability levels in the Civilian Labor Force.

This target is a measure of the diversity in NARA's workforce. The expected outcome is that our customer service to all segments of American society improves because our workforce mirrors the society we serve.

Performance indicators	• Percentage of staff with diversity training
	• Number of diverse applicants
	• Percentage of applicant pools with diverse applicants
PRM linkage	Mission and Business Results: Management of Government Resources
Key external factor	Achievement of this target depends on qualified people in underrepresented groups applying for positions at NARA.

PART IV
Infrastructure

3. By 2007, NARA will accept 100 percent of the validated legal documents sumitted electronically for publication in the *Federal Register*.

This target is a measure of the effectiveness of *Federal Register* production improvements. The expected outcome is that publication of documents in the *Federal Register* is easier and more cost-effective for Federal agencies, and the public has easier and faster access to these documents.

Performance indicators	• Number of documents submitted for publication electronically
	• Number of documents managed electronically
	• Number of documents retrieved online

PRM linkage	Technology: Effectiveness
Key external factors	Successful Government-wide electronic commerce remains dependent upon the resolution of issues surrounding Government-wide digital signature standards and an electronic public key infrastructure.

4. By 2008, all public network applications are available 99.9 percent of the time.

This target is a measure of the reliability of NARA's information technology infrastructure. The expected outcome is that NARA information and services are electronically accessible to the public 24 hours a day.

Performance indicators	• Hours public network applications are unavailable • Number of public network application users • Cost per public network application user
PRM linkage	Technology: Reliability and Availability
Key external factors	Constantly evolving hardware and software changes make it difficult to accommodate growth while ensuring minimum performance levels on existing systems.

V. WHAT HAVE WE ACCOMPLISHED?

This section highlights key successes since our Strategic Plan was first issued in 1997.

TARGETS ACHIEVED

The following long-range performance targets were met and have been replaced in the current plan with new or follow-on targets.

• By 2007, 50 percent of customer contacts for NARA information and services are made electronically.

• By 2002, 100 percent of Office of Federal Register publications are available upon publication in both traditional formats and online.

• By 2003, 100 percent of employee performance plans are linked to strategic outcomes.

We also made progress in a number of areas toward our strategic goals. Significant achievements are noted as follows.

Strategic Goal 1   We helped Federal agencies improve their records management in all media through Targeted Assistance.

We issued Fast Track guidance through the web on electronic records issues of immediate concern to Federal agencies.

We issued transfer guidance for new electronic record formats, expanding the number of records formats we will accept as part of the Electronic Records Management E-Government Initiative.

We tested, evaluated, and endorsed the Department of Defense Electronic Records Management Software Application Design Criteria Standard, versions 1 and 2, for use by all Federal agencies.

After careful study of Federal records management and agency work processes, we proposed a redesign of Federal records management and are developing and implementing new policies and strategies based on this proposal.

We re-engineered our records lifecycle processes based on the new records management direction and in preparation for the future Electronic Records Archives.

Strategic Goal 2   We established an Electronic Records Archives program management office, initiated collaborative research and development partnerships, and developed core program documents such as a concept of operations and draft requirements.

We launched the Access to Archival Databases system, which allows direct online access to selected electronic records.

Strategic Goal 3   We launched the Archival Research Catalog, a web database containing about 600,000 descriptions of our records and links to more than 123,000 digitized documents.

We redesigned our web site, *archives.gov*, and developed new web sites for White House initiatives: *ourdocuments.gov* and *regulations.gov.*

We opened the 1930 Census to the public on April 1, 2002.

We implemented new systems and work processes that are significantly improving service on military service records at the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis.

Strategic Goal 4   We completed the conservation and re-encasement of the Charters of Freedom and re-opened the renovated Rotunda of the National Archives Building.

We began construction of the Southeast Regional Archives.

We issued facility standards for the storage of Federal records in records storage facilities.

On October 1, 1999, we successfully converted our records center program to a 100-percent revolving fund operation.

We completed a survey of Federal agencies in Alaska to determine current and future storage needs.

We moved more than 45,000 cubic feet of acetate-based records in the Washington, DC, area to cold storage.

We moved 20,000 Kennedy library artifacts to appropriate space.

Strategic Goal 5   We renovated all of our mission critical systems for Year 2000 compliance.

We provided diversity training for all NARA staff.

For more information about our performance on long-range performance targets and annual objectives, please see our annual performance reports.

ASSESSING OUR RESULTS

Periodic assessment of the results we achieve and the extent to which our organization caused these results is necessary for successful strategic management. Decision makers need to know what worked, what did not, and why, and explore ideas of what should be done next. The evaluation process described below provides the information we need to improve performance, ensure accountability, and inform the planning process.

Performance Measurement

In our continuous effort to improve our performance measurement program, we are upgrading our Performance Measurement and Reporting System. We are taking advantage of web infrastructure to collect our performance data from the more than 70 organizational units that send data to the system from all over the country. We also are using newer, more robust, and enterprise-level databases to store the data and extract reports, thereby minimizing the maintenance burden on desktop databases previously used for data collection. This upgrade will enable us to collect our performance data more consistently and more efficiently, and will allow us to store much more data for use in analyzing trends. In addition, each year we are further refining and expanding the system to incorporate more of a balanced scorecard approach for tracking cycle times, quality, productivity, cost, and customer satisfaction with our products and services.

Customer Satisfaction Assessment

Development and implementation of a comprehensive and coordinated program to measure the satisfaction of customers with our services is another key to strategic management success. Our customers are surveyed on a recurring basis to establish agreement on responsive service levels and to determine degree of satisfaction with the accuracy and timeliness of services. By repeating surveys at frequent, systematic intervals, changes in our performance are measured and appropriate management actions are taken to ensure that service levels reflect an appropriate balance between customer needs and NARA resources.

Program Evaluation

We verify and validate measured values of actual performance and customer satisfaction in several ways. We use three existing mechanisms—periodic management reviews, formal audits of operations, and systematic sampling of measurement system effectiveness—to evaluate the degree to which our strategies are succeeding. Applicable program evaluations and audits are cited in the Bibliography at the end of this plan.

Combining these performance measurement and evaluation methods and integrating them into every level of day-to-day management of our operations provide powerful tools to assess

the success of our programs, enabling us to determine which programs are on schedule to meet their objectives, what is or is not working and why, and what additional steps are necessary to ensure the program can meet the service level agreements that have been established. This focus on whether intended results are occurring, and the degree to which our programs have influenced those results, is at the heart of the Government Performance Results Act's intent. We continue to monitor external changes that affect our work, evaluate the degree to which our strategies are succeeding, and change those that are not.

CONCLUSION

This, then, is the Strategic Plan of the National Archives and Records Administration. It is the third iteration of our Strategic Plan first developed in 1997 as a concrete, measurable, and practical plan for stemming the losses occurring in our Nation's recorded history, for assuring adequate documentation of events to come, and for expanding opportunities for all Americans to make use of government records in all forms, now and for posterity.

As a living plan, it serves as our guidepost in documenting the progress we have achieved in meeting the goals of the original Strategic Plan. We re-examine it each year to see what has happened to the assumptions on which it is based, what unanticipated challenges have subsequently arisen, and what unexpected opportunities have come to hand. Each third year, we incorporate that knowledge into a revised plan that reflects the current state of our progress in achieving our goals, as well as adding new or revised targets and, in this revision, a new goal that addresses the rising need to give particular attention to electronic records.

We have achieved substantial progress in meeting the goals we set for ourselves in 1997, but we know that much more remains to be done. By being actively involved in mastering the many challenges of electronic records technology and by understanding that further changes are inevitable, we will ensure that our Strategic Plan continues to be the dynamic document by which we steer our course to future successes.

Following are the customer service targets, performance indicators, Performance Reference Model linkages, and outcomes that underlie the Goal 2 long-range performance target on customer service: By 2007, access to records and services and customer satisfaction levels meet or exceed NARA's published standards.

Long-range targets	Indicators	PRM linkage	Outcomes
95 percent of written requests are answered within 10 working days.	• Number of written requests • Number of requests answered in 10 days	Customer Results: Timeliness and Responsiveness	People promptly receive the information they need from NARA.
90 percent of FOIA requests for Federal records are answered within 20 working days.	• Number of FOIA requests received • Cost per FOIA request	Customer Results: Timeliness and Responsiveness	People promptly receive the information they need from NARA.
95 percent of requests for military service separation records at the NPRC in St. Louis are answered within 10 working days.	• Number of requests • Number of requests answered in 10 days • Cost per request	Customer Results: Timeliness and Responsiveness	Veterans and their families receive the information and services they need.
95 percent of items requested in our research rooms are furnished within 1 hour of request or scheduled pull time.	• Number of researchers • Number of items requested • Number of items furnished on time	Customer Results: Timeliness and Responsiveness	Researchers receive prompt services.
99 percent of customers with appointments have records waiting at the appointed time.	• Number of customers with appointments • Number of requests furnished on time	Customer Results: Timeliness and Responsiveness	Researchers receive prompt services.
95 percent of Federal agency reference requests in Federal records centers are ready when promised to the customer.	• Number of agency reference requests • Number of requests ready on time • Cost per agency request	Customer Results: Timeliness and Responsiveness	Agencies receive prompt, cost-effective services.
99 percent of records center shipments to Federal agencies are the records they requested.	• Number of shipment requests • Number of complaints • Cost per shipment	Customer Results: Service Quality	Agencies receive high-quality, cost-effective services.
90 percent of archival fixed-fee reproduction orders through OFAS are completed in 35 working days or less.	• Number of orders • Average order completion time • Cost per order	Customer Results: Timeliness and Responsiveness	People promptly receive materials from NARA.
95 percent of education programs, workshops, and training courses meet attendees' expectations.	• Number of programs • Number of attendees • Average program rating • Number of museum visitors	Customer Results: Customer Benefit	People learn about records management, archival programs, the U.S. Government, and American history.

Date	Event
04/26/1995	NARA celebrates 10 years of independence with activities nationwide
06/01/1995	John W. Carlin is sworn in as the eighth Archivist of the United States
08/24/1995	The Archivist issues a Vision, Mission, Values statement to staff and announces the start of a Strategic Directions Initiative; the Archivist establishes VISION, an electronic suggestion box
09/14–15/1995	The Archivist holds a retreat with his new Leadership Team where they get training in team-building, communication, and strategic planning
09/18/1995–03/26/1996	The Archivist and Deputy Archivist hold approximately 70 informal staff meetings with every NARA unit nationwide
10/13/1995	The Archivist establishes a column in the Staff Bulletin to announce and discuss strategic initiatives and answer questions from staff
11/08/1995	The Archivist issues a memorandum that establishes the Strategic Directions Team to hold facilitated brainstorming sessions with staff on strategic priorities for the agency
02/20–03/29/1996	The Strategic Directions Team visits all NARA facilities nationwide to gather input for new strategic plan. More than 1,000 staff members participate in 156 brainstorming sessions
04/22–07/29/1996	The Archivist and Leadership Team develop a draft Strategic Plan
06/24/1996	Input from Strategic Directions Team sessions available to staff on the NARA web site
07/02/1996	The Archivist issues a draft Strategic Plan for staff and public comment
07/16–17/1996	The Archivist holds open forums for key stakeholders, customers, and constituents on the draft Strategic Plan
07/19–08/04/1996	The Archivist and Leadership Team revise the Strategic Plan based on staff and public comment
08/07/1996	The Archivist issues *Ready Access to Essential Evidence: The Strategic Plan of the National Archives and Records Administration, 1997–2007*
09/23/1996	The Archivist announces a plan to restructure the agency around the records lifecycle
01/06/1997	The first phase of NARA's lifecycle restructuring becomes effective
01/08/1997	The Archivist issues a memorandum on Strategic Plan Stewardships
04/07/1997	The Archivist issues a memorandum on Reallocation of Personnel Resources
05/05/1997	The Archivist issues a memorandum that establishes the GPRA Working Group to develop performance measurements
05/22/1997	The Deputy Archivist and staff meet with OMB on a draft of NARA's GPRA performance goals

Date	Event
06/23/1997	The Deputy Archivist and staff meet with OMB on a second draft of NARA's GPRA performance goals
07/03/1997	NARA posts draft GPRA performance goals on its web site for public and staff comment
07/29/1997	The Deputy Archivist and staff consult with Senate staff on the draft Strategic Plan
08/06/1997	The Deputy Archivist and staff consult with House of Representatives staff on the draft Strategic Plan
08/18/1997	The Deputy Archivist submits an advance draft Strategic Plan to OMB
08/28/1997	The Deputy Archivist and staff consult with OMB on the draft plan
09/10/1997	The Archivist submits a draft Strategic Plan to House and Senate committees
09/23/1997	The Archivist submits a draft Strategic Plan, revised to reflect further consultations with OMB and Congress, to OMB and House and Senate committees
09/30/1997	The Archivist submits a final version of the Strategic Plan to OMB and Congress
12/03/1997	The Archivist announces the completion of the agency's lifecycle restructuring to be effective February 1, 1998
12/08/1997	OMB informs Federal agencies that NARA will establish a reimbursable records storage program that will begin to charge agencies for the cost of storing their records center records in FY 2000
01/13/1998	The Archivist submits for review a revised Customer Service Plan that reflects the mission, values, priorities, and customer service standards published in the Strategic Plan
01/16/1998	The Archivist issues a process for the review of information technology product plans
02/03/1998	The Archivist issues two documents concerning the Federal Records Center Reimbursable Project: "Financing the Records Center Program" and "Why Does the Federal Government Need a Reimbursable Records Center Program?"
03/24/1998	The Archivist announces a space planning initiative led by a team charged with developing a nationwide space plan
04/14/1998	The Archivist announces a new round of staff meetings, with the goal of visiting all NARA units on a rotating basis
06/09/1998	The Archivist issues Strategic Initiatives for Fiscal Year 2000 that include the integration of information technology investments analysis and strategic planning into the budget process
09/30/1998	NARA publishes a revised Customer Service Plan that reflects the mission, values, priorities and customer service standards outlined in the Strategic Plan
12/01/1998	The Archivist issues the FY 1999 Revised Final Annual Performance Plan
04/07/1999	The Archivist identifies the Southeast Region, National Personnel Records Center, and Records Center Storage Standards as priority space initiatives to meet NARA's space needs

Date	Event
Date	*Event*
04/15/1999	The Archivist develops a list of FY 2001 Strategic Initiatives to be evaluated for inclusion in the budget and annual performance plan
10/22/1999	The Archivist rolls out NARA's nationwide automated performance measurement and reporting system
12/14/1999	The Archivist delivers a "State of the National Archives and Records Administration" address to staff
12/21/1999	The Archivist issues the FY 2000 Revised Final Annual Performance Plan
02/07/2000	The Archivist announces the creation of the Lifecycle Coordination staff to develop data standards, policies, and processes for all NARA lifecycle data and coordinate the planning for all lifecycle systems
02/07/2000	The Archivist submits a preliminary FY 2001 Annual Performance Plan to Congress
02/14/2000	The Archivist directs NARA offices to examine their programs in conjunction with the Strategic Plan and annual performance plans to identify FY 2002 budget initiatives
04/06/2000	NARA releases its agency-wide Annual Performance Report for FY 1999 to the Congress, the Administration, and the public
04/17/2000	The Archivist develops a list of FY 2002 Strategic Initiatives to be evaluated for inclusion in the budget and annual performance plan
05/06/2000	The Archivist and Leadership Team update the Strategic Plan
06/29/2000	The Archivist issues the draft updated Strategic Plan for staff and public comment
08/01– 08/10/2000	The Archivist and Leadership Team revise the draft Strategic Plan based on staff and public comment
08/11/2000	The Archivist submits an advance updated Strategic Plan to OMB
09/29/2000	The Archivist submits a final updated Strategic Plan to OMB and the Congress
11/29/2001	The Archivist delivers a "State of the National Archives and Records Administration" address to staff
01/02/2001	The Archivist issues the FY 2001 Revised Final Annual Performance Plan
02/15/2001	The Archivist directs NARA offices to examine their programs in conjunction with the Strategic Plan and annual performance plans to identify FY 2003 budget initiatives
03/30/2001	The Archivist releases its agency-wide Annual Performance Report for FY 2000 to the Congress, the Administration, and the public
04/09/2001	The Archivist submits a final FY 2002 Annual Performance Plan to Congress
04/15/2001	The Archivist develops a list of FY 2003 Strategic Initiatives to be evaluated for inclusion in the budget and annual performance plan
09/10/2001	The Archivist submits an initial FY 2003 Annual Performance Plan to OMB

Date	Event
12/05/2001	The Archivist delivers a "State of the National Archives and Records Administration" address to staff
12/14/2001	The Archivist issues the FY 2002 Revised Final Annual Performance Plan
02/04/2002	The Archivist submits a final FY 2003 Annual Performance Plan to Congress
02/15/2002	The Archivist directs NARA offices to examine their programs in conjunction with the Strategic Plan and annual performance plans to identify FY 2004 budget initiatives
03/27/2002	The Archivist releases its agency-wide Annual Performance Report for FY 2001 to the Congress, the Administration, and the public
04/15/2002	The Archivist develops a list of FY 2004 Strategic Initiatives to be evaluated for inclusion in the budget and annual performance plan
09/09/2002	The Archivist submits FY 2004 Annual Performance Plan to OMB
12/03/2002	The Archivist delivers a "State of the National Archives and Records Administration" address to staff
02/03/2003	The Archivist submits FY 2004 Annual Performance Plan to Congress
02/14/2003	The Archivist directs NARA offices to examine their programs in conjunction with the Strategic Plan and annual performance plans to identify FY 2005 budget initiatives
02/27/2003	The Archivist releases its agency-wide Annual Performance Report for FY 2002 to the Congress, the Administration, and the public
03/01/2003	The Archivist submits a draft updated Strategic Plan to OMB
03/21/2003	The Archivist issues the FY 2003 Revised Final Annual Performance Plan
04/15/2003	The Archivist develops a list of FY 2005 Strategic Initiatives to be evaluated for inclusion in the budget and annual performance plan
05/19/2003	The Archivist issues the draft updated Strategic Plan for staff and public comment
08/18/2003– 09/12/2003	The Archivist and Leadership Team revise the draft Strategic Plan based on staff and public comments
09/08/2003	The Archivist submits FY 2005 Performance Budget Request to OMB
09/30/2003	The Archivist submits a final updated Strategic Plan to OMB and the Congress

APPENDIX C: EVALUATIONS AND REPORTS USED TO DRAFT THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The reports are arranged alphabetically by author and thereunder chronologically by the date of the report.

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