

5 FAH-4 H-100 RECORDS MANAGEMENT

5 FAH-4 H-110 GENERAL

5 FAH-4 H-111 PURPOSE

(TL:RMH-1; 10-30-95)

This handbook prescribes the basic procedures and practices for the efficient and secure management of records of the Department of State and Foreign Service posts. It is intended for the use of officers, supervisors, or other personnel who are directly or indirectly responsible for records operations or management, regardless of the physical location of the records.

5 FAH-4 H-112 SCOPE

(TL:RMH-1; 10-30-95)

The guidelines and procedures contained in this handbook pertain to the creation, use, maintenance, and ultimate disposition of records. Unless specifically stated, these records management procedures pertain to both Department offices and posts overseas.

5 FAH-4 H-113 DEFINITIONS

(TL:RMH-1; 10-30-95)

- a. **Administrative Records.** Records relating to budget, personnel, supply, and similar housekeeping, or facilitative functions common to most offices, in contrast to program records.
- b. **Archival Records.** Records with long term or permanent value worthy of preservation by the National Archives.
- c. **Automated Document System (ADS).** ADS is an automated central database that contains texts of telegrams and written documents about Department policies dating back to 1973. The two basic retrieval files are:
 - (1) **Citation file**—contains summary data on a document. Included are originator, addressee, TAGS, subject line, and ADS-generated number identifying the reel and frame location of the microfilmed text stored by OIS.

(2) **Text Record file**—contains texts of telegrams. ADS stores citations to the microfilmed texts of the following types of documents:

- General memorandums;
- Memorandums of Conversation;
- Congressional correspondence;
- Diplomatic Notes;
- Technical agreements;
- Opinion papers;
- INR reports;
- General correspondence; and
- Telegrams.

d. **Destruction.** The complete elimination of the record, through such means as burning or shredding.

e. **Disposition.** The actions taken regarding records no longer needed in current office space. These actions include transfer to the Records Service Center or the Washington National Records Center, transfer to another federal agency, transfer of permanent records to the National Archives, and destruction of temporary records.

f. **Donation.** The authorized transfer of temporary records from a Federal agency to an eligible person, organization, institution, corporation, or government (including a foreign government) after the authorized retention period has expired.

g. **Electronic Records.** Records that include numerical, graphical, and textual information recorded on any medium capable of being read by a computer and which satisfies the definition of a record found in 44 U.S.C. 3301. This includes, but is not limited to, both on-line storage and off-line media such as tapes, disks, and optical disks (36 CFR 1234.1).

h. **Electronic Records System.** Any information system that produces, manipulates, stores, or transfers federal records by using a computer.

i. **Federal Records.** By law, Federal records are all documentary materials (including all books, papers, maps, photographs, machine readable materials), or other documentary materials, regardless of physical form, that are:

(1) made or received by an agency of the United States Government in pursuance of Federal law or in connection with the transaction of public business, and

(2) preserved or appropriate for preservation as evidence of agency activities or because of the value of the information they contain (44 U.S.C. 3301). "Appropriate for preservation" means documentary material made or received that will be filed, stored, or otherwise systematically maintained by the agency because they constitute evidence of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, or other activities of the Government or because of the informational value of the material. Drafts of documents that contain unique information, such as annotations or comments, that help explain the formulation or execution of agency policies, decisions, actions or responsibilities, and which were circulated or made available to employees other than the drafter for the purpose of approval, comment, action or to keep staff informed about agency business, are considered records.

j. **NARA.** National Archives and Records Administration

k. **Non-record Material.** Materials that do not meet the statutory definition of records or that have been excluded from coverage by the definition. Excluded materials are extra copies of documents kept only for reference, stocks of publications and processed documents and library or museum materials intended solely for reference or exhibit.

l. **Permanent Record.** Any Federal record that NARA has determined to have sufficient value to warrant its continued preservation by the National Archives.

m. **Personal Papers.** Documentary materials of a private or non-public nature that have not been used in the transaction of Department of State business.

n. **Program Records.** Records documenting the unique, substantive functions for which an office is responsible, in contrast to administrative records.

o. **Records Disposition Schedule.** A document describing, providing instructions for, and approving the disposition of records. It includes the type of disposition (destroy, retire, transfer), and when such action is to be taken.

p. **Retirement.** The transfer of records to the Records Service Center or a Federal records center for storage according to the authority cited in the records disposition schedules.

q. **Safe Haven.** The temporary storage of a post's valuable records in the Department or a nearby post deemed appropriate until hostilities subside.

r. **Storage Media.** Media that includes, but is not limited to, magnetic media, such as tapes and disks; and optical media including optical disks and CD-ROM.

s. **Temporary Record.** Any Federal record that the Archivist of the United States has determined to have insufficient value to warrant its preservation by the National Archives.

t. **Transfer.** The act or process of moving records from one location to another, especially from office space to storage facilities or Federal records centers, from one Federal agency to another, or from office or storage space to the National Archives.

5 FAH-4 H-114 TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

5 FAH-4 H-114.1 Training

(TL:RMH-1; 10-30-95)

OIS provides training opportunities through the National Foreign Affairs Training Center (NFTAC) on the records management program and the application of TAGS/Terms. Specialized training for individual offices or posts may be obtained by request to OIS.

5 FAH-4 H-114.2 Technical Assistance

(TL:RMH-1; 10-30-95)

OIS/RA/RD provides support to offices and posts in establishing appropriate filing systems, reviewing information flow, and determining the adequacy of filing techniques. In addition, OIS/RA/RD conducts reviews as a means of providing improved operations, protecting information resources and ensuring compliance with Federal regulations.

5 FAH-4 H-115 JOINT AGENCY RECORDS

(TL:RMH-1; 10-30-95)

a. Certain posts are organized to share with other Federal agencies administrative support through a Joint Administrative Office (JAO). In consideration of records management policies and guidance, the records maintained by these posts are in two categories: administrative and programmatic.

b. Administrative records reflect administrative and fiscal services rendered to the participating agencies designated in the written agreement of consolidation. These records are handled in accordance with the procedures of this handbook.

c. Programmatic records are substantive records created by the agencies involved in a JAO agreement. These records are the property of the creating agency and are handled in accordance with the records management policies and procedures of the creating agency.

5 FAH-4 H-116 RECORDS OF OTHER AGENCIES AT POST

(TL:RMH-1; 10-30-95)

a. The records management policies and procedures of the agency which created the records are to be followed.

b. In a crisis situation, the post's policies and procedures relating to security of records and information take precedence over an individual agency's records management policies and programs. Refer to the Post's Emergency Action Plan (EAP). Federal regulations allow for the destruction of records in emergency situations.

5 FAH-4 H-117 THROUGH H-119 UNASSIGNED