

# PRESERVING THE PAST TO PROTECT THE FUTURE

*The Strategic Plan of  
the National Archives and Records Administration*

2006–2016

REVISED 2009



# PREFACE

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In the Rotunda of the National Archives Building in Washington, DC, the Declaration of Independence, Constitution, and Bill of Rights are on display for anyone who wishes to see them. The words on these carefully preserved parchments have shaped our Government and our country for more than two centuries, and they capture forever the hopes, dreams, and aspirations the founders of our democracy had for its citizens. But it is beyond the walls of the Rotunda that most of the stories of America can be found in records that document history, the business and actions of Government, and the rights and entitlements of individuals. It is in our offices, regional archives, records centers, Presidential Libraries, and research rooms where the work of our mission is planned and carried out every day across the country.

I am pleased to present an update of the Strategic Plan of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) for 2006–2016, which details our goals, the strategies we will use to achieve these goals, and the measures by which we will evaluate our progress. We asked for help in creating this plan—from our staff at all levels, our customers both within and outside of the Government, our stakeholders, and our colleagues in the archival, historical, and records management communities. The feedback we received reaffirmed the soundness of the directions we have been taking in many areas and helped us to focus new attention on other areas.

We made use of the lessons learned under our plan's first three years. While enormous challenges lie ahead, I am proud of the exceptional commitment our staff makes to this work every day. Our progress owes much to the work of our partners and key stakeholders who help move us toward our plan's goals. And we are particularly grateful to the Congress and the Administration for understanding the value of our services and providing essential support.

We remain firm in our conviction that effective management of the records of the Federal Government is key to a responsive, citizen-focused democracy. In this vein we have developed new strategies that will expand NARA's leadership in Federal records management, including electronic records management. We are further refining our role in an electronic Government and are committed to establishing an electronic records program that is responsive to the Federal agencies that create the records as well as to our customers who expect continuing access to our Government's records, whether those records are paper or digital. It is clear that our role as the nation's record keeper is vital now and for the future, for we must take care of the information that will become our country's history.

While many important themes continue in this updated Strategic Plan, some of the content of this plan is new. Changes in the Federal Government, in our society, and in the nature of records themselves compel us to adapt the way we do business and how we address the needs of all our customers. Included in this plan is the establishment of a new National Declassification Center (NDC), directed by the President to be

located in NARA. The development of the NDC reflects the on-going challenge to balance the needs of national security and the right of citizens to have access to the records of their Government.

We continue our commitment to providing prompt, easy, and secure access to our holdings, anywhere, anytime, and an important part of this effort is developing the means to interact with our virtual visitors. Along these lines, we are developing Web 2.0 technologies and social media tools that enhance NARA's interactive, collaborative, and participatory relationships with Federal agencies, partners, and the public.

Within the goals and strategies throughout this plan, you will see our organizational values reflected in our plans for the decade ahead. These are the ideals that steer our work and illustrate the spirit of our Vision.

At the National Archives, we maintain a highly skilled and talented workforce and conduct all our business with the utmost professionalism. Our customers are the American people, and we are dedicated to serving them as effectively and efficiently as possible. To do this, we will continually improve our programs and services through innovation and use of modern technology. We encourage the involvement of all our colleagues in the archival and records management communities as well as our stakeholders in the larger world, knowing that partnerships at all levels of the organization will add depth and richness to our programs and initiatives. At all times we are committed to remaining absolutely nonpolitical, to building consensus, and to treating our colleagues, customers, and staff with civility and respect.

Public service is the central tenet of our mission and our vision for the future. The holdings of the National Archives belong to the American people, and we work every day to ensure they are usable and accessible. These records document the rights and entitlements of individuals and the actions of Government agencies and officials; the ability to examine them is a cornerstone of our democracy.

In developing this plan, we have challenged ourselves to reach for some very ambitious goals because we know that this is the level of service and expertise our customers want and deserve. Our holdings belong to all the men, women, and children who make up our country. We must aspire to the trust that has been placed in us. Furthermore, our customers are not only the visitors who come to our research rooms, libraries, exhibits, programs, and web sites, they are the Americans who are not yet born—those whose dreams will determine our nation's future. The work that NARA does in the coming years will help shape the kind of Government that serves Americans generations from now, and I am honored to play a part in this important mission.



David Ferriero

Archivist of the United States

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# STATUTORY FOUNDATION

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The mission of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) is rooted in legislation codified principally under Chapters 21-33 of 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 agency records in records centers from which agencies can retrieve them; to receive, preserve, and make available permanently valuable Federal and Presidential records; and to take into NARA's archival facilities, including Presidential libraries, for public use donated materials that are 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 (and similarly for Presidential records in Sections 2111 note, and 2201), 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.*

Regarding those records, the Archivist shall not only receive and preserve them, he shall make them accessible and exhibit them as defined in Sections 2109 and 2114.

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."

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 Chapter 15 of 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*.

Title 3, Chapter 1, of the United States Code provides that the Archivist of the United States will receive and transmit to Congress the certificates of the electors of the Electoral College, preserving them for public inspection.

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.

## NARA Statutes

Federal Register and Code of Federal Regulations (Title 44, Chapter 15)  
 Publications for Use of National Archives and Records Administration (44 U.S.C. § 1714)  
 National Archives and Records Administration (Title 44, Chapter 21)  
 Presidential Records (Title 44, Chapter 22)  
 National Archives Trust Fund Board (Title 44, Chapter 23)  
 National Historical Publications and Records Commission (Title 44, Chapter 25)  
 Advisory Committee on the Records of Congress (Title 44, Chapter 27)  
 Records Management by the Archivist of the United States and by the Administrator of  
 General Services (Title 44, Chapter 29)  
 Records Management by Federal Agencies (Title 44, Chapter 31)  
 Disposal of Records (Title 44, Chapter 33)  
 Coordination of Federal Information Policy (Title 44, Chapter 35)  
 Establishment of National Database for Records of Servitude, Emancipation, and Post-  
 Civil War Reconstruction (44 U.S.C. § 2107 note)  
 President John F. Kennedy Assassination Records Collection Act of 1992 (44 U.S.C. § 2107 note)  
 Presidential Recordings and Materials Preservation Act (44 U.S.C. § 2111 note)  
 Capital Improvement Plan for Presidential Archival Depositories; Report (44 U.S.C. § 2112 note)  
 Transfer of Funds (44 U.S.C. § 2120 note)  
 Grants for Establishment of State and Local Databases for Records of Servitude,  
 Emancipation, and Post-Civil War Reconstruction (44 U.S.C. § 2504 note)

Advisory Committee to Review Founding Fathers Editorial Projects (44 U.S.C. § 2505 note)  
Records Center Revolving Fund (44 U.S.C. § 2901 note)  
E-Government Act of 2002 (44 U.S.C. § 3501 note)  
Documents Relating to [Japanese] Internment (50 App. U.S.C. § 1989b-6)  
Nazi War Crimes Disclosure Act (5 U.S.C. § 552 note)  
Disclosure of Information on Japanese Imperial Government (5 U.S.C. § 552 note)  
Public Interest Declassification Act of 2000, as amended (50 U.S.C. § 435 note)  
Custody of Records; Oklahoma Historical Society (25 U.S.C. §199a)  
Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2008 (Pub. L. 110-161)  
Open Government Act of 2007 (Pub. L. 110-175)  
Classified Information and Controlled Unclassified Information (74 FR 26277)

## Vision

*As the nation's record keeper, it is our vision that all Americans will understand the vital role records play in a democracy, and their own personal stake in the National Archives. Our holdings and diverse programs will be available to more people than ever before through modern technology and dynamic partnerships. The stories of our nation and our people are told in the records and artifacts cared for in NARA facilities around the country. We want all Americans to be inspired to explore the records of their country.*

## Mission

*The National Archives and Records Administration serves American democracy by safeguarding and preserving the records of our Government, ensuring that the people can discover, use, and learn from this documentary heritage. We ensure continuing access to the essential documentation of the rights of American citizens and the actions of their government. We support democracy, promote civic education, and facilitate historical understanding of our national experience.*



# Part I

## WHAT IS OUR SITUATION NOW?

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

Yet, changes in the Federal Government, in our society, and in the nature of records themselves drive us to make changes in the way we do business and how we address the needs of all our users.

As our nation's record keeper, we see the constantly changing benefits and demands of technology shaping the way the Government does business. The dramatic emergence of electronic Government has brought to the forefront new records management issues that have implications beyond government business. Electronic records will continue to increase exponentially in both volume and formats over the next decade. The ability to find, organize, use, share, appropriately dispose of, and save records—essentially the essence of records management—is vital for the effective functioning of the Federal Government. In rising to the challenges of electronic records, NARA is transforming itself from an agency that manages traditional (predominantly paper) records to a leader in electronic records management. We must continue to work with agencies to help them seamlessly incorporate records management into their business processes and information systems.

The Electronic Records Archives (ERA) is a comprehensive, systematic, and dynamic means for preserving electronic records, free from dependence on any specific hardware or software, and will improve preservation of and access to computer-based records into the future. Over the next decade, ERA will become increasingly capable, enabling NARA to process and then make valuable Government electronic records available. We will continue to work to ensure that this technology is scalable for use by others who have a need to preserve electronic records.

Our holdings in all media—paper, electronic, film, and so on—are constantly growing as the proliferation of Government records continues. At the same time, the public demand for access is increasing. NARA has a significant backlog of unprocessed holdings that are therefore not yet readily available to the public. New records are arriving faster than they can be processed. Clearly, we must refocus attention and resources on making as many records as possible accessible to the public.

While we put great effort into readying records for public use, the expectation of easy online access to our holdings continues to grow. The American public expects information to be delivered almost instantly to their desktop with more and more information available via the Internet. However, we cannot provide online access to all our holdings in the next decade—the task is simply too big. Our focus must be on making our most requested holdings available online and on providing researchers with online tools to help them in their work.

As we strive to find new and better ways to get information to those who want it, we also recognize that our customers will benefit from having historically relevant records explained and put in context. Simply put, the records of our country tell the story of its history. For Americans to understand and participate in our present democracy, they must understand our collective past.

Security concerns fostered by threats of terrorism, theft, natural disasters, and the vulnerability of computer systems have forever changed our Government and the way we think about and care for records. In addition to dealing with issues of collection security that are inherent in our mandate to allow public access to the nation's records, we must continue to address evolving concerns of continuity of operations, emergency preparedness, and recovery of damaged records in the event of disasters.

Despite changes to our Government, NARA's core mission remains—we preserve, process, and provide access to the records of our Government. In a democracy, the records of the Government belong to its citizens, and providing access to them is a vital obligation. Because of work done every day in NARA facilities across the nation, the public can examine the records that document the actions of Government officials, the entitlements of individuals, the events that make up American history, and in some instances, how those events have affected the rest of the world. With new social media applications (Web 2.0), we have the opportunity to reach the public with tools they already use. These tools allow us to operate more transparently and to interact with our users in new, more informal ways. We can explore ways to use these same technologies to streamline our own internal processes.

We recognize that for NARA to move forward in the next decade we must plan carefully and use our resources wisely to our customers' best advantage. We cannot simply continue doing things as we have always done them. We recognize that we must reexamine our business processes and reevaluate the benefits of our programs so that we are working in the most efficient and cost-effective manner. At the same time, we need to step forward and lead the archival and records management community with innovative programs and new strategies, while striving to deliver enviable customer service. We must shape ourselves into a nimble agency that can respond quickly and effectively to ongoing changes to our business, our Government, and our society.

Our greatest advantage in succeeding at the goals in this strategic plan is our dedicated, talented staff. We must offer current staff members the professional opportunities needed to equip them with the skills necessary to master developing technology and evolving business processes. We must also train NARA's future leaders to meet the challenges we can now only begin to envision.

Just as we have not come to our current situation entirely on our own, our future also depends on collaboration with other agencies, groups in the both the private and public sectors, and professional communities. Partnership is essential now and into the future to meet our goals, and we are excited about the possible collaborations that lie ahead.

The Strategic Goals detailed on the following pages are demanding, and we have a long way to go from our present state to achieve them. The records entrusted to us form the very foundation of our democracy—from the Charters of Freedom, to the naturalization records used by millions of Americans to verify their citizenship, to the census records that enumerated the entire population of our country, to the service records of the courageous men and women who fought for our freedom. At the National Archives and Records Administration, we work every day to ensure that everyone with a need or desire for access to Government records can have the information they want—that is our mission and our pledge to the American people.

# Part II

## WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE?

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### VISION

*As the nation's record keeper, it is our vision that all Americans will understand the vital role records play in a democracy, and their own personal stake in the National Archives. Our holdings and diverse programs will be available to more people than ever before through modern technology and dynamic partnerships. The stories of our nation and our people are told in the records and artifacts cared for in NARA facilities around the country. We want all Americans to be inspired to explore the records of their country.*

At the National Archives, we preserve the past to protect the future. The records we hold are the original sources of the American story, documenting the collective history of our nation through the actions of individuals and institutions. We see the soul of America in the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights. We see the passion of America in the arrest warrant of Susan B. Anthony, issued when she defiantly cast a ballot in the 1872 Presidential election. We see the genius of America in Thomas Edison's patent application for the light bulb. We see the great lessons of America in President Truman's executive order committing the Government to integrating the segregated military. We see the heart of America in the military records of the courageous men and women who served in the Armed Forces, and in the manifests of ships, recording the names of those immigrants who came to this country with dreams of a new life. These documents, like all the records in National Archives facilities across the country, are more than by-products of Government business—they are pieces of history and they belong to the people of this nation.

As the nation's record keeper, we will work to ensure that all Americans know the role records play in a democracy and the personal stake they have in the National Archives.

### MISSION

*The National Archives and Records Administration serves American democracy by safeguarding and preserving the records of our Government, ensuring that the people can discover, use, and learn from this documentary heritage. We ensure continuing access to the essential documentation of the rights of American citizens and the actions of their government. We support democracy, promote civic education, and facilitate historical understanding of our national experience.*

This statement acknowledges our statutory responsibility for the management of the records of the Federal Government. It also acknowledges our commitment to providing both Federal agencies and the public access to the records of the Federal Government. Furthermore, our mission statement recognizes that our mandated work also serves democracy, for the ability of the people to have access to the documentation of their rights and entitlements and to examine the records of their Government and the actions of their elected officials is the foundation of a democratic society. Documentation of the rights of citizens means material that enables them to establish their identities, protect their rights, define their responsibilities, 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. Finally, our holdings tell the story of our nation. We believe our mission supports the teaching, learning, and understanding of American history and civics.

Government records take various forms, including

- *written paper records*
- *maps, drawings, pictorial, and audiovisual records of documentary value*
- *digital records generated in multiple formats by computers*
- *artifacts as well as papers in Presidential Library collections, and*
- *donated historical collections from notable Americans, Federal Register publications, and other materials that help document rights and entitlements, Federal actions, and historical 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. This mandate is unique. Records document and personalize the history of our country, as well as the rights and entitlements of individuals and also support the tenets of democracy that allow citizens to examine the actions of their Government. Thus, included in our mission is the responsibility to share our holdings through programs and exhibitions that promote civic literacy and education. The records we hold belong to the public—our mission is to ensure the public can discover, use, and learn from the records of their Government.

#### **Strategic Goals**

- One:* As the nation's record keeper, we will ensure the continuity and effective operation of Federal programs by expanding our leadership and services in managing the Government's records
- Two:* We will preserve and process records to ensure access by the public as soon as legally possible.
- Three:* We will address the challenges of electronic records in Government to ensure success in fulfilling NARA's mission in the digital era.
- Four:* We will provide prompt, easy, and secure access to our holdings anywhere, anytime.
- Five:* We will increase access to our records in ways that further civic literacy in America through our museum, public outreach, education, and grants programs.
- Six:* We will equip NARA to meet the changing needs of our customers.

## Part III

# WHAT MUST WE DO TO GET THERE?

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

**Strategic Goal 1:** As the nation’s record keeper, we will ensure the continuity and effective operation of Federal programs by expanding our leadership and services in managing the Government’s records.

### **Strategic Overview**

Promoting and ensuring effective records and information management across the Federal Government is the foundation on which the long-term success of NARA’s mission depends. We carry out this foundational work by ensuring 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.*

Our responsibilities—and the records and information responsibilities of the Congress, the Courts, the President, and the Federal agencies—are grounded in law and regulation. However, our mandate goes beyond compliance, especially during this period of rapid technological change.

Fundamental changes in the Federal Government’s business processes, and in the wider information management environment, have critical implications for the records lifecycle. Today, the Federal Government creates the bulk of its records and information in electronic form. To deal with these challenges and carry out our mission, NARA must provide leadership and be more agile in adapting to change in information technology and in the Federal recordkeeping environment.

As we understand this changing environment, we will identify, develop, and provide services and tools that agencies need to manage their records more effectively. We will explore how to provide these services and tools in a cost effective manner, while balancing the needs of future users for continuing access to and preservation of archival records. We will examine our statutory and regulatory frameworks to ensure they accurately reflect this changing environment. NARA will provide direction and leadership in this changing and largely uncharted landscape.

Effective records management policies, practices, and services support open and transparent government, which strengthens our democracy and promotes efficiency and effectiveness. Government records and information are among our nation’s most valuable assets, and records management is central to preserving, protecting, and making available this asset to our citizens and the world.

Recent disasters, both natural and man-made, have underscored the importance of records. Our role in these emergencies is to promote the preservation of records, first our own, then other Federal records, and then those of other levels of government. NARA will continue to be a partner in the Federal response community.

NARA's role as the nation's record keeper is vital to the future of our nation. Without a vigorous, forward-thinking records management program, we risk losing the information that documents the daily work of our Government and, ultimately, the history of our nation.

#### ***Specific Strategies for Records Management***

- A. We will carry out our statutory responsibilities for Federal records management and encourage agencies to do the same. We will accomplish this through assessments, studies, inspections, and reports on records management compliance throughout the Federal Government.
- B. We will continue to make the business case at senior levels throughout the Federal Government that records and information are important Government assets and that records management is an important tool in effectively managing and protecting those assets.
- C. We will examine our statutory and regulatory frameworks to ensure they accurately reflect the needs of the changing information and records management environments. Where our statutory and regulatory frameworks do not meet current needs, NARA will work with the Administration, Congress, and other stakeholders to pursue new ones that do.
- D. We will support agencies' business needs by providing records management guidance, training, and assistance throughout the Government. In particular, we will provide knowledgeable advice to agencies that are embedding records management in their systems and associated processes.
- E. We will work with industry and academic experts to develop automated records management solutions that meet both Federal agency business needs and NARA requirements.
- F. We will offer expanded reimbursable records management services to include traditional physical records storage and retrieval as well as electronic records management and turn-key records management solutions.
- G. The *Federal Register* will be published in times of crisis, in the face of all hazards, for as long as needed. It will be ready on short notice at another location to support Federal plans for continuity of operations.

**Strategic Goal 2:** We will preserve and process records to ensure access by the public as soon as legally possible

#### ***Strategic Overview***

In a democracy, the records of the Government belong to its citizens, and providing access to them is a vital service. After the Archivist has identified the records to be retained for posterity, NARA gathers, stores, processes, and preserves them. Our holdings cannot be made available to current and future generations if we do not invest in the archival processing and preservation of records in our custody.

*Archival processing* involves all the steps needed to open a record to the public. It includes establishing basic intellectual control, flagging records that have privacy or national security classifications, providing enhanced descriptions of the records content as well as the context in which the records were created, and performing initial preservation so that the records may be served to the public. New technology has created increased

opportunities for easier and faster access to our holdings. However, the same technology has led to the creation of more records. The result is that new records have been *accessioned* (transferred to the legal custody of the National Archives) faster than they could be processed. This has created a backlog of holdings that has been growing for decades.

To deal with this backlog and make our holdings accessible to the public, we are continuously improving our work processes to make them as efficient and effective as possible for our customers. We will seek out and develop partnerships to assist in this effort and are realigning our business systems and processes when appropriate. The expected result will be a considerable increase in records available for research.

Our archival processing efforts must go hand-in-hand with investments in the preservation, appropriate storage, and security of the records and artifacts in our custody. Our holdings include loose and bound textual records, photographs, motion picture films, architectural drawings, maps and plans, magnetic media, sound recordings, electronic records, and artifacts such as furniture, paintings, and textiles. It is our responsibility to ensure that items such as these—as well as our more famous holdings like the Declaration of Independence, Constitution, and Bill of Rights—receive the care they are due. This means that they are appropriately preserved, stored, handled, and exhibited so that they are available to future generations.

For records to be available to researchers, we must have inspected them and given them appropriate preservation attention. We must continue to focus on preparing appropriate archival space for both our present and future holdings. Changing and increasing threats and vulnerabilities may continue to require improved security measures for our holdings, staff, and infrastructure. We will continue to refine our security measures to guard our holdings while still maintaining the open access that our mission inherently dictates.

### ***Specific Strategies for Accessioning and Processing Records***

- A. We will establish intellectual control over our unprocessed collections so that the public can have efficient access.
- B. We will ensure that records to be accessioned into the National Archives arrive on time, properly documented, and in accordance with our published guidance.
- C. We will expeditiously process our holdings for opening to the public as soon as legally possible.
- D. We will improve the efficiency with which we manage our holdings from the time they are scheduled through accessioning, processing, storage, preservation, and public use.
- E. We will describe all of our holdings at a level and quality appropriate to their use, understanding that these descriptions are the key to subsequent access.
- F. We will ensure that all eligible classified holdings are processed efficiently for declassification according to Executive Order 12958, as amended.
- G. We will investigate ways to improve the declassification processing of classified archival records, including studying the feasibility of an interagency National Declassification Center and, if warranted, the structure of such an effort.
- H. We will work to ensure that the continued classification and withholding of sensitive holdings is entirely appropriate and for no longer than necessary.

***Specific Strategies for Storage, Preservation, and Holdings Security***

- I. We will ensure that all of our holdings are in appropriate space, whether temporary holdings in the records centers or archival holdings in our archival facilities, and whether they are artifacts, electronic files, or traditional records.
- J. We will ensure that future Presidential libraries meet standards that will make them usable and sustainable into the future.
- K. We will prioritize and address the preservation needs of all our holdings, regardless of format.
- L. We will proactively adapt our security measures for our staff, holdings, and infrastructure to meet changing threats and vulnerabilities.

**Strategic Goal 3:** We will address the challenges of electronic records in Government to ensure success in fulfilling NARA's mission in the digital era

***Strategic Overview***

Across the entire Federal Government, the transformative use of information and networking technology to carry out Governmental functions is creating both challenges and opportunities for the National Archives and how it conducts its business. This transformation of Government processes has resulted not only in the development and use of new tools to conduct business, and the creation of records in new and varied formats, but also higher expectations about public access to Government records and information. Having the ability to manage, use, find, share, and appropriately dispose of electronic records is vital for the effective functioning of the Federal Government. It is also central to a Government that strives to be transparent, participatory, and collaborative.

Due to the dynamic nature of information technology, its rapid evolution, and the ever-changing nature of electronic records, NARA must better understand and continually adapt to the business needs of Government. We must work to ensure that records are available to protect the public's rights and assure accountability, and that archival records are preserved and made available for future generations.

Our primary response to the challenge of authentically preserving electronic records and providing access to these records in the future is the Electronic Records Archives (ERA). ERA will provide a comprehensive, systematic, and dynamic means of preserving and providing continuing access to authentic electronic records over time. When fully deployed, ERA will give us the means to preserve, process, and provide continuing access to Federal Government electronic records of archival value. Yet, at the same time, we must explore ways to provide economical storage and retrieval services for electronic records that remain under the legal control of the originating agencies. We must also continue to adapt our internal business processes and staff expertise to effectively use the ERA system and to ensure that it evolves over time to fit tomorrow's technology.

***Specific Strategies***

- A. We will identify permanently valuable electronic records wherever they are, capture them, and make them available in usable form as quickly as practical.
- B. We will develop, implement, integrate, and manage an electronic records program, which is responsive to the needs of the Federal Government and our customers who expect continuing access to our Government's electronic records.



- C. We will deploy further increments of the Electronic Records Archives to capture, describe, preserve, and provide continuing access to Government electronic records.
- D. We will partner with agencies, research institutions, and private industry to develop, implement, manage, and promote our electronic records program both within NARA and for the Government at large.
- E. We will provide leadership to the Federal Government by testing and implementing within NARA itself the effective lifecycle approaches that emerge from the work of an electronic records program.

**Strategic Goal 4:** We will provide prompt, easy, and secure access to our holdings anywhere, anytime

### ***Strategic Overview***

In the decades to come, the expectation of easy online access to our holdings will grow. The breadth of information available on the Internet has increased public demand for faster access to more information than could even be thought possible just a decade ago. Research is no longer relegated to libraries and research rooms, but is being done around-the-clock on computers world-wide. To support this new appetite for information, we will create, to the greatest extent possible, an “archives without walls.”

We have two challenges in this area. The first is to provide access to records that were created digitally. Being digital, these records will be made available through the Electronic Records Archives. By contrast, our traditional records must be scanned or otherwise digitized. We will work to digitize selected records, including those most requested by researchers. Additionally, we will put searchable descriptions of *all* our holdings online with clear information about the archival context of the original records and how they may be located and used, and we will develop online tools to assist researchers.

Some researchers need to delve deeper into records than our online services will allow. We will continue to support them with research rooms and expert reference staff. We will equip these facilities and staff with the tools to help researchers locate records at any National Archives facility. At the same time, we must reinvent the traditional role of our reference staff and equip them with the skills they need to work in an online world.

The Internet has introduced countless researchers to the holdings of the National Archives. This thirst for online access to information is exciting, as it brings more and more people to our virtual doors, yet the task of building an “archives without walls” is daunting. Implicit in this task is the ability for archivists and the public to virtually interact. Our strategies in this area will focus on developing dynamic partnerships to digitize and deliver our most popular holdings and create interactive tools to help researchers find the information they seek. By putting our country’s records literally at the public’s fingertips, we will be able to share our rich resources with more people than ever before.

### ***Specific Strategies***

- A. We will continuously re-envision the nature of archival research services to sustain a nationwide system of archival research with coordinated access to all the resources and staff expertise of the National Archives.

- B. For the broadest possible access, we will make digital copies of selected non-electronic records available online. We will identify these holdings in a digitization plan that sets priorities for putting these holdings online.
- C. We will work to establish partnerships with both governmental and private institutions to facilitate the availability of NARA holdings over the Internet, while ensuring that NARA obtains ownership of the digital versions.
- D. We will continue to publish descriptions of our archival holdings in an online catalog and provide online access to selected records via the published descriptions, including those holdings hosted by our digitization partners, so that the archival context of all our holdings is readily available.
- E. We will eliminate the backlog of written requests awaiting reply, especially those made under the Freedom of Information Act.

**Strategic Goal 5:** We will increase access to our records in ways that further civic literacy in America through our museum, public outreach, education, and grants programs

### *Strategic Overview*

America's democracy is reborn—and reinterpreted—with each generation. In that essential work of renewal, each generation must understand the basic ideas, forms, and values of the Government they inherit. It is with this understanding, this civic literacy informed by the lessons of history, that the American people will be equipped to nurture the evolution of our democracy.

In the promotion of civic literacy, the National Archives has always played a unique and important role. As the keeper of Government records, we have literally safeguarded the documentary record of American history. In a world where everyone has an opinion regarding current events, we have offered an evidential foundation for the public conversation. Familiarity with this evidential record is the core of what we mean by civic literacy.

Access to these holdings is the right of all Americans. From the Charters of Freedom, to the census records that enumerate our country's population, to the records of Congress and Presidential administrations, our holdings are so vast and diverse that the value and amount of information available is not always readily apparent to the public. Therefore, we continually educate the public about the treasure of information and the services we offer to enable access to our holdings.

We understand that our usefulness to the public is directly related to our visibility. People must know what we are, what we do, and what we hold before they can benefit from our resources. Likewise, we must understand who our customers are and what they need from us. We have seen the power of the Internet to bring communities of interest together for a common purpose. We will foster such online communities in our mission area, believing that through them we can multiply our effectiveness at promoting civic literacy. We likewise see our volunteers, the Foundation for the National Archives, state archives and their boards, and the private foundations that support the Presidential libraries as instrumental partners in advancing NARA's core responsibilities. They promote our mission and provide additional resources to accomplish that mission while becoming a grass-roots corps of advocates for historical records.

The National Archives is not a single building in Washington, DC. It is a nationwide network of regional archives, records centers, and Presidential libraries and museums. Along with our web sites, our facilities provide access to records as well as workshops, seminars, exhibits, lectures, films, and special events, giving visitors all around the country unique interactive experiences. We will continue to augment our programs through partnerships with institutions that can help us reach our goals. Through our public outreach and education programs that help people understand how to use our holdings, we are committed to furthering our nation's civic literacy and putting America in touch with the richness of history and the promise of the future.

### ***Specific Strategies***

- A. Working with other Federal and state agencies whose primary purpose is education, we will continue to support teachers and students, creating a cadre of educators and researchers who use primary sources as teaching tools.
- B. We will promote the understanding of America's national experience through lifelong learning programs.
- C. We will create exhibits and programs that raise the profile of records, and the historical and civic understanding that is based on those records. We will use all available resources, including the private foundations that support the National Archives and the Presidential Libraries, to expand audiences, achieve public notice, reach new communities, and engage opinion leaders.
- D. We will expand our web presence to broaden the reach of our exhibit and education programs and improve the quality of the visitor experience.
- E. We will continue to work with the private foundations that support the National Archives and the Presidential libraries to raise the visibility of the National Archives to the public.
- F. We will partner with industry, national and international institutions, and affiliated archives to develop cooperative initiatives that showcase NARA holdings, promote civic and historical literacy, and highlight the importance of records.
- G. The National Historical Publications and Records Commission will continue to promote access to and preservation of some of the most important records and papers in American history by supporting publication (print and electronic), preservation, and access activities.

## **Strategic Goal 6: We will equip NARA to meet the changing needs of our customers**

### ***Strategic Overview***

In this plan, we commit ourselves to expanding records management services to the Federal community and solving the challenges of electronic records in government. We also pledge to make more of our holdings available for examination by the public, and to create new and dynamic ways for researchers to learn about, access, and care for our holdings so they will be preserved for use by generations to come.

These are bold commitments, and to fulfill them will require bold thinking and bold ideas. As managers and employees, we must challenge ourselves—and each other—to think proactively about emerging challenges and opportunities, apply new approaches to old problems, and seek out ways to improve and streamline our business processes. And collectively, we must establish ourselves as an organization that seeks

excellence, encourages flexibility, and always puts the customer first. It is not enough to make a plan—we must create the staff, culture, and technological infrastructure to support that plan.

First and foremost, we must ensure that everyone in NARA understands what is envisioned in this plan and how each of us can contribute to making the plan a reality. This includes not only our regular workforce, but also the countless students, volunteers, contractors, and other partners who contribute their time and energy to NARA programs across the country. For all of these staff, we must create an environment wherein individuals feel connected to the mission and vision of the agency and valued for the contributions they make. In addition, we must ensure that each of us in NARA understands who our customers are and what our customers expect from us. Each of us serves a customer, whether we are providing records management support to Federal agencies, preserving documents, locating service records for veterans, maintaining our IT systems and networks, awarding grants, or processing budget or personnel actions. These customers must always be our first thought—never an afterthought.

Moreover, we must continually adapt our policies, practices, and procedures to provide the best possible value and service to our customers. In an environment where change is the rule rather than the exception, we cannot assume that the way we conduct business today will be the way we conduct business tomorrow. We must work with our customers to identify their changing needs and develop creative, innovative solutions. In particular, we must be attentive to our customers' information technology requirements, and ensure that NARA's information technology infrastructure is optimized to support those requirements.

### ***Specific Strategies***

- A. We will identify and implement the cultural changes that we need to better serve our customers in a changing environment.
- B. We will ensure that staff have the skills, competencies, training, and tools they need to support their customers in a changing environment.
- C. Through innovative approaches, we will recruit and develop a diverse workforce so that we can better serve a diverse public.
- D. We will increase staff productivity by improving our systems and processes.
- E. We will expand our partnerships with the professional communities who share our goals and mission.
- F. We will expand our corps of volunteers and the roles they play in helping us serve our customers.
- G. We will continue to partner with the private foundations that support the National Archives and the Presidential libraries to increase customers and produce quality products and services of interest to the public.
- H. We will make sure that each employee understands his or her opportunities to advance within the organization.
- I. We will involve employees in defining the best practices for their unit.
- J. We will support an information technology infrastructure that is flexible, robust, secure, and scaleable, and that serves NARA's customers, both internal and external.

## Part IV

# HOW WILL WE KNOW WE HAVE SUCCEEDED?

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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. Within each strategic goal, we list the few *long-range performance targets* (numbered in boldface) that we will use to measure our success. *Key external factors* are constraints outside of NARA that could affect our success. Each target also is linked to the appropriate measurement area and category of the Performance Reference Model in the Federal Enterprise Architecture's Consolidated Reference Model Document, Version 2.7.

Our annual performance plans will track additional measures and milestones to gauge our short-term progress. 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:** As the nation's record keeper, we will ensure the continuity and effective operation of Federal programs by expanding our leadership and services in managing the Government's records

**1.1 By 2016, 50 percent of agencies achieve passing scores for compliance with Federal records management policy.**

This long-range performance target measures the success of NARA's efforts to promote compliance with Federal records management policy. NARA will focus on records management oversight activities to ensure that Federal agencies can economically create and manage records necessary to meet the needs of the public, records are kept long enough to protect rights and assure accountability, and records of archival value are preserved.

*PRM Linkage*                      Mission and Business Results: Management of Government Resources

*Key external factors*        Federal agencies must devote resources to perform records management. Federal agency managers must see records management as an asset for their business operations. Federal agencies must assign resources to perform regular self-assessment of records management compliance. Records management professionals must be trained in Federal records management policy.

### 1.2 By 2012, 90 percent of customers are highly satisfied with NARA records management services

NARA provides services to support agencies in their implementation of records management. We provide guidance, training, assistance, and the approval of records schedules. (The schedules specify the retention period and final disposition of agency records.) Here, we measure our success at delivering these services through a smooth and efficient program with satisfied customers.

*PRM Linkage* Customer Results: Customer Benefit

*Key external factors* Records management professionals must be motivated to attend training and complete NARA's certification program.

### 1.3 By 2016, records management transactions serviced by the Federal Records Center Program grow by 6 percent.

NARA's Federal Records Center Program offers reimbursable records management services to Federal agencies by storing, accessing, and disposing of their non-current records and assisting agencies in managing records throughout their lifecycle. As a result of the fundamental shift from paper to electronic records across the Federal Government, the Federal Records Center Program is adapting to these changes by providing customer-responsive solutions to Federal agencies.

*PRM Linkage* Customer Results: Service Coverage

*Key external factors* The Federal Records Center Program operates in a competitive business environment in which Federal agencies choose their records center services provider. Testing and enhancing remote servicing capability for electronic official military personnel files (OMPF) is contingent on agreements with military service departments for NARA to access their systems.

### 1.4 Within 30 days of the end of an administration, 100 percent of Presidential and Vice Presidential materials have been moved to NARA locations or NARA-approved facilities.

This target measures our success at securing the records of an outgoing administration, especially if the change of administration is unexpected—our most challenging case.

*PRM Linkage* Mission and Business Results: Management of Government Resources

*Key external factors* Our success depends greatly on working with both the outgoing and incoming White House staffs.

**Strategic Goal 2:** We will preserve and process records to ensure access by the public as soon as legally possible

***Accessioning and Processing Records***

**2.1 By 2016, 85 percent of scheduled transfers of archival records are received at the scheduled time.**

This target measures the timeliness of our work in getting all of the archival records that are supposed to come to us. The outcome is that records of archival value are preserved for future generations.

*PRM Linkage*            Mission and Business Results: Management of Government Resources

*Key external factors*    Federal agencies must schedule their records. Agencies must agree to transfer their permanently valuable records to us. Federal agencies must implement Federal electronic records management standards.

**2.2 By 2016, 95 percent of our holdings have been processed to the point where researchers can have efficient access to them.**

This target directly measures our success against the goal. By “processed,” we mean that if a researcher asks for the records, we have established intellectual and physical control, performed basic preservation, described the holdings, and identified any restrictions on their release. In short, the records are at a point where a researcher can discover their existence and either have the records promptly or have a prompt explanation of why we must withhold them.

*PRM Linkage*            Customer Results: Service Accessibility

*Key external factors*    Progress in processing Presidential records may be hindered by an unusually large number of special access requests or Presidential Records Act (PRA)/FOIA requests and the need to review records page by page.

**2.3 By 2012, 90 percent of agency declassification programs earn high scores from ISOO.**

The Information Security Oversight Office (ISOO), which is administered by NARA, oversees the Government-wide security classification program and reports annually to the President on its status. ISOO collects data about agencies’ programs as a means of assessing those programs. This target measures our success in improving the quality of agency declassification programs and in increasing their transparency to the public. Better-quality programs reduce the risk of inappropriate disclosure, they improve the efficiency of the declassification process, and they hasten the appropriate release of records to the public.

*PRM Linkage*            Mission and Business Results: Management of Government Resources

*Key external factors* Agencies' cooperation is essential to identifying the records subject to automatic declassification, impediments to meeting the new deadline, and solutions to these impediments.

**2.4 By 2016, NARA archival holdings of 25-year-old or older records are declassified, exempted, or referred under the provisions of Executive Order 12958, as amended.**

NARA has a backlog of classified pages that cannot be released to the public because further declassification processing remains to be done on them. This target measures our success in keeping up with that backlog. The outcome is that records that *can* be declassified *are* declassified.

*PRM Linkage* Customer Results: Service Accessibility

*Key external factors* National security concerns may divert resources from declassification efforts or lead to the withholding of additional records.

Section 3161 of Public Law 105-261, The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1999, as amended requires the re-review, page-by-page, of all declassified records except those determined to be highly unlikely to contain Restricted Data and Formerly Restricted Data. We continue to devote resources to assist the Department of Energy (DOE) in surveying and auditing records to ensure that no Restricted Data and Formerly Restricted Data are inadvertently released. Our work in this increased in FY 2003 as the U.S. Air Force began a project similar to DOE's resulting in another layer of review before the records can be made available.

Special declassification projects also reduce 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 withdrawn classified documents to determine their relevance and coordinate 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 in the scanned documents before the libraries can process the records for release.

New employees hired for the declassification program cannot start work with classified records for many months until their security clearances are approved.

***Storage, Preservation, and Holdings Security***

**2.5 By 2016, 100 percent of archival holdings are stored in appropriate space.**

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

*PRM Linkage* Mission and Business Results: Management of Government Resources



*Key external factors* Public, White House, and congressional support for our space planning activities is vital to develop and implement proposed plans.

## **2.6 By 2014, 100 percent of NARA records center holdings are stored in appropriate space.**

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

*PRM Linkage* Mission and Business Results: Management of Government Resources

*Key external factors* Agencies may choose to store records in facilities not controlled by NARA.

## **2.7 By 2016, less than 50 percent of archival holdings require preservation action.**

This target measures whether we are keeping up with our preservation responsibilities. The outcome of these actions is that we will preserve our archival holdings for generations to come. Basic preservation work is done under target 2.2 when the records are first processed. However, additional preservation work often remains to be done. This target includes the full range of potential preservation actions, but excludes electronic holdings, which are a special case addressed under Goal 3.

*PRM Linkage* Mission and Business Results: Services for Citizens

*Key external factors* Unusually large increases of new at-risk records, such as the recent accessioning of Official Military Personnel Folders (OMPF) and civilian Official Personnel Folders (OPF), increases in costs 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 laboratories affect our ability to address the preservation requirements of audiovisual holdings.

**Strategic Goal 3: We will address the challenges of electronic records in Government to ensure success in fulfilling NARA's mission in the digital era**

### **3.1 By 2016, 95 percent of archival electronic holdings have been processed to the point where researchers can have efficient access to them.**

This target is a breakout of target 2.2 on page 16 above, *By 2016, 95 percent of our holdings have been processed to the point where researchers can have efficient access to them.* The outcome is that the records are at a point where a researcher can discover their existence and either have the records promptly or have a prompt explanation of why we must withhold them.

*PRM Linkage* Customer Results: Service Accessibility

*Key external factors* Progress in processing Presidential electronic records may be hindered by an unusually large number of special access requests or PRA/FOIA requests and the need to review records page by page.

### **3.2 By 2016, 80 percent of archival electronic records are preserved at the planned level of service.**

This target measures our ability to effectively preserve and provide access to archival electronic records, maximizing the number of records available to researchers. We will preserve and maintain any permanent electronic records in any format and will transform these records to the most appropriate format as necessary, or to a persistent format or state when possible. This work will be carried out based on the technological characteristics of the records, expected customer demands or interests, the needs of the records' originators, the laws and regulations requiring differing levels of control, and NARA's business strategies and priorities. The expected outcome of preserving archival electronic records at the planned level of service is that they are effectively preserved and continually made available for future generations.

*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 and costs for an electronic records preservation system.

### **3.3 By 2016, 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.

*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 4:** We will provide prompt, easy, and secure access to our holdings anywhere, anytime

#### **4.1 By 2016, NARA customer service standards for researchers are met or exceeded.**

This target measures how well we are meeting our own published standards. The outcome is that our customers are satisfied with our services.

*Related Measures* • Percent of written requests answered within 10 working days.

- Percent of items requested in our research rooms that are furnished within 1 hour of request or scheduled pull time.
- Percent of FOIA requests for Federal records answered within 20 working days.
- Percent of online archival fixed-fee reproduction orders completed in 20 working days or less.

*PRM Linkage* Customer Results: Timeliness & Responsiveness; Service Quality

*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. Public interest in newly accessioned civilian Official Personnel Files (OPF) and Official Military Personnel Files (OMPF) may lead to an especially high demand for these records and services at the National Personnel Records Center. NARA cannot control the response time for FOIAs that must be referred to other agencies.

#### **4.2 By 2012, 1 percent of archival holdings are available online.**

Here, we directly measure the extent to which our holdings have been put online. These records include both electronic records and non-electronic records that have been digitized, either by us or by our partners. By *online* we mean that the public can retrieve copies over the Internet without an interaction with NARA staff, and the archival context of these records is available in our online catalog. Not counted here are the electronic holdings that we will provide upon request and are therefore not, strictly speaking, online. The outcome of this work is that our holdings are available anywhere, anytime.

*PRM Linkage* Customer Results: Service Coverage

*Key external factors* We intend to accomplish much of this goal through partnerships with other organizations that want to publish our holdings on their web sites.

#### **4.3 By 2016, 95 percent of archival holdings are described in an online catalog.**

We need to provide the tools that will let researchers find the records they want, regardless of where the records are and regardless of whether they are online or not. Our principal mechanism for doing that is the online catalog. Here we measure the extent of our holdings that are described in the catalog. The expected outcome is that researchers are able to find information about the archival records they need, anytime, anywhere.

*PRM Linkage* Customer Results: Service Accessibility

#### **4.4 By 2012, our web sites score at or above the benchmark for excellence as defined for Federal Government web sites.**

Our web sites are the way we package the research experience for our online customers. We expect great changes in that customer base over the next 10 years as we expand our online holdings and as a new generation of researchers arrive. We enhance the customer experience and offer new opportunities for interaction through social media and social networking tools. We will use common industry instruments that measure customer satisfaction with web sites. The outcome is that more people, nationwide and worldwide, have easy access to our services.

*PRM Linkage*            Customer Results: Service Quality

*Key external factors*    The standard for excellence will increase over the life of this plan.

**Strategic Goal 5: We will increase access to our records in ways that further civic literacy in America through our museum, public outreach, education, and grants programs**

#### **5.1 By 2016, 90 percent of NARA’s visitors are satisfied with their visit experience.**

This is an overall measure of the public’s satisfaction with their visit experiences. These experiences are delivered through a variety of mechanisms, including physical visits, online and offline publications, videoconferences, webcasts, social media, and others. Studies have shown that, for attendees, visit satisfaction correlates with learning. That is, people who report having a satisfying experience also turn out to have learned more of the content of the program. The outcome is that people understand their personal connection to the records of their history.

*Related measures*            • Percent of education program visitors satisfied with their visit experience.  
     • Percent of exhibit visitors satisfied with their visit experience.  
     • Percent of public program visitors satisfied with their visit experience.

*PRM Linkage*            Customer Results: Customer Satisfaction

*Key external factors*        Our success here depends on the support of the private foundations that are fundamental to our exhibit programs. To better understand our customers’ interests, we will need to expand our customer survey program. Surveys are still under development.

#### **5.2 By 2016, a minimum of 85 percent of all NHPRC-assisted projects produce the results required, employing rigorous standards and milestones 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.

*PRM Linkage* Processes and Activities: Quality

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

## **Strategic Goal 6: We will equip NARA to meet the changing needs of our customers**

### **6.1 By 2016, 95 percent of employees possess the core competencies that were identified for their jobs.**

This measures our success at creating a workforce with the skills necessary to deliver the services our customers require.

*PRM Linkage* Mission and Business Results: Management of Government Resources

### **6.2 By 2016, the percentages of NARA employees in underrepresented groups match that of the Civilian Labor Force (CLF).**

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

*PRM Linkage* Mission and Business Results: Management of Government Resources

*Key external factors* Success here depends on qualified people in underrepresented groups applying for positions at NARA in response to our recruitment efforts.

### **6.3 By 2016, 60 percent of NARA's positions are filled within 80 days.**

This target measures NARA's ability to remain competitive for the best talent available through a fast and effective hiring process.

*PRM Linkage* Mission and Business Results: Management of Government Resources

### **6.4 By 2016, NARA's telework rate is 100 percent of the Federal Government average rate.**

This target measures our success at using one form of non-traditional work arrangements to enhance employee quality of life, as a tool for recruitment and retention, as a way to prepare for and cope with emergency situations, and for supporting "green" energy-saving initiatives.

*PRM Linkage*            Mission and Business Results: Management of Government Resources

**6.5 By 2016, public network applications are available 99 percent of the time.**

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

*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.

## Part V

# WHAT HAVE WE ACCOMPLISHED?

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This section highlights key successes since our last Strategic Plan was issued in 2006.

### TARGETS ACHIEVED

The following long-range performance targets were substantially met.

By 2009, NARA has established partnerships with FEMA to support 100 percent of its regions in the national response to emergencies.

### PROGRESS MADE

Significant achievements are noted as follows:

#### Strategic Goal 1:

**Our Nation's Record Keeper** We expanded our reach of records management training through our online training course, Records Management for Everyone, hosted on OPM's *GoLearn.gov* web site and distributed to requesting agencies for hosting on agency internal web sites.

We successfully implemented our Electronic Edit and Publishing System (eDOCS) which allows us to manage 100 percent of the digitally signed, legal documents electronically submitted by agencies for publication in the *Federal Register*.

Through NARA's leadership, records are recognized in the draft National Response Framework Emergency Support Function #11 as natural and cultural resources and historic properties (NCH) resources.

We strengthened our preparedness for emergencies through the development of our Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP), the establishment of an alternate continuity facility for NARA Headquarters and the *Federal Register*, and participation in the National Level Continuity Exercise where we annually test our skill at continuity and emergency incident management operations.

We developed the initial operating capability of the Archives and Records Center Information System (ARCIS) and began phased deployment to the Federal Records Centers.

We successfully moved and transferred records and artifacts from the Bush Administration for secure storage and processing in a temporary facility in Lewisville, Texas.

**Strategic Goal 2:  
Preserve and Process**

We spearheaded a National Declassification Initiative, a multiagency effort to implement mandatory declassification requirements outlined in Executive Order 12958, as amended, for Federal Records.

Our Information Security and Oversight Office (ISOO) developed a program to assess declassification reviews conducted by Federal agencies and established a process to assist agency declassification review programs through issuance of notifications.

We selected a site for a new National Personnel Records Center.

We certified and accepted the Nixon Presidential Library into NARA's Presidential Library system and moved a portion of the Nixon collection in College Park, Maryland, to the Library in Yorba Linda, California.

We certified a new Federal Records Center facility in Fort Worth, Texas, and made significant progress in completing our long range target to house temporary records in space that meet appropriate space standards.

We made significant strides in treating and preserving our at risk holdings to prevent further deterioration.

We inventoried, rehoused, and gained intellectual control of Official Personnel Military records including World War I U.S. Navy and U.S. Marine Corps records documenting American's military service to the nation.

We have more than 83 million logical data records accessible online through Access to Archival Databases (AAD), an early prototype of a portion of the ERA system.

**Strategic Goal 3:  
Electronic Records**

We achieved initial operating capability (IOC) of the Electronic Records Archive (ERA) for Federal Records and achieved operational status for the



Executive Office of the President (EOP) instance of ERA, which enabled us to capture Presidential electronic records at the end of the George W. Bush Administration.

**Strategic Goal 4:**  
**Access**

We increased the number of holdings available online through in-house digitization activities and partnerships with both the public and private sectors.

We experienced a 25 percent increase of visits to our Archival Access Database (AAD) and a 130 percent increase to our Archival Research Catalog (ARC).

We established non-exclusive partnerships to help us digitize our holdings across a range of media types.

We launched a redesigned ARC database system which includes new features and improved navigational tools making our holdings easier for researchers and the public to find.

We redesigned our Federal Records Center Program web pages.

**Strategic Goal 5:**  
**Civic Literacy**

We opened a new Learning Center with a ReSource Room designed for teachers and parents and a Learning Lab designed for middle and junior high school students to participate in interactive workshops and teachers can be trained in how to use documents in the classroom.

We received *Time.com's 50 Best Websites for 2008*, *The Scout Report Best of 2007–2008* and several other awards and recognitions for our Digital Vaults.

For the public, we hosted numerous *American Conversations*, a series of informal conversations on American history between the Archivist of the United States and notable scholars.

We hosted community forums relating to health care, immigration, Federal debt, education, and energy at our Presidential libraries around the country.

**Strategic Goal 6:**  
**Infrastructure**

We developed and implemented a recruitment framework to attract underrepresented groups to the agency.

We awarded a new NARA IT and Telecommunications Support Services (NITTSS) to include telephone responsibilities together with information technology operations, enabling us to manage our network services and communications modernization as an integrated whole.

## **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. Each year we further refine our performance management program to make it more balanced across the categories of OMB's Performance Reference Model. The evaluation process described below provides the information we need to improve performance, ensure accountability, and inform the planning process.

### ***Performance Measurement***

Our Performance Measurement and Reporting System takes advantage of web infrastructure to collect our performance data from more than 70 NARA organizational units that send data to the system from all over the country. It uses 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 architecture allows us to store much more data for analyzing trends. Frequent internal control evaluations, within the tool itself and of the processes used to collect the data, help ensure the continued accuracy and validity of the data.

### ***Customer Satisfaction Assessment***

Development and implementation of a comprehensive and coordinated program to measure customer satisfaction with our services is another key to strategic management success. Our customers are surveyed regularly to help us align our standards of performance with their expectations. 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 provides 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 needed to ensure that the program can meet the service-level agreements that have been established. This continual assessment of our results, and the degree to which our programs have influenced those results, is at the heart of the Government Performance and 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 document lays out the Strategic Plan of the National Archives and Records Administration. This three-year update of the plan through 2016 continues our efforts to ensure that our nation keeps adequate documentation of our Government's actions for generations to come, that the Government has a solution to the challenges of Electronic Records, and that Americans have expanded opportunities to make use of Government records in all forms, now and well into the future. This plan also takes us into some exciting new directions, focusing our attention on addressing the backlog of materials not yet available to the public, expanding our efforts to make America's records accessible to everyone—whether in digital or physical form, and through education, public programs, and exhibits, promoting civic literacy and the public's understanding of the treasures we protect.

As a living plan, it serves as our guidepost in documenting the progress we have achieved in meeting the goals of earlier Strategic Plans. 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, adjusting goals as needed, and adding new or revised targets. We understand that change is inevitable, but we look at this plan as the long-range direction in which we will steer our course, leading us to a future in which all Americans will understand the vital role records play in a democracy and their own personal stake in the National Archives.

# APPENDIX A: CUSTOMER SERVICE TARGETS

Following are the customer service targets found throughout our Strategic Plan, along with performance indicators, Performance Reference Model linkages, and outcomes.

<i>Long-Range Targets</i>	<i>Indicators</i>	<i>PRM Linkage</i>	<i>Outcomes</i>
95 percent of written requests are answered within 10 working days.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of written requests</li> <li>• Number of requests answered in 10 days</li> </ul>	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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of FOIA requests received</li> <li>• Cost per FOIA request</li> </ul>	Customer Results: Timeliness and Responsiveness	People promptly receive the information they need from NARA.
95 percent of items requested in our research rooms are furnished within 1 hour of request or scheduled pull time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of researchers</li> <li>• Number of items requested</li> <li>• Number of items furnished on time</li> </ul>	Customer Results: Timeliness and Responsiveness	Researchers receive prompt services.
95 percent of written requests to the records center operations of the National Personnel Records Center are answered within 10 working days.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of requests</li> <li>• Number of requests answered in 10 days</li> </ul>	Customer Results: Timeliness and Responsiveness	People, including America's veterans and civil servants and their families, receive the information and services they need from NARA.
95 percent of Federal agency reference requests in Federal records centers are ready when promised to the customer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of agency reference requests</li> <li>• Number of requests ready on time</li> </ul>	Customer Results: Timeliness and Responsiveness	Agencies receive prompt, cost-effective services.
95 percent of online archival fixed-fee reproduction orders are completed in 20 working days or less.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of orders</li> <li>• Average order completion time</li> <li>• Cost per order</li> </ul>	Customer Results: Timeliness and Responsiveness	People promptly receive the materials they have ordered from NARA.
90 percent of visitors are satisfied with their visit experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of public program attendees</li> <li>• Number of exhibit visitors</li> <li>• Number of education program visitors</li> </ul>	Customer Results: Customer Benefit	People learn about American history and the U.S. Government, as well as the extent of NARA's holdings.
90 percent of customers are highly satisfied with NARA records management services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of records management customers</li> <li>• Number of customers highly satisfied</li> </ul>	Customer Results: Customer Benefit	Agency customers know about the records management services NARA provides and how to make use of them in their own agencies.

# APPENDIX B: CHRONOLOGY OF STRATEGIC PLANNING AND GPRA ACTIVITIES

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<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
02/10/2005	Senate confirms nomination of Dr. Allen Weinstein to be the ninth Archivist of the United States
02/16/2005	Allen Weinstein is sworn in as the ninth Archivist of the United States
02/16/2005	The Archivist sends welcome letter to staff and launches initiative to visit and hold informal staff meetings with every NARA unit nationwide
05/06–06/10/2005	The Archivist holds a series of meetings with Senior Staff and Strategic Plan Support Team to develop new mission and vision statements for NARA's new Strategic Plan
06/13/2005	The Archivist announces the strategic planning effort, the importance of staff input to the strategic planning process, and upcoming staff focus groups in the <i>Staff Bulletin</i>
06/15–06/16/2005	The Archivist meets with Presidential Library directors to discuss strategic directions
07/11/2005	The Archivist and Senior Staff formally kick off strategic planning activities with a nationally televised webcast for NARA staff entitled “A Conversation About NARA’s Strategic Plan 2007–2017,” presented from the McGowan Theatre in the National Archives Building
07/13/2005	The Archivist issues draft mission and vision statements to staff for comment during focus group sessions
07/18–08/31/2005	Approximately 90 focus group sessions are held around the country with more than 900 staff and volunteers participating in discussion about NARA’s strategic direction. Additionally, external stakeholders are invited to comment, and several focus group sessions are held with external groups.
12/01/2005	The Archivist delivers “State of the National Archives and Records Administration” address to staff
12/27/2005	The Archivist releases “NARA’s Strategic Directions for 2007–2017” for public comment, outlining NARA’s new mission statement, vision statement, and proposed strategic goals and strategies
02/07/2006	The Archivist submits FY 2007 budget to Congress
03/07–05/24/2006	The Strategic Plan support team conducts facilitated sessions with senior managers and business process owners to develop long-range performance measures and metrics for strategic business areas
05/26/2006	The Archivist’s staff submits a draft Strategic Plan to OMB for comment
06/27/2006	The Archivist issues draft Strategic Plan for 2006–2016 for staff and public comment
08/15/2006	The Archivist submits an advance new Strategic Plan to OMB

09/11/2006	The Archivist submits FY 2008 Performance Budget Request to OMB
09/25/2006	NARA completes consultations with Congressional staffs on the draft Strategic Plan
09/29/2006	The Archivist submits a final Strategic Plan to OMB and Congress
12/01/2006	The Archivist delivers “State of the National Archives and Records Administration” address to staff
02/05/2007	The Archivist submits FY 2008 budget to Congress
09/11/2007	The Archivist submits FY 2009 Performance Budget Request to OMB
11/27/2007	The Archivist delivers “State of the National Archives and Records Administration” address to staff
09/15/2008	The Archivist submits FY 2010 Performance Budget Request to OMB
12/04/2008	The Archivist delivers “State of the National Archives and Records Administration” address to staff
02/04/2009	The Archivist submits FY 2010 budget to Congress
07/16/2009	The acting Archivist issues the draft updated Strategic Plan for staff and public comment
08/18/2009	The acting Archivist submits the draft updated Strategic Plan for OMB review
09/14/2009	The acting Archivist submits FY 2011 Performance Budget Request to OMB
09/17/2009	The acting Archivist and Senior Staff finalize the draft Strategic Plan based on staff and public comments
09/30/2009	The acting Archivist submits a final updated Strategic Plan to OMB and Congress

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

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

1. Government Accountability Office, GAO-05-802, *Acquisition of the ERA is Progressing*, July 12, 2005.
2. Government Accountability Office, GAO-08-742, *National Archives and Selected Agencies Need to Strengthen E-Mail Management*, June 13, 2008.
3. Government Accountability Office, GAO-08-788T, *Challenges in Implementing an Electronic Records Archive*, May 14, 2008.
4. Government Accountability Office, GAO-09-733, *Electronic Records Archive: The National Archives and Records Administration's FY 2009 Expenditure Plan*, July 2009.
5. Information Security Oversight Office, *National Archives and Records Administration Special On-site Review of the Mandatory Declassification Review Program*, March 29, 2006.
6. Information Security Oversight Office, *Report to the President for Fiscal Year 2008*, January 12, 2009.
7. Interagency Committee on Government Information, *Recommendations for the Effective Management of Government Information on the Internet and Other Electronic Records*, December 16, 2004.
8. National Archives and Records Administration, *Nontextual Preservation at the National Archives and Records Administration Review of Current Activities and Future Needs*, September 2002.
9. National Archives and Records Administration, *Ready Access to Essential Evidence: The Strategic Plan of the National Archives and Records Administration, 1997–2008, (Revised Final Plan)*, 2003.
10. National Archives and Records Administration, *Preserving the Past to Protect the Future: The Strategic Plan of the National Archives and Records Administration, 2007-2016*, September 2006.
11. National Archives and Records Administration, *Strategic Directions for Federal Records Management*, July 2003.
12. National Archives and Records Administration's Electronic Records Archives Program, *Presentation to the National Digital Strategy Advisory Board, Library of Congress*, June 2004.
13. National Archives and Records Administration, *Office of Regional Records Services Archival Program, Fiscal Year 2004*, December 2004.
14. National Archives and Records Administration's presentation at Electronic Records Forum, *Embedding Electronic Records Management Into the Fabric of Your Agency*, December 16, 2004.
15. National Archives and Records Administration, *Continuity of Operations Plan, v1.0*, August 2005.
16. National Archives and Records Administration, *Office of Regional Records Services Archival Program, Fiscal Year 2005*, December 2005.
17. National Archives and Records Administration, *Preservation Survey of Textual Records*, December 2005.
18. National Archives and Records Administration, Office of Management and Budget, and Architecture and Infrastructure Committee, Federal Chief Information Officers Council, *Federal Enterprise Architecture Records Management Profile*, December 15, 2005.
19. NARA E-Records Management Initiative, *Plan to Identify, Schedule and Appraise, and Acquire E-Records*, presented at BRIDG meeting on February 16, 2006.

20. National Archives and Records Administration, *FY 2007 Annual Performance Plan (Revised Final Plan)*, March 15, 2007.
21. National Archives and Records Administration, *FY 2007 Performance and Accountability Report*, November 15, 2007.
22. National Archives and Records Administration, *FY 2008 Annual Performance Plan (Revised Final Plan)*, February 22, 2008.
23. National Archives and Records Administration, *FY 2008 Performance and Accountability Report*, November 17, 2008.
24. National Archives and Records Administration's (NARA) Implementation of the E-Government Act of 2002 – Report for FY 2008, November 23, 2008.
25. National Archives and Records Administration, *FY 2009 Annual Performance Plan (Revised Final Plan)*, March 27, 2009.
  
26. National Archives and Records Administration, *FY 2010 Annual Performance Plan (Submitted to Congress)*, May 7, 2009.
27. National Archives and Records Administration, *Report on Alternative Models for Presidential Libraries, issued in response to the requirements of Public Law 110-404*, September 25, 2009.
28. National Archives and Records Administration, *Strategic Human Capital Plan, 2009-2014*.
29. Office of the Inspector General, *Audit of Management Controls for Safeguarding NARA's Specially Protected Records and Artifacts*, OIG Report 07-01, October 12, 2006.
30. Office of the Inspector General, *Audit of Textual Records Processing at NARA*, OIG Report February 28, 2007.
31. Office of the Inspector General, *Audit of NARA's Energy Usage*, OIG Report 07-08, June 8, 2007.
32. Office of the Inspector General, *Audit of the Process of Safeguarding and Accounting for Presidential Library Artifacts*, OIG Report 08-01, October 26, 2007.
33. Office of the Inspector General, *Audit of NARA's Development of the Holdings Management System (HMS)*, OIG Audit 08-04, March 11, 2008.
34. Office of the Inspector General, *Clifton-Gunderson LLP (CG) Audit of the National Archives and Records Administration FY 2008 Financial Statements*, OIG Report 09-02, December 4, 2008.
35. Office of the Inspector General, *Audit of the Controls Over Presidential Library Textual Records*, OIG Report 09-01, January 14, 2009.
36. Office of the Inspector General, *Audit of NARA's Processing of Military Personnel Record Requests*, OIG Report 09-16, September 30, 2009.
37. Policy and Planning Staff, *Workload Analysis Study of Paper Textual Records*, July 2006.
38. Public Information Declassification Board, *Improving Declassification: A Report to the President*, January 2, 2008.
39. Thibodeau, Kenneth. "Building the Archives of the Future" Presented to Planet Storage Summit, 2005.