1967 - 1968

IRAC

INTERAGENCY RECORDS ADMINISTRATION CONFERENCE
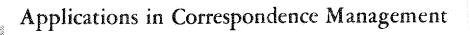
ANNUAL ELECTION

THE CORRESPONDENCE CLOG

(original and 5 x one billion!)

Innovations in Correspondence Management

Carl E. Uhlig

National Archives and
Records Service

Applications in Correspondence Management

Col. John F. Rash

Department of
the Air Force

PRESIDING: Seymour J. Pomrenze

Department of the Army

INNOVATIONS IN CORRESPONDENCE MANAGEMENT

By Carl E. Uhlig
National Archives and
Records Service

Good morning ladies and gentlemen.

It is good to be before the combined IRAE once again, particularly
since this meeting is devoted entirely to that most neglected area of
paperwork management--managing correspondence.

My part this morning will consist of three parts: (1) Some of the
general activity in correspondence management going on throughout the
Federal community. (2) What you can expect from the National Archives
and Records Service during the coming year. (3) A brief look at auto-
mating correspondence production.

First of all, the Federal Property Management Regulations on corres-
pondence (section 101-11.206) are being generally revised and updated. We
hope to put a little more punch into the overall correspondence guidelines
given there. Several forms included in the regulations have been changed,
some correspondence supply items have been eliminated, and, of course, the
new correspondence manual has to be referenced.

Most of you have by now probably seen the new edition of the U.S.
Government Correspondence Manual. I would like to thank each of you
who contributed so generously to the development of the manual. Of all
the suggestions offered we were able to adopt at least 75% of them. In
reality we can say that this edition is the product of the 26 agencies
who contributed their thoughts. Oftentimes I was in the quandry of seeing
diametrically opposing suggestions. In these cases, of course, I would
have to make a decision with the advice and counsel of several other
members of the NARS staff.

If some of you are disappointed that your suggestion was not included,
don't feel that we didn't take it seriously into consideration--we did.
Although I have to admit that we are slightly prejudiced in favor of the
new approach, we did create a correspondence manual reflecting the salient
wishes of the Government community.

As of this morning, Federal Supply tells me that 45,000 copies of the
manual have been distributed throughout the agencies. A second printing
is being authorized. By the way, the cost of the manual will drop ap-
preciably with this reprint.

As you realize with this edition, unlike the 1960 version, we omitted
those items which we felt would automatically be supplemented by most of
the agencies; for example, Congressional correspondence, security classi-
fied mail, time limits, special documents, and so forth. As we got into
the revision, we soon discovered that there were several ways to determine

This report is distributed for the Interagency Records Administration Con-
ference by the National Archives and Records Service, General Services
Administration. For further information, write Conference Secretary, Office
of Records Management, National Archives and Records Service, Washington, D.C.
20408, or call WOrth 36426 (Code 13-36426).

the conditions for using the informal letter (or the memo or captioned format versus the formal version.

Some agencies felt that they could use the informal letter format for all their internal communications. Some saw fit to use the informal for all their intra-Governmental communications. Still others saw no reason for not using the informal across the board, including letters to the general public. Recognizing these differences, we thought it best for each agency to make this determination for itself. They could do this in their yellow pages or supplement to the manual. For example, here in GSA there are two conditions under which the formal version will be used--in all other cases, the informal version will go. These are groups of addressees (President to mayors) and where a writer knows a more personalized letter is expected. We have reason to believe that 80% of all Federal correspondence can be prepared in the informal format.

It is our intention to give the typical Government typist what she needs and nothing she does not need. We have cut out all the philosophy and those items beyond the typist's control. We will cover these points in a correspondence management handbook. More about that later.

Because of the divergence of Federal agencies, we realized that probably no agency could solely rely on the U.S. Government Correspondence Manual to take care of all its correspondence preparation problems. In almost every case those agencies adopting the 1968 edition would also issue in conjunction with the manual their yellow pages or supplement. So it is happening. For example, GSA has five pages of supplement, POD four and one-half, Commerce 10, SBA 20, OED 10, Agriculture 18, and so forth.

As of now, agencies using the manual or adopting the standards it contains employ over half of the total Federal roster. For example, FAA has gone right down the line with the manual; however, is printing its own edition. Seventy-four percent will be using it if the Navy and the Veterans Administration, where I understand it is being considered and tested, decide to use it. And the figure will jump to 92% of the Federal employment if the Department of the Army accepts it. I understand they are moving in that direction.

I realize that because of the press of deadlines here at the Archives we have not done all we should have done to help you sell this seemingly radical approach to correspondence preparation. Hopefully that will change. Because of my experience in playing a part in getting the Air Force to adopt a similar approach eight years ago, I believe I know most of the arguments you have faced or will face in your organization. For example, I probably have heard all the reasons imaginable for keeping the salutation and close on letters. When their elimination was first proposed in the Air Force you would have thought the roof of the Pentagon would come off. It may be of interest to you that on my own I mailed out 24

2

letters to persons outside the Air Force in the new format. A week later I again contacted these persons and asked if they still had my letter and if they did, did they notice anything strange about it. And not a one of the 24 even mentioned that there was no salutation and closing. I believe this proves how unimportant those two items are. Another NARS staff member has had a similar experience which confirms this.

We also have a handout we can make available to you which explains the basic changes in the manual and the advantages of each.

The basic change, of course, is the new letter format. Whatever your opinion regarding its appearance, you cannot deny that it will make our letters easier and faster to type. And this was our basic goal.

We certainly recognize that there was nothing objectionable about the appearance of the old format. It looked fine. We switched to the new because we knew it would speed up the preparation of correspondence. The fact that it _does_ has been proved through tests conducted in my own office and the Air Force. Our girls type letters in the new format at least 10% faster than in the old.

Obviously, the appearance of the letter is also important. We don't believe, however, that the old format looks so much better than the new that we can pass up a minimum of 10% savings in preparation time. In fact, some of us even think the new format looks better. But appearance is a matter of opinion. The hard fact is: The new letter format will save your organization a lot of dollars. We should also realize that a great part of our communications--even to the public--are in the form of messages completely unlike the format of the traditional letter--punched cards, slips of paper, cards, etc. Standardizing the format of letters makes it easier for a secretary to move from one organization to another without being retrained each time. It is, as you realize, a simple format to learn. We believe that training time for secretaries can be cut by at least 25%.

Those who have doubts about whether this format is acceptable should get their secretary's reaction--and we don't mean the individual who reviews correspondence, but the actual typist or stenographer.

I have talked to many secretarial groups during the past few months about the new manual--the latest being the top secretaries of HEW and a group of top gals from various agencies during a seminar at the Civil Service Commission. Unanimously they have said, "Why haven't we done this before--It is so simple--is is just plain common sense."

To help gain greater acceptance of the new correspondence manual and the standards contained in it, I have been working recently with another

3

agency in creating a training course aimed at orienting a typist or steno-
grapher in using the new manual. The entire Federal community owes a
"thank you" to the Consumer and Marketing Service of the Department of
Agriculture, for they are paying for this project. I have merely served
as the technical adviser.

The course was developed for Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing
Service by the Praxeonomy Institute of New York, which has done a remark-
able, highly professional job. It is written broadly enough that with a
little revision it can be used by any Government agency.

The course is of the programmed, book and pencil type and takes about
seven hours to complete. Many girls have finished it in less time.

The training kit includes several items: First, there is a 39-page
student's handbook highlighting and explaining the most often used parts
of the correspondence manual. Incidently, a copy of the correspondence
manual is included in each kit. Second, there is a 61-page student's
notebook which covers all the points made in the handbook. There is also
a student's progress plotter to help keep a check on progress made while
taking the course. Finally, a 5-page answerbook and an 8-page teacher's
guide are included.

With the exception of jacketing correspondence for the Administrator
of C&MS, the USDA Secretary, and Legislative replies, the materials ex-
actly parallel the first four chapters of the U.S. Government Correspondence
Manual. There are motivational stories concerning the consequences which
will result if a secretary does not do the job the right way. These are
extremely well done. The trainee has a chance to practice each point while
learning it. There are some remarkably well-developed exercises, for
example, dealing with the importance of proofreading and how to proof
your own work. This section alone runs 14 pages.

The reason for my working on this project rests in that the entire
Federal Community will, in turn, get a chance to use the training course if
it wants to. Although the course is geared primarily for C&MS, we can, as
mentioned earlier, adapt it for general use with little effort. Camera-
ready copy has been furnished to C&MS by the Praxionomy Institute. The
project is presently in clearance and further testing. Within a month we
should have more information for you if you think you might be interested
in using it in your own agency. I certainly recommend it.

I would also like to congratulate the Navy for a good job on the pre-
sentation they have developed on reviewing proposed letters to the general
public. Most of us have worked in this area during the past year and I'm
sure can benefit from the work Navy has done. The slide presentation has
been printed in AO Instruction 5217.2, dated 7 February 1968. For further
information contact the Administrative Management Division, Navy, or see me.

4

As another assist to you, perhaps seeing the actual yellow pages or supplement to the correspondence manual by an agency would be helpful. Bob Beets, the Records Officer of GSA, has offered to make his available if you would like to see it. Bob has also worked up the benefits GSA can realize as a result of adopting the new manual. Perhaps talking with him about this would be useful.

Here at NARS we are currently putting the finishing touches on three records management handbooks which have a definite bearing on managing correspondence. The first, <u>Mail Management</u>, should go to the printer within a month, with publication this summer. The second, <u>Correspondence Management</u>, should follow in a couple of months. And lastly, we are com-bining and updating our two handbooks on form letters and guide letters. We believe you will see a definite improvement here.

There are probably many other projects currently in the mill in other agencies that I should mention; however, I just haven't heard of them. I would like to ask those of you with projects underway, which you feel could benefit the entire community, to be sure and let me hear of them. Too often I have found a Department of Bureau working on its own projects completely oblivious of another source which could be of assistance and save them some work. In other words, let's get some dialogue going and help each other lick the evergrowing problem of correspondence production.

And now to the future--

For quite some time a piano-roll-type system has been in existance wherein paragraphs can be stored for identical or similar letter replies. All that is required of the letter writer is to cue in the appropriate paragraph from his correspondex. There is, however, as we all realize, the problem of the number of paragraphs which can be stored. A maximum of 36,000 characters is usually all that is allowed or perhaps 7,000 words or approximately 100 paragraphs. Of course the choice of paragraphs be-comes much greater with papertape and magnetic tape systems. Here you can easily store 500 or more paragraphs.

The big payoff will come with computer-assisted correspondence pro-duction. The day will soon be here when a computer can actually compose letters. It will syphon off all the routine type letters. An agency with a good form and guide letter program will know what its repetitive letter-answering situations are. Veterans Administration has had such a program for a good many years and has found it no problem to automate a good part of its client correspondence. Here a person in the mailroom reads the letter and prepares an input card showing what the reply should contain. Oftentimes the addressee may get more information than he has actually asked for about a given point, but he does get an answer and in a relatively short period of time.

5

In automating a correspondence production system certain questions should automatically be asked. First, and probably most important, does the machine include enough data to answer questions on a subject other than the situation for which it was basically designed? We must always consider data over and above that which is essential in carrying out a particular program or project. In most cases we haven't done this and, as a result, have not really tapped the full potential of the computer. We have heretofore always felt obligated to restrict the amount of data going into the system. We have always felt restricted by the problem of punched card space.

In personnel records, for example--let's say payroll records--there are varying degrees of information included in these systems throughout the Federal Government. Some include only the information needed to produce the pay check. On the other hand, some go all the way to include the employee's education, specialization, grade, skills inventory, and so forth. With this broader data base the information can be used to handle situations other than merely payroll. Although most systems with such a broad data base are used primarily for situations other than answering correspondence, it does offer the possibility of also helping in that area. In other words, correspondence production would only be one use for this data base.

The correspondence manager must get into the act when a new information system or data base is actually being created. He must make sure that the information he needs for answering repetitive correspondence is included as prescribed data for inclusion. Most often correspondence managers simply didn't ask that the information they need be included.

To determine what information a correspondence manager needs now and in the future he should first look at his form letters and guide letters. Hopefully he has a good program in that area already. Once he has analyzed them, he has to determine whether the computer can handle them. By working with the data systems designer, he can include the required data to handle a good part of his repetitive letters.

As I said earlier, the computer of the future will become sophisticated enough to actually compose a letter the way you and I can--perhaps even more effectively than we can. It may even have a greater respect for the "4S" formula. With the enlarged computer memory capacity, it will be able to give a sophisticated answer to a complicated question. It will become more intellectually competent as our programming skills increase and more competent programmers come on the market.

As an example of what the computer can do in the correspondence production area, back in 1951 Congress decided on rather short notice to

6

liberalize the right of veterans to increase their life insurance holdings. The VA was faced with the tremendous problem of notifying all the men affected. It had to do so in a relatively short time. Press releases and other communication media were used to accomplish this almost impossible task. With the assistance of a computer, this task could have been done in 24 hours. Rather than make a veteran wade through a booklet or pamphlet to determine how the law applies to him, the computer can write a tailored letter to him. The computer allows an organization to ignore those individuals who are not involved in a particular situation.

A problem which we all recognize is the short supply of skilled programmers. We must have programmers who can better cope with the problems associated with machine processing of textual information, who can design the program to compose letters with a more tailored-to-the-audience appearance. Everytime a more personal answer is required, the more complicated the job becomes. Here is where good writers and programmers are urgently needed.

Another problem that faces us is the realization that there usually is no one at the top of the organization who is looking at the total automation needs of the agency. Each manager tends to see his agency needs from the point of view of his own particular function. He uses the machine to accomplish his particular job and the rest, no matter how closely related, no matter how well suited to handling by the same machine, are neglected or ignored.

With the cathode ray tube system, the letter writer can compose a letter right on the tube before him. He can add any variables he wants once he has chosen the correct pattern paragraphs. He can then type in the name and address of the addressee. The definite advantage of this system is that it enables the writer to see the letter he is writing in final form before it is actually printed into hard copy. He can modify it as he sees fit.

The computer can go even one step further for us. It can help the letter writer prepare an even more effective letter. For example, it can be programmed to substitute or at least warn the writer that there is a simplier, more common tern he should have used. When the writer wants to use the word "utilization" the machine can suggest that he try "use." Or perhaps it can warn that certain terminology is not used in this agency.

My advice to correspondence managers regarding automation is simply-- get involved. Seek out the automation specialists in your agency and explain your correspondence problems. For all you know, your agency may already have equipment that can be programmed to handle some of your repetitive correspondence now. If not, perhaps you can insure that future equipment will have a correspondence capability.

Thank you.

7

CORRESPONDENCE MANAGEMENT IN THE AIR FORCE
By Colonel J. F. Rash
Director of Administrative Services
HQ USAF

When asked to make this talk on Correspondence Management in the Air Force, I said that I wanted to place very little of my emphasis on the past, not much more on what we are doing now, and devote most of my time to our plans for the future. I don't know if I can stick to this desire completely . . . because when I started getting my thoughts together, I realized that I must first give you some background on our previous relations with the Department of the Army and the effect those relations had on our early days as an independent agency.

And I realized that I must explain how we are presently organized to cope with our correspondence management problems and solutions and, of course, how our organization and our definitions differ from those of the National Archives and Records Service. This required that I mention the recent survey of Air Force paperwork management conducted by our good friends in NARS . . . particularly Mr. Bob Anderson . . . and how much the potential for future improvement in this area demands maximum management attention. As Director of Administrative Services for the Air Force I can assure you that I will do everything possible to improve our paperwork management systems and capabilities. I believe the greatest improvements will come through the wise use of the new equipment being developed, coupled with continuing emphasis on improved systems and procedures.

As you all know, the Air Force is a large agency with an important mission. I am convinced that paperwork management, and correspondence management in particular, is a vital ingredient in mission accomplishment. I believe that the Air Force has the capability and the desire to remain continually abreast of new developments, analyze these new developments for applicability to our requirements and obtain and operate those with the greatest promise. We can help others by providing them with information on our efforts in this area, and the results of these efforts. To that end we will make copies of our reports and studies in this area available to NARS from time to time.

Now let me clarify one point before proceeding. There is a difference between the Air Force definition of "correspondence management" and that of NARS. NARS defines "correspondence management" so as to include the management of letters, messages, possibly mail and the effective writing function. In the Air Force we describe the combination of these areas as "Administrative Communications" . . . with correspondence but one facet of the combined function, and then it is restricted to non-electrically transmitted communications, in other words . . . letters.

- 8 -

Responsibility for the several elements of "Administrative Communi-
cations" is presently split between several Divisions within my Directorate.
I intend to bring them together within one Division . . . with the possible
exception of Effective Writing. I say with the possible exception of Effec-
tive Writing because this program applies to all forms of writing . . .
directives, reports and studies, as well as letters and messages.

Now with these introductory words in mind, let's briefly review . . .
the PAST, and the PRESENT Air Force Programs or programs for managing
Administrative Communications.

As you all know, the Air Force was formerly part of the War Department
and, then later, of the Army. During the early days of World War II we
were known as the Air Corps . . . a term which is still sometimes misapplied
to us. Later, in that war, we were renamed the Army Air Force and in late
1947 we became an independent agency . . . The Department of the Air Force,
or simply The United States Air Force. Until we became a separate agency
we did little in the field of correspondence management which was not in-
fluenced or dictated by the Army's policies and procedures. However, after
1947, we gradually began to develop our own instructions and media. To be
truthful, this was a painful process, because most of our officers, and
many high-ranking civilians, were completely imbued with the Army system
as they knew it. I mean nothing derogatory by this statement . . . the
Army system was changing too, but our older people didn't seem to know it
and still remembered the "good old days" with the Army, and as too many are
want to do they resisted change.

Finally, in the late fifties and early sixties we decided to make a
clean break with the past so far as letter writing was concerned. We looked
at many systems and finally decided that the format and principles for
letters proposed by the National Office Management Association were sound
and practical. We adopted a single standard format and stationery for all
letters, including inter-office correspondence. We also began preparing
most of our letters in a simplified format . . . block style with no salu-
tation and no complimentary close.

Immediate benefits from this change included time saved by the typist
due to fewer key strokes and tabulations; a considerable reduction in
training time for our people; and by economies in designing, prescribing,
procuring, stocking and distributing one kind of stationery.

There were other benefits to using one kind of stationery that were
not immediately evident. For example, writers and stenos were not faced
with a choice of format . . . there was only one. Printing costs were
reduced, files were improved, and handling of mail was speeded due to
familiarity of personnel with the single format. This is not to say that
we did not have a selling job . . . but on the whole, Air Force personnel
were ready for a change. If there was any real selling problem, it was

- 9 -

in the area of personalized letters (as distinguished from official letters)
when the salutation and complimentary close were omitted. Some officials
claimed that this ommission denoted a lack of respect or courtesy. Several
spot checks indicated that our new short, simple, strong, sincere letters
in the new format were more appreciated by the civilian populace than the
lack of meaningless salutations.

National Office Management Association experience has been similar . . .
in the 10 years since the new format was developed, they have received no
real criticism from the lack of the formalized opening and closing salu-
tations as more and more commercial firms convert to the new format. I must
hasten to add that the Air Force does permit the use of the salutations and
complimentary close in those instances where warmth and sincerity are es-
sential . . . for example, in letters expressing condolence, sympathy, and
certain other letters of an essentially private nature.

We also began to use a simplified and standardized address abbreviation
system within the Air Force, and we speeded the delivery of the new style
letters by addressing and delivering them directly to action offices. At
the same time we streamlined our procedures by prohibiting central clerical . . .
policing . . . activities that formerly opened, reviewed, recorded, con-
trolled and authenticated letters but took no action on them.

Because black type on yellow provides a better contrast for reading
and microfilming, we started using yellow blank manifold paper for the
coordination copy of letters. Additionally, we prescribed the most modern
techniques and guidelines for using "Form" and "Guide" letters and included
a chapter in our new correspondence manual, entitled "Tips to Typists" which
suggested various methods and techniques for taking care of typewriters,
inserting papers and carbons, making corrections, determining the end of the
page, and many other time consuming irritants that typists encounter.

We also tackled the problem of identifying references to previous
correspondence by prescribing that the subject of a letter be followed by
a brief parenthetical reference to the previous letter where such reference
is appropriate. We were still dealing with a letter writing, paper pro-
ducing Air Force; but our techniques were being accepted and they are con-
tinuing to be employed without any major changes.

Now that I have covered in some detail what we call "correspondence,"
let me briefly discuss our procedures, or programs, concerning message pre-
paration and processing and our Effective Writing Program. Frankly, we
have some advances in our message area; but most of them have been at the
same pace as our sister services . . . the Army and Navy . . . and other
elements of the Department of Defense. This is as it should be because of
the integrated nature of our message systems and the similar formats used
by all DOD elements. We are making improvements and I'll tell you about
them a little later. Suffice it to say that the GSA paperwork management

survey of the Air Force, which I mentioned earlier had this to say about our Message Management efforts, quote "Air Force . . . message service was generally found to be excellent . . . ADFAS," (the office symbol for my Directorate), "has exhibited a positive management attitude concerning needed efficiencies" . . . end quote.

To improve our message transmission system, we established central communications distribution centers to receive and distribute all incoming and outgoing electrical messages for ALL activities at a location such as an Air Base, except for those very large activities operating their own terminal stations. These communication distribution centers are located adjacent to the electrical communications terminal, so that our people can quickly react to operational requirements.

In the general area of "Mail Management" I was surprised to find that there was no single directive prescribing an acceptable over-all system. Consequently, we are now working -- as a matter of some priority -- on a new Air Force Manual on the subject of "Administrative Communications Management." It will state Air Force policy and provide direction for the establishment and operation of administrative communications distribution systems on an Air Force installation. It will provide for one distribution center on an installation to receive, process and expedite intrabase distribution of incoming and outgoing communications and provide for mobile, messenger and automated distribution services. We expect to reduce the time for delivery of communications on a base to a maximum of three hours between action offices.

Our Effective Writing Program was commented upon in the recent GSA report as follows: quote "The Air Force Effective Writing Program has been a leader in its field throughout the Federal agencies. It has enjoyed widespread attendance and accomplished much as a basic training effort." end quote.

We can thank the Gentleman sharing this platform with me for much of that effort. Mr. Uhlig was the project officer for the initial program when he worked in our Directorate back in the early 1960's. We are certain that this writing program has been extremely worthwhile. Obviously, effective writing helps us control and decrease our paperwork load since the quality of our writing keeps the quantity down. For example, clear and effective letters, messages, publications, reports, etc., reduce verbiage; and when the writing is understandable, the need to write a return communication requesting clarification is eliminated. Hence, more paperwork reduction.

Our experience in introducing the Effective Writing Program may be of interest and help. We realized that the top people in the Air Force had to be "sold" on the program first. Otherwise, our middle management types and other writers would bring back the message, try to use the new simplified writing, and would not be able to "get it by the boss." Therefore, we first held a one-hour briefing for most of the general officers at Hq U. S. Air Force . . . Those individuals at the Deputy Chief of Staff and

- 11 -

Directorate level. After "selling" them on the program, we arranged our schedules and classes so that the first increments of students were the senior Executive Officers of the Air Force . . . those individuals who had the final word on how things were to be said. Then we encouraged the attendance of middle management . . . those individuals working as project officers, and directing divisional and branch activities. In this way, we were able to gain the backing of our top and middle management for the new program. We then opened our training courses to all writers and other interested personnel and placed our manual in general distribution. Since the start of the program, the training course has been attended by approximately 120,000 persons.

There has been only slight modification to the manual and the related training course on Effective Writing since the first issue. At the present time we are working on a revision of the manual and training course primarily to bring them into line with subsequent changes in formats and procedures in our communications systems. Our foremost concern in this area is to keep our writers aware of the principles and practices of effective writing. To this end we are preparing a "packaged" training course which will be presented world-wide in the Air Force by use of the new, almost completely automatic "Super-8" motion picture film equipment. This will make it possible to present the course without a trained instructor. A good instructor is one of the most difficult of all people to find and if the instructor is poor, the training, no matter how good the training material, cannot be effective. This new media leaves nothing to chance, the message will be exactly what it should be and anyone can operate the equipment. Incidentally, the new briefing package will be prepared here in Washington, first on video tape and then transferred to "Super-8" film which is then placed in sealed, tamper-proof cartridges. Everyone will be getting the same message from the best possible instructor.

Though I have mentioned new equipment a automated devices to process and speed our communications, I haven't dwel on the subject. We have been making use of some of this new equipment for the past few years, but we will make much greater use of it in the FUTURE. Especially since we can prove such use will save time and money.

As an example . . . we are making increased use of automatic typing machines for preparing correspondence, reports, studies and directives. Recent installation of fifteen (15) magnetic tape-operated typing machines in the Headquarters office responsible for preparing replies to Congressional correspondence resulted in a much better product, and greater volume of work. You should all be interested in the fact that this action also resulted in the release of nine stenographers and twenty-six standard electric typewriters. In the future we intend to use these machines in typing pools so as to reduce the retyping workload, and to interface with our automated message processing systems and our automated publishing systems.

- 12 -

Basically, the system will work like this . . . The writer dictates or drafts his communication and sends it to the typing pool. A draft is prepared for him and the pool keeps the tape. If the draft needs revision, he sends it back, with the corrections, for retyping and the pool retains the latest and updated tape. When the communication is in final form, the writer has three options:

1. If the communication is a letter, report or staff study, the pool automatically types the communication in final form and returns it to the originator for disposition by him;

2. If the communication is a message or teletype, an Optical Character Recognition font is used by the pool. The message is then entered into the optical scanning device at the communications center and automatically entered into the transmission system;

3. If the communication is to become a printed publication intended for wide distribution, the final tape plus the draft, edited to include typographical instructions, is sent to the publications management people. The tape is then entered into automatic composition devices which produce "camera ready" copy of a quality equal to hot-lead type-setting, and from this "camera ready" copy an offset printing plate is made for volume repro-duction and distribution.

From this explanation you can see that these automatic typing machines will give us a multi-purpose system to serve our correspondence, message and publications needs at a significant reduction in time and manpower. The equipment is relatively expensive but it will pay for itself in a very short time.

Now about the Optical Character Recognition (OCR) equipment. OCR equip-ment will be located in our communications centers. We plan to have the test installation in the Pentagon in operation by July of this year. The necessary studies have been made, the required formats have been designed and the equipment is being obtained for this automated message reading capability. This system will permit us to cope with the ever increasing use of electrically transmitted communications.

Frankly, at the present time, an electrical message with a precedence of less than "priority" will not arrive at most destinations as quickly as an ordinary letter sent through our very efficient airmail pouch system. This is not because the transmission of the electrical message is the bottle-neck, rather it is because the entering of the message into the system and the retrieving and delivering of it at the other end is relatively slow. We expect our OCR equipment will speed things up drastically.

Another action underway, designed to speed our communications, is our current effort to standardize administrative communications office sym-bols, Air Force-wide. With this standardization an action office at any location in the world will be able to dispatch a message or letter directly

- 13 -

to another action office, any place in the world, by including the standard
symbol in the address element. The receiving base distribution facility
will deliver the communication directly to the action office without need
to use time-consuming central referral service.

Transmission of communications and other material in micro-miniaturized
form or by facsimile transmission is also receiving our attention. Our
MEDAL program . . . Micromechanized Engineering Data for Automated Logistics. . .
provides for the acquisition and storage of our engineering data on micro-
film at a central location from which location the data is made available
to Engineering Data Service Centers (EDSC's) around the world. For this
we use 35 mm microfilm in an EAM card . . . commonly called an aperture
card. This has drastically reduced the bulk and transmission time of en-
gineering drawings that are so vitally essential for the maintenance and
overhaul of weapons systems. We also use similar microfilming systems to
reduce and transmit procurement.bid sets, that is, data sent to our con-
tractors preliminary to bids.

For facsimile transmission we use a number of systems . . . these
will transmit communications and drawings and we intend to continue to
explore possibilities in this field, especially now that newer, more
efficient, and more economical systems are becoming available. One of the
most recent I have seen is a system which reduces the cost tremendously
because of two advanced techniques . . . first, it used ordinary "voice
quality" telephone lines and, second, it "scans" and sends only the dark
areas on the paper - typing, printing or black lines - rather than scan-
ning and sending the entire surface. You can see by looking at the average
page of typed, printed or drawn material that nearly 70% of the page is
blank . . . borders, between the lines, between the letters, etc. Since
this equipment scans the characters or drawings and skips over the white
or black space, it works only about one-third as long to send each page.
This is a real time-saver and cost-reducer . . . using regular long distance
lines a third of the time previously required.

The last of the new or automated systems we are using or comtemplating
using, which I will mention today, is the Automatic On-Base Document Dis-
tribution System (ABDDS). This system is designed to use our third genera-
tion base computers which will have the capability of accepting all docu-
mentation and data received by an installation . . . normally over the
Automatic Digital Network (AUTODIN). The computer will automatically relay
the the documentation to the appropriate action agency by use of remote
terminals. These terminals can also be used by the action offices to
query the computer for facsimiles of documentation maintained in the cen-
tral data store. A recently completed feasibility study shows that this
system is both feasible and economically practical.

Changes in requirements in the field of Administrative Communications
Management come rapidly. Our ever changing international scene demands
faster, more effective communications methods to meet these demands. In

an attempt to meet this constant challenge, I have established an Advanced
Systems Planning Team (ASPT) within my Directorate. This team is charged
with the responsibility of continually exploring new ways to do business.
The make up of the membership on this Team is a mix of computer, publishing
and information storage and retrieval talents. The team constantly reviews
proposed changes from a total administrative system viewpoint, no small
element of which is communications management, and also keeps informed about
and studies applicability of new technology. Their job is to know what
equipment is available, how it can be used, and how its use can do the
most good, either for one of our programs areas or as an integrated system.

This is another of our continuing efforts to either solve existing
problems through the use of new management ideas or new technologies, or
to recognize potential problem areas and have an answer for them before they
become serious problems for us.

Gentlemen, it has been a pleasure to participate in this program today,
and I assure you of our interest and cooperation in the improvement of
communications management. We in the Air Force welcome any information
dealing with ways and means of improving our way of doing business.

THANK YOU.

- 15 -

GSA DC 69- 2 145