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GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

National Archives and Records Service
Washington, D.C. 20408

DATE: September 9, 1970

REPLY TO
ATTN OF:SUBJECT: Project for Improving Federal Reporting and
Reducing Related Paperwork

Department and Agency Project Directors

This draft of a "Reports Management" handbook is being sent you well in advance of its formal publication because so many of you indicated you could use it now as you plan your own project to improve reporting and reduce related paperwork.

Based on departmental and agency progress statements, it has become apparent that your projects are collectively forcing a comprehensive review of reports extending into all areas of the Executive Branch. Moreover, the projects are expected to trigger the establishment of continuing reports management programs at departments and agencies previously lacking in this area of management.

The introduction of the Federal Assistance Review (FAR) Program, which is concerned with simplifying Federal grant-in-aid programs, was one of the occasions during which the President declared his concern with needless paperwork. He said "cut out every step possible, and where a step cannot be eliminated, then streamline it." The accomplishments to date under the FAR effort are considered indicative of the potential for simplification and streamlining that may be achieved in the reporting and related paperwork area.

We would like to go to press with the "Reports Management" handbook as soon as we can. Therefore, any changes which you believe would improve the book should reach me by October 23, using the National Archives and Records Service address above.

HERBERT E. ANGEL
Study Project Director

Enclosure

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Remarks: <i>This is the Reports Handbook - We were promised more copies, I wonder if we will get them - Even as a temporary draft I think this is worth sending to RMO's as part of our Reports Program - Can we get more or should we reproduce this one -- or sections of it?</i>					
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RECORDS MANAGEMENT HANDBOOK

REPORTS
MANAGEMENT

1970

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS SERVICE
OFFICE OF RECORDS MANAGEMENT

This is a temporary draft with limited distribution. Your comments and suggestions are invited. Please send them to:

National Archives and Records Service, GSA
Office of Records Management
Paperwork Standards and Automation
Division, NRP
Washington, DC 20408

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		<u>PAGE</u>
FOREWORD		i
CHAPTER 1	<u>The Role of Reports in Management</u>	1
	Importance of Reports to Managers-----	1
	The Reports Problem-----	2
	Reports Management as an Answer-----	5
	Benefits-----	7
CHAPTER 2	<u>Establishing a Reports Management Program</u>	9
	Functions and Processes-----	10
	Organizational Considerations-----	12
	Implementing Directive-----	13
	Reports Inventory-----	13
	Reports Control Symbols-----	18
CHAPTER 3	<u>Continuing Reports Program Operations</u>	23
	Basis for Review-----	23
	Reports Clearance-----	24
	Continuous Evaluation-----	26
	Periodic Reviews-----	27
	Reports Management Records-----	32
	Documentation of Accomplishments-----	34
CHAPTER 4	<u>Reports Analysis</u>	39
	Determining Need-----	39
	Detailed Analysis-----	40
	Writing Directives-----	55
	Designing the Form-----	58
	ADP versus Manual Reporting-----	59
CHAPTER 5	<u>Costing Reports</u>	61
	Explanation of "Individual" Report-----	61
	Obtaining Cost Information-----	62
	Costing Techniques-----	63
	Expressing the Cost-----	65
	Cost of Initiating a Report-----	66
	Cost of Maintaining a Report-----	66
	Cost of Using a Report-----	67
	Cost of Providing Specialized Assistance-----	68
	Costs Included in an Agency Reporting System---	69
	Study Options-----	69
	Reading Cost-----	70
	"Broad-Brush" Estimates-----	70
	Obtaining the Most Accurate Estimate-----	72
CHAPTER 6	<u>External Reporting</u>	77
	Public Reporting-----	78
	Intergovernmental Reporting-----	81
	Interagency Reporting-----	83

TABLE OF CONTENTS (CONT'D)

APPENDICES

		<u>PAGE</u>
APPENDIX A	FPM Regulation 101-11.207 "Reports -- Agency Program Responsibilities"	85
APPENDIX B	Model Reports Management Directive "Reports Management Program"	89
APPENDIX C	Circular No. A-40 (OMB), May 25, 1962 "Clearance of plans and report forms under the Federal Reports Act"	97
APPENDIX D	Circular No. A-40 (OMB), Transmittal Memorandum No. 1, February 12, 1968 "Clearance of plans and report forms under the Federal Reports Act"	107
APPENDIX E	Circular No. A-39 (OMB), April 24, 1967 "Providing of statistical information to intergovernmental organizations"	109
APPENDIX F	Circular No. A-44 (OMB), Transmittal Memorandum No. 1, June 17, 1970 "Government-wide study to improve Federal reporting and reduce related paperwork"	114

FOREWORD

Managers of Government operations rely heavily upon the information reported by their organizations. These facts are used at all levels for the purpose of measuring performance, planning programs, and making sound decisions. The more reliable and better organized the reporting system delivering the facts, the more timely, useful, and accurate is the information conveyed.

Cost studies made in many Government organizations have revealed how marginal is the value of many reports, therefore, the need for more effective management of reporting. This reports management handbook has been prepared to meet that need. It is a compilation of the best features of reports management systems of many Federal organizations. Special credit is given to the Department of Agriculture since its "Reports Management Handbook" was used extensively in preparing this publication. Many other Federal agency manuals have contributed choice portions as well.

The handbook has been designed to provide guidance to departments and agencies in improving the management of reports. Its aim is the development, installation, and operation of a system to challenge the gathering of low value information and to make all reports surviving the challenge more responsive to the manager's needs. The suggestions, methods, and techniques outlined in this handbook can be applied in varying degrees at all organizational levels. However, they will surely need modification to meet policy, organizational and procedural requirements of the organization to which applied.

Approved For Release 2001/11/01 : CIA-RDP74-00390R000300140009-1

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THE ROLE OF REPORTS IN MANAGEMENT

Fundamentally, the Government manager is concerned with the accomplishment of the organizational mission, and the accomplishment of that mission in the most effective and efficient manner. Management translates these concerns into decisions on such matters as service to the public, internal administration, and public relations.

IMPORTANCE OF REPORTS TO MANAGERS

Decision-making needs inevitably lead managers to require information from whomever can and will supply it. In this context information is as much an asset to them as manpower, funds, facilities, or systems.

One of the most common forms of information gathering is reports. Through reports, management seeks information which will enable it to:

- . evaluate and improve performance by measurement of results in terms of quantity, quality, speed, or cost;
- . follow the progress of decentralized operations;
- . provide factual measurement of conditions rather than relying on opinions, guesses and fragmentary verification;
- . indicate deficiencies and need for corrective action;
- . measure program progress with respect to objectives;
- . determine program values as they relate to mission;

- . recognize trends, problems, and other factors which affect program direction and execution.

The flow of needed information upward is important in the job of every employee because of the way they are cued in to program and activity managers. No matter how far down on the organizational ladder a manager's interests and responsibilities may be, his informational needs usually are quite urgent and critical.

THE REPORTS PROBLEM

Managers complain that they spend a considerable part of each work day reading reports. Recognizing that a manager's time is valuable, it is essential that the information reported to him be of such a nature that he can quickly grasp its implications, and promptly act on its worth. It is well known that the decisions the manager makes and the actions he takes are directly related to the quality and completeness of the information provided. Poor quality and incomplete reports create waste and inefficiency. Obsolete reports are useless. Late reports can delay corrective measures.

Collecting too much information -- just because it is available -- is as bad as not collecting enough. Besides creating uncertainty as to what actually is needed, this practice:

- . makes all information appear equally important;
- . gives the impression of over control;
- . tends to push decision-making to higher levels;

- . limits managerial freedom at lower levels;
- . creates unnecessary workloads at all levels;
- . increases program costs.

a. Cost of Reporting

Reports cost money. Reporting systems cost money. Analysis of the cost in reporting agencies, where cost figures are available, indicate that at least three hundred to five hundred dollars per year is being spent per employee on management reporting.

b. Need for Guidance

Most managers are too busy to give thorough analysis to their information needs. They operate from what they already know, what information normally comes across their desks, or what they learn through discussion. They may not know precisely what information would do them most good, what they might be able to get, or where to go for the information needed.

c. Need for Special Attention

Essentially all significant areas of information other than management reporting are being managed. For example, work processing has its managers in those offices responsible for getting work done. The work itself may almost automatically govern the information requirements of the operation. Something quite similar might be said

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for the area of public service, scientific, and technical
information.

But who is "minding the store" for management reporting?
It is easy to impose information requirements on others
without considering the cost. Sometimes the requirements
are imposed without awareness of existing sources, or
without obtaining the information actually needed. It is
also easy to forget to put a stop to the reporting
requirement long after it has served its original purpose.

Management reporting systems usually involve a network of
information flow. That network usually flows upward
through several echelons of the organization ladder but
with subsystems reaching out laterally at every level.
Hence, responsibility for such systems and their updating
can easily become foggy or get lost.

d. Need for Cost-Effectiveness Appraisals

In most agencies, few reports have their price tag attached.
They should. Doubtless many reporting systems would be
discontinued or drastically overhauled if their true
costs were appreciated.

Yet, the answer does not rest in the dictum that "the cost
of reporting must be reduced." This means little, or may
even be harmful, unless each report is compared with its
benefits by some reasonable and objective means. Still,
the costing problem is not a simple one by any means.

Costs are often difficult to determine. In any event, Appraisal remains a subjective judgment.

REPORTS MANAGEMENT AS AN ANSWER

A score or more Federal agencies have found the best solution to their reports problem to be management over the initiation of reports so as to determine costs, benefits and use. This calls for an evaluation process aimed at keeping reports to a minimum of essentials, yet assuring adequate and meaningful coverage of all measurable activities. The basic objectives of a reports management program are shown in figure 1.

FPM Regulation 101-11.207 sets forth agency requirements for establishing "an appropriate program for the management of agency reports." (See Appendix A.) Some people think that procedures cited in this regulation intrude upon the authority or responsibility of management, that they permit outsiders to decide whether or not they need the information they seek. This is not so. Approval of reports remains a management decision. Reports management is intended to help, rather than to hamper or control the flow of information. Reports management procedures assure management that all those involved in developing a report have fully analyzed and documented their views, and that the report represents their best thinking. Management can then decide whether an actual need for the information exists.

- Basic Objectives of Program
1. Provide management officials with the information needed for informed managerial decision-making.
 2. Furnish needed information at times and places, and in the format most useful to managers.
 3. Gather this information as economically and efficiently as possible.
 4. Prevent the collection of marginal value information or information that does not measure up on the cost-effectiveness scale.

Figure 1

An effective reports management program also can make several positive contributions toward improving an organization's information flow:

First, it makes management aware of the many problems created by inadequate information reporting systems and poor reports design.

Second, it provides a means for regulating information that is directed to management's attention by identifying the real informational needs of management.

Third, it helps reduce costly data accumulations.

Fourth, it helps staffs gather meaningful and currently needed information through improved reporting techniques.

Fifth, it provides the machinery for improving needed reports and eliminating unessential ones.

BENEFITS

It takes time and effort to manage information. But it is worth it. Information is so essential in all managerial actions that if the information or the system that provides it is weak, or if it lacks the positive direction that is accorded other management responsibilities, total programs may suffer.

Better informed management means better administration over financial and other resources. Better and more timely information means better services and operations.

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ESTABLISHING A REPORTS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

The need for managing reports, and the objectives of such a program, were reviewed in Chapter 1 and summarized in figure 1. These objectives give first attention to seeing that management gets the information needed at the lowest cost. This is quite different from the traditional reports control program of the 1950's which sometimes seemed primarily intent on reducing the number of reports. A good reporting program will likely result in a reduction in reporting but much more significant benefits may be expected from better information for managerial decision making.

The objectives also imply that heavy emphasis should be given to the design of procedures and systems for collecting the information. To be meaningful, this cannot be performed routinely as a part of the reports clearance process. It requires constant attention and revision as new reporting systems come into being, as changes take place in work processing procedures, or as new automation techniques and equipment are developed. Almost any significant changes affecting the organization, functions, or procedures of an agency should result in changes to some reporting systems.

Reduction in reporting would not be the primary objective of a reports management program. However, special attention would be given to determining the cost-effectiveness of management reports.

FUNCTIONS AND PROCESSES

Six primary functions involved in reports management have been identified in successful Federal Programs. It is important to recognize that not all of these functions are necessarily carried out by every reports management office. However, each function should be performed somewhere within the organization. Under each of these functions listed below are some of the most significant processes or means of carrying out the function.

1. Program Promotion and Development
 - a. Develop and issue regulations, standards, and guides.
 - b. Further the use of standards and guides through workshops, symposiums, circulars and other media.
 - c. Encourage and assist in the establishment of an effective management reporting program at all levels.
2. Information Requirements
 - a. Assist managers in determining their management reporting needs.
 - b. Relate information needs to sources and systems.
3. System Design
 - a. Design new or improved manual reporting systems.
 - b. Design new or improved data-processing systems.
 - c. Prepare specifications for data-processing reporting systems necessary for instructing the programming staff.
 - d. Review proposed systems for collecting management reporting data.

- e. Develop a master, long-range plan for the integration of management reporting systems.

4. Processing

- a. Compile reports using automated data processing.
- b. Compile reports using manual processing methods.
- c. Maintain an automated data bank.
- d. Distribute completed reports to users.

5. Interpretation and Presentation

- a. Provide management with key information extracted from reports, including off-target or unusual developments.
- b. Present information summaries, interpretative analysis of reported data, graphics, or other means that will help management comprehension.

6. Review and Monitor Reports

- a. Review proposed reports for effectiveness, identification, cost, adequacy of instructions and directives.
- b. Review all existing reports in an organizational component for cost-effectiveness, adequacy, design, and economy of preparation and use.
- c. Maintain an inventory of reports, with supporting historical files.
- d. Maintain control registers and prepare reports catalogs.
- e. Review the justification of proposed reports required of the public and provide liaison with the Office of Management and Budget.

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These six functions and their related processes should be

considered in assigning responsibilities for the reports management program. The actual assignments will vary with agency missions, location within the hierarchical structure, decentralization, agency traditions, and other management considerations.

ORGANIZATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

A number of other assumptions and management principles have a bearing on where the functions should be placed. These are:

1. Most large scale management reporting systems today are of such complexity that they need to be designed by teams composed of individuals with skills that complement each other.
2. The design of any management reporting system should take into account the automation potential.
3. The direction today is toward greater integration of management reporting systems. This trend is enhanced by automation. It is also becoming increasingly difficult to separate management reporting from other information systems as the systems become more sophisticated.
4. Management reporting should be dynamic and not static. It is important that such systems are not "locked in" by machine restraints. The everchanging needs of users must control the system; the machines or systems must not be permitted to determine what will be offered the users.

5. The reports management program should not detract from the responsibility and authority of a manager at any level.

The functions should be placed where they will result in a minimum overlap and duplication while achieving a maximum in manpower utilization, coordination, and effectiveness.

IMPLEMENTING DIRECTIVE

After determining the functions and processes to be assigned to a reports management office, it is important to issue an appropriate directive setting forth the purpose of the program, governing policies, objectives, definitions of terms, and responsibilities. Appendix B contains a "model" reports management directive.

REPORTS INVENTORY

Usually the first task undertaken by a newly established reports management office is the development of a reports inventory. The inventory will identify reports and provide basic records on which to build an effective program.

It is suggested that each major office issue a reports inventory call and announce a briefing meeting of those who will take part. Those who attend the meetings should be furnished inventory forms (see figure 2), catalog forms (see figure 3), and any other items needed for the inventory.

REPORTS INVENTORY

INSTRUCTIONS: Complete for each report required and for each report issued or published by your office. Don't include those required by higher levels. Send original and copy to your reports management officer.

Attach:
 (1) Sample report,
 (2) Blank forms used, if any,
 (3) Copy of directive or instructions, and,
 (4) Any additional descriptive material.

1. REQUIRING OFFICE (Division, branch, etc.)		2. REQUIRING OFFICE PERSON TO CONTACT (Name, location, phone, etc.)	
3. TITLE OF REPORT		4. FORM NUMBER OR FORMAT	5. DUE DATE OF REPORT
6. FREQUENCY (Weekly, monthly, etc.)		7. REQUIRING DIRECTIVE OR INSTRUCTIONS	
8. PURPOSE AND USE			

9. REQUIRED USE THIS SPACE IF REPORT IS ONE YOU REQUIRE FROM OTHERS	9a. OFFICES REQUIRED TO SEND REPORT		9b. SOURCES USED BY PREPARING OFFICES (Form no., report symbol, records, etc.)
	TYPE	NUMBER	
	9c. NUMBER OF COPIES AND DISTRIBUTION OF THIS REPORT		

OR 10. ISSUED USE THIS SPACE IF REPORT IS ISSUED OR PUBLISHED BY YOUR OFFICE	10a. NUMBER AND TYPES OF ORGANIZATIONS OR INDIVIDUALS TO WHOM REPORT IS SENT
	10b. SOURCE OF INFORMATION FOR REPORT (Form no., report symbol, records, etc.)

11. MAN HOURS TO PREPARE AND USE	11a. ONE-TIME PREPARATION HOURS			11b. ANNUAL PREPARATION HRS.		11c. ANNUAL HRS. TO PROCESS AND ANALYZE	11d. TOTAL ANNUAL HRS. TO PREPARE & USE
	ONE OFFICE	NO. OFFICES	TOTAL HOURS	TIMES PER YEAR	TOTAL		
	x	=	x	=	+	=	

12. CHALLENGE THIS REPORT			WHAT IF WE DIDN'T HAVE IT?			IS THERE A BETTER WAY?		
NEED	YES	NO	DATA	YES	NO	IMPROVE REPORT BY	YES	NO
	a. IS THIS REPORT STILL NEEDED?			h. IS DATA BEST FOR THE PURPOSE?			o. COMBINING WITH OTHERS?	
	b. IS EVERY ITEM STILL NEEDED?			i. IS COMPARATIVE DATA NEEDED?			p. MAKING EASIER TO COMPLETE?	
	c. IS THE REPORT NEEDED AS OFTEN?		j. IS REPORT CLEAR AND EASY TO USE?		q. USING A FORM IF NOT USED?			
	d. IS EVERY COPY STILL NEEDED?		k. ARE INSTRUCTIONS OBSOLETE?		r. STOPPING NEGATIVE REPORTS?			
	e. IS THERE ANOTHER SOURCE?		l. ARE THEY CLEAR CONCISE, COMPLETE?		s. USING SUMMARY?			
	f. IS IT WORTH ITS PROBABLE COST?		m. ARE ILLUSTRATIONS NEEDED?		t. USING SAMPLING?			
VAL- UE	g. DOES THE DUE DATE GIVE ENOUGH TIME?		n. DO THEY GIVE ENOUGH "HOW"?		u. REPORTING BY EXCEPTION?		v. CHANGING SOURCE?	
DATE					w. CHANGING SEQUENCE?			

REPORTS PROGRAM

Approved For Release 2001/11/01 : CIA-RDP74-00390R000300140009-1

REPORTS CATALOG		REQUIRING LEVEL		NAME OF OFFICE		AS OF DATE
		<input type="checkbox"/> NATIONAL OFFICE	<input type="checkbox"/> REGIONAL OFFICE	<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT OFFICE	REQUIRING ORGANIZATION (Division or ARC)	
REPORT SYMBOL	REPORT TITLE OR SUBJECT (INCLUDE FORM NUMBERS)	REQUIRING DIRECTIVE OR INSTRUCTIONS		FREQUENCY	PREPARED BY	OFFICE USE

U. S. TREASURY DEPARTMENT - INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE
FORM 2993 (REV. 7-62)

A separate inventory form is prepared for each report required and for each report issued or published by the office. For a required report, item 10 on the form is omitted. For an issued report, item 9 is omitted. The man-hour figures for item 11 should be estimated and arrived at solely from information immediately available to the requiring office. Descriptive materials (forms, directives, etc.) are to be attached.

If there is no symbol for the report being inventoried, one will be assigned by the reports management office.

Requiring officials and reports management offices, as appropriate, appraise each report inventoried by applying the checklist in the lower section of the inventory form. These initial appraisals offer real opportunities to improve reports at the outset of the program, and to identify those areas where future studies should be undertaken. From their own experience and familiarity with reports, requiring offices should quickly recognize problems and opportunities as the checklist is applied. This is the type of review expected, not a comprehensive in depth study. Future in depth studies should be made on the basis of information gained from the inventory of the total reporting.

Upon completion of the appraisal phase of the inventory by the requiring office the inventory package is forwarded to the activity's reports management office. This package should consist of the reports inventory form, in duplicate, for each report inventoried, with a copy of each supporting attachment and two copies of the reports catalog form reflecting the complete listing of all reports inventoried.

Approved For Release 2001/11/01 : CIA-RDP74-00390R000300140009-1
When inventory packages from requiring offices are received

by the reports management office it:

- a. Reviews the material for completeness and to spot opportunities for additional reporting improvements,
- b. Assigns reports symbols or reviews for their proper assignment,
- c. Acknowledges receipt of the material by returning to the requiring office one copy of each inventory and catalog form, and
- d. Establishes case files for each report.

Each reports management office should publish a reports catalog after completing the inventory. Reports should be listed in groups by function or organization.

All reports inventoried at the requiring level should be reviewed in sufficient detail to explore every possibility for improvement. The review is best conducted jointly by the requiring office and the reports management office.

A systematic and thorough review of reports, one functional activity at a time, is advocated. Chapter 3 provides guidance for this review, which for each report should include:

- . The views of the preparing and using offices on the value and use of each report. Also an estimate of the annual man-hours and significant material costs expended

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on the report. These data should be obtained on a
sampling basis.

- . Projections of man-hour figures and material costs
into annual report cost estimates.
- . Applying to each report the Evaluation Checklist and
Guide. (Figure 4.)

Organization-wide assistance is necessary to identify the most
beneficial areas of reports improvement. All personnel should
be apprised of the review and the opportunity it presents for
improving and reducing reports with which these personnel
are involved. Publicity programs should urge employees and
officials to submit (see Chapter 3), information concerning
problems and any ideas for improvement.

Flyers, bulletin boards, activity newspapers, newsletters,
and other appropriate media can be used to publicize the
review, giving recognition to offices taking effective
action, emphasize final results, and to emphasize phases of
particular concern to the organization.

REPORTS CONTROL SYMBOLS

Each report in the inventory should be given a reports symbol.
Such symbols quickly identify approved reports; they provide
a means for tying directives, records, and files to the report
they are associated with; and they furnish an easy way to
refer to a report in conversation or written communication.

REPORT TITLE

SECTION I--DETERMINE THE NEED

INSTRUCTIONS: Check either column (b) or (c). If questionable, show changes in column (d) (a)	QUESTION- ABLE (b)	SATISFAC- TORY (c)	PROPOSED CHANGES (Attach Additional Sheets, if Needed) (d)
1. THE REPORT AS A WHOLE Who uses it? How? What is its purpose? Should it be continued?			
2. USE OF EACH ITEM. Is every item used? Any missing items to be added?			
3. USE OF EACH COPY. Are all copies used to good advantage?			
4. FUNCTIONAL RELATIONSHIP. Is the information within the scope of the office functions?			
5. MISAPPLICATION. Does the report try to solve a problem which should be solved by other means?			
6. STAND-BY DATA. Is the data obtained for "just-in-case" use?			
7. ANOTHER AVAILABLE SOURCE. Is the data available in another report or office?			
8. BY PRODUCT. Is it possible to get the data by some other process?			
9. DIRECT USE OF RECORDS. Could actual records or "fast copy" of record be used instead of a report?			
10. SAMPLING. Would a sampling of a few offices give reliable data?			
11. EXCEPTION REPORTING. Would it be appropriate to report conditions only when other than normal?			
12. COMBINATION. Could this report be combined with another report?			
13. NON-RELATED MATERIAL. Are non-related subjects included in the same report?			
14. ADEQUACY AND SUITABILITY. Is scope or content tailored to meet needs?			
15. VALUE VS. COST. Is the report worth its cost?			

SECTION 2--VERIFY THE TIMING

16. REPORTING PERIODS. Are reporting periods properly stated?			
17. FREQUENCY. Is the present frequency suitable, excessive, or inadequate?			
18. DUE DATE. Is the due date specifically stated?			
19. PREPARING OFFICE WORKLOAD. Has this been considered? Can due dates be changed to avoid peak workloads?			

Figure 4
19

REPORT TITLE

SECTION 3-- REVIEW STYLE OF PRESENTATION

INSTRUCTIONS: Check either column (b) or (c). If questionable, show changes in column (d). (a)	QUESTION- ABLE (b)	SATISFAC- TORY (c)	PROPOSED CHANGES (Attach Additional Sheets, if Needed) (d)
20. REPORT TITLE. Is it the same as, or listed in the directive?			
21. PURPOSE OF REPORT. Is it clearly stated?			
22. REPORTING INSTRUCTIONS. Are reporting instructions clear and adequate?			
23. INTEGRATED REPORTING. Are data needs of other levels tied in?			
24. FEEDER REPORTS. Are procedures for feeder reports provided to assure uniformity and simplicity?			
25. REPORTING UNITS. Are reporting units shown? Are there too many, too few?			
26. NEGATIVE REPORTS. Are negative reports required? What use is made of them?			
27. NUMBER OF COPIES. Are number of copies specified?			
28. ROUTING. Are correct mailing addresses given?			
29. NARRATIVE OR FORM Is the best format for this report used?			
30. ARRANGEMENT AND SIZE. Are items sequenced to source? Is spacing adequate? Are item captions clear? Is size adequate & practical?			
31. STANDARDIZATION. Do all offices use the same form or format?			
32. SUMMARY INFORMATION. Would a summary of information rather than statistics or a narrative be better?			
33. CUMULATIVE DATA. Can data be maintained on a cumulative basis to eliminate last-minute workloads?			
34. COMPARISONS. Are comparisons made against goals, past performance, or current performance of others?			
35. GRAPHICS Are graphics used to good advantage?			
36. AUTHENTICATION. Are verifying or approving officials' signatures used only when necessary?			
37. DATA SOURCES. Are records from which reports are to be prepared identified?			
38. ARRANGEMENT OF RECORDS. Should records be rearranged to simplify reporting?			
39. REPORT SYMBOL. Is it shown after title of report?			
40. STYLE OF PRESENTATION Does the overall report provide clarity and simplicity?			

Approved For Release 2001/11/01 : CIA-RDP74-00390R000300140009-1
They also help identify the office that requires the information and aid in its distribution.

A good method of composing the reports control symbol is to indicate first the code of the report initiating office. Second would be the functional classification; and third would be the reports sequence number. For example:

<u>Reports Initiated by:</u>	<u>Reports Symbols</u>
Administrative Office	AO - A - 001 (A for administration)
Secretary's Office	SE - E - 001 (E for managing executive)

Symbols derived in this manner will permit assignment in different offices without duplication and without loss of control.

Approved For Release 2001/11/01 : CIA-RDP74-00390R000300140009-1

Approved For Release 2001/11/01 : CIA-RDP74-00390R000300140009-1

CONTINUING REPORTS PROGRAM OPERATIONS

The reports management program provides for reviews of reports at all levels. These reviews, which are meant to constitute a challenge, are essential for an effective program. An important part of this program is one of continuous self-evaluation. Managers and operating officials at all levels should challenge the need for individual reports received in their offices.

BASIS FOR REVIEW

Each proposal to establish a new reporting requirement, or revise an existing one, should be jointly reviewed by the originator and someone well up in the program hierarchy. Consideration might well be given to pretesting the requirement when warranted. It is also well to reevaluate new and revised reporting requirements within a reasonable time after the submission of the first report.

Particular emphasis should be on the value received in relation to the cost of the report and the ease of securing data requirements.

Reports of marginal value can be stopped in seven basic ways:

- . By elimination in their entirety
- . By combining related reports
- . Reporting by exception

- . By reducing frequency
- . By omitting details deemed marginal in value
- . By cutting distribution to those with a 'need to know'
- . By using sampling techniques (reducing the number of respondents)

Experience has shown some of the ways to reduce the costs of an individual report are by improving burdensome procedures:

- . Lack of clarity or completeness of the reporting directive.
- . Too much narration when a simple report form would suffice.
- . Written negative reports.
- . Use of transmittal letters.

Federal agencies have varied their challenging procedures in several ways. Usually they do so by a review prior to establishing a report; a continuous evaluation to assess the current need for the information; and a periodic review to determine whether or not each report is fulfilling its purpose, needs to be brought up to date, or whether it should be eliminated.

REPORTS CLEARANCE

The best review is that which precedes the establishment of a report. A form used by the Internal Revenue Service for this purpose is shown as figure 5. Probably the most important item on the form is the one entitled "Purpose and Need." This item describes the type of information proposed to be collected, why it is needed, and where it fits in with or supplements other reports in a program area. Other items on the form that manage-

Approved For Release 2001/11/01 : CIA-RDP74-00390R000300140009-1

Instructions - Prepare and send in duplicate (2) to the Central Reports Management Officer. Attach - (1) Draft of report instructions (This form may be used also to document postreviews in regions that have adopted this system.) (2) Draft of report or forms if required (3) Any related material	2. FORM NO. OR FORMAT
	3. REPORT SYMBOL (If any)
	5. FREQUENCY (Weekly, Monthly, etc.)
4. TITLE OF REPORT	6. DUE DATE OF REPORT

7. REQUIRING INSTRUCTIONS (Cite specific issuance number when applicable)

8. PURPOSE AND NEED (Explain in detail the use to be made of the report)

9. STATUS <input type="checkbox"/> NEW <input type="checkbox"/> REVISED	10. TYPE OF REPORT <input type="checkbox"/> REQUIRED <input type="checkbox"/> ISSUED <input type="checkbox"/> BOTH REQUIRED AND ISSUED	11. USE <input type="checkbox"/> RECURRING <input type="checkbox"/> ONE-TIME
--	---	---

12. IF REVISED REPORT, STATE NATURE OF REVISION

13. REPORTS SUPERSEDED BY THIS REPORT (Title and report symbol, if any)

14. DATA SOURCE (Form Nos., report symbols, records, etc.)

15. ESTIMATED WORKLOAD FOR THIS REPORT

ORGANIZATIONAL ELEMENT	PREPARATION MANHOURS				ANNUAL HOURS TO PROCESS & ANALYZE	TOTAL ANNUAL MANHOUR WORKLOAD
	ONE TIME		ANNUAL			
	ONE OFFICE X	NO. OFFICES =	TOTAL HRS. X	TIMES PER YR. =		
NATIONAL OFFICE						
REGIONAL OFFICE						
DISTRICT OFFICE						
SERVICE CENTER						
BRANCH OFFICE						
TYPE "A" OFFICE						
POST OF DUTY (other)						
TOTAL						

ANNUAL MACHINE COSTS (EAM OR ADPE) ANNUAL PRINTING COSTS (Published reports only)

16. Distribution of copies	NUMBER OF COPIES	ORIGINAL REPORT SENT TO -
		COPIES TO -

17. Requiring office information	ORIGINATING OFFICE (Division, Branch, etc.)	PERSON TO CONTACT	ROOM	EXT.
	SIGNATURE OF REQUIRING OFFICIAL	TITLE		EXT.
	REPORTS MANAGEMENT OFFICER'S COMMENTS	SIGNATURE		

18. For Use of Central Reports Management Officer	REMARKS
	DATE CLEARED OR POSTREVIEWED CLEARED OR POSTREVIEWED BY (Name of analyst)

Approved For Release 2001/11/01 : CIA-RDP74-00390R000300140009-1
ment should concern itself with are the number and types of
preparing and using offices, and the frequency of the report.
These represent workload.

The initial reports clearance should insure:

- . That the proposed report represents a valid need for information;
- . That it requires only that information needed to advance the purpose for which the report was designed;
- . That the report has been thoroughly reviewed, and that the procedures and forms for collecting, reporting, and using the information are efficient and economical; and
- . That the additional workload imposed by the report, and its costs are justified.

CONTINUOUS EVALUATION

All too often people look at a report only from the standpoint of the end product. Deciding whether or not information is needed is the responsibility of top management. But the degree of detail that goes into the report and how to obtain and process that information can be another matter - one more often than not determined below top management. It is in these details that reports frequently become burdensome, costly, and out of date. For this reason, a continuous evaluation of all reports is essential to make sure that needed information is being received in its most useable form, and to purge useless or out-of-date information from the system as quickly as possible. These are

the most.

The Reports Evaluation checklist used in evaluating reports (see figure 4, page 18) is intended to stimulate thought on the many potential pitfalls of reporting. Use the checklist when developing a new report or evaluating an old one.

PERIODIC REVIEWS

Basically there are two ways to conduct periodic reviews: (1) analysis of total information requirements as they relate to a program system; (2) procedural review of individual reports. Both types of review are valuable and practical.

Total Information Requirements Analysis. In analyzing the informational requirements of a system, we are actually asking the question, "What information does management need to manage a particular program?" In this context, we are going beyond the mere review of reports. We are analyzing the program and the informational system that supports it. The objective is to find out what kind of information is needed at each level of management, and how best to provide and use it. Then, after completing this phase of the survey, individual reports are reviewed in detail to detect voids, make improvements, or to eliminate collection of unnecessary information. To do this one agency recommends the following:

1. "Identify the organization's total program objective or objectives. (Do not include such supporting responsi-

Approved For Release 2001/11/01 : CIA-RDP74-00390R000300140009-1
bilities as the management of manpower, money,
material, or other resources as part of the objective
unless these constitute the prime mission of the
organization.)

2. "Break the total objective into identifiable operating programs (major functions, subfunctions, etc.) by organizational level. Define the objective(s) of each of these operating programs at each level. Show the relationship of each to the total objective.
3. "Analyze the work done at each organization level. Identify organizational elements working in the same or closely related functional areas. Divide each function into small enough units to keep it manageable, but at the same time, make the area inclusive enough to reflect a whole function, or a separately identifiable piece of the whole.
4. "Select people for a review panel who are familiar with the objectives of each function. Use program specialists who work directly on the program being analyzed as advisers rather than as regular panel members. See that the services of reports, directives, forms, and other systems analysis staffs are made available to this group.
5. "Find out what information the program manager at each level of organization needs and actually uses to manage his program. If possible, have him list the information in order of importance.
6. "Find out what information the next higher program manager expects from his subordinate managers.
7. "Identify actions that occur within the function at each organizational level.
8. "Identify decisions within the function that should be made at each organizational level.
9. "Identify, by function, the planning and operating responsibilities at each organizational level.
10. "Identify the functional controls needed and exercised by each level.
11. "Identify information, either in form of reports or guidance, needed to carry out decision making, planning, operating and controlling responsibilities.
12. "Identify specific reports that support each requirement. (Recognize that lower level officials will probably have to collect data in greater detail to meet higher management's

Approved For Release 2001/11/01 : CIA-RDP74-00390R000300140009-1
informational needs, or to control the program the way higher management wants it controlled.)

13. "Analyze how the information presented in the reports fits into the total program system. Do this by category of information for the entire report (what it is, why it is needed, how it is used, and who uses it) rather than by segments of the report.
14. "Then, using sample copies of the reports, the report clearance forms, the checklist, and the information you have gathered to this point, give the operating official an opportunity to validate each report he is responsible for. Start from the top-down.
 - a. Identify, with the operating official, the specific information used to satisfy higher management's needs.
 - b. Separate this from the information that directly supports the operating official's transactions. Find out whether all of these transactions are necessary to fulfill higher management's desires. How do they contribute to the program? How do they contribute to the operating officials' actions, decisions, planning, control, etc.? When was the last time these transactions were used as a basis for a management decision either at this or a higher level? Could lower organizational levels perform any of these actions, thereby reducing the informational needs at this level?
 - c. Now, identify reported data that is used for other purposes. Are these necessary to support the program system? How are they used?
15. "After you have determined that the type of information collected is necessary to fulfill the needs of the program at each level, review the specific data for ways to increase its usefulness.
16. "If appropriate, solicit recommendations from lower reporting levels on ways to improve reports that they consider burdensome. Be careful in reviewing their recommendations. Lower levels might not know the full intent of a report or how it is used.
17. "Complete the analysis of all reports in the functional area before recommending improvements. Make sure that all of the information in the reports collectively support the program's total information needs. Check your conclusions against the requirements the manager said he needed to manage his program."

Approved For Release 2001/11/01 : CIA-RDP74-00390R000300140009-1
Procedural Review. As the name implies, in a procedural review

you look at individual reporting procedures, and at the reports themselves, rather than at the informational system that they are part of. This is a housecleaning type of review that culminates in improving or eliminating individual reports.

It is often the only type of review needed, particularly when the program's informational system is known to be sound.

The review usually starts at the specific direction of a higher authority. Everyone is asked to analyze all of the reports they are involved in. To organize this kind of review:

1. Place the responsibility for monitoring it in one office in the agency.
2. Establish focal points in other offices at an appropriate level of organization.
3. Set specific schedules for completing various phases of the program. (Completion dates should extend no longer than necessary; otherwise interest in the effort will deteriorate.)
4. Establish progress reports. Identify the types of information management wants reports during and after the review.
5. If possible, establish special incentives, or relate accomplishments to an existing incentive program.

6. Firm up a method for conducting the review. This is usually done by evaluating reports received by or originated in an office. Identify organizational elements working on the same or closely related functions. Divide the functions into small enough work units to be manageable. Separate the reports by category:
 - a. Functionally Within the Office. This will point up any overlapping or duplicative information in reports.
 - b. Those Required by the Office. These are reports the office has control over. These are the ones that can be changed without difficulty.
 - c. Those Submitted to Other Offices or Agencies. These are reports on which the office may only recommend changes or improvements.

7. Then, using sample copies of the report, and the evaluation checklist, make or recommend changes that will improve the reports. Where possible, eliminate those that contribute little to the program that they were designed to support.

Obviously, there are several ways to combine the desired features of an informational requirements analysis and a procedural review. Recognize the potential benefits provided by each and select the method best suited to your agency's needs.

Case Files. An individual report case file is a basic working tool for a reports management office and should be available from the beginning. As new reports are established and existing reports are inventoried and appraised, an individual report case folder should be set-up. The file should be as complete as possible.

For internal reports, the case file should contain:

- . A copy of the document proposing the report,
- . An individual reports inventory form or
- . A report clearance request,
- . The directive or other reporting instructions,
- . The approved report form or forms,
- . A copy of the evaluation made on the report, and
- . All pertinent worksheets, correspondence, memos, and notes for the record.

For external reports, the case files should contain:

- . All information concerning the report and its application at the agency or activity level,
- . A copy of the implementing directive (or a cross reference as to its location),
- . A copy of the form, and
- . All correspondence, memos and notes for the record.

File Card Record. A card or other type of form or record (see figure 6) is sometimes used as a convenient tool in identifying

Record of Reports Control Actions			
REPORTS CONTROL SYMBOL	Report Title		Form Number
DATE:	Initiated	Discontinued	FREQUENCY
Directives			<input type="checkbox"/> One-time
			<input type="checkbox"/> Daily
			<input type="checkbox"/> Weekly
			<input type="checkbox"/> Monthly
			<input type="checkbox"/> Quarterly
			<input type="checkbox"/> Semi-Annual
			<input type="checkbox"/> Annually
		<input type="checkbox"/> As Required	Period covered or "As of" Date
		<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	Due Date
			This Report is a Feeder for (Give symbols)
Preparing Agencies		Distribution of Copies of this Report	Feeders for this Report are (Give symbols)
			This Report Supersedes (Give symbols)
			This Report Superseded by (Give symbols)
Refer questions to			
REPORTS CONTROL SYMBOL	Report Title		Form Number

Stub is provided for convenience in typing. To be detached prior to filing.

Figure 6

Approved For Release 2001/11/01 : CIA-RDP74-00390R000300140009-1

reports, reporting directives and forms. It also provides for other information about the report such as frequency, due date, and preparing office. This card record is also useful in preparing lists of reports by organizational segments. A record of the status and actions taken on reports clearance request received is desirable. This document is useful in establishing work priorities in the reports management office and as a ready reference to answer "status" inquiries. Often a similar file is arranged by function.

Reports Catalog. It is useful to prepare and maintain a reports catalog. This is a listing of all reports to be prepared by each organizational segment. The list not only acts as a reminder to the preparing offices but is a useful device for cross-checking by the reports management offices as to current requirements. The listing should show as a minimum: the reports control symbol, title, form number, frequency, due date, requiring directive, and preparing agency. See figure 3, page

DOCUMENTATION OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

To effectively measure progress, and to plan and coordinate the reports program at each level, those responsible for the program will need periodic reports of accomplishment. A form similar to Form 3030 of the Internal Revenue Service (see figure 7) may be used. This report is usually prepared semi-annually.

The report format has been designed to be self-balancing. Part I provides for an opening recurring reports inventory, the

Approved For Release 2001/11/01 : CIA-RDP74-00390R000300140009-1
application of inventory transactions during the report period,
and ending recurring reports inventory. Part II deals with
one-time reporting activities during the report period. Specific
instructions for each report item are given on the reverse of
the form.

REPORTS PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS
(See reverse for INSTRUCTIONS)

TO

FROM

REPORT PERIOD ENDING

ITEM	DISTRICT OFFICE		SERVICE CENTER		REGIONAL OFFICE		REGION TOTAL	
	NUMBER (a)	ANNUAL MAN-HOURS (b)	NUMBER (c)	ANNUAL MAN-HOURS (d)	NUMBER (e)	ANNUAL MAN-HOURS (f)	NUMBER (g)	ANNUAL MAN-HOURS (h)
PART I. RECURRING REPORTS								
1. Reports in inventory beginning of report period (Item 12 of previous report)								
ADDITIONS	2. New reports established							
	3. Existing reports modified	[]		[]		[]		[]
	4. Adjustments to reports inventory							
	5. Adjustments to reports inventory (Manhours only)							
DELETIONS	6. Reports eliminated							
	7. Existing reports modified	[]		[]		[]		[]
	8. Consolidation action							
	9. Adjustments to reports							
	10. Adjustments to reports inventory (Manhours only)							
11. Net change to inventory (+ or - sum of ADDITIONS minus sum of DELETIONS)								
12. Reports in inventory end of report period (Item 1 plus or minus item 11)								
13. Proposals for new or revised reports improved or withdrawn ¹								
14. Total program benefits (Sum of 6, 7, 8, and 13)								
PART II. ONE-TIME REPORTS								
15. Reports required or published this report period								
16. Report proposals improved or withdrawn ¹								

REMARKS (Include any significant developments with respect to the Reports Program and show savings which are other than man-hours, e.g., equipment rental, printing costs, etc.)

^{1/} GIVE BRIEF DETAILS OF SIGNIFICANT SAVINGS SHOWN IN "REMARKS"

TYPED NAME AND TITLE

SIGNATURE

DATE

INSTRUCTIONS

PREPARING OFFICES – Regions will report program accomplishments to the National Office on this form. District offices and Service Centers will also use this form to report feeder information to the regional office.

TRANSMITTAL – District office and Service Center reports are due in the regional office by the 15th workday of June and December; regional office reports are due in the National Office by the 1st workday after the close of the report period.

GENERAL

This form is designed to be self-balancing. All actions taken during the report period will be reflected under the appropriate item, culminating in a new recurring reports inventory.

SPECIFIC

ITEM 1 – Total recurring reports and their related man-hours in inventory at end of last report period.

ITEM 2 – Newly established recurring reports and their related man-hours added to inventory during the report period.

ITEM 3 – Show a memorandum entry within the brackets for the number of existing recurring reports modified which resulted in an addition of man-hours during the report period. This figure will not be included in totals. Man-hours added as a result of modifications will be shown and included in man-hour totals.

ITEM 4 – Recurring reports and their related man-hours added to inventory during the report period as a result of adjustments made to inventory figures used last report period.¹

ITEM 5 – Man-hours only added to inventory during the report period as a result of adjustments made to inventory figures used last report period.¹

ITEM 6 – Recurring reports and their related man-hours deleted from inventory during the report period as a result of Reports Program Activity. Reports which terminate on a predetermined date will be shown under this item. Reports which were eliminated as a result of consolidation action will not be shown under this item.

ITEM 7 – Show a memorandum entry within the brackets for number of existing recurring reports modified which resulted in a deletion of man-hours during the report period. This figure will not be included in totals. Man-hours eliminated as a result of the modification will be shown and included in man-hour totals.

ITEM 8 – Recurring reports and their related man-hours eliminated as a result of consolidation action. Show only the net elimination of reports and man-hours, i.e., the difference between the original number of reports

and man-hours, and the new number of reports and man-hours remaining or established as a result of the consolidation.

ITEM 9 – Recurring reports and their related man-hours deleted from inventory during the report period as a result of adjustments made to inventory figures used last report period.¹

ITEM 10 – Man-hours only deleted from inventory during the report period as a result of adjustments made to inventory figures used last report period.¹

ITEM 11 – Calculate the net change to the recurring reports inventory during this report period by subtracting the sum of items 6 through 10 from the sum of items 2 through 5, except for bracketed entries. Show the result as a plus or minus factor.

ITEM 12 – Total recurring reports and their related man-hours in inventory at end of this report period.

ITEM 13 – New or revised recurring report proposals improved or withdrawn during the report period as a result of Reports Program analysis and review. Annual man-hour benefits resulting from improvement or withdrawal of the proposal will be estimated and shown.

ITEM 14 – Calculate the total Reports Program benefits for the report period by adding together items number 6, 7, 8, and 13, except for bracketed entry.

ITEM 15 – Total one-time reports required or published during the report period.

ITEM 16 – One-time reports proposals improved or withdrawn during the report period as a result of Reports Program analysis and review. Man-hour benefits resulting from improvement or withdrawal of the proposal will be estimated and shown.

¹ Examples of adjustments are changes made in the reports inventory data due to mathematical errors discovered in man-hour figures, revision of original man-hour estimates, elimination of reports which should not have been included in the Reports Program, or addition of reports which should have been included in the recurring reports inventory.

Approved For Release 2001/11/01 : CIA-RDP74-00390R000300140009-1

Approved For Release 2001/11/01 : CIA-RDP74-00390R000300140009-1

REPORTS ANALYSIS

Many of the communications problems in Government today can be traced to poor or nonexistent reports. Reports must be systematic, automated when feasible, based on solid need, capable of providing a basis for measuring performance, for making and revising policy, and for executing the mission of the organization requiring the reports.

Many reports, however, do not turn out as well as originally planned. The information is not always presented in its most usable form. Some information collected soon proves to be unneeded. The environment at the reporting level is not always as anticipated, and respondents have difficulty collecting and properly presenting the data. So the data as received does not give the kind of information management needs for decision planning or controlling programs. In reality, there are few reports that cannot be improved through analysis.

DETERMINING NEED

The first step in reports analysis is to establish need for a new report or the continued use of an existing report. To establish need, or justify continued use, the report should:

- . Provide no information the user doesn't have functional authority to utilize.

- . Be timely.
- . Duplicate few other data requirements.
- . Fulfill a valid need of those who will review and evaluate its content measured against the expense of collecting and using it.
- . Be secured at the lowest possible cost.

DETAILED ANALYSIS

If the need is established, the report is ready for detailed analysis. If the report or any part of the report is found to be unsatisfactory, positive recommendations for changes should be made to the requiring officials before the directive for a new report is issued or a report symbol is assigned. Specific findings and recommendations on existing reports or their relationships to other reports or reporting systems should be made to the requiring officials so that appropriate action can be taken.

The following basic aids should be used whenever they facilitate the comprehensive review and analysis of the report.

Case Files of Individual Reports. The case file on each report is a main reference source. Its contents should be reviewed in any study to improve reporting.

Reports Clearance Form (figure 5). As used in a clearance or post review procedure, or as a part of the case file, this form provides basic facts needed in considering a report for possible improvement.

RECURRING DATA ANALYSIS CHART		TITLE, DESCRIPTION, OR SOURCE														TOTAL		
SUBJECT OF ANALYSIS OR ACTIVITY																		
ANALYZED BY	DATE																	
ITEM		NO.	NO.	NO.	NO.	NO.	NO.	NO.	NO.	NO.	NO.	NO.	NO.	NO.	NO.	NO.	NO.	TOTAL
1.																		
2.																		
3.																		
4.																		
5.																		
6.																		
7.																		
8.																		
9.																		
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27.																		
28.																		
29.																		
30.																		
31.																		
32.																		
33.																		
34.																		
35.																		
TOTAL																		

Approved For Release 2001/11/01 : CIA-RDP74-00390R000300140009-1
Recurring Data Analysis Chart (figure 8). This form may

be used to list report items for each of several reports. Listed in this way, repetitive items become apparent. This form is particularly useful in exploring opportunities to combine related reports in a functional area, or to integrate reports in a vertical reporting system.

Reports Evaluation Checklist (figure 4). This form provides a series of guides for step-by-step reports improvement from two points of view -- that of the office which uses the report and that of the office which prepares it. This form is intended as an informal worksheet (a pencil copy should suffice) to encourage free and conscientious thought regarding each point. Because of the significance of the many points itemized in this checklist, each item deserves our special attention in fact gathering and analysis.

I. Determine the Need

1. *Use of the Report as a Whole.* Who uses the report, and how? Who established the report? Does he still use it? When was the last time he saw it? Is all of the information reported actually and actively used as a basis for actions? For plans or decisions? Who performs these functions? When was the last time specific plans or decisions were made as a result of the report? Was all of the reported data needed for these purposes? What would happen if the report were discontinued? Could the control phase of

level?

2. *Use of Each Item in the Report.* Is each item used? Apply this simple test: Get a completed report. If it is submitted on a form, check the entries that you use regularly. If it is submitted in narrative, underline the key items. Now ask yourself what you do with the information. After you are satisfied that you need this information, identify the items that you don't use. As you question each item, consider whether there are any missing items, columns, instructions, etc. If these were added, would they increase the utility of the report? Careful examination can often eliminate several individual items and cut down preparation and reading time.
3. *Use Each Copy of the Report.* How many copies are distributed? How many of these are actually used to a good purpose? Should any office be removed from the distribution? Should distribution be broadened to eliminate the need for other reports? Would it be feasible to distinguish between "action" and "information" copies? When was the last time you checked the accuracy of the distribution list?
4. *Functional Relationship.* Is the report within the scope of each of the receiving offices' functions? Do these offices have the authority to change or recommend a

Approved For Release 2001/11/01 : CIA-RDP74-00390R000300140009-1
change in the program if such action is needed? What

are their interests and responsibilities today?

Functions and interests change. What was once a pressing need, may now be a passing interest; or worse, no interest.

5. *Misapplication.* Does the report attempt to solve problems that in fact call for administrative or other action? It may be possible that reports are being required when more direct supervision at other levels would do a better job. Would more specific instructions in the program directives make this report unnecessary?

6. *Standby Data.* Is any data obtained only for standby or "just-in-case" use? How often has it been used? When was it last used? Was the need at the time critical? When it was used, was the information up to date? Did it answer all the questions, or did you have to get additional information? Is it worth what it costs to receive and maintain this data "just-in-case" the need arises? Would a one-time situation report serve the purpose?

7. *Another Available Source.* Is another source of information readily available that will satisfy this reporting requirement? Perhaps in other records or in a report received by another office. If another office has the data available, but in a different form, can you use it as it is? If you

to provide mutually acceptable information?

8. *By-Product.* Can routine office procedures at the source of needed information be modified to provide you with a by-product data as a part of their normal work process? Can the information be extracted from an existing work package at your level by modifying existing forms, recordkeeping or accounting systems (manual or mechanized)? If this were done, would it eliminate this report?

9. *Direct Use of Records.* If information is transcribed from a record, could you use the record (or a copy) instead of establishing a separate report? Would using records which can be photographed or otherwise "fast copied" at the source eliminate transcribing to a report? Some examples of reporting by photographic process are:
 - Visible record panels
 - Production control boards, graphs or charts
 - Microform records

10. *Sampling.* Would a sample of a few offices or persons be sufficient to provide the data? If the sampling method is being used now, are the present respondents representative enough to give accurate data when projected to cover the whole?

Approved For Release 2001/11/01 : CIA-RDP74-00390R000300140009-1
11. *Exception Reporting.* Would exception reporting be

adequate? Using this method, reports are made only when conditions are other than normal. The expected norm should be defined, and potential abnormalities (when a report might be submitted) highlighted. Instructions covering exception reports should describe danger signals and events which could require decisions by higher levels. Exception reports can be associated with a project (one time or recurring) that has fairly well defined starting and closing dates, or with a well established program of indefinite duration.

12. *Combination.* Can the report be combined with another report? When two or more reports with similar subject material or data are combined, it takes less work to do the job. Here is a simple way to determine whether combining reports is feasible: Put a check mark next to items common to each report. Now decide whether the unchecked items are essential or "nice-to-have." Go over the report with other offices directly concerned to get their ideas for additions or deletions. Add the needed items to make the combined report.

13. *Nonrelated Material.* Does the report contain nonrelated information that should be in separate reports? Before changing the report, consider the effect on work patterns at the source of the information.

14. *Adequacy and Suitability.* Is the scope or content of the report adequate, too broad, or too narrow for its intended purpose? Does the data match the specific needs of the using offices?
15. *Value Versus Cost.* What is the value of reported data? Is it known? What is the cost? Has it been considered? Does the cost of the report exceed the value? Can the data be obtained, or the informational needs met, in a less costly manner?

II. Verify the Timing

16. *Frequency*
 - a. Is the frequency of the report prescribed in the directive and on the form? For example, monthly, quarterly, annually, etc. Does the directive tell when the first report is due?
 - b. Does the frequency fit the needs of principal users? Would a different frequency fit the needs better or as well? For example, in a new program, quarterly submission the first year, semiannually the second year and annually thereafter? When actual needs permit lowering the frequency, the cost of a report goes down.
17. *Reporting Periods.* Are reporting periods properly stated? Is the number of work days per month significant? For

example, when weekly reports are summarized monthly, do you have to adjust reporting periods to determine actual work days? Does the report consider work days as opposed to calendar days?

18. *Due Date.* Does the directive indicate the date when the report is to be received at its destination? Use a statement such as "The report must be received by (specific date) ," or "received not later than workdays after the close of the reporting period." Due dates should take into account the most distant preparing offices and the method of transmission, i.e. airmail, wire communication, etc.
19. *Preparing Office Workload.* Is there adequate preparation time? Remember, reporting workloads are heaviest at mid-month, ends of months, and ends of quarters. Have you considered the preparing office's workload? Are your deadlines realistic? If not, they should be adjusted.

III. Review Style of Presentation

REPORTING DIRECTIVES

20. *Report Title.* If the directive concerns only the report, is the title of the report the same as the subject of the directive? Make the title as brief and descriptive as possible.

21. *Purpose of the Report.* Is the purpose clearly stated so

that the preparing offices will understand what use is made of the data and can apply the instructions intelligently?

22. *Reporting Instructions.* Are reporting instructions clear enough to be understood? Do they tell what to do and how to do it? Are complex reports clarified by including a completed sample form or format (John Doe forms) in the directive? This insures uniformity in reporting.

23. *Integrated Reporting.* Are data needs of other levels tied in? Has the pyramid principle been applied? For instance, detailed data become less significant at higher organizational levels. Reporting instructions should include the data requirements for each organizational level. Be as specific as you can.

24. *Feeder Reports.* Do procedures for feeder reports assure maximum uniformity and simplicity? What is the extent of feeder reporting? Is it used economically? e.g. when establishing a feeder report to satisfy a report of another agency, just ask for information that is not available in your own office or agency files. Consider all sources in your immediate headquarters. Would there be an advantage to by-pass intermediate levels and furnish lower level data directly to the level requiring the report?

25. *Reporting Units.* Are the units which are required to prepare the report identified? Are the designated reporting units the ones in the best position to furnish the information? Are there more or fewer reporting units than needed? Will the present number of reporting units be sufficient for data comparison?
26. *Negative Reports.* Are negative reports required? What use is made of them? Should they be stopped? Make your directive explicit concerning the submission or nonsubmission of negative reports.
27. *Number of Copies.* Are the number of copies to be prepared and distributed specified?
28. *Routing.* Is the correct address of each recipient indicated? Is a desired method of transmission such as regular mail, airmail, telegram, etc., spelled out?

REPORTING FORMS

29. *Narrative or Form*
- a. Is the report submitted on a form, in a prescribed format, or in narrative? Is the present format suitable for the way the report is used? Is it easy to prepare? If the report is in narrative style, would a form be better? If the report were changed to a form, would it lose its original effectiveness?

- b. Do users have to hunt through the text of a narrative report to find the information they need? Does the report contain information which is repeated in successive reports? Is this repetitive information of special interest to the users? Could report preparation be simplified by substituting a codeword, symbol, or number (with adequate definition) for repetitive narrative passages. Narrative reports are expensive. They require research, creative writing, and time of high salaried employees. Identify any questionable areas and review them with the forms design staff.

30. *Arrangement and Size*

- a. *Fill-in-Reports.* Is the text of questionnaire fill-in-reports arranged to permit easy fill in and use? Arrange text so that fill-ins come at the left margin, or a separate line, or so that all fill-in items are grouped in one area on the form.
- b. *Spacing.* Is there adequate space for filling in each item? Is the spacing suitable for the type machine used to prepare the report? If handwriting is optional, is enough space provided?
- c. *Sequencing.* Are items on the report form arranged in the same sequence as the data source? Are items sequenced to the user's needs? Do these parallel each other? Are items sequenced to the next form

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to which the data will be transcribed? This is

especially important when data is transferred from a report to columns on a punch card.

- d. *Preprinting.* Are recurring items of data preprinted on the report form wherever possible?
 - e. *Captions.* Are adequate instructions included on the report form? Are they placed where they will be seen and read first? If instructions are on the back of the form or in a separate document, state this in the heading of the form. Are captions clear and descriptive? Can any of them be misunderstood? Are boxes, lines, signals, type, etc., used effectively to emphasize captions?
 - f. *Size.* Is the size of the form adequate, practical, and easy to read? Will it fit in standard files or binders?
31. *Standardization.* Do all offices submitting the report use the same form or standard format?
32. *Summary Information.* Does the form or format require a complete and time-consuming review by all users to get at essential data? Would selective or summary highlighting of significant elements be better? As a substitute? As a supplement?

33. *Cumulative Data.* Can statistical data be maintained on

a cumulative basis at the source to eliminate last minute workloads? Would a brief journal or daily tally eliminate backtracking over the period when reporting time comes? If so, provide a recording or tally form to aid preparing offices.

34. *Comparisons.* Can comparisons of data be readily made?

Have production or performance goals been set so there is something to compare data against? Are the most meaningful comparative bases used: Established standards? Past performance? Time-span? Trends? Financial or production goals? Correlation with other schedules, programs, and events? Reporting forms that include comparative data are more useful than those that simply provide raw, unrelated data or statistics.

35. *Graphics.* Would graphics speed the comprehension of data?

Are graphics used to good advantage? Illustrations? Charts? Graphs? Symbols?

36. *Authentication.* Are the signatures of verifying and

approving officials required only when absolutely necessary? Are they at the right level of authority? Do those which are used contribute needed authority? Does each approval add to the information's reliability? Don't collect signatures for prestige.

37. *Data Sources.* Have you specified the records from which reported data is to be extracted? When source records do not exist, or cannot be specified, does the directive prescribe how to develop the information for the report?
38. *Arrangement of Records.* Are files or other sources maintained so that data can be easily extracted? Should the records be rearranged in the same data sequence as the report form or format? If there is a good reason why the records are maintained as they are, can the form be adjusted to match the data sequence of the records? Will this arrangement fit the report users needs? Can you match file headings with report headings or vice versa?
39. *Report Control Symbol.* Is the report control symbol shown in a conspicuous place on the report? Does the agency prescribe a standard location for the symbol? Where the report title is the subject of the directive, consider including the symbol in the directive title. Another good location is in the paragraph heading, or at the end of the paragraph that prescribes the report. Consider placing the report control symbol on forms and records associated with the report. This ties the report, forms, directive, and related files together.

- a. Will the report attract and satisfy its intended users? Who are they? Are they executives? Technicians? The general public? The treatment of information is different in each case. Is the tone, and presence or absence of detailed statistics appropriate to the users' levels of responsibility and knowledge?
- b. Where statistics are used, are they used meaningfully? Do they provide technicians a running account of facts, and, at the same time, provide executives summary information?
- c. Can users interpret the information quickly and easily? Or does the mass of data obscure real meaning? Does the complete report provide maximum simplicity and utility for the intended users?

WRITING THE DIRECTIVE

After it has been determined exactly what the report requiring office really needs to know, whether the information can be obtained without undue effort and cost, and that a proposed reporting requirement is fully justifiable it becomes important to develop a requiring directive and form that will contribute to the successful collection of the

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desired information. Instructions prepared in concise, clear and complete detail are basic elements of a good report. A well designed reporting directive and report form (or format) should give a clear picture of who is to report what, when and how it is to be reported; to whom it is to be reported, and why.

Directives for recurring reports should generally appear in permanent publications such as agency policy and procedure manuals. The directive should be organized so as to be most convenient both to those who prepare the report, and those who use it.

The following provides guidance as to items that should be included in a reports directive:

Purpose of Report. The purpose should be clearly stated so that the preparing offices will understand what use is to be made of the data and be able to apply the instructions intelligently. The statement should be explicit.

Report Title. The title of the report should be the subject of the proposed directive if it is wholly concerned with the report. The title should be brief and generally descriptive of the substance of the information reported.

Report Symbol. The report symbol should be shown as part of the title of the report, appearing immediately following the title. Where the report title is the subject of the directive,

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the symbol should be shown with the title, otherwise the title and symbol should be shown as the caption of the paragraph which prescribes the report.

Format. The directive should specify whether the report will be on a form, memorandum, machine tabulation, telegram, etc.

Data Sources. Records from which reports are to be prepared should be completely identified. When source records or feeder reports are not already in existence, the directive should prescribe the manner in which the information for the report should be developed.

Preparing Instructions. Adequate instructions for making line and column entries on the report should be provided. Complex reports should be clarified by the inclusion of a completed sample report format. Report instructions should be in sufficient detail to insure uniformity in reporting and clear enough to be readily understood.

Preparing Offices. The specific offices required to prepare the report should be shown.

Frequency. The frequency of the report should be prescribed, for example, monthly, quarterly, annually, etc. On every new report there should be a statement of the "beginning" period for the report, for example, report ABC to be submitted beginning January, 1971.

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Number of Copies. The number of copies to be prepared and distributed should be specified.

Routing. The correct mailing address of each recipient should be indicated. Also, where applicable, the method of transmission such as regular mail, airmail, telegram, etc., should be spelled out.

Due Date. The directive should indicate the date by which the report is to be received at its prescribed destination. Due dates should take into account the distant preparing offices. Generally, due dates should be stated using the phrase, "by not later than ____ workdays after close of the reporting period."

Negative Reports. The directive should be explicit with respect to submission or nonsubmission of negative reports.

DESIGNING THE FORM

A report form is usually the basic tool in the collection and transmission of reporting information. The way it is designed can effect the ease with which information is collected, the accuracy of the information, the efficiency with which the information is extracted, and the clarity of understanding of the information conveyed.

A well designed form can often eliminate or reduce the need for detailed instructions in the report. Forms and directives must fully support each other.

which can more than double the efficiency of many reporting forms. A separate handbook on "Forms Design" (GSA Records Management Handbook) gives many valuable tips that should not be overlooked by anyone developing a reporting form.

If a form is prescribed for Government-wide use, it should be a "standard form." If it is used by 2 or more agencies on a nonmandatory basis, it should be an "optional form." In either case it must be cleared through the National Archives and Records Service, GSA, using Standard Form 152. This procedure is prescribed by Federal Property Management Regulation 101-11.8.

If the form requires information from a person outside of your agency, refer to guidance given in Chapter 6 of this handbook dealing with "External Reporting." Special clearance processes may be necessary.

ADP VERSUS MANUAL REPORTING

There is a place in management reporting for both the automatic data processing (ADP), and the manual type of reporting. ADP provides certain advantages over manual or employee prepared reports. Once the information is captured by ADP on tapes or punched cards, it can be manipulated and computed at high speeds. Printouts are easily prepared according to set formats and the data can be stored in "memory units" in a

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readily reproducible and readable form. Assuming that the
data has been correctly transmitted to the computer, by
manual key punching or optical scanning techniques, the
potential error rate is greatly reduced over similar reports
prepared manually. On the other hand manual reporting
costs are frequently much less than ADP costs, when the equip-
ment procurement costs are tabulated. For small organiza-
tions, manual report preparation is usually more effective
and possibly more timely, dependent upon the availability of
machines. It is suggested, when in doubt, that both reporting
techniques be evaluated.

COSTING REPORTS

Anyone attempting to determine the cost of reports may view the problem from two extremes. On the one hand, he may see all agency reporting and related work as a whole. He may emphasize the cost of various staff services, often overlooked. On the other hand, he may see the problem from the point of view of the smallest unit of work involved in preparing, transmitting, or using an individual report. He may emphasize the cost of entering figures on a worksheet, the cost of preparing a series of management charts, the cost of rewriting or retyping a narrative, and so forth. Actually, an awareness of all cost areas is essential, because all are significant.

The total cost of either an agency's entire reporting system or a single report is the cost of initiating it, maintaining it, using it, and providing specialized assistance or service.

EXPLANATION OF "INDIVIDUAL" REPORT

The individual report is often called a "unit reporting system."

This "system" usually includes many layers of report preparation, compilation, and refinement as the information moves from the source to the user. In this chapter, the terms "report," "individual report," and "unit reporting system" are synonymous.

In most Federal offices, the word "report" usually means either "management reporting," which denotes information for guiding agency operations, or "public reporting," which denotes information derived from private citizens or organizations. However, "report" is also used to describe individual operating documents or scientific and technical papers. As used here, the individual report (or unit reporting system) relates only to management or public reporting. It does not include operating documents or scientific and technical papers.

OBTAINING COST INFORMATION

If you can obtain the cost information you need from existing records or from those who already have knowledge of the cost, so much the better. If cost information exists, you need only find it and compare it with the report cost factors in figure 9 of this chapter and your own costing objectives.

Two of the best sources of information on the cost of a report are the office that initiated the requirement and the agency's reports management office.

The best source of information is probably the office that requires the report. Someone on the staff will usually know the report from "A to Z." He may have developed the reporting requirements, designed the system, and authored the implementing directive. If not, he will know who did.

If you have to develop the cost yourself, you can get help on methods and shortcuts from the nearest reports specialist. Most agencies have at least one. If yours does not, you can telephone another agency in the area for the help you need.

An important source of indirect cost information is the agency directive which imposes the reporting requirement. It should provide clues to the work involved, reporting offices, frequency of reporting, and other pertinent facts.

COSTING TECHNIQUES

The best course is usually to find the shortest route to a reasonable, if not perfect, estimate of the actual cost. In doing so, however, you should be sure to investigate all of the important cost areas and account for all significant costs. Consult the list of cost factors in figure 9 of this chapter to ensure that no significant costs are overlooked.

Reports analysts have used many techniques to cost agency reports in the past. But whatever the costing technique, the great variety of reports and reporting methods confounds any attempt to find one approach that will serve all purposes. In each case, the scope of the cost study must be clearly defined and all cost factors taken into account.

You will have to ask yourself: Who does what, when, where, and how? How many offices prepare this report? What do they

actually do? Who keeps the records? Where does the information come from in the first place? How many levels of reporting are there? Do some offices compile reports? What do they do? How much time does it take? How many people get involved? Who receives these reports? How many people read these reports? How long does it take?

The easiest way to develop the cost of a report is to first describe it in terms of work performed and locations involved. The description should include the number of annual repetitions based on the frequency of reporting (daily, weekly, monthly, etc.). The description should identify all significant cost factors, including any peculiar to the reporting system under study.

The reports analyst will usually compute the total cost of preparing the report in one office, one time. He will then multiply this figure by the total number of reporting offices. He will in turn multiply by the number of yearly submissions of the report. This gives the total cost of preparation for a period of one year. The analyst must also take into account the cost of any feeder reports and any records involved. He may or may not add the transmitting costs, the reading costs, the analyzing and interpreting costs, etc., depending on the scope of his study. If he is seeking total costs, however, he must account for these other important cost areas.

Cost estimates based on actual situations provide the clearest and most accurate picture. Get estimates from those who actually do the work. Obtain information from one or two offices or activities of each type, and project the figures to include all offices and activities involved. Obtain dollar costs for machine-time, printing, special equipment, and other materials from those who do the purchasing.

Consider all report locations and all basic types of report work. Only when you know the dimensions of the entire reporting system can you estimate its cost realistically.

EXPRESSING THE COST

The cost of the individual report is measured or estimated primarily in man-hours for all work involved at all locations over a period of one year. If applicable, you should include the man-hour and other costs incurred by other agencies and the general public.

As more and more mechanization of reports takes place, a trend towards some standard presentation of cost information has developed. In following this standard, you should express the cost in man-hours and related dollars; machine-hours and related dollars; other costs in dollars; and total cost in dollars, as of a given date.

Measure man-time in man-hours, days, or years. Convert to dollars using specific grades or rates where known, or averages

if you cannot easily determine the actual grades or rates. Measure machine-time in machine hours. Convert to dollars using an appropriate average hourly cost. Measure space in square feet, and convert square feet to dollars, using an average cost per square foot for the type of space in use. Measure equipment, supplies, printing, or other materials in dollars.

COST OF INITIATING A REPORT

The cost of a report includes more than the cost of keeping the records, preparing, transmitting, and using the reports. Even before the report enters the agency reporting system, it involves much work. This part of the cost usually gets little if any attention.

When compared to the high cost of continuing a report, the cost of initiating a report may not seem great. But in the aggregate, Federal offices spend a great deal of time and money in creating and installing new reporting systems. These costs should get the attention they deserve. They include such things as developing reporting requirements, designing the reporting system, writing and issuing instructions, establishing source records, and installing the system.

COST OF MAINTAINING A REPORT

Some of the same work required to initiate a report continues as a means of keeping it up to date. Methods and procedures

change. Information requirements change. These changes require revision of instructions and other activity. Sometimes the requiring office has one or more employees who spend their full time in revising requirements, redesigning systems, and rewriting instructions.

Each report submission involves many types of work and related costs. These may include both manual and mechanized procedures for collecting data; recording information at the source; and preparing feeder reports, summary reports, briefings, publications, and so forth.

The prime sources of maintenance cost information are the various organizations that perform the work and those responsible for purchasing equipment or services. The cost to other agencies or the public, if applicable, should be developed by sampling and projecting to determine a reasonable overall estimate.

COST OF USING A REPORT

The using cost includes not only the cost of recording information at the receiving office from each report presentation, but many other costs as well. It includes the time it takes to read and analyze the report, to select useful data, and to interpret the information so that it can be understood. It includes the time of executives spent in reviewing the reports they receive. It includes time spent in conferences and manage-

ment information centers discussing information reported. It includes time spent to obtain clarifying information, including telephoning and letterwriting.

Some reports require little attention at the receiving end, while others require a great deal. The more digging and analysis required, the higher the using cost.

Agencies often print and distribute 500 to 600 copies of reports containing 50 to 100 pages. Sometimes each copy is passed to several staff members for reading, analysis, and written comments. These costs should be included, too.

In addition, some offices publish documents after important conferences to announce decisions made and responsibilities fixed. These documents also represent a part of the using cost.

Reports-receiving offices and users can best provide information on the cost of using a reporting system.

COST OF PROVIDING SPECIALIZED ASSISTANCE

Many types of staff services enter the cost picture directly or indirectly, on a large or small scale. These services include the assistance provided by analysts in a reports management office, a management information office, or an operations research activity. If you are costing a reporting system which in itself includes a management information officer or staff, you should include these costs. Other

specialized assistance, more or less indirect, includes the time spent by accountants, budget officers, economist statisticians, and manpower utilization analysts.

COSTS INCLUDED IN AN AGENCY REPORTING SYSTEM

The cost of an agency's reporting system includes the cost of all individual unit reporting systems plus the cost of the various staff services related to management and public reporting. For example, in costing the agency reporting system, you should include the entire cost of the agency reports management office. The first step, though, is to list and describe all that is involved, to be sure that no costs are overlooked.

STUDY OPTIONS

There are several approaches to costing an entire reporting system. It is sometimes desirable to develop first the cost of a subsystem or family of individual reports within the whole system. It is sometimes desirable to develop cost information with respect to an entire class of reports, like narrative reports, or statistical reports, or published reports. You may also approach costing by types of work involved; for example, a measure of the total cost of reading reports.

Which is the best approach to costing? YOU must decide for yourself, according to the scope of the study and the circumstances

in your own agency. In many cases, the type of cost information already available in an agency dictates the most logical approach.

READING COST

Reading cost per page will depend on the type of report. Clear reports of fairly simple information require about 4 minutes reading time per page on the average. But a report requiring intensive study may require as much as 15 minutes or more per page. This variation suggests that a sampling of users is the best guide to developing a reasonably accurate estimate of this or any other using cost. One agency estimated that one group of reports involved a reading cost amounting to 2,750,000 pages per year at 4 minutes per page.

"BROAD-BRUSH" ESTIMATES

One broad-brush technique for costing agency management reporting consists of nothing more than finding the total number of agency employees and multiplying this figure by \$400. Tests have shown that the cost of agency management reporting amounts to from \$300 to \$500 per year per employee, on a Government-wide average. In larger agencies the cost per employee will be lower than in smaller agencies.

The average cost of a report will vary from agency to agency and from level to level within the same agency. These variations depend on the number of people involved. The higher the

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level at which a reporting requirement is imposed, the higher the cost of reporting. One agency found that 87 percent of its reporting cost came from reporting requirements at the national level, 6 percent at the regional level and 7 percent at the local level.

One large agency determines the cost of many reports on the basis of an average cost per man-year. At one time, this agency used as its average a cost of \$8150 per man-year. For example, a report involving 268 man-years was estimated to cost \$2,194,920. Before determining average cost, the agency carefully considered the typical grade levels of those involved in most agency reporting.

Some organizations estimate the cost of the agency reporting system in terms of man-time per line entry, based on an average of 15 minutes of man-time per line for initiation, maintenance, use, and so forth. (Lines of highly summarized data will average much more than 15 minutes per line.) This technique involves multiplying the number of submissions each year, times the number of participating offices, times the average number of line entries, times 15 minutes per line.

A few organizations estimate the cost of writing narrative reports at about \$20 per page. Some per-page costs will run as high as \$100 per page for collecting information, keeping records, dictating or hand-drafting, typing, transmitting, duplicating, delivery, reading, compilation, filing, and reference.

Although the "broad-brush" techniques offer the fastest approach to cost estimates, they have limited reliability. The most accurate cost information will be based on a clear understanding of the scope of the report system, research, interviews, samplings, and first-hand knowledge of the work involved. The first step to a sound cost estimate is always to identify the elements of cost, the factors of cost, and the characteristics of the report system under study.

CHECKLIST OF REPORTS COST FACTORS

The factors below are a basic guide to costing either an individual report or an agency reporting system as a whole. The person conducting the cost study should determine which of the factors apply. He should add any factors peculiar to the specific report, costing situation, or agency.

INITIATING THE REPORTING SYSTEM

1. Developing reporting requirements, including the specification of information needed, the time of need, the form of communication best suited, and the information to be excluded.

Figure 9

2. Designing the reporting system, including the composition of the report format (forms, charts, tables, narrative outlines, etc.), the investigation of methods used in other reporting systems, and the determination of any equipment requirements.
3. Writing and issuing all necessary instructions, including the development, writing, and issuance of the implementing directive and other instructions.
4. Establishing source records, including the establishment of complete records or parts of source records, manual or mechanical, solely for the collection or preparation of information for the reporting system.
5. Installing the reporting system, including training assistance; answering technical questions; demonstrating; testing; considering modifications recommended; and working out modifications.

MAINTAINING THE REPORTING SYSTEM

6. Updating the reporting system, including modification of reporting requirements, system design, related forms or charts, and written instructions.
7. Collecting data for the system, including preparation of forms, questionnaires, etc.

Figure 9 (cont'd)

8. Updating source records, including posting and filing source records, manually or mechanically; punching or notching cards; typing records; and other types of recordkeeping activity.
9. Preparing reports in the system, including compilation or transcription of data from records, forms, and other reports; calculation of quantities, ratios, and averages; posting of data to worksheets; development and preparation of narrative, statistical, form, chart, or photographic information required for oral or written reports; summarizing, refining, interpreting, and restructuring information to clarify its meaning; and writing evaluations or recommendations as an aid to the decision process.
10. Transmitting reports or data in the reporting system, including significant mailing, routing, and logging; transmission of data over Federal data networks; and publishing of reports.

USING THE REPORTING SYSTEM

11. Recording information at the receiving level, including selection of data from reports received and preparation or updating of records in the receiving office.

Figure 9 (cont'd)

12. Reading, reviewing, analyzing, and discussing information contained in reports received by officials, supervisors, specialists, and other agency employees; participating in briefing sessions, as in a management information center.
13. Preparing followup documents, including recording of names of participants, matters discussed, and decisions reached; writing, typing, correcting, and distributing the official document to those responsible for action.

PROVIDING SPECIALIZED ASSISTANCE

14. Furnishing directly related staff service, including the activities of a management information staff, a reports management staff, or an internal or external consultant staff used before and during the development of a reporting system.
15. Furnishing indirectly related staff service, including guidance obtained from the budget office; accounting office; economists, statisticians, and mathematicians; the planning, programming, and budgeting system staff; manpower utilization specialists; operations research specialists; systems analysts; work measurement specialists.

Figure 9 (cont'd)

EXTERNAL REPORTING

Many agencies collect information from the public, either as a part of an administrative program, or for general informational purposes. This generally useful information, supplied by the public, is used in many ways. A great deal of it goes into statistical and economic analyses, which are published for the public as well as for Government use. Some of it provides data which guides agencies in carrying out their program responsibilities. Special summaries of public reported information are often released as a service to the broad economic interests of the Nation.

Guidelines for the collection of information from public sources outside a Federal Agency are covered by the Office of Management and Budget, Circular No. A-40 revised May 25, 1962 (Appendix C), and Transmittal Memorandum No. 1, dated February 12, 1968 (Appendix D). That circular, issued under the authority of the Federal Reports Act of 1942, provides for the Office of Management and Budget to review and clear plans and report forms used by Federal agencies in the collection of information from ten or more non-Federal employees.

Some departments and agencies receive official requests from intergovernmental organizations for statistical information. Executive Order No. 10033 of February 8, 1949 provides for determinations as to what statistical information will be furnished to intergovernmental organizations, and as to which

Federal executive agency or agencies will collect or make available such information. The Office of Management and Budget, Circular No. A-39 revised April 24, 1967 (Appendix E) outlines the procedures to be followed in handling such requests.

Interagency reporting is also discussed in this chapter, for it is a form of external reporting when viewed from the eyes of the supplying agency.

PUBLIC REPORTING

Agency Responsibilities. The sponsoring agency (or its contractors) proposing to collect information from the public, either as a part of an administrative program or for general information purposes, must file with the Office of Management and Budget, unless exempted, a request for clearance of its proposal. This request, which is made on "Standard Form 83" is accompanied by a draft of the form or plan used to collect the information, together with instructions and related materials. A supporting statement must accompany each request.

Internal Review Process. The responsible official should satisfy himself as to the validity of the reporting requirement using the analysis techniques discussed earlier in this handbook. Consideration will be given of the burden which would be imposed on the respondent and whether the questions are answerable from his records or knowledge. Special attention is given to questions which may involve the issue of invasion

of privacy or which would reflect adversely on the respondent. If the data requested are of a confidential nature, consideration will be given to the appropriateness of the pledge to the respondent to maintain confidentiality, and the legal or administrative procedure to be followed for carrying out such a pledge.

The Reporting Burden. The Congress is ever concerned about agencies requiring information from the public -- its political aspects, its recordkeeping requirements, and the invasion of privacy involved. It is particularly concerned about duplication in Federal reporting programs and about the costs of reporting imposed on the public by Federal agencies. It was to reduce this burden that the Congress passed the Federal Reports Act of 1942. Subsequently, there were the Olson "Paperwork Jungle" hearings and the Smathers small business hearings, along with the Second Hoover Commission views on the public's burden. The extent of the recordkeeping requirements involved can be found in the special annual issue of the Federal Register listing how long required documentation must be kept. There have been constant complaints that agency instructions in this area are vague and indefinite.

Office of Management and Budget Clearance. Before information on any scale can be obtained from the public, the approval of the Office of Management and Budget is required. As a result of Attachment A to Transmittal Memorandum No. 1, of Circular A-44, Revised, issued in June 1970, (Appendix F) OMB will have to be given stronger justifications than previously before approval can be granted.

The Office of Management and Budget has adopted the following list of 'Practices to be Avoided in the Preparation of Federal Reporting Forms' in an effort to be responsive to Congressional wishes.

1. "Avoid asking for data which are not readily available to the respondent.
2. "Avoid asking for data which cannot be prepared by standard accounting processes.
3. "Avoid reporting requirements which fail to take into account the limitations of the records of 'small business' respondents.
4. "Avoid reporting requirements which fail to allow for the specialization or location of records of very large business respondents.
5. "Avoid making requests for information retroactive to periods too far in the past.
6. "Avoid asking for the listing of individual transactions.
7. "Avoid reports intended to determine whether a respondent is in violation of a regulation or to induce a violator to attest to his own violation.
8. "Avoid questionnaires which convey information to management or which stimulate management to an awareness of a Government agency, its policy or its requirements.
9. "Never let a questionnaire fall below the established standards for physical makeup.
10. "Avoid the issuance of new reporting forms and new reporting and recordkeeping requirements which are not accompanied by a statement as to the intended purposes and uses to which the data will be put.
11. "Avoid making request for information when Government facilities and staff for processing such requests are not available.
12. "Avoid attempting to meet the Government's need for information by collaborating in the collection of data by a business organization such as a trade association, until, as is required by the Federal Reports Act, the Bureau of the Budget has approved the questionnaire which is being 'sponsored' by a Federal agency."

Standards for Designing Public Reporting Forms. The Office of Management and Budget has also established standards which they consider essential when designing reporting forms that request information from the public. These standards are in addition to those previously discussed in connection with other reporting forms.

1. Essential Items Required on All Reporting Forms

- . Agency identification and return address.
- . Bureau of the Budget report approval number.
- . Identification of respondent.
- . Postal ZIP Code of originating agency.

2. Other Items to Include if Needed

- . Authority or basis for collection.
- . Confidential clause.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL REPORTING

Agency Responsibilities. A department or agency receiving a request for statistical information from intergovernmental organizations is to be guided by the procedures contained in Circular No. A-39 revised April 24, 1967 (Appendix E). An "intergovernmental organization" means any international organization of which the United States is a member.

The Office of Management and Budget has determined, that statistical information may be provided in response to official intergovernmental requests, without further action under Circular A-39 revised, whenever:

- . The statistical information requested is contained in a published document, or
- . The information is clearly informal in character and does not call for data for publication, citation in official documents, direct use in intergovernmental conferences or negotiations, or other specific uses of a formal character.

The department or establishment receiving such an official request has been determined by the Office of Management and Budget to be the agency which will make such information available. Special provisions are made in this same circular pertaining to requests of international financial institutions.

Processing of and reviewing requests for statistical information from intergovernmental organizations is logically a responsibility of the agency's reports management office. Precautions should be taken by the reviewer to insure full agency compliance with the requirements of Circular A-39. Included in that responsibility is the furnishing of additional supporting material pertinent to the requests, including, the citation of any budgetary restrictions, requirements of military security or confidentiality, or other limitations which would prevent substantial clearance by the Office of Management and Budget. As in the procedure for review of public reporting requests, the request and proposed report involves a careful examination. This includes consultation with the officials who will supply the data requested. The inquiry includes a look at the work load

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involved, and any problems associated with the preparation
of the requested data and the appropriateness of release of
the information.

INTERAGENCY REPORTING

Interagency reporting is any reporting which is required by one department or agency having statutory or administrative authority to require reports from one or more other departments or agencies. For example, the Civil Service Commission in administering the Federal Civil Service Program, requires certain personnel reports from agencies. The General Services Administration being responsible for common procurement services and the use of public buildings collects information on those subjects from departments and agencies.

While the information required and the reporting formats are prescribed by the requiring agencies, they are usually developed in consultation with the reporting departments and agencies. Preparing agencies and departments are encouraged by reporting agencies, to submit constructive suggestions or recommendations for the improvement of interagency reports. Especially useful are estimates of the cost of the report to the participating agencies and whether the report supplies any management information of value to the participating agency. Such suggestions and recommendations should, of course, be forwarded through proper administrative channels.

The fact that an interagency report is Congressionally required is not, ipso facto, evidence of need. The requirement may be quite old and no one may have approached the Congressional Committee involved to see to what extent times or views have changed.

FEDERAL PROPERTY MANAGEMENT REGULATIONS

Part 101-1. Records Management

Subpart 101-11.2 Creation of Records

101-11.207 Reports - Agency Program Responsibilities.

101-11.207-1 The reports management function.

The primary objectives of reports management are to provide agency management officials with needed information at times and places, and in the format most useful to them, and to furnish this information as economically and efficiently as possible. The reports management function is also concerned with the review, approval, and clearance with the Bureau of the Budget of reporting plans and forms, as required by the Federal Reports Act (Bureau of the Budget Circular No. A-40, Revised, May 25, 1962).

101-11.207-2 Reports defined.

- a. A report is data or information, generally summarized, transmitted for use in determining policy; planning, controlling, and evaluating operations and performance; and preparing other reports. The data or information may be in narrative, statistical, graphic, or other form.
- b. Most reports of an agency can be classified as belonging to one of several well defined families or groups of reports. Each group of related reports is generally the product of an information system serving a specific administrative or operational area, such as personnel, budget, or procurement. Consequently, the analysis of reports on a systems basis provides the best means of establishing reports relationships and evaluating information need and adequacy.
- c. Certain categories of reports normally are exempted from review and clearance in an agency reports management program. These usually include: inspection and audit reports; security classified documents; copies of operating documents such as individual supply and procurement transactions; and information presentations such as research findings, technical summaries, special studies, and surveys. Reports to be exempted should be determined by an analysis of agency information requirements.
- d. Reports to and from other agencies, as well as those for internal management, are included in agency review and clearance procedures.

101-11.207-3 Program requirements.

- a. Each Federal agency, in providing for effective controls over the creation of records, is expected to establish an appropriate program for the management of

agency reports (101-11.201-1). The program will:

1. Establish and implement standards and procedures for the identification of management information needed for planning and control.
 2. Establish and implement standards and procedures for the design of management information systems.
 3. Establish and implement standards and procedures for the initiation, identification, review, approval, preparation, and distribution of agency reports.
 4. Provide essential management information concerning the number and types of reports in use and, for reports which require a significant amount of manpower, the estimated cost of obtaining, using, and maintaining them.
 5. Provide for the periodic review of approved reports for need, adequacy, design, and economy of preparation and use.
- b. Standards, guides, and instructions developed for the reports management program are to be published, designed for easy reference and revision. They should be readily available to reports originators and users.

101-11.207-4 · Program implementation.

The following actions are generally basic to a reports management program:

- a. Establish and maintain an inventory of reports for each agency management information system.
- b. Determine, from the inventory of agency reports, whether information available is adequate for management purposes.
- c. Determine the kinds of management information systems that best serve management.
- d. Analyze all reports inventoried and all reports submitted for approval in the future to determine that:
 1. The information is adequate, necessary, meaningful, and useful.
 2. The information is obtained from the best available source and in the simplest manner.
 3. The estimated cost of gathering the information does not exceed its management value.
- e. Require that each request for a new or revised report explain how the report will be used.

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- f. Require that each report be supported by a directive setting forth instructions for preparation and submission.

Approved For Release 2001/11/01 : CIA-RDP74-00390R000300140009-1

Approved For Release 2001/11/01 : CIA-RDP74-00390R000300140009-1

MODEL REPORTS MANAGEMENT DIRECTIVE

Subject: Reports Management Program

Purpose. Reports are essential to the management and operation of this agency. Reports management is required to assure that reports and reporting systems are as effective, efficient, and economical as possible. This directive sets forth policies, responsibilities, and procedures for the management of reports.

Policy. Management and operating officials at all levels need dependable information to measure the accomplishment of objectives, and for advance planning purposes to improve the effectiveness of programs, policies and procedures. It is this agency's policy that this information shall be obtained through a systematically planned and administered management reporting program that will assure: (1) adequacy, accuracy, timeliness, and usefulness of the collected data, and (2) maximum efficiency and economy in collecting and disseminating data.

Role of Reports in Management. Reports are an important means of communication in the management process. Appropriate reported information is an important management tool not only for managers of specific activities but for overall management as well. Reports also serve as a primary source of information for planning and directing future programs.

Objectives of The Reports Management Program. The reports management program is designed to help each manager carry out his responsibilities, at the same time achieving maximum economy, uniformity, and simplicity in reporting systems. Inherent in this aim are the following specific objectives:

- Provide meaningful and useful information for management, clearly presented.
- Develop reporting simplicity, including practical limits on data reported, frequency, and distribution.
- Insure maximum timeliness and realistic due dates.
- Provide reporting that compares progress with stated operating program objectives.
- Eliminate non-essential reports and information; combine and simplify reports wherever possible.
- Integrate reporting systems where feasible.
- Mechanize or automate reports, as applicable and economical.
- Develop clear and adequate reporting instructions and forms, and
- Establish periodic follow-up on individual reports and reporting systems to determine need and adequacy.

Definitions.

i. General Terms

- a. Information. Most reports of an agency can be classified as belonging to one of several well-defined families or groups of reports. Each group of related reports is generally the product of an information system serving a specific administrative or operational area, such as personnel, budget, or procurement.
- b. Report. A report is data or information, generally summarized, transmitted for use in determining policy; planning, controlling, and evaluating operations and performances; and preparing other reports. The data or information may be in narrative, statistical, graphic, or other form.

- c. Reporting System. The means through which a report or related reports, including the procedures, methods of preparing, and transmitting, achieves either a single end result or supports a complete information system, a portion of such system, or an operation.

2. Specific Terms

- a. Departmental or Agency Report. A report required by a department or agency to be submitted by activities under its jurisdiction.
- b. Interagency Reporting. Any reporting which is required by one executive department or agency having statutory or administrative authority to require reports from one or more other departments or agencies.
- c. External Report. A report required by an organization from departments, agencies, organizations, or individuals outside the control of the requesting organization.
- d. Feeder Report. A term used to identify reports required for the sole purpose of providing information needed in the preparation of other reports.
- e. One-time Report. A report prepared one time only by one or more respondents.
- f. Recurring Report. A report which conveys essentially the same type of information regularly at prescribed intervals; e. g. daily, weekly, monthly, annually etc.
- g. Public Reporting. Any reporting required by the Federal Government from state and local governments, businesses, or individuals which is subject to the provisions of the Federal Reports Act. This definition is limited to administrative forms and inquiries filled out by the public, and excludes statistical public

- h. Required Report. A report which a particular office or organization requires from another office or organization. The report is an incoming report to the requiring office.
- i. Revised Report. A report which is changed in any respect; e. g. format, content, definitions, instructions, reporting procedures, preparing offices or organizations, frequency, scheduling or routing.
- j. Situation Report. A recurring report, which is prepared on each occurrence, recurrence, or non-occurrence of an event or situation of certain prescribed characteristics; e. g. "a forest fire," "upon occurrence of an accident" etc.
- k. Reports Symbol. A set of authorized letter abbreviations and/or numbers, plus a serial number, which identifies a report.
- l. Due Date. The date a report is to arrive at its prescribed destination.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Overall Direction.

The head of this agency and his national office staff direct the overall program. Within the overall policy and programs, regional directors and heads of subordinate offices are responsible for effective reports management programs within their respective organizations.

Reports Management Officers.

Common responsibilities at each of the three organizational levels, national, regional, and subordinate offices will be assigned to one Reports Management Officer (RMO) and an alternate. Each individual designated as an RMO will, through his office, conduct the functions described below in collaboration with operating and staff officials:

- Survey reporting requirements and coordinate the development of data collection and reporting systems.

- Provide reporting requirement analysis services.
- Review new and revised reports and assign reports symbols as appropriate.
- Maintain a current inventory of all reports.
- Observe area reports activities to assure compliance with the policies contained in this and related agency instructions, to achieve the objectives of the reports management program.
- Administer the reports clearance procedures within his area.
- Effect only authorized new or revised reporting requirements and arrange the discontinuance of unnecessary or rescinded reports.
- Establish evaluation procedures necessary to improve the quality of reports.
- Make constructive recommendations and suggestions concerning the preparation and use of reports.
- Suggest improvements in reports and reporting instructions to improve quality.
- Maintain liaison with staff offices and other agencies to assure maximum economy and effectiveness in his organization's reporting program.

Program and Operations Managers will:

- Analyze and evaluate reporting requirements.
- Identify data needs.
- Recommend reports and system improvements.

Agency Reports Management Officer as head of the National Reports Management Office will:

- Identify categories of information to be exempted from reports control procedures.
- Develop and promote techniques to improve the effectiveness of reports management programs and activities throughout the agency.

- Provide agency standards and guidelines for the creation and use of reports.
- Advise and assist regional offices and field activities in establishing and administering effective reports management programs and systems.
- Direct and coordinate periodic reviews of agency headquarters and field reports.
- Evaluate progress and summarize results of staff office and field reports management programs.

Regional Directors and Heads of Subordinate Offices, as appropriate will:

- Establish a reports management program within his area.
- Issue appropriate directives implementing agency reports management policies and objectives.
- Establish internal controls to assure conformity with agency standards and program objectives.
- Set up adequate systems for reviewing and clearing proposed reports.
- Periodically, or as requested by agency headquarters, conduct a systematic review of all reports submitted by or to the region or major subordinate office to determine whether any should be modified or discontinued.
- Designate an individual to act as Reports Management Officer and notify national headquarters of the designation.

Operating A Program

This section of a Reports Management directive should contain or make reference to the instructions for the operation of a program. It is recognized that the extent and scope of such instructions will vary among Government organizations. Furthermore, departments or agencies, depending on their respective policies on directive issuances, will either include

the instructions as a part of this directive or may choose to issue a separate internal handbook covering the detailed operating features of the program. To serve a general purpose, the operating instructions have been included in the body of this handbook and provide sufficient material to assist each department or agency in establishing its respective program.

Appendix C

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

BUREAU OF THE BUDGET

WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

MAY 25, 1962

CIRCULAR NO. A-40
Revised

TO THE HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND ESTABLISHMENTS

SUBJECT: Clearance of plans and report forms under the Federal
Reports Act

This revision of Circular No. A-40 replaces Circular No. A-40, dated October 24, 1951. Paragraph 2e(1) has been revised to refer more specifically to reporting requirements. Standard Form No. 83 has been revised so that it can be used both as a request for clearance and as a notice of action. The provision for requesting extension of clearance by letter has been eliminated from paragraph 6. Other minor clarifying changes have also been made.

1. Authority. This Circular, promulgated under the authority of sections 3, 5, and 6 of the Federal Reports Act of 1942, provides for the review and clearance of plans and report forms used by Federal agencies in the collection of information.

2. Definitions. The following definitions are to be used for the purposes of this Circular:

a. The term "Act" means the Federal Reports Act of 1942. Section 5 of the Act reads as follows:

"No Federal agency shall conduct or sponsor the collection of information, upon identical items, from ten or more persons (other than Federal employees considered as such) unless, in advance of adoption or revision of any plans or forms to be used in such collection,

"(a) The agency shall have submitted to the Director such plans or forms, together with copies of such pertinent regulations and other related materials as the Director shall specify; and

"(b) The Director shall have stated that he does not disapprove the proposed collection of information."

(No. A-40)

b. The term "Federal agency" means any executive department, commission, independent establishment, corporation owned or controlled by the United States, board, bureau, division, service, office, authority, or administration in the executive branch of the Government, provided, that it does not include the government of the District of Columbia or of any territory or possession of the United States, or any subdivision of such a government; the General Accounting Office; the Internal Revenue Service, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, the Bureau of the Public Debt, the Bureau of Accounts, or the Division of Foreign Assets Control of the Treasury Department; or any Federal bank supervisory agency to the extent that such agency obtains reports and information from banks as provided or authorized by law and in the proper performance of its supervisory functions.

c. The term "Director" means the Director of the Bureau of the Budget. The term "Assistant Director" means the Assistant Director of the Bureau of the Budget for Statistical Standards or his designated representative.

d. The term "report form" means any application form or other administrative report form, questionnaire, telegraphic request, or other similar device for the collection of information.

e. The term "plan" means:

(1) Any general or specific requirement for the reporting of information or the establishment or maintenance of records (including systems of accounts and systems of classification) which are to be used or be available for use in the collection of information.

(2) Any requirement or instruction affecting the content, preparation, return, or use of a plan or report form.

(3) Any contract or agreement which will result in the collection of information on identical items by or for the contractor from ten or more respondents.

f. The term "requirement" will be deemed to include a recommendation, order, regulation, or directive, but will not apply to the imposition of a general duty to maintain such records, or submit such reports, as may be thereafter or otherwise specifically prescribed by appropriate authority. Such a general requirement will, however, state that specific recording or reporting requirements subsequently prescribed will be "subject to the approval of the Bureau of the Budget pursuant to the Federal Reports Act of 1942."

g. The term "information" means facts or opinions obtained or made available by the use of a plan or report form.

h. "Clearance" of a plan or report form means (1) a determination that the information to be sought or provided is reasonably needed by the Federal agency concerned, in the proper performance of its functions, and (2) authorization to use the plan or report form in the collection or recording of such information in the manner proposed, or on such other conditions as the Assistant Director may prescribe, with an approval number, notation, or other appropriate means to indicate clearance. Such clearance will constitute a declaration by the Director, in accordance with section 5 of the Act, that he does not disapprove the collection of information in the manner proposed. Unless the agency is otherwise notified, a withholding of clearance will constitute a determination in pursuance of section 3(d) of the Act that the collection of information in the manner proposed is unnecessary.

i. The term "person" means any corporation, company, association, firm, partnership, society, or joint-stock company, as well as an individual, and any State or territorial government or branch thereof, any political subdivision of any State or territory, or any branch of any such political subdivision.

j. The term "respondent" means any person or any agency or employee or instrumentality of the Federal Government, from which information is obtained or requested on a plan or report form. The term applies irrespective of whether the individual or organization is located within or outside the United States.

k. Any plan or report form is deemed to be "used" by an agency when its use is wholly or partly sponsored, controlled, or contracted for by the agency. Among the types of sponsorship which are covered are situations in which the plan or report form is developed or put into use at the request of, order of, by virtue of a research grant from, or under contract with, a Federal agency. In these circumstances, a Federal agency will be regarded equally as sponsor with regard to work done by contractors and subcontractors.

l. "Unnecessary duplication" is deemed to exist in the collection of information if the duplicating activities involve either identical information or similar information which is adequate for the intended use.

3. Clearance requirements.

a. General requirements of clearance. No plan or report form (as herein limited or described) is to be used or prescribed by a Federal agency in the collection or recording of information without first

obtaining clearance from the Assistant Director and inscribing thereon an approval number or notation. Paragraphs 3, 4, 5 and 6 of this Circular apply only to (1) plans and report forms which call for information of an identical nature (or the recording thereof) from ten or more persons other than Federal employees considered as such, and (2) report forms which call for information of an identical nature from agencies, employees, or instrumentalities of the Federal Government, which is to be used for statistical compilations of general public interest, including compilations showing the status or implementation of Federal activities and programs.

b. Responsibility of agency sponsoring collection of information.

Whenever a Federal agency sponsors the use of a plan or report form by research grantees, contractors, and other sponsored collectors of information, including sponsoring a request for data to be obtained by others, it will be the agency's duty:

- (1) To inform the sponsored collector of information of the requirements of this Circular;
- (2) To insure that the submittal required by paragraph 4a of this Circular is made; and
- (3) To insure that the plan or report form is not used without clearance.

c. Evidence of clearance for report forms. Clearance of a report form will be evidenced by printing or inscribing on each copy so used, in the upper right-hand corner of the first page, an approval number assigned to it by the Assistant Director, in the following manner:

- (1) When no time limit is assigned to the use of the report form:

Form Approved
Budget Bureau No. OO-ROO

- (2) When a time limit is assigned to the use of the report form:

Budget Bureau No. OO-ROO
Approval Expires (date)

d. Evidence of clearance for plans. Clearance of plans for use in the collection or recording of information will be evidenced by printing or inscribing on each plan so used one of the following endorsements or such other means as may be required by the Assistant Director:

(1) "The...(record-keeping, reporting, or other requirements) of this...(regulation or the like) have been approved by the Bureau of the Budget in accordance with the Federal Reports Act of 1942."

(2) "This...(record-keeping, reporting, or other requirement) has been approved by the Bureau of the Budget in accordance with the Federal Reports Act of 1942."

e. Termination of clearance and use. No plan or report form subject to paragraph 3a is to be used after its expiration date without resubmittal and prior clearance. Moreover, clearance of any plan or report form subject to paragraph 3a may be withdrawn by the Assistant Director, in which event the use of the plan or report form will be discontinued.

4. Request for clearance for new plans and report forms.

a. Submittal for clearance. In order to obtain review and clearance, the agency will submit two copies of the plan or report form to the Assistant Director in time to allow for adequate review and the adoption of any necessary alterations (including coordination or integration with other plans and report forms) without delaying the operating program to which the plan or report form relates. Such submittal will be accompanied by the required number of copies of Standard Form No. 83, appropriately filled out, and such other data as the Assistant Director may require. Ordinarily, the submittal will not need to be accompanied by a letter, as Standard Form No. 83 is itself a request for clearance. Standard and optional forms, which are subject to the Federal Reports Act of 1942, shall be submitted for clearance in accordance with the procedures outlined in Bureau of the Budget Circular No. A-17. Standard Form No. 83 may be secured from the Federal Supply Service, General Services Administration.

b. Other material to be submitted. In addition to the foregoing, there will be submitted for examination or clearance such other material pertaining to the collection, processing, tabulation, analysis, or publication of information as may be required by the Assistant Director.

c. Consideration of practical utility. To minimize the reporting burden on respondents, especially individuals and small business enterprises, and to improve governmental efficiency, each Federal agency will consider and determine, in connection with each plan or report form submitted, whether the proposed plan or report form exceeds the limits of reasonable need or practical utility, either with respect to number of respondents, frequency of collection, or number and difficulty of the items, and whether all of the items of information to be furnished or recorded are essential to the central purpose of such plan or report form. Clearance of plans and report forms will be withheld whenever it appears to the Assistant Director that this requirement has not been met.

(No. A-40)

5. Request for clearance for revised plans and report forms. Before a material revision or change is made in an approved plan or report form or one for which clearance is required, or in the use thereof, further clearance will be obtained from the Bureau of the Budget in the manner prescribed in this Circular, by submitting pertinent data or explanation on Standard Form No. 83. A material revision or change in a plan or report form or the use thereof, necessitating further clearance, will include any revision in (a) the kind or amount of information sought, (b) the number or identity of respondents, or (c) the time or frequency of reporting. It will also include a transfer of the duty or function of collecting, processing, or tabulating the information, either into, or out of, or within a Federal agency.

6. Request for extension of clearance. If use of a plan or report form beyond a scheduled expiration date is desired, without material revision or change, the request for an extension of clearance will be made on Standard Form No. 83.

7. Use of exempt forms.

a. Granting of exemptions. Exemption from clearance may be granted by the Assistant Director with respect to affidavits, oaths, certifications, and other plans and report forms which do not call for information of substantial volume or importance.

b. Advisory review. Any form or reporting requirement for which clearance is not required by this Circular may be submitted to the Assistant Director for advisory review and, when desired, assignment of an approval number or other means of clearance. This provision refers to:

(1) Plans and report forms used by an agency that are not subject to this Circular, and those which are used in the collection (or recording) of information from fewer than ten persons or in other circumstances not covered by paragraph 3a.

(2) Forms and reporting requirements other than those defined as report forms and plans.

c. Notation on exempt forms. In order to facilitate compliance with forms and reporting requirements for which clearance is not required by this Circular, or with respect to which exemption may have been granted by the Assistant Director, the following notation may be recorded, preferably in the upper right-hand corner of the first page of the form:

Approval of Budget Bureau
not required

d. Termination of exemption. The use of the foregoing notation will be discontinued, and an approval number or other appropriate means of clearance will be required, whenever it is determined by the Assistant Director that the plan, report form, or other request for data is within the purview of paragraph 3a of this Circular.

8. Deviation from terms of clearance. No deviation is to be made in the use of any plan or report form, or any means of clearance, from the terms and conditions on which clearance has been granted.

9. Notice of discontinuance. Whenever the use of a plan or report form to which an approval number has been assigned is discontinued, except by expiration of a time limit fixed in pursuance of paragraph 3c, the Assistant Director is to be notified by the responsible agency.

10. Records and reports. Each Federal agency will afford the Assistant Director access to its records concerning the status and use of each plan or report form, and make such improvements in such records and reports as the Assistant Director prescribes.

11. Exercise of authority.

a. Delegation of Director's authority. The authority conferred by the Act on the Director may be exercised by the Assistant Director to the extent necessary or appropriate for the performance of any function or duty prescribed by this Circular.

b. Determination of scope. The determination of the Assistant Director as to whether any plan, report form, activity, or other matter is within the scope of the Act or this Circular will be controlling.

c. Waivers. Any provision of this Circular may be waived in writing by the Assistant Director.

12. Relation to existing authority. This Circular will not be deemed to limit or preclude exercise of the authority vested in the Bureau of the Budget by Executive Order 8248, Executive Order 10033, Executive Order 10253, or otherwise, to plan and promote the improvement, development, and coordination of Federal and other statistical services.

DAVID E. BELL
Director

(No. A-40)

Approved For Release 2001/11/01 : CIA-RDP74-00390R000300140009-1

Approved For Release 2001/11/01 : CIA-RDP74-00390R000300140009-1

STANDARD FORM 103 January 1962 Bureau of the Budget 83-104	Approved For Release 2001/11/01 : CIA-RDP74-00390R000300140009-1 REQUEST FOR AND NOTICE OF BUREAU OF THE BUDGET CLEARANCE ACTION For Documents Requiring Approval Under Bureau of the Budget Circulars No. A-40 and A-17	SEE INSTRUCTIONS BELOW AND ON REVERSE SIDE
Leave this space blank	NOTE: For clearance under Circular No. A-40, submit three copies, and under Circular No. A-17 four copies, of this request to the Bureau of the Budget. For each duplicate notice of action desired by the submitting agency, an additional copy should be submitted. Attach two copies of (1) the material submitted for clearance, (2) the supporting statement described in instructions, and (3) any supplementary documents, such as instructions, covering letters, summary of tabulation plans, etc.	Leave this space blank

REQUEST FOR CLEARANCE

1. NAME AND ADDRESS OF OFFICE TO WHICH NOTICE OF ACTION SHOULD BE SENT <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 100px; width: 100%;"></div>		2. CURRENT APPROVAL NO.
		3. CURRENT EXPIRATION DATE
		4. SUGGESTED EXP. DATE
5a. DEPARTMENT OR AGENCY SUBMITTING REQUEST 	5b. BUREAU AND DIVISION ORIGINATING REQUEST 	
6. NAME OF PERSON WITH WHOM BUDGET BUREAU REVIEWER SHOULD CONFER 	7. TELEPHONE CODE AND EXTENSION 	
8. TITLE OF FORM OR OTHER DOCUMENT SUBMITTED 	9. FORM NO. (Agency, Standard or Optional) 	
10. RELATED FORMS, REQUIREMENTS, ETC. (Identify any to be replaced) 		
11. TYPE OF DOCUMENT SUBMITTED ("X" ONE) <input type="checkbox"/> FORM <input type="checkbox"/> REPORTING OR RECORD-KEEPING REQUIREMENT <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (Specify): _____	12. EDITION ("X" ONE) <input type="checkbox"/> NEW <input type="checkbox"/> REVISED <input type="checkbox"/> EXTENSION—NO CHANGE	
13. FREQUENCY OF USE ("X" ONE) <input type="checkbox"/> ANNUAL <input type="checkbox"/> QUARTERLY <input type="checkbox"/> MONTHLY <input type="checkbox"/> WEEKLY <input type="checkbox"/> ON OCCASION <input type="checkbox"/> SINGLE TIME <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (Specify) _____		
14. REPORTING METHOD ("X" ONE) <input type="checkbox"/> MAIL <input type="checkbox"/> PERSONAL INTERVIEW <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (Specify) _____	15. ACTUAL OR ESTIMATED COVERAGE: NUMBER _____ IF SAMPLE SURVEY, NUMBER IN UNIVERSE _____	16. SUPPORTING STATEMENT ("X" ONE) <input type="checkbox"/> NEW STATEMENT ATTACHED <input type="checkbox"/> PREVIOUS STATEMENT APPLICABLE
17. SIGNATURE AND TITLE OF APPROVING OFFICIAL FOR ORIGINATING OFFICE 		18. DATE SIGNED
19. SIGNATURE AND TITLE OF OFFICIAL SUBMITTING REQUEST TO BUREAU OF THE BUDGET 		20. DATE SIGNED

NOTICE OF ACTION

(To be completed by Bureau of the Budget)

In accordance with the provisions of Bureau of the Budget Circulars No. A-40 and A-17, the action indicated below has been taken with respect to the above request. In the case of 1 or 2 below, the information appearing in the box must appear in the upper right corner of the document. In the case of 3, it must appear somewhere in the document. For a standard or optional form, the form number and edition date shown in 4 must appear on the form, preferably in the upper left corner, with the name of the promulgating agency and reference to its directive governing use of the form. After reproduction of form or document, send two copies to this office.

1. <input type="checkbox"/> Approved. <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content;"> BUDGET BUREAU NO. _____ APPROVAL EXPIRES _____ </div>	4. <input type="checkbox"/> Approved as: STANDARD FORM NO. _____ DATE _____ OPTIONAL FORM NO. _____ DATE _____ EXCEPTION TO STANDARD FORM NO. _____ DATE _____
2. <input type="checkbox"/> Approved through— <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content;"> FORM APPROVED. _____ BUDGET BUREAU NO. _____ </div>	5. <input type="checkbox"/> Disapproved or other action. (See "Remarks") Remarks: _____
3. <input type="checkbox"/> Approved under Budget Bureau No. <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content;"> The reporting and/or record-keeping requirements contained herein have been approved by the Bureau of the Budget in accordance with the Federal Reports Act of 1942. </div>	
Action approved by— <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100%; height: 20px;"></div> <p align="center">(Signature)</p>	Date signed <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100%; height: 20px;"></div> <p align="center">(Title)</p>

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING STANDARD FORM 83

Documents Requiring Approval. This form is to be used for requesting clearance of all documents requiring approval under Bureau of the Budget Circular No. A-40 (Revised), Clearance of Plans and Report Forms under the Federal Reports Act, and Circular No. A-17 (Revised), Clearance of Standard and Optional Forms. The term "document" refers to report forms and to orders, regulations or other directives which include requirements to submit reports or to maintain records. It also refers to any supplementary documents, such as instructions, covering letters, tabulation plans, etc. Contracts or agreements under which a Federal agency sponsors the collection of information, and the forms, plans or requirements growing out of such contracts or agreements, are also subject to clearance.

Item 1—Enter name and address of office responsible for final clearance of request within the department or agency and for transmittal to the Bureau of the Budget. The notice of action will be returned to the address shown.

Item 2—For a request for approval of a revision or an extension, enter the current Budget Bureau approval number. For new requests, leave blank.

Item 3—Enter the expiration date last assigned, if any.

Item 4—The originating office should suggest an expiration date for the approval being requested. Documents that have been in use for some time and for which early revisions are not contemplated, may be approved for periods up to 5 years. Single-time forms are approved for periods sufficiently long to permit the collection of the information.

Items 5a and 5b—Enter name of department or agency, and the bureau and division or other corresponding office originating the request and responsible for developing the forms, plans, regulations, etc.

Item 6—The person who is familiar with the document being cleared and who can answer questions about it.

Item 7—The code and extension or other telephone number of the person named in item 6.

Item 8—The title which appears on the form or document in sufficient detail to be easily identified. If it has no title, enter a descriptive phrase.

Item 9—The number or other symbol assigned to the form or document by the agency. If a revision of standard or optional form, enter the number assigned by the Bureau of the Budget. For new standard or optional form, leave blank.

Item 10—Enter either the Budget Bureau approval number, the agency number, or the title of any related forms or documents, e.g., forms of agency collecting similar information for a different period of time or from a different group of respondents. Any of these forms which are to be replaced by the form covered by the request for clearance must be identified.

Item 11—The term "form" includes any application form or other administrative report form, questionnaire, schedule, telegraphic request, or other similar device for the collection of information. "Reporting or record-keeping requirements" refers to any order, regulation, or other directive containing requirements to submit reports or maintain records. Contracts or agreements under which a Federal agency is sponsoring the collection of information should be entered under "other."

Item 12—Check "new" if the form or document has never been submitted for clearance before. Check "revised" if any substantive changes are being made in an approved form currently in use. All such changes are subject to approval as soon as they are made even if the current approval has not expired. Check "extension" if no changes are being made or if they are of a very minor nature, such as changes in dates.

Item 13—Check "annual," "monthly," etc., for regularly repetitive forms; "on occasion" for forms used if, as, and when required (such as most application and registration forms); and "single time" for forms which are nonrepetitive or of noncontinuing use.

Item 14—Check the appropriate box to indicate whether the information is being obtained by mailing a form to the respondent or by means of a face-to-face interview. If other means are to be used, check "other" and specify.

Item 15—For applications and other administrative forms, estimate the number (exclusive of duplicate originals) to be used in a stated time period, e.g., 3,000 per year, 20 per month, etc. In the case of statistical surveys, give the number to be contacted. If it is a sample survey, also report the total number in the universe from which the sample was selected.

Item 16—Indicate whether a supporting statement is attached or that the previous statement submitted is still applicable. (See instructions for supporting statement, below.)

Items 17 and 18—These spaces are provided for the signature and title of the person in the originating office who normally approves forms and survey plans, and the date signed.

Items 19 and 20—These spaces are for the signature and title of the person responsible for submitting the request for clearance to the Bureau of the Budget, if this person is different from the one signing in item 17. In agencies having central clearance units, the person heading such unit would sign here.

Notice of Action. This part of the form will be completed by the Bureau of the Budget. When this section of the form has been completed and signed, the number of copies required by the agency will be returned to the office designated in item 1.

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

A supporting statement must accompany each request for clearance unless the request is for extension of approval without change, in which case the last previous statement will be considered applicable if so indicated in item 16. The supporting statement should include the following:

A. Justification of form or other document (or revision thereof) in its relation to operating or research programs

1. Describe the situation or problem which makes the collection of the information necessary and indicate by whom and how the data will be used. If the request covers a revision of an existing form or document, it is necessary only to identify the changes to be made and state the reasons for making them. In such cases, attach two copies of the form or document now in use in addition to the required copies of the revised form.

2. Explain the relationship of the forms or documents covered by this request to any listed under item 10.

3. If the data are to be collected on a regularly repetitive basis, explain the need for the frequency of collection planned.

B. Justification of method used in selecting and contacting those to be covered

1. For statistical surveys, identify the type of individuals or organizations to be covered, describe the plan used in selecting them, and justify the method to be used in contacting them. This should include plans for pretesting forms or requirements before actual use and for following up in cases where replies are not received. (See Bureau of the Budget Circular No. A-46, Exhibit A, Standards for Statistical Surveys.)

2. For application, registration, and other administrative forms, identify the type of individuals or organizations that will use them.

C. Brief description of plans for collection, tabulation and publication

1. For single-time forms, indicate when the collection of information will begin and end. Also provide any other facts about the collection phase that are pertinent to a proper evaluation of the project.

2. A summary of the tabulation plans should accompany the request for clearance or be described briefly in the supporting statement.

3. Indicate briefly the plans for publication, such as time, type and content. If any data collected are not to be published, give reasons. (See Standards for the Publication of Statistical Data, Bureau of the Budget.)

D. Documentation of consultation with those supplying data, users of the data, and others

1. Give names of individuals outside of the sponsoring bureau with whom this material has been discussed, and indicate agencies, organizations or companies which they represent. Summarize any major problems on which agreement could not be reached.

2. To allow proper consideration of the burden which would be imposed on the respondent and to relate it to the need for the information to be reported, supporting statements for new or substantially revised forms or requirements should include any significant data that may be available to the submitting agency on the expected burden on those being asked to supply the information. These may be data obtained through consultation with potential respondents or estimates of average cost based on previous experience. Cost in terms of manhours is preferred, and the source of the data should be indicated. Unless so directed, the source of the data should be indicated. For surveys for the purpose of satisfying this requirement.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

BUREAU OF THE BUDGET

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

February 12, 1968

CIRCULAR NO. A-40
Revised
Transmittal Memorandum No. 1

TO THE HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND ESTABLISHMENTS

SUBJECT: Clearance of plans and report forms under the Federal
Reports Act

1. Purpose. This Transmittal Memorandum amends paragraph 2.k. of the Circular as revised May 25, 1962, to provide that the "Clearance requirements" of paragraph 3 will apply to data collection by a contractor, subcontractor, or grantee of a Federal agency only if the specific purpose of the contract or grant is to secure for the Federal agency the data to be collected through a plan or report form, and not if the purpose is to support research or other activities to which the collection of the data is incidental.

2. Amendment. Paragraph 2.k. is amended to read as follows:

k. A plan or report form is deemed to be "used" by a Federal agency if the agency itself employs the plan or form or if it sponsors the employment of the plan or form by others. A plan or report form is deemed to be "sponsored" by a Federal agency if the information requested through the plan or report form is collected at the request of the agency by a contractor or subcontractor, a grantee, or any other person. Whenever the purpose of a contract or grant by a Federal agency is to secure information collected through a plan or report form, the plan or report form will be deemed to be sponsored by the agency even though no indication is given to respondents that the information is being collected for the Federal Government.

A plan or report form used by a contractor, subcontractor, or grantee of an agency will not be deemed to be sponsored by the agency if the contract or grant is made for the support of research or for other general purposes and not for the specific purpose of obtaining the information which would be collected through the plan or report form. A contractor, subcontractor, or grantee collecting information from the public on his own initiative in connection with

(No. A-40)

a research or other general-purpose project must not in any way represent that the information is being collected by or for the Federal agency. The terms and conditions of contracts and grants should be set forth in such a manner as to give contractors and grantees adequate notice of this prohibition.

3. Effective date. The amendment is effective on the date of this Transmittal Memorandum.

PHILLIP S. HUGHES
Acting Director

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
BUREAU OF THE BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

April 24, 1967

CIRCULAR NO. A-39
Revised

TO THE HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND ESTABLISHMENTS

SUBJECT: Providing of statistical information to intergovernmental organizations

1. Purpose. This Circular outlines the procedures to be followed by all departments and establishments in dealing with official requests from intergovernmental organizations for statistical information.

This revision replaces Circular No. A-39, dated April 4, 1949. The revision broadens the definition of "intergovernmental organization" to include any international organization of which the United States is a member; the list of specific organizations contained in Appendix I of the 1949 Circular is therefore eliminated. The revision also modifies the definition of "statistical information" and certain of the procedural requirements previously specified.

2. Authority. This Circular is issued under the authority of Executive Order No. 10033 of February 8, 1949. That Order provides for determinations as to what statistical information will be provided to intergovernmental organizations, and as to which Federal executive agency or agencies will collect or make available such information.

3. Definitions. The following definitions will apply for purposes of this Circular:

a. "Statistical information" means any kind of summary numerical data other than technical data in engineering, physical, or biological science fields.

b. "Intergovernmental organization" means any international organization of which the United States is a member.

c. "Official request" means any statistical questionnaire, or any other form of request or inquiry from an intergovernmental organization calling for statistical information, including ad hoc or single-time requests as well as repetitive or periodic requests.

d. "Assistant Director" means the Assistant Director for Statistical Standards, Bureau of the Budget.

(No. A-39)

4. Authority of Assistant Director. The Assistant Director is hereby authorized to exercise, in accordance with the provisions of this Circular, the authority which Executive Order No. 10033 confers upon the Director of the Bureau of the Budget, and the authority conferred on the Assistant Director by this Circular may be exercised by such persons as he may designate. The Assistant Director may waive any requirement of this Circular, except that requirements of paragraph 8 may be waived only with the concurrence of the National Advisory Council on International Monetary and Financial Policies. The Assistant Director may also revoke or modify any approval granted or determination made by him under the Circular. In making determinations authorized under this Circular, the Assistant Director is responsible for necessary consultation and clearance with appropriate Federal executive agencies.

5. Processing of requests. Except as provided in paragraphs 6, 7, 8, and 9, any statistical information furnished to an intergovernmental organization by any department or establishment in response to an official request will be furnished only pursuant to a prior determination by the Assistant Director in accordance with the provisions of this Circular, and such requests will be dealt with in the following manner:

a. Submittal of requests. Information concerning all such requests will be submitted promptly to the Assistant Director including, as appropriate, the identity of the organization making the request; the nature of the information requested; the views, if any, of the department or establishment on whether or how the request should be answered; and identification of any statistics which the department or establishment proposes to submit in response to the request (but not necessarily the actual statistics).

Such information will ordinarily be submitted by letter or memorandum to the Assistant Director, but may be submitted orally in special circumstances or in the case of simple or routine requests.

b. Assistant Director's action regarding requests. The Assistant Director will determine--with the concurrence of the Secretary of State-- what statistical information will be provided in response to such requests and will determine which departments and establishments will supply the information. Such determination may cover the continuing transmittal of recurrent data (for example, the transmittal of monthly data as they become available) and will continue in effect until otherwise determined by the Assistant Director.

The Assistant Director will promptly inform the departments and establishments concerned of his determination.

6. Advance determinations. It is hereby determined that statistical information may be provided in response to official requests, without further action under this Circular, whenever (a) the statistical information requested is contained in a published document, or (b) the request is clearly informal in character and does not call for data for

publication, citation in official documents, direct use in intergovernmental conferences or negotiations, or other specific uses of a formal character.

The department or establishment receiving such an official request is hereby determined to be the agency which will make such information available.

7. Existing arrangements for transmittal of recurrent data. Until otherwise determined by the Assistant Director, existing arrangements for the recurrent transmittal of statistical information to intergovernmental organizations are hereby approved.

Any department or establishment having such an arrangement resulting from an official request received prior to the date of this revision and not previously approved in accordance with the provisions of this Circular will, within sixty days of the date hereof, notify the Assistant Director in writing of the existence of such arrangement and will subsequently submit such further information concerning the arrangement as he may require.

8. Requests from the International Monetary Fund, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and other international financial institutions.

a. Under the provisions of Executive Order No. 10033 and Executive Order No. 11269, the National Advisory Council on International Monetary and Financial Policies is responsible for determining--after consultation with the Director of the Bureau of the Budget--what information is essential in order that the United States Government may comply with official requests for information received from the International Monetary Fund, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and other intergovernmental organizations the policy coordination of which is the responsibility of the National Advisory Council.

b. The National Advisory Council has informed the Bureau of the Budget that the definitions in paragraph 3, the advance determinations effected by paragraph 6, and the procedures prescribed by paragraph 7 of this Circular will be equally applicable insofar as determinations by the National Advisory Council are required by Executive Order No. 10033. The Council has also informed the Bureau that all requests subject to this paragraph of this Circular will be dealt with in the following manner:

(1) Any department or establishment which receives an official request for information from an intergovernmental organization referred to in paragraph 8a will send promptly to the Council a statement or outline of the request, in duplicate, and may also send the Council its recommendations as to the response to be made

(2) The National Advisory Council will determine, after consultation with the Assistant Director, what information is essential in order that the United States Government may comply with such request, and will notify the department or establishment concerned.

(3) The Assistant Director will determine which department or establishment will collect or make available such information. Such department or establishment will consult with the Council as to the manner and form in which the information will be collected and prepared.

(4) After the information has been collected and prepared in the manner and form prescribed by the Council, it will be submitted to the Council for presentation to the intergovernmental organization concerned.

9. Special arrangements. The Assistant Director may make special arrangements in furtherance of the purposes of Executive Order No. 10033 with any department or establishment or any interdepartmental body to which has been assigned special responsibility relating to an intergovernmental organization.

10. Channels for communication. Section 1 of Executive Order No. 10033 provides that statistical information prepared in response to official requests from intergovernmental organizations (except the organizations referred to in paragraph 8) will be transmitted to the requesting intergovernmental organizations through established channels by the Secretary of State or by the Federal executive agency authorized by the Secretary to transmit such information. The Bureau of the Budget has been informed that the Department of State intends to maintain established channels of communication for this purpose. The Assistant Director will notify the affected departments and establishments, in connection with his determinations under this Circular, of any changes by the Department of State with respect to channels of communication.

11. Material requested by Assistant Director. Each department or establishment will furnish to the Assistant Director such additional material pertaining to requests for information which are within the purview of this Circular as he may from time to time require. The department or establishment will notify the Assistant Director in writing of any budgetary restrictions, requirements of military security or confidentiality, or any other limitation which prevents substantial compliance with a determination by the Assistant Director under this Circular.

12. Plans and report forms. A determination or approval by the Assistant Director under this Circular with respect to any matter involving the use of a plan or report form which is subject to clearance by him under Circular No. A-40 does not include clearance of the plan or report form unless the Assistant Director expressly so states.

PHILLIP S. HUGHES
Acting Director

(No. A-39)

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

BUREAU OF THE BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

June 17, 1970

CIRCULAR NO. A-44
Revised
Transmittal Memorandum No. 1

TO THE HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND ESTABLISHMENTS

SUBJECT: Government-wide study to improve Federal reporting and reduce related paperwork

1. Purpose. A major element of the Government-wide management improvement program, as described in Bureau of the Budget Circular No. A-44, Revised (February 16, 1970), paragraph 7, is the periodic selection of common operational areas for Government-wide study. This Transmittal Memorandum sets forth the policy and procedures to be followed by departments and agencies for conducting the first of these---a Government-wide study to improve Federal reporting and reduce related paperwork. The study will involve three types of reporting: public, interagency, and internal reporting.

Attachment A describes in detail the responsibilities assigned and the actions required in conducting the study. The Bureau of the Budget, with the assistance of the General Services Administration, will provide project direction and coordination for this study.

2. Coverage and effective date. This Transmittal Memorandum applies to all departments and agencies and is effective immediately.

ROBERT P. MAYO
Director

Attachments

GOVERNMENT-WIDE STUDY TO IMPROVE REPORTING AND REDUCE RELATED PAPERWORK

1. Objectives of the study. The objectives of this study are to improve reporting, reduce related paperwork, and eliminate unjustified reporting requirements and associated reporting systems. The specific Government-wide goals are:

- A reduction of five million man-hours in the time expended by the public in filling out administrative forms and inquiries which are subject to clearance under the Federal Reports Act (44 U.S.C. 3501-3511).
- A \$200 million reduction in funds expended by the executive branch for reporting and related paperwork.

2. Definitions. For the purposes of this study, the following definitions will be utilized:

a. Reporting system. All systems for the processing of documents or transmissions of data which are used to set goals, fix priorities, schedule operations, allocate resources, measure results, provide information, and improve efficiency. Systems include all related reports, forms, records, directives, instructions, and processing and collection techniques, whether mechanical or manual.

b. Report. Any documents or transmission of data on a recurring, regular, or periodic basis. Reports may be in narrative, tabular, graphic, questionnaire, punched card, tape, or other forms.

c. Public reporting. Any reporting required by the Federal Government from State and local governments, businesses, or individuals which is subject to the provisions of the Federal Reports Act. This definition is limited to administrative forms and inquiries filled out by the public, and excludes statistical public reporting requirements.

d. Interagency reporting. Any reporting which is required by one executive department or agency having statutory or administrative authority to require reports from one or more other departments and agencies.

e. Internal reporting. Any reporting which is required by and prepared within the same department or agency. Significant internal reports are those which are utilized throughout or draw information from a major organizational element of a department or agency, or

those reports which are submitted by field activities and offices to the headquarters of a department or agency.

f. Project Director. The top management official designated by the head of each department or agency to be responsible for this study within his department or agency.

g. Reports identification. The process whereby a department or agency Project Director determines the individual reporting systems and reports within the agency and establishes a base line of dollars and man-hours associated with each. The base line information is to be used in measuring cost effectiveness and projecting improvement goals.

h. Reports justification. The process whereby a department or agency Project Director reviews a reporting system and its component parts, and finds that it provides necessary information and is operating in a technically acceptable manner. Justification responsibility may not be delegated.

i. Reports certification. The process whereby a department or agency head certifies a reports justification as valid. Certification responsibility may not be delegated below the Assistant Secretary level or its equivalent.

j. Reports cancellation. The process whereby a department or agency terminates a reporting system or some of its component parts.

3. Scope of the study. The study will include:

a. review of public, interagency, and significant internal reporting requirements,

b. review of organization, functions, and resources utilized for reporting systems and reports management and the recommendation of improvements,

c. research and development studies to formulate future plans for reporting systems and related paperwork, and

d. review of Government-wide statistical public reporting to evaluate requirements for economic and social statistics.

4. Responsibilities.

a. Departments and agencies. Each department and agency will:

(1) Identify the public, interagency, and significant internal

reporting and related paperwork improvements in the management effectiveness section of annual management improvement reports (See paragraph 3, and Attachment A, Circular No. A-44 Revised, February 16, 1970).

b. Bureau of the Budget. The Bureau of the Budget will:

(1) Establish an Interagency Steering Group, consisting of top level administrative personnel from the General Services Administration and four other agencies to advise on the general direction for this study. The Interagency Steering Group will appoint a task force to conduct a study of the adequacy of the organization, functions, and resources for reporting systems and reports management in the departments and agencies. The Steering Group will transmit the findings and recommendations resulting from this study to the Bureau of the Budget by September 30, 1971.

(2) Issue, at the conclusion of the Steering Group study, revised Government-wide guidelines for the organization, functions, and resources for reporting systems and reports management.

(3) Initiate a study to develop alternatives to traditional reporting and paperwork methods together with a research plan outlining mechanisms to attain these goals through basic conceptual and/or technological innovations.

(4) Initiate a study to evaluate statistical public reporting requirements. This study will evaluate statistical reporting requirements in the light of current needs for economic and social statistics as a basis for decisions.

c. General Services Administration. The General Services Administration will serve as the chairing agency of the Interagency Steering Group and will:

(1) Designate a Study Project Director who will monitor project progress and coordinate project technical activities.

(2) Provide overall technical assistance through conferences, visual aids, instructional material, and practical techniques (e.g., workshops, case studies, etc.), beginning with the conduct of a study kickoff orientation session.

(3) Provide consultant services to departments and agencies, as requested.

(4) Prepare study findings, recommendations, and achievements for publication by the Bureau of the Budget in an "Executive Management Bulletin".

(No. A-44)

reporting systems for which it has responsibility, and determine the current annual cost of these systems.

(2) Establish goals of the annual dollar and man-hour savings to be achieved from a review of these reporting requirements during the period of January 1, 1970, to June 30, 1971.

(3) Submit to the Bureau of the Budget the results of this identification process and agency goals in the format specified in Exhibit 1. This will be submitted as an attachment to the annual management improvement report due on September 30, 1970, in accordance with Circular No. A-44 Revised (February 16, 1970).

(4) Review the public, interagency, and significant internal reporting systems for which it has responsibility to:

- (a) eliminate unnecessary and uneconomical reports and reporting systems,
- (b) consolidate and shorten reports,
- (c) reduce the number of report copies,
- (d) simplify the collection of data and the processing of reports,
- (e) improve the quality and usefulness of the data being submitted, and
- (f) reduce reporting requirements.

(5) Justify and certify public, interagency, and significant internal reporting systems for which it has responsibility. Reports not required by statute which cannot be justified and certified will be cancelled. Unnecessary statutory reporting requirements will be submitted together with proposed corrective legislation to the Bureau of the Budget with the annual management improvement report due on September 30, 1971.

(6) Submit to the Bureau of the Budget the results, in terms of actual achievement of goals, of the agency review and its justification, certification, or cancellation process. This will be submitted in the format specified in Exhibit 1, as an attachment to the annual management improvement report due on September 30, 1971. Agencies participating in the Federal Assistance Review program shall include in their estimates of man-hours and dollar savings those achieved under that program.

(7) Submit information on continuing progress concerning

(No. A-44)

5. Department and agency action. Within ten working days following issuance of this Transmittal Memorandum, the head of each department and agency will designate a top management official as Project Director to be responsible for this study within the department or agency. Project Directors of Cabinet level departments and other large agencies should appoint subordinate project directors for each second level organization within such departments and agencies. Each department or agency Project Director will:

a. Notify the Bureau of the Budget (telephone 395-4850) of his selection and indicate his official title and telephone number.

b. Provide leadership and coordinate activities related to this study within his department or agency, including the establishment of a plan of action for conducting the study.

c. Direct the timely preparation of submissions required by this Transmittal Memorandum in accordance with procedures specified in Bureau of the Budget Circular No. A-44 Revised (February 16, 1970).

(No. A-44)

EXHIBIT 1

Circular No. A-44

Revised

Transmittal Memorandum No. 1

**Submittal on Government-wide Study to Improve
Federal Reporting and Reduce Related Paperwork**

SUBMITTED BY: _____ DATE: _____

Reporting Category	Base Period (As of 1-1-70)	Savings Goal (Due 9-30-70)	Actual Savings (Due 9-30-71)
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Public Reporting:

Number of reports	_____	_____	_____ 1/ 2/
Cost of reporting	_____ (Man-Hours)	_____ (Man-Hours)	_____ (Man-Hours)

Interagency Reporting:

Number of reports	_____	_____	_____ 2/
Cost of reporting	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____

Internal Reporting:

Number of reports	_____	_____	_____ 2/
Cost of reporting	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____

1/ Attach listing of public reports showing by BOB report identification number those public reports that have been justified and certified, and those public reports that have been cancelled. Public report cancellations will be effected in accordance with procedures specified in Bureau of the Budget Circular No. A-40 (May 25, 1962), as amended by Transmittal Memorandum No. 1 (February 12, 1968).

2/ Attach listing of unnecessary statutory reporting requirements and draft of proposed corrective legislation.

(No. A-44)