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VITAL RECORDS PROGRAM

DISTRIBUTION:

7 August 1973

RECORDS AND CORRESPONDENCE

FOREWORD

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This handbook has been prepared for the purpose of providing guidance and uniform procedures to the Directorates and Independent Offices responsible for developing their internal vital records programs as delegated in 21 July 1971 and 25 September 1963. This handbook is issued as a means of implementing a comprehensive and continuing Agency Vital Records Program.

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1. GENERAL

- a. There is a need to develop greater understanding of the Agency's Vital Records Program and to build a continuing interest in its support. There is also a necessity to ensure that all Agency components give adequate attention to selecting and safeguarding that body of information which would be most useful to their own essential emergency and recovery functions.
- b. Agency regulations have established decentralized responsibility for the program with the directorates and independent offices. The Chief, Information Systems Analysis Staff is the established CIA Vital Records Coordinator for the program.
- c. As a part of the Coordinator's role, this handbook is being issued to assist all components in the appraisal, selection and choice of media of records essential for the continuation of operations under emergency conditions. It is intended to give uniform technical procedures required to carry out the transactions of the program through uniform scheduling and timely deposits of the selected records. It provides a means of checking the program compliance through periodic audits.

2. DEFINITIONS OF PROGRAM OFFICERS

a. CIA Vital Records Coordinator (Chief, Information Systems Analysis Staff)

The Coordinator is responsible for furnishing staff guidance, assistance, and coordination of the Agency Records Administration Program which includes the Agency Vital Records Program.

b. Directorate and Independent Office Vital Records Officer

Under the decentralized Records Administration Program, Deputy Directors and Heads of Independent Offices have designated an individual who will be responsible for the development and administration of the Records Administration Programs under their respective jurisdictions. The Records Administration Program is defined to include the Vital Records Program.

c. Office Vital Records Officer

Those officers, usually Records Officers, officially designated within the directorates and independent offices as representatives of their internal functional and operating offices for conducting and implementing the further decentralized Records Administration Program which includes the Vital Records Program.

d. Agency Repository Vital Records Officer

The designated officer who is responsible for the Vital Records Program at the Repository. The repository is the facility for the storage, processing and servicing of deposited vital records.

3. GENERAL GUIDANCE FOR THE APPRAISAL, SELECTION AND MEDIA OF VITAL RECORDS

a. What are vital records?

Those extra copies of records identified, scheduled and deposited in the vital records repository that will facilitate continuity of Agency activities under local disasters and national emergency conditions. The Archival or Records Center retirement deposited copy should not be used as the backstop for the Vital Records program. In an emergency the retired permanent record copy would convert to being used as a working copy without control or protection for preservation prescribed by statute. Vital Records should be considered under two broad categories, emergency operating records and rights and interests records.

(1) Broad Categories of Vital Records

(a) Emergency Operating Records

These relate to essential functions of the Agency for the duration of an emergency and consist of organization and manning records (readiness) as well as substantive and procedural records basic to implementation of emergency operations. They are the records that would be needed immediately, that should normally be prepositioned at emergency relocation site, and that should normally be in the form of paper copies so they can be used (read) directly without reliance on enlarging or other equipment.

(b) Rights and Interest Records

These relate to the preservation of rights and interests of individual citizens and of the Government.

In identifying vital records, the records themselves must be evaluated only in regard to their essentiality in carrying out emergency functions or in protecting rights or interests. The person making the selection is not concerned with the archival or research value of the files. Many records to be safeguarded have no lasting value, but their value at the onset of an emergency cannot be questioned.

Experience has indicated that certain personnel are so familiar with existing problem areas and carry so much program knowledge in their heads that they have not given sufficient attention to records which should be at the relocation site. They overlook the twin facts that in time of emergency they themselves may not reach the relocation site, and that people not so well acquainted with their activities may have to take over. Instructions peculiar to other than normal and routine use of records at the site should be included.

OTHER RECORDS.

(2) / It should be remembered that although the major functional offices of the Agency are responsible for depositing collections of vital records concerning the rights and protection of people, personnel fiscal records, etc., there may also be records within other offices that are equally as vital but which do not duplicate functional office information. The functional office's RMO may be contacted if there is confusion as to duplication of information

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or deposit responsibility. This issuance cannot provide operating offices with detailed guidance in the specific identification of records vital to their operations and mission. Operating records can only be identified through the combined efforts and judgment of the office RMO, the operating office personnel, and the Emergency Planning Officer. This paper provides only very general guidance concerning operating records.

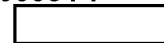
b. Providing Vital Records Copies at Creation

Once identification and selection has been accomplished it is essential that vital records deposit copies of active transaction-type records be made available for deposit at creation or at each updating transaction. Arrangements must be made with the office responsible for the creating and updating to adjust their initial distribution to provide for the vital records deposit copy.

c. Method of Maintenance, Media of Deposits and Compatible Equipment

The depositing offices must determine the method of maintenance or document arrangement of the records at the repository to make them most accessible and useful during the emergency. They must consider the media of the records deposited in relation to compatible equipment available at the repository. They must consider the equipment they will be responsible for providing to actively use, reproduce and continue their business based on the media of information deposited. Arrangements for special equipment placement and storage at the repository must be made with the CIA Vital Records Coordinator. Space available and many other factors must be considered prior to the shipment and installation of equipment at the repository.

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4. Preparation of the Vital Records Deposit Schedule

a. The Records Administration Branch maintains the supply stock of Form 829, Vital Records Deposit Schedule and Form 829a, the green covers for the schedule.

b. Schedules should be reviewed for partial or total revision annually. Schedules and revisions of schedules should be forwarded to the Records Administration Branch for the approval of the CIA Records Administration Coordinator. After reviewing the current schedule, if there are no revisions necessary, written notification should be submitted to advise the Records Administration Branch that the annual review was initiated and an updating revision is not necessary at this time. Interim revisions should be submitted as frequently as new categories of information become applicable to the Vital Records Program. The interim revisions do not preclude initiating and reporting the annual review of the total schedule. Annual revisions and negative revision reports are due in the Records Administrative Branch by _____.

c. The following provides guidance for completing Form 829:

- (1) Prepare an original and four copies to be forwarded for approval. After approval, the original and two copies

will be forwarded to the repository, a copy to the originating office, and a copy will be retained by Records Administration Branch.

- (a) Office, Division Code - code numbers assigned by Records Administration Branch for offices' use on the Vital Records Schedule.
- (b) No. of Pages and Date Prepared - Self-explanatory.
- (c) Office, Division - should include the directorate address symbol, followed by the full title of the major staff, division or office, and the full title of any subordinate office for which an individual schedule is developed.
- (d) Signature of Approving Officer - this will be the signature of the head of the office for which the schedule is prepared.
- (e) Item Number - number each item consecutively, beginning with number 1, through all items included on an individual schedule regardless of the number of pages included in that schedule.
- (f) Vital Records Identification - clearly describe the items included in the schedule to ensure

positive identification of the records to be deposited on a one-time or continuous updating basis. Use titles that appear on the records, when appropriate. Avoid using initials unless their meaning is spelled out at first use. Use commonly acceptable terminology, form or other identification numbers, and where applicable, inclusive dates, i.e., 1 July through 30 June, monthly, bi-weekly, annually; to assist in a more accurate description for positive identification in future updating submissions. Try to keep descriptions brief but not cryptic. Use the guidance in paragraph 3 of this handbook in parallel with the knowledge and experience of immediate office personnel for assistance in identifying appropriate primary and supporting vital record information. Compare your appraisal findings with the office's emergency mission paper to ensure complete coverage.

(g) Media of Deposits - The vital records program may encompass all forms of recorded essential information whether the media is paper hard copy, machine listings, microforms, electronic

data, punch cards, tapes, etc. However, under the restrictions of budgeting and other factors which may limit the office's program, take into consideration the availability, plans for furnishing, or lack of compatible equipment for use, reproduction and continued creation of the media of records selected. (See paragraph 3d) Primarily keep in mind that records which would be needed immediately should normally be in the form of paper copies so they can be used (read) directly without reliance on enlarging or other equipment. The need for information will dictate the media or combination of media in which deposits are made.

(h) Frequency of Deposit - this is based on the frequency in which the updating issuances of records are produced. Appropriate frequency notations may be: daily, weekly, monthly, as amended, quarterly, yearly, etc.

(i) Disposition Instructions - The repository has available services to process for direct destruction or return to the depositor, upon request, obsolete items which updated issuances have replaced. Vital Records are not reference copies and should not be recalled for such use with only the following exception. When the

deposited copy is the only copy in existence it may be recalled with the understanding that it may not be charged out more than a 24-hour period. Items should not be recalled or removed permanently without the deposit of updating replacements unless action is taken to submit a formal schedule deletion revision for approval prior to the recall or removal of the item. Typical instructions are: return upon deposit of current data, destroy upon deposit of current data, permanent unless officially deleted from schedule, destroy after 3 years (or any given period appropriate to needs) after date of deposit.

(j) Until revised 829 forms are available with the classification exemption stamp preprinted, add and complete the stamp in the lower right corner outside the forms' border.

(k) Prepare a page for signatures of coordinating and approving officers to be inserted immediately under the cover of each copy of the schedule. The signature page should be prepared lengthwise and should be headed with the office title for which the schedule is prepared. Center two lines below the office title "VITAL RECORDS DEPOSIT SCHEDULE". Four lines below the headings, the following paragraph should be added with the office title inserted in the spaces provided.

The following Vital Records Deposit Schedule reflects all records considered essential to the re-establishment and operation of the (fill in office title) in an emergency with the exception of records of other components needed in support of these operations. Records covered by this schedule and required in an emergency to support other offices, will be made available on request through a representative of the (fill in office title).

Signature and date lines should be arranged as follows:

Preparation and Review:

Approval:

(Office RMO)

(Directorate or Office Head)

Date

Date

(Directorate RMO)

CIA Vital Records Coordinator

Date

Date

(RAB)

Date

d. Preparation of Schedule Covers (Form 829a)

Type the address symbol of the directorate on the front cover, followed by the full title of the staff, division or office for which the individual schedule was developed. Independent offices should use their full title. Fasten the schedule pages for each copy inside a separate set of covers and forward all copies through the Office Vital Records Officer and Directorate Vital Records Officer for approval by the CIA Vital Records Coordinator.

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5. Preparation and Distribution of Vital Records Transfer Slip (Form 620)
 - a. The Records Administration Branch maintains the supply stock of Form 620.
 - b. Delegation of responsibility and signature approval authority for the preparation and submission of Vital Records Transmittal Slips rests with the component's internal program development. These slips accompany the records for deposit in the repository. They serve as a receipt of documents transferred to the repository, record of physically deposited records and updating transaction as prescribed by the schedule. They will also serve in auditing the program for compliance to scheduled requirements. It is necessary that these transmittal slips be maintained and controlled in an active system available for preparation of program audits as well as their use in current functional transactions.
 - c. Form 620 is a three part (non-carbon) form. The original is yellow, with a pink and a white copy. The yellow and pink copies accompany the material while in transit to the repository. The white copy is held by the originator as a suspense copy. The Repository Vital

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Records Officer signs and dates the form as received, files the pink copy and returns the yellow copy to the depositor. The white suspense copy is destroyed upon receipt of the yellow copy.

d. Guidance for Completing Form 620

(1) Office of Origin - should include the directorate address symbols, followed by the staff, division or office address symbols for which the schedule was prepared.

(2) Security Classification - self-explanatory. If Top Secret classification is used, submit the records for deposit with Form 620 through official Top Secret Control Offices.

(3) Deposit Number - Enter the four-digit code identifying the office of origin followed by a hyphen and two digits indicating the current year, another hyphen and the consecutive number of deposits made for that year. The year of the deposit will change at the end of the calendar year. The consecutive deposit numbers for each new year will begin at number 1. Where the office identification number is not established, the depositing office may use office address symbols as some have done in the past.



(4) CAT. - Where components develop their schedules with the items divided into categories, enter the category number in the first column.. The use of category divisions is optional and is left to the discretion of the component or office developing a schedule.

(5) Item - Enter the corresponding item number used in the schedule for the record or document being deposited.

(6) Date of Document(s) - Enter the date of each document listed. In case of film, no date is required except where inclusive dates are indicated on the container and would be helpful in identifying the reel. Items being deposited will determine if use of dates is applicable.

(7) Description of Records - The description should be as specific as possible to identify the information being deposited as that prescribed by the schedule. Use copy or identification numbers, dates, etc. when item is an updated issuance.

(8) Remarks - Enter clarifying information regarding the eventual disposition of any item on deposit

which may be superseded by a current item being deposited.

(9) Date Released - Enter date that the deposit was forwarded to the Office Vital Records Officer.

(10) Signature of Depositor - Depending on the component's internal program, requirements, this is usually the Office Vital Records Officer's signature to indicate that the form and records have been reviewed.

(11) Date Received and Signature of VRR Official - This will be filled in upon receipt at the repository.

(12) No. of Documents and No. of Reels - Self-explanatory.

(13) Security Classification - Same as (2) above.

e. Packaging Vital Records for Shipment to the Repository

(1) Prior to shipment, the Office Vital Records Officer who is responsible for the depositing office should verify the records with the information on Form 620 with the schedule and reconcile any discrepancies with the depositor. This review will also surface any delinquencies in updating deposits required by the schedule.

(2) The Office Vital Records Officer preparing the shipment should prepare a duplicate list of deposit numbers from all transfer slips included. The original should accompany the shipment to the repository for use in verifying records transferred. After verification, the repository officer will sign and date and return the original to the Office Vital Records Officer for filing. The suspense copy should be destroyed upon receipt of the signed original.

(3) The innermost wrapping should be in accordance with security and any sensitive restrictions.

Attach the yellow and pink copies of the Form 620 to the outside of the innermost wrapping when opening the innermost wrapper is prohibited. Mark this wrapping "TO BE OPENED ONLY BY (fill in)"

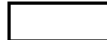
More than one deposit may be packaged together and shipped weekly except where the schedule calls for more frequent shipments.

(4) Additional inner wrappings will depend on security classification. Secret and Confidential, not registered, shall be double wrapped. Certain offices have central mailrooms that handle the preparation of the outer wrapping. Check with

director or office Records Management Officer for such service before applying the outer wrapping described in (5) below.

(5) Outermost wrapping address for vital records deposits is as follows:

RECORDS CENTER



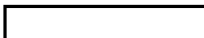
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PROPERTY OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT

DO NOT OPEN

If Found Please Call
Washington, D.C. 351-6161, Collect

Use Form 240, Courier Receipt and attach it to the outer wrapper. Vital records deposits should only be made between Agency buildings and the repository via the provided authorized official courier service.

(Also see  Transmission of Classified Documents outside CIA, for specifications on wrapping records and inner and outer wrapping markings.)

6. Withdrawal and Disposition of Records in the Repository

a. Withdrawals of deposited records will not be made except as authorized by the office of origin in written memorandum format. Disposition of deposited vital records will be accomplished on a schedule basis through the disposition provided in the memorandum when it conforms with the scheduled instructions.

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b. Form 620 should be used only when records are being deposited.

c. Disposition and withdrawal instructions must not conflict with those in the schedule. Schedules must be revised prior to any action being taken that conflicts with instructions in the presently approved schedule.

d. Authorization from the office of origin must specify a positive description of the item for withdrawal or disposition action to prevent any error in identifying the item at the repository. Dispositions can be made by repository personnel without opening restricted packages when proper identification can be made from the outside of the package.

e. The repository Vital Records Officer will notify the office of origin when the disposition action requested has been completed. Each disposal transaction will be recorded on the repository copy of the Form 620.

f. Authorizations by memorandum will be held on record at the repository.

7. The depositing office has the option of making periodic visits to the repository to service their own records. By furnishing appropriate instructions, they may also have the repository officer service the deposits, withdrawals and dispositions. In the latter situation, the office of origin must furnish appropriate maintenance arrangement instructions in addition to specific detailed instructions. Repository personnel are fully cleared to handle records deposited except where offices of origin place special restrictions on sensitive information. They can still handle the receipting, filing, etc., of records placed in sealed packages and marked as described in paragraph 5e above. The seals will not be broken. The sealed package will be filed in accordance with the depositor's instructions and at time of disposition, will be disposed of unopened, as scheduled or upon receipt of special written disposal instructions from depositor.

8. Auditing and Reporting on the Vital Records Program

a. Auditing and reporting are scheduled for completion twice annually on 31 May and 30 November.

b. Office Vital Records Officers are required to visit the repository for the purpose of conducting the audit and

should notify Records Administrative Branch one day in advance prior to traveling to the repository to allow for appointment and working space arrangements.

c. An audit is made to determine program compliance. The report of findings shall be submitted via the directorate Records Management Office to Records Administration Branch with a copy for the repository and a copy retained by the office of origin for follow-up action on discrepancies or needed revisions of the schedule surfaced by the audit. A follow-up report of action taken by the office of origin on discrepancies found, is due in Records Administration Branch 30 days after the submission of the initial audit report. A follow-up report is not required unless discrepancies are found by the audit.

d. The audit by the office of origin shall include the following:

(1) Check the order of maintenance to determine if the records are arranged in the most usable manner based on those records that will be needed immediately and those records that will be needed on a less urgent basis.

(2) Using the schedule and deposit slips:

(a) Check to determine if all items listed in the schedule are on deposit and if all are still considered vital.

(b) Check schedule frequency against receipt of updating issuances to ensure they are being shipped as prescribed. List those that are not and the date of last deposit.

(c) Check disposition instructions of schedule or special memoranda against records to ensure that correct records were disposed of as prescribed.

(d) Check to ensure that any deposits made with instructions not to be opened have not been opened.

(e) Check, or arrange to have appropriate technicians check, compatible equipment for any needed repair to ensure its in good working condition. This is optional where equipment is furnished by the repository. Repository shall be responsible for maintenance of equipment they furnish.

(f) Do reels of microfilm include adequate indexing?

e. The Repository's audit shall be for receipt of deposits only.

(1) Responsibility for accuracy of the contents of envelopes rests with the office of origin, but responsibility for checking receipt of the updating records rests with the repository. The Repository

Vital Records Officer is responsible for auditing receipts of deposits to ensure that all were received. This is extremely important because contents of lost envelopes could be duplicated if undertaken promptly and lack of complete records could destroy the value of the reconstructed record. Lost security classified records should be reported to the originating office's Security Officer for appropriate action.

(2) The repository may perform the audit of receipts on a scheduled or continuing basis. When done on a continuing basis, each discrepancy is acted upon as it occurs. The office of origin is notified immediately. Corrective measures taken by the office of origin should be reported in writing to the repository.

(3) The repository's report of audit should be submitted 31 May and 30 November including all discrepancies found and acted upon during the reporting period. It is not necessary to furnish copies of papers involved in these transactions. A brief description of the problem, corrective action taken, and any recommendations that may help prevent similar problems in the future. Recommendations are optional at the discretion of the reporting officer.