



BULLETIN NO. 81-21

June 8, 1981

TO THE HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND ESTABLISHMENTS

SUBJECT: Designation of the single official required by the
Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980, P.L. 96-511

1. Purpose. This bulletin provides guidance to Federal agencies on designation of the single official for information resources management required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980.

2. Coverage. This bulletin applies to each agency (see section 4) required to designate a single official in accordance with Section 3506 of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980.

3. Background. The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980 (P.L. 96-511, 44 U.S.C. Chapter 35) was enacted for the purpose of improving the management of information resources within the executive branch. A major objective of the Act is to integrate agency information resources management activities and establish a single, clear line of accountability for such activities. Accordingly, the Act requires that, by July 1, 1981, each agency designate a single senior official who is to develop uniform policies and procedures to ensure that the agency effectively and efficiently manages its information resources.

4. Definitions.

"Agency" - any executive department, military department, Government corporation, Government-controlled corporation, or other establishment in the executive branch of the Government or any independent regulatory agency, but does not include the General Accounting Office, Federal Election Commission, the governments of the District of Columbia and the territories and possessions of the United States, and their various subdivisions, or Government-owned contractor-operated facilities including laboratories engaged in national defense research and production activities (3502 (1)).

"Information resources management" - the planning, budgeting, organizing, directing, training, promoting, controlling and other managerial activities involved with the collection, use and dissemination of information.

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5. Responsibilities of the Single Official.

Section 3506 of the Paperwork Reduction Act requires that each agency head designate a senior official to carry out the responsibilities of the agency under the Act. These responsibilities include:

A. Ensuring that the information policies, principles, standards, guidelines, rules and regulations prescribed by OMB are appropriately implemented within the agency (3506(a), et al.).

B. Developing agency information policies and procedures and overseeing, auditing and otherwise periodically reviewing agency information resources management activities (3506(a), (c)(1), et al.).

C. Reviewing proposed agency reporting and recordkeeping requirements, including those contained in rules and regulations, to ensure that they impose the minimum burden upon the public and have practical utility for the agency (3506(d), 3507).

D. Developing and implementing procedures for assessing the burden to the public and costs to the agency of information requirements contained in proposed legislation affecting agency programs (3506(c)(3), et al.).

E. Conducting and being accountable for acquisitions made pursuant to a delegation of authority under Section 111 of the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949, as amended (3506(c)(4), et al.).

F. Assisting OMB in the performance of its functions assigned by P.L. 96-511, including the reviews of agency information activities. Each agency, except independent regulatory agencies, shall make its services, personnel and facilities available to OMB upon request and to the extent practicable (3515).

6. Organizational Placement. Section 3506 of the Paperwork Reduction Act requires that the single official report directly to the head of the agency. Designation of a senior official is intended to establish an identifiable line of accountability for information management activities, provide for greater coordination among the agency's information activities and ensure greater visibility of such activities within the agency. The Congress recognized that one structure will not be appropriate for all agencies. However, both the House and Senate Committee reports noted that a proposed structure

for an agency will meet the intent of section 3506 if (1) the agency's information functions which relate to the OMB Director's functions listed in section 3504(a) are under the supervision of the designated official; and (2) the designated official has approval authority for the agency's information functions.

7. Designation of the Single Official. By July 1, 1981 the head of each agency shall designate the single official, or officials, required by P.L. 96-511. As soon as the official is designated each agency head is to provide the Office of Management and Budget with the following information:

- the single official's name, title, address and phone number.
- an organization chart which identifies agency staff and associated resources assigned, or to be assigned, to the single official for the performance of P.L. 96-511 functions.
- a description of the single official's authority and responsibilities.
- copies of any implementing documents.
- agencies permitted by law to have more than one official shall clearly delineate the specific duties of each official.

The Paperwork Reduction Act requires OMB to evaluate the adequacy and efficiency of each agency's information management activities. The information provided in response to this bulletin will be used by OMB to evaluate the degree to which each agency has complied with the intent of P.L. 96-511 in designating the single official.

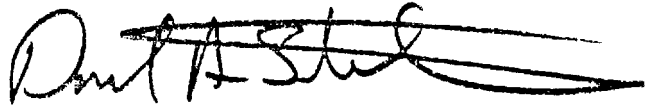
8. Triennial Reviews. Section 3513 of P.L. 96-511 requires that OMB selectively review at least once every three years the information management activities of each agency. In addition, section 3506(c)(1) requires the agency single official to periodically review the agency's information management activities. No later than September 1, 1981, each agency head should submit to OMB three copies of a plan for conducting these reviews. At a minimum the plan should contain:

- A schedule which includes:
 - agency information activities to be reviewed by the single official;
 - the dates the reviews will be initiated and completed;
 - resources to be devoted to each review;
- A description of agency activities and resources involving the collection, management, dissemination or disposition of information.
- Agency objectives for improving the management of information resources to reduce the burden on the public and the cost to the agency.
- The criteria that will be used to assess the effectiveness, efficiency and appropriateness of agency information activities.

9. OMB Review of Agency Plans. In accordance with its responsibilities under section 3504(b)(5), OMB will analyze and provide comments on each agency plan for conducting reviews of its information resources management activities.

10. Inquiries. Inquiries or suggestions regarding this guidance may be referred to the Acting Assistant Administrator for Information Policy, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, (202 395-3785).

11. Effective Date. This bulletin is effective upon issuance and will remain in effect until September 30, 1981.



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Director