10 May 1984

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, Near Eastern and South Asian Analysis

THROUGH: Chief, Administrative Staff, NESA

[redacted] 25X1

FROM: [redacted] 25X1
NESA 25X1

SUBJECT: Request for Agency Sponsored Academic Training

I would like to request that NESA sponsor my full-time participation in an academic year of graduate-level studies in computer systems applications. I am making this request because I believe it will help fill an urgent requirement within the office for a substantial increase in our competence in ADP-related matters. I want to stress the need to begin this program no later than the fall of this year. Forces are at work, both within the Agency and in the computer world, that will soon begin to have a major impact on how we do our work. We are not now equipped to deal with these forces. I have a stong conviction that the need for important decisions will be upon us by midyear 1985 (and probably before then).

HOW THE PROPOSED SABBATICAL WILL HELP NESA

NESA is still at a fairly early stage in its adjustment to computers. We are managing to keep our heads above water, thanks to the work of [redacted] and to the interest and enthusiasm of 25X1
some of the analysts and supervisors. Our recent soundings within the office, however, have turned up problems we have been unable to solve even with the help of ASG and the SURE staff. Most of these boil down to inadequacies in training and support.

My work with the DI's ADP task force convinces me that the situation will become much more complex in the years ahead. A few examples:

-- Whatever course of action the DI adopts, there will be a requirement for more intensive training. OT&E cannot handle the load. Some of the burden will fall on the offices, and they will have to develop a capability for on-the-job training.

-- Analysts are just beginning to discover that their terminals not only allow them to do their present work more efficiently, but also open up important new anlytical possibilities. Experience has shown that their demand for such new tools will grow over time. Some of

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the most useful applications involve building and maintaining databases that are relatively simple technically, but which most analysts cannot set up without some expert advice. Those providing the advice must not only understand the technical aspects, but must also be intimately familiar with the what the analyst is trying to accomplish.

-- With respect to hardware, past mistakes by others leave us with no choice in the short term but to contine buying equipment that is already obsolete--particularly the Delta Data SAFE terminals. We will have to start replacing it by the end of the decade. NESA will have an opportunity to help decide what the replacements will be, but if we do not know what we want someone else will decide for us.

-- NESA will probably also want to take advantage of special-purpose equipment--such as highly sophisticated graphics systems--at the branch, division, or office level. These are not easy to use and we will have to have people on hand who are trained to operate them.

-- Even with a lot of local initiative, there will be applications that are too complex to handle in-house. We will have to turn to the specialists and contractors for help. Such assistance will be only as good as our ability to articulate our needs and to monitor the results.

The level of support from Agency technical staffs will not grow nearly as rapidly as the demand. If we were to rely exclusively on such staffs, moreover, I believe we would find that the larger they grow the less efficient they would be in meeting our needs. The only solution is to build our own capabilities. Although hiring a few additional specialists would help, it would be no substitute for developing a cadre of individuals with strong analytical backgrounds who also have the technical competence to provide the advice and training we will need. Coming up to speed will require more than a part-time commitment; there is simply too much to learn.

PROGRAM OF STUDY

After considering the offerings of several area universities, I have concluded that the Information Systems Track of the University of Maryland's Master of General Administration program is best suited to NESA's needs and my own background. It is designed to equip managers to apply computer-based informations systems more effectively in an organizational setting. I would not be able to complete the entire program in an academic year, but would plan to continue on my own time thereafter.

My proposed course of study would be:

Fall Semester (September through December 1984)

ADMN 601 The Administrator in a Technological Society
ADMN 640 Electronic Data Processing
ADMN 600 Methods of Organizational Evaluation
CMSC 110 Introduction to Computer Programming
MATH 220 Calculus

Spring Semester (January through May 1985)

ADMN 641 Construction of Computer-Based Information Systems
ADMN 603 Planning and Forecasting for Administrators
ADMN 625 Organizational Communications
CMSC 120 Intermediate Computer Programming
MATH 221 Calculus

COSTS:

	FY-84	FY-85	Total
Tuition	$2,224.00	$2,224.00	$4,448.00
Books	175.00	175.00	350.00
Fees	50.00	25.00	75.00
Totals	$2,449.00	$2,424.00	$4,873.00

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