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OIT 0884-86

8 October 1986

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, Management Staff, DA

VIA: Edward J. Maloney [redacted]
Director of Information Technology

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FROM: [redacted]
Chief, Management Division, OIT

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SUBJECT: Conference on Agency Priorities

REFERENCE: Your memo, dtd 4 Sept 1986, Same Subject
(DDA 86-1515)

1. In the Reference, you ask that OIT address three resource-related issues for the outyears (1989-1993). What new activities shall we pursue? What activities underway need additional resources? and what activities can be consolidated or eliminated to free up resources? The following paragraphs speak to major resource and management issues in the future (the management issues raised in response to your last question we believe have significant though unquantifiable resource implications as well as effectiveness implications.) [redacted]

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New Activities

2. Information systems (I/S) support to the field [redacted]

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[redacted] is a critical challenge for this Agency. It is the field where we are stretched the thinnest; where our reaction times are the shortest; and where we are in desperate need of the data processing, storage and retrieval capabilities that I/S technology offers. It is in the field, with available technology, that we will receive our greatest return-on-investment in the I/S arena. What is needed is a strong coordinated Agency-wide effort in this area. The technology is or will be available. Improving support to all field components should be our goal (DA, DI, DS&T, as well as DO). We see the the early systems engineering portion of this effort as a [redacted] dollar activity. [redacted]

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3. Exploiting artificial intelligence technology will be absolutely essential in the late Eighties, early Nineties. Artificial intelligence and expert systems, in particular, have

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the potential to permit this Agency to leverage its most critical resource---its people. Expert systems will be a significant productivity tool, freeing up personnel currently performing straightforward tasks. Expert systems will also permit us to capture and approximate the expertise of many of our more highly trained and skilled employees who retire or otherwise leave their positions. Not only will we be able to automate many tasks currently requiring "an expert," we will be able to ensure consistency, provide backup, and improve the speed of decisionmaking. To fully exploit this technology, we must be prepared to make the necessary investment in staff resources, consulting services and hardware and software infrastructure. This will be an ongoing program which will require considerably more resources than OIT currently devotes from its thinly-stretched Base. We estimate this to a [redacted] dollar per year level-of-effort activity. [redacted]

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4. A third area where resource investment is required is the implementation of new storage technologies such as optical disk storage. Storage requirements have historically grown at forty percent (40%) annually. We see this rate continuing and potentially even accelerating as major new applications and data types (e.g., image, video, etc.) come online. Given our well-known space constraints, we are reaching a crisis in regard to data storage. In conjunction with technological solutions, we must also investigate archiving strategies that will help us manage the burgeoning requirements for storage. In addition to developing an in-depth knowledge of storage options and archiving strategies through the use of study contracts, we must be funded to implement new storage technology should it prove appropriate. We estimate this to be about a [redacted] dollar per year resource requirement. [redacted]

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Underway Activities

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Consolidation/Elimination of Activities

7. We see three major organizational changes that in the future could result in considerable resource savings and in improvements in effectiveness and efficiency. First, in our judgment, Agency I/S activities remain too fragmented for effective and efficient management. There is the potential of considerable savings through the clarification of I/S responsibilities. There is much I/S activity Agency-wide that is either overlapping or in conflict. For example, a rational approach to I/S field support is extremely difficult with responsibilities fragmented across OIT, OC, IMS and other components (such as OF). Similarly, DDA I/S planning continues to lack coherence due to our failure to vest authority and responsibility in a single component and manager [redacted] (program responsibilities are heavily circumscribed in this arena). A related issue is the fragmentation of the I/S budget. As it stands, any component can propose and capture in perpetuity an I/S initiative. This frequently leads to a conflict between the customer and developer on control of project direction. It also leads to the proliferation of uncoordinated and incompatible initiatives. Some, if not all, of these may generate considerable downstream costs (FBIS Modernization is a potential example.) Thus, we believe, a revisiting of responsibilities and authorities in information systems, and a review of the I/S budget process could potentially result in cost-savings and management benefits Agency-wide. [redacted]

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