The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) requires Senior Agency Officials for Records Management (SAORM) to provide an annual report demonstrating how agencies are handling important records management initiatives as identified by NARA.

NARA uses the reports to determine the overall progress of the federal government in managing its records and the transition away from paper to digital formats, and to identify best practices and model solutions within federal agencies.

On June 28, 2019, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and NARA issued a memorandum, *Transition to Electronic Records* (M-19-21), to ensure that all federal records are created, retained, and managed in electronic formats. M-19-21 gave agencies until the end of December 2022 to comply with several specific deadlines.

On December 23, 2022, OMB and NARA issued a new memorandum, *Update to Transition to Electronic Records* (M-23-07) reinforcing the goals in M-19-21 and extending the 2022 deadlines to June 30, 2024.

Additionally, on January 1, 2021, Congress enacted the Preservation of Electronic Messages and Other Records Act, amending 44 U.S.C. Chapter 29, that requires the electronic capture, management, and preservation of such electronic records in accordance with the records disposition requirements of 44 U.S.C. Chapter 33.

This year's SAORM report provides an opportunity for agencies to report on plans and progress towards electronic recordkeeping and preservation under these requirements, as well as other important records management initiatives.

The reporting period begins on January 9, 2023, and reports are due back to NARA no later than March 10, 2023.

NARA plans to post your 2022 SAORM report on the NARA website upon receipt. Please ensure that your agency's report is a publicly releasable version. This action is in the interest of transparency in government and to promote collaboration and communication among agencies. NARA intends to list any non-responding agencies in a summary report on our website.

Instructions for Reporting:

- This template covers records management program developments, including those related to the transition to electronic recordkeeping as required by M-19-21 and M-23-07.
- Please be brief and precise in your answers. Limit answers to each question to no more than 500 words.
- Please complete the questions/items below and send the report to rmselfassessment@nara.gov. Include the words "SAORM 2022 Annual Report - [Agency Name]" in the subject line of the email.
- If you are responsible for records management in multiple agencies, components, or bureaus, please determine how you will submit reports to NARA. While NARA prefers a comprehensive report, you may submit separate reports for each component.

NARA may follow up with agencies to obtain additional information and/or documentation related to responses provided in the template.

As in previous years, we will be validating selected questions and responses from agencies. Your agency may be selected at random to provide additional documentation and/or take part in interviews to discuss your records management program activities.

Provide the following information (required):

- Name of SAORM: Fred Ames
- Position title: Assistant
- Address:

1. **What agencies, bureaus, components, or offices are covered by this report and your position as SAORM and which will be reporting separately?**

   Please provide a list and indicate any that are new or have been changed due to reorganization or other circumstances.

   All offices of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) are covered by this report and my position as the SAORM. No offices are reported separately. None of the offices are new or have been reorganized as of the filing of this report.

2. **In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, have any of the temporary adaptations to agency business processes become permanent improvements to the management and preservation of electronic records?**

   ☐ Yes
   ☐ No
   ☐ Not applicable, no adaptations were needed
   ☐ Do not know

Please explain your response. (If Yes, include details of the changes and why they became permanent. If No, or Do not know, please explain your answer.)

The Executive Office of the President (EOP) is comprised of multiple components to include the USTR. The Office of Administration (OA) provides enterprise-wide services, including information technology, for all EOP components. OA has acquired an object-based storage solution for long-term electronic records management and is currently in the process of configuring the storage solution, which will include the controls and mechanism specified.

3. **Has your agency taken action to meet the goal to manage, preserve and transfer all permanent records in an electronic format with appropriate metadata by June 30, 2024? (M-19-21, 1.2 and M-23-07, 1.1 and 1.2)**

   ☑ Yes
   ☐ No
   ☐ Do not know

   Please explain your response with specific actions taken, challenges and results.

   USTR, and the greater enterprise-wide EOP, is committed to the underlying goals laid out in M-19-21 and M-23-07 in transitioning to a fully electronic environment. In preparing for this transition, the agency conducts all business in electronic formats with appropriate metadata requirements considered and included in the building of new systems.

   Staff teleworking more during the Covid-19 pandemic and the WNRC being closed much of that time did hinder the transfer and accessioning of permanent textual records. With staff returning the office, USTR has prioritized records clean up across the agency to ensure all textual records are transferred to appropriate repositories before the extended deadline.

4. **Has your agency taken action to meet the goal to manage and preserve all <u>temporary</u> records in an electronic format by June 30, 2024? (M-19-21, 1.3 and M-23-07, 1.3)**

   ☑ Yes
   ☐ No
   ☐ Do not know

   Please explain your response with specific actions taken, challenges and results.

   As noted above, USTR currently conducts all current business in an electronic environment with records management internal controls in place to ensure proper management and preservation. In addition, the agency continues to work to clean out office spaces of temporary textual records no longer needed for business use.

5. **Will your agency meet the requirements of M-19-21, 1.3 and M-23-07, 1.3 to close agency-operated records storage facilities and transfer inactive, temporary records to Federal Records Centers or commercial records storage facilities by June 30, 2024?**

   ☐ Yes
   ☐ No
   ☐ Not applicable, all records are in electronic format
   ☐ Do not know

   Please explain your response with specific actions taken, challenges and results.

   USTR stores all inactive records at the Washington National Records Center (WNRC). As part of its current textual records clean-up project, all inactive temporary records which have not met their disposition will be transferred to WNRC by June 30, 2024.

6. **Does your agency have policies and procedures that incorporate records management into the information governance (IG) framework for information, data, and other agency information management? (This includes a relationship between CIO, CDO, SAORM, DRO/ARO, Records Management (RM) Staff, Security, Privacy Officers, and FOIA)**

   Note: The incorporation of records management into information governance is part of the framework covered by [OMB Federal Data Strategy - A Framework for Consistency (M-19-18)](#) *as it provides a vision for managing and using federal data, along with recordkeeping requirements included in* [OMB Circular A-130, Managing Information as a Strategic Resource](#).

   ☐ Yes
   ☐ No
   ☐ Do not know

   Please explain your response and provide details about how your agency's policies enhance IG and RM's role or relationship to it.

   USTR is committed to incorporating records management into its information governance framework. Over the next year, with USTRs new Records Manager Officer, the agency will work to revise and update its policies and procedures related to information management to ensure compliance, security, and promote better workflow of systems and processes. The policies have will be a collaborated effort amongst the CIO, SAORM, ARO, Security Officer, Privacy Officer, FOIA, and General Counsel.

7. **Has your agency developed policies and procedures to ensure the capture and preservation of electronic messages, including when hardware or software is upgraded?**

Note: Electronic messages means electronic mail and other electronic messaging systems that are used for purposes of communicating between individuals. Electronic messages that satisfy the definition of a federal record under the Federal Records Act are electronic records. This includes email, text messages, chat messages, voicemail, social media posts, and other similar applications. (See: [Email Management](#) and [CFR 1236: Electronic Records Management](#))

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Do not know

Please explain your response and include details of your agency's methods to capture and preserve electronic messaging records or challenges preventing you from doing so.

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8. **Is your agency using or exploring cognitive technologies to identify records and distinguish between temporary and permanent retention?**

Note: Cognitive technologies generally describe automated technologies that can be applied to recordkeeping practices and procedures. These include Artificial Intelligence, Robotic Process Automation, Software Robot or Bot, and other machine learning technologies.

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Do not know

Please explain your response. (If Yes, include details on both methods and tools being explored, the level of accuracy and how that level is determined.)

The Executive Office of the President (EOP) is comprised of multiple components to include the USTR. The Office of Administration (OA) provides enterprise-wide services, including information technology, for all EOP components. To be compliant with both requirements, the Office of Administration IT (OA-IT) Data Governance Division, which is dictated by the PRA, is currently in the process of file analysis software market research. USTR does not have any additional information on what tools are being explored, their level of accuracy, or how that level is being determined.

9. **Do you as SAORM regularly oversee and evaluate the effectiveness of your records management program and its compliance with statutes and regulations?**

☑ Yes
☐ No
☐ Do not know

Please explain your response including what specific measures you have incorporated into the SAORM role.

As the SAORM, I review the effectiveness of USTRs program by ensuring that the records program is a critical component of USTRs overall records and information governance strategy. Accordingly, I am committed to ensuring USTR is compliance with all federal laws, statutes and regulations. In doing so, I work closely and met regularly with relevant records and information management staff, General Counsel, and high-level officials in the agency to ensure adequate records management resources are embedded into the agency's strategic plans, goals, and objectives.

Is there specific policy or guidance you need from NARA to support the strategic direction of your records management program?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Do not know

Please explain your response and include any comments on existing, pending, and future topics.

USTR engages NARA on a regular basis regarding its records management program.

10. **Do you have any suggestions for how NARA can better engage with you and your program in your role as SAORM?**

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Do not know

Please explain your response and include any comments on previous NARA SAORM engagements, topics for future engagements, or other suggestions.

Reporting bi-annually seems more effective as agencies continue to build out their records programs.