



Senior Agency Official for Records Management 2021 Annual Report

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 and the National Archives issued a memorandum: *Transition to Electronic Records* (M-19-21) to ensure that all federal records are created, retained, and managed in electronic formats by December 31, 2022. 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 records keeping and preservation under both these requirements, as well as other important records management initiatives.

The reporting period begins on January 10, 2022, and reports are due back to NARA no later than March 11, 2022.

NARA plans to post your 2021 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 and on the website.

Instructions for Reporting:

- This template covers records management program developments towards the transition to electronic recordkeeping outlined in M-19-21 through December 31, 2021, and other aspects of agency records management programs.
- 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 rmsselfassessment@nara.gov. Include the words "SAORM 2021 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.

Provide the following information (required):

- Name of SAORM: Colleen Allen
- Position title: Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Management
- Address: 500 D Street, SW, Washington, DC 20547

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 also indicate any that are new or have been changed due to reorganization or other circumstances.

Agency: United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

Position: Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Management

Reporting: This is a comprehensive report that takes into account a reorganization. Updates since last reported include:

1. The Office of the Executive Secretariat (ES) Effective Date: 01/06/2021:
2. The Office of the Administrator, Immediate Office (A/AID) Effective Date: 11/08/2021:
A/AID houses two Deputy Administrators; the Chief of Staff; and the Agency Counselor. The following Officers and Independent Offices report directly to the Administrator:
 - a. The Deputy Administrator
 - b. The Assistant to the Administrator,
 - c. Office of Human Capital and Talent Management
 - d. The Chief Financial Officer
 - e. The Chief Information Officer
 - f. The Global Malaria Coordinator
 - g. The Office of Civil Rights and Diversity
 - h. The Office of the Executive Secretariat
 - i. The Office of the General Counsel
 - j. The Office of Security
 - k. The Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization
3. Bureau for Management (M Bureau) Effective Date: 11/22/2021
The Bureau is divided into the following organizational units.
 - a. Office of the Assistant Administrator (AA/M)
 - b. Office of the Chief Information Officer (M/CIO)
 - c. Office of Acquisition and Assistance (M/OAA)
 - d. Office of the Chief Financial Officer (M/CFO)
 - e. Office of Management Services (M/MS)
 - f. Office of Management Policy, Budget, and Performance (M/MPBP)

2. Has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted policies or practices related to records management at your agency?

- Yes
 No
 Do not know

Please explain your response (include details of specific challenges, if applicable):

USAID published an Agency Notice on April 3, 2020, stating “The COVID-19 outbreak does not change your responsibilities to appropriately manage official-government records.” The notice went on to remind staff of best practices.

Subsequently, several Agency Notices were issued to remind staff of their records management responsibilities (e.g., June 17 and October 27, 2020) during this extended period of telework in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

While official records management policies and responsibilities remain the same, some changes in work practices due to the COVID-19 pandemic have been necessitated. These changes have had an effect on records management at the agency. Most notably:

1. USAID remains in a state of emergency telework. By its very nature, the switch from the majority of staff being in the office to being on telework pushed a shift in the medium of records from physical to electronic;
2. The Bureau for Management, Office of Management Services, Headquarters Management Division’s (M/MS/HMD) large-scale scanning contract was halted in November 2020; and
3. M/MS/IRD’s Records Management Training Courses have been moved entirely online. While the Records Management Fundamentals course had already been transferred online to USAID’s University platform, M/MS/IRD was still offering longer, in-person training for its records liaisons and file clerks around the world. This 5-day, intensive course has since been temporarily relocated to a virtual platform and shortened.

3. Does your agency have an established information governance framework that integrates records management, data management, and other agency information lines of business? (This includes a relationship between CIO, CDO, SAORM, DRO/ARO, RM Staff, Security, Privacy Officers, and FOIA)

- Yes
 No
 Do not know

Please provide details. If ‘Yes,’ provide details on how your RM program is integrated into this framework. If ‘No’ or ‘Do not know,’ please explain your response.

On June 4, 2019, USAID published an announcement appointing the head of the Data Services Unit in M/CIO as USAID’s Chief Data Officer (CDO). Among other duties, the CDO also chairs

the Data Administration and Technical Advisory (DATA) Board, a subcommittee of the USAID Management Operations Council (MOC). The Board serves as a central venue for seeking input from agency stakeholders regarding data-related priorities and best practices to support agency objectives.

The Chief of M/MS/IRD, who serves as the Agency Records Officer and FOIA Public Liaison, sits on the DATA Board. From this position, he is able to give a records management perspective to the formation of the agency's data-related strategies, policies, or standard operating procedures. The DATA Board has several Working Groups bringing together stakeholders from across the agency to address some of USAID's most pressing data-related challenges. Some steps that the DATA Board has recently taken have been:

1. Re-drafting the Automated Directives System (ADS) Chapter 579 to address the full data-management lifecycle, streamline USAID's business processes, and advance the agency's use of data to improve measurable development outcomes;
2. Launching the Essentials Data Literacy e-Learning Series in November 2021, which is a new series of e-learning modules that will provide learners with key knowledge of USAID data-related tools, guidance and best practices, to enhance basic skill sets and help staff use data to better communicate, collaborate, and improve productivity; and
3. Establishing a structure to align USAID's geo-spatial data both with National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI)/Geospatial Data Act of 2018 (GDA) recommendations and USAID internal processes

The Chief of M/MS/IRD also sits on another MOC Subcommittee, the Privacy Council. The Privacy Council provides leadership and enhances coordination, communication, and collaboration within USAID to uphold the highest standards governing the agency's creation, collection, use, processing, storage, maintenance, dissemination, disclosure, and disposal of Personally Identifiable Information (PII) to ensure effective, efficient, and consistent privacy risk management and demonstrate the agency's compliance with privacy laws and policies. In M/MS/IRD and the Privacy Office have also collaborated to create the online 502-4 Annual Records and Personal Identifiable Information (PII) Inventory, which electronically collects information about what types of records are collected in the agency, what disposition schedules are followed for those records, what PII is collected in those records, what authorization is cited for the collection of any PII, and where that data is located.

Finally, M/MS/IRD regularly collaborates with other agency departments, like the Office of Security, to bring a records management standpoint to the production of policies or reports. One example being the most recent Information System Security Officer (ISSO) Report.

4. Will your agency meet the goal to manage and preserve all permanent records in an electronic format with appropriate metadata by December 31, 2022? (M-19-21, 1.2)

- Yes
 No
 Do not know

Please explain your response (include specific goals, example metrics, and/or challenges):

USAID is aggressively pursuing the goal of managing and preserving all records in an electronic format by December 31, 2022. Approximately 54% of record series reported in the past 3 years were electronic medium, 27% were a mix of physical and electronic records, and 19% were physical medium only. USAID has already made inroads into eliminating its physical records through focused digitization efforts. Scanning activity from 2016 to date have included 9 projects, with a total of 83,118 documents scanned and 105 boxes to go on the current venture. The agency's training programs have also been adjusted to promote awareness of these digitization efforts, inclusion of metadata requirements for digital records, and addresses challenges inherent in the 21st century records environment.

5. Will your agency meet the goal to manage and preserve all temporary records in an electronic format by December 31, 2022? (M-19-21, 1.3)

- Yes
 No
 Do not know

Please explain your response (include specific goals, example metrics, and/or challenges):

In addition to the steps being taken above, USAID is currently in the process of purchasing an Electronic Records Management System (ERMS). Once deployed, the system will provide capabilities for managing records, both permanent and temporary, end-to-end across the full lifecycle using NARA-compliant Electronic Records Management (ERM) requirements. *See Question 7 for details.

6. Does your agency have plans to submit to NARA a request for an exception to the M-19-21 requirements before December 31, 2022?

- Yes
 No
 Do not know

Please explain your response. If 'Yes,' please include an estimate of when you plan to submit an exception and any relevant details. If 'No' or 'Do not know,' please explain your response.

As noted above in Questions 4 and 5, USAID is pressing forward rapidly toward complete compliance with M-19-21. However, M/MS/IRD has highlighted two roadblocks to achieving 100% concurrence.

The first point of contention being around wet signature requirements. To achieve its mission abroad, the agency partners with countries that have different statutes, regulations, and policies that do not recognize digital signatures. Collaborating in this capacity leads to the use of paper to document agreements that otherwise would go unrecognized.

The second obstruction being the COVID-19 pandemic. As noted in Question 2 above, certain records management practices have been affected in the agency. In addition, the COVID pandemic has overwhelmed governments worldwide, resulting in changes in regulations and even weakening local infrastructure. Given USAID's heavy OCONUS presence globally, its local Missions have experienced everything from local lockdowns to rolling blackouts. This could result in unexpected delays in digitization efforts from those affected Missions.

7. Is your agency utilizing the General Services Administration's Special Item Number for Electronic Records Management ([518210 ERM](#)) 6 to procure solutions to assist in transitioning to an Electronic Environment?

- Yes
 No
 Do not know

Please explain your response. If 'Yes,' please include specific examples and how this will support records management processes. If 'No' or 'Do not know,' please explain.

USAID is currently in the process of purchasing a comprehensive Electronic Records Management System (ERMS) with the overarching objective of managing and preserving all permanent records in an electronic format and replacing manual, paper-based business processes. It has completed its initial stages of gathering input and defining requirements needed for the system. The agency also conducted research to learn more about records management solutions and capabilities to better understand the options available in the marketplace. This included putting forth a Request for Proposal (RFP) asking vendors to provide input on the specified objectives in order to better understand features and offerings.

M/MS/IRD has also worked with M/CIO to draft and finalize documentation needed for the project lifecycle. Furthermore, in combination with M/OAA, it has reached out to the General Services Administration's (GSA) Integrated Workplace Acquisition Center to gain assistance with drafting a Statement of Objectives (SOO). Once finalized, the agency anticipates using the General Services Administration's Special Item Number for Electronic Records Management (518210 ERM) to procure the system.

8. Has your agency developed plans to meet the requirements of M-19-21, 1.3 to store temporary records in commercial storage facilities by December 31, 2022?*

- Yes
 No
 Do not know

**M-19-21, 1.3 includes closing of agency-operated storage facilities and no new transfers of paper records to the Federal Records Centers.*

Please explain your response. If 'Yes,' provide details about the use of commercial storage and

other changes related to storage. If 'No' or 'Do not know,' please explain.

USAID does not have agency-operated records centers, only commercial storage. This, along with its continued scanning and digitization efforts, bolsters USAID's effort to transition to full-electronic records management and reduce its physical footprint.

9. Do you, as the SAORM, see challenges within your agency in meeting the goal of fully-electronic recordkeeping?

- Yes
- No
- Do not know

Please explain your response (include details of specific challenges, if applicable):

In addition to the obstacles mentioned above in Question 6, the White House and Congress require wet signatures for rulemaking, further suggesting the need to maintain paper documents to preserve historically valuable records.

Lastly, several agency staff have email accounts with other Federal agencies. Dictating which agency has authority and following varying policies is challenging.

10. NARA is always working on ways we can make your role as the SAORM easier, improve how we interact with you and how you interact with each other. Do you have any suggestions?

- Yes
- No
- Do not know

Please explain your response (include any comments on previous NARA SAORM engagements, topics for future engagements, or other suggestions):