



Senior Agency Official for Records Management 2022 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 (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 rmsselfassessment@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: Colleen Allen
- Position title: Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Management
- Address: 500 D Street, SW, Washington, D.C. 20547

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

Agency: United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

Position: Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Management

Reporting: This is an agency-wide, comprehensive 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

USAID has transitioned from a state of emergency telework posture and entered into a new model for day-to-day operations coined the Future of Work Framework. This move solidified the switch in the nature of the agency's records management policies, from a focus on physical to digital. M/MS/IRD's Records Management Training Courses now exist almost entirely online. All training sessions now include a section on electronic file/folder organization and best practices. Several of the required forms and work processes are currently being re-worked and migrated to an online environment. The agency is also continuing its efforts to purchase an Electronic Records Management System (ERMS), so that it can manage digital records throughout their entire lifecycle.

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

USAID is committed to pursuing the goal of creating and managing all records in an electronic format. Approximately 65% of the records reported in 2022 were strictly digital, 18% were in paper format, while 17% were in a mixed digital and physical medium. The agency's training programs have also been adjusted to promote awareness of how to work with and organize electronic records, inclusion of metadata requirements for digital records, and address challenges inherent in the 21st century records environment.

In addition, USAID is currently in the pre-purchase phase of acquiring several higher-capacity document scanners so that it can continue reducing its physical records footprint. Finally, USAID is in the solicitation phase 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.

4. Has your agency taken action to meet the goal to manage and preserve all temporary 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

*See Question 3.

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

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

USAID does not have any domestic agency-operated records centers. Physical records that have reached the disposition stage of their life-cycle are transferred to one of two places; 1. Metropolitan Archives, a NARA approved commercial storage facility or 2. NARA's Federal Records Center. Overseas, USAID has Missions in over 80 countries and programs in over 100. Missions can range in size from a few staff members working in a local office, to large regional offices that handle programs in several countries and are located in U.S. Embassies. Physical records that reach disposition might be stored in a local commercial, USAID, or Department of State storage facility. Regardless of their interim storage location, all permanent records are eventually shipped back to USAID's domestic facilities for processing and eventual transfer to NARA.

Reliance on these physical storage facilities is diminishing, however, as USAID continues its move from physical to digital records. The vast majority of USAID records are digital born and rarely, if ever, move into the physical world. Continued efforts in scanning and digitization also help the agency reduce its current physical footprint. Whereas before, a small Mission that might have had to store non-active records offsite due to space constraints, can now simply move those electronic files into an archive folder on an agency network or shared drive.

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

The Records Management (RM) Team sits adjacent to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Team within the Bureau for Management, Office of Management Services, Information and Records Division (M/MS/IRD). The division leads and manages several interrelated programs on behalf of the Agency, including but not limited to:

1. Leading and managing the Agency's records management program;

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2. Managing the Agency's Essential Records Program;
 3. Administering USAID's Forms Management Program;
 4. Receiving, tracking, and processing all USAID Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests and appeals;
 5. Processing requests from the public for Mandatory Declassification Review (MDR); and
 6. Implementing the Agency's Federal Register (FR) notices program.

The Division Chief of M/MS/IRD, who serves as the Agency Records Officer and FOIA Public Liaison, sits on the Data Administration and Technical Advisory (DATA) Board, a subcommittee of the USAID Management Operations Council (MOC). Headed by USAID's Chief Data Officer (CDO), the Board serves as a central venue for seeking input from agency stakeholders regarding data-related priorities and best practices to support agency objectives. From this position, he is able to give a records management perspective to the formation of the agency's data-related strategies, policies, and/or standard operating procedures.

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.

M/MS/IRD and the Privacy Office continue to collaborate on the 502-4 Annual Records and Personal Identifiable Information (PII) Inventory, which electronically compiles 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.

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.

As per [ADS 502.3.4.7, The USAID Records Management Program](#), USAID electronic messaging (EM) systems are divided into two (2) categories; Official and Non-Official. Official EM systems are owned by the agency and are approved to conduct agency business. Examples of official EM systems include, but are not limited to; usaid.gov email accounts, text messages from government-furnished devices, etc. Non-official EM systems are owned by the employee or others and are *not* approved to conduct agency business. Examples of this type of EM system are non-official (personal and private) email accounts and servers, non-MyUSAID social media sites, and text messages from personal devices.

In limited exceptional circumstances (e.g. catastrophic natural disasters, extreme weather conditions, etc.), use of non-official EM systems may be necessary. To the extent that such use occurs in limited exceptional circumstances, the individual creating, sending, or receiving the record from a non-official electronic messaging system must seek approval from the USAID Chief Information Officer and upon approval, copy/forward all records to an official USAID electronic messaging account within 20-days of creation.

On September 1, 2022, USAID sent out an agency notice advising employees of the appropriate use of text messages and third-party applications. The notice reminded staff that the use of non-official EM systems (e.g., personal email accounts, WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, Viber, Snapchat) in the conduct of official Agency business is prohibited. It also stressed that text messages sent/received even on a government issued device are typically captured/stored via a third-party service provider, and are not stored on the Agency's network.

USAID does not encourage the use of text messaging to conduct official Agency business; however, if any official record is created, sent, or received via text to conduct Agency business, it is the responsibility of the USAID employee to ensure that any Federal records of the Agency are appropriately captured within an official USAID recordkeeping system. To accomplish this, the employee must forward the communication to an official email account of the employee no later than 20 days after the original creation or transmission of the record.

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.)

USAID is committed to improving the lives of millions of poor and vulnerable people throughout the world and promoting a path to self-reliance for countries by supporting the development of secure, inclusive, and resilient digital ecosystems and the adoption of digital tools and data-driven approaches to improve development outcomes. As a technology that can identify, interpret, and act on patterns in data, Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a natural extension of the international development community's push to become more empirical and data-driven, and to drive innovation to where it is needed most.

AI's ability to derive insights from disparate data sources, recognize patterns, and make predictions can also help USAID records management professionals know what records they have, where they are located, and if they comply with current policies. USAID is not currently using any cognitive technologies to identify or classify its records. However, it has begun exploring them. The agency is in the solicitation phase of acquiring an Electronic Records Management System (ERMS). Adding the ability to automate identification and saving of records in the repository and/or the scheduling of records to the system is being examined.

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 have consistently promoted and prioritized the Agency's records management program. I am in regular communication with the Agency Records Officer, whom I have charged with addressing and communicating back to me all issues related to the evaluation and effectiveness of USAID's records management program and its compliance with statutes and regulations. I have reviewed and approved a series of initiatives and provided the necessary resources to enhance the Agency's ability to effectively manage its records including the development of an Agency CAPSTONE program, the procurement of an Electronic Records Management System, the development and implementation of a series of Plan of Corrective Actions in response to two NARA on-site inspections in the last three years, the promotion of records management issues across the Agency and the inclusion of my Agency Records Officer in key governance boards across USAID, the implementation of a whole-of-agency digitization effort for all paper-records, and the continued availability of virtual and in-person training in records management across the Agency including our Missions worldwide.

10. 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.

NARA does a satisfactory job supporting agencies with broad policies and guidance. The bulletins put out are a practical example of this. The bulletins lay out the specifics of the guidance NARA is giving, its reasoning behind the decision, and universal suggestions about how they might be implemented. This has been helpful in creating internal records policy and regulations for the agency.

Given the nature of records management moving swiftly in the direction of being a purely electronic endeavor though, it would be helpful for NARA to provide specific examples and/or case studies of where and how these policies and/or regulations have been implemented. In addition, rough estimates of cost for these endeavors would be extremely valuable. While each agency has its own unique business and technical environments, each shares the need to comply with federal records requirements and all could benefit from interagency discussion and identification of vendors with the capabilities to meet the federal requirements..

11. 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.

N/A