National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)

Implementation of the E-Government Act of 2002

Report for FY 2010

The National Archives and Records Administration annual E-Government report is provided pursuant to the E-Government Act of 2002 (Pub. L. No. 107-347) (Act). The act requires the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to report to Congress a summary of the information reported by agencies pursuant to Section 202(g) of the Act.

Our report comprises two sections that describe:
1. Innovation and Transparency
2. Compliance with Goals and Provisions of the Act

Section 1: Innovation and Transparency

Describe your top three E-Government IT accomplishments related to Open Government and innovation from this year. You are encouraged to confer with your Open Government Senior Accountable Official.

We engaged in a number of activities supporting the tenets of Open Government and the goals we outlined in *NARA's Open Government Plan*. Highlighted below are some of the key activities:

- The public participated in the Archives.gov redesign, part of the flagship initiative of the Open Government Plan. This is the first time NARA crowd-sourced the decision for the final design. We asked visitors to vote for their favorite design in person at the National Archives in Washington D.C., College Park, Maryland, and online.

- In support of our strategic goals to make as many of our holdings available to the public as easily as possible, and to improve civic literacy, we launched *DocsTeach*, a new online tool for teachers. *DocsTeach* is an education website designed to instruct teachers in the best practices of teaching with primary sources. As the site was developed, NARA's education team and colleagues from schools, institutions, and organizations across the nation participated in an online community to collaborate and share innovative ideas for

DocsTeach. We gathered feedback regularly throughout the development process. The highly commended site was officially launched in September 2010.

- *Federal Register 2.0,* another initiative in response to the President's call for open government, was launched to the public in July 2010. *Federal Register 2.0* is an online, newspaper edition of the *Federal Register*, the tool for access to government information. The site, highlighting agencies' significant rules, features a more user-friendly layout, greatly improved navigation and search tools.

In addition to these top three initiatives, we launched a *Transformation Idea Forum* to garner participation from staff around organizational transformation at the National Archives. More than 350 employees submitted 200 ideas, 552 comments on those ideas, and 4,500 votes on ideas to transform NARA. With the launch of *Our Archives Wiki*, we implemented a platform for the public as well as employees to describe records, collections, and provide images. The site encourages citizen archivists to contribute their expertise and guidance on a wiki along with NARA staff. The wiki currently has 178 members and over 125 pages. Also, we engaged employees in an idea forum called *Budget Brainstorming* where more than 790 (almost a quarter of all staff) participated and shared their ideas for possible areas to save money. There was much enthusiasm for the project with 371 ideas submitted, 921 comments, and 22,205 votes.

NARA's Open Government Plan launched over 70 specific tasks to accomplish. For more information about the Plan and a full list of tasks, and our recent accomplishments, please see: http://www.archives.gov/open/.

Section 2: Compliance with Goals and Provisions of the Act

A. *Please provide the URL(s) to your agency's Web site where the following information is located: Your agency's Information Resources Management (IRM) Strategic Plan and Enterprise Architecture (EA) Plan;*

NARA's Strategic Information Resources Management (IRM) Plan is posted to NARA's website at the following URL: http://www.archives.gov/about/plans-reports/info-resources

NARA's Enterprise Architecture documentation set is not publically posted to our website. These documents are part of NARA's annual EA submission to OMB.

B. *For each E-Gov initiative, provide final determinations, priorities, and schedules. Also include your agency's information dissemination product catalogs, directories, inventories, and any other management tools used to improve the dissemination of and access to your agency's information by the public;*

For each E-Gov initiative, our determinations, priorities and schedules are available on our web site for public comment at www.archives.gov/comment/web-priorities.html. The public may send comments through a link on the same page that lists the priorities and schedules.

NARA's most effective channel for communicating with and disseminating information to its diverse customers is its website, www.archives.gov. On that site, we have links to our online researcher tools (which include catalogs of our archival holdings) found at www.archives.gov/research/tools; and our up-to-date press release page at www.archives.gov/press. Our printed publications page at www.archives.gov/publications offers books, research papers, catalogs, teaching aids, and more resources that provide information about the National Archives and its holdings, works about professional archival practice, and scholarly works on people and events of historical interest.

NARA also reaches out to the public where they are online by participating in common social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and Flickr. For a full list of our current external social media projects, see: http://www.archives.gov/social-media/.

Part of our Open Government flagship initiative is our Online Public Access (OPA) system, which is intended to provide a streamlined search and updated display to the permanent records of the federal government in our holdings. We launched the OPA prototype to our staff in July, through an internal webpage, which we highlighted on the staff homepage. Every member of the staff received an email from the Archivist asking them to take the functional prototype for a test drive and to provide comments. We also highlighted OPA on the staff home page and requested feedback through an idea brainstorming tool or email. We are analyzing the comments for future enhancements. We plan to provide an external webpage to launch the prototype to the public in December and will use the same tools to garner feedback for continual enhancement of the system.

C. *Identify improved performance (e.g., outcome measures) by tracking performance measures supporting agency objectives and strategic goals;*

Fundamental to NARA's mission and Open Government goals is the idea of prompt, easy, and secure access to NARA holdings anywhere, at any time. Not only must we meet aggressive customer service standards with regard to access, we must get more of our holdings online, make them easier and more efficient to find online, and make our website, the portal for accessing these records, a product that engages the professional researcher as well as the middle school social studies student.

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We continually strive to make our holdings accessible to the public as soon as possible. One indication of the quality and interest in the information we provide is the number of visitors to our web sites—more than 39 million visits in FY 2010, up from 37 million last year. Through partnerships and collaborative efforts, we continue to increase the number of digital records available to the public through our online catalog of NARA's nationwide holdings, the Archival Research Catalog (ARC). More than 2.8 million cubic feet of traditional holdings are described in ARC, 71 percent of our holdings. To date, we have received more than 60 million digital objects from partners. We continued with our multi-party projects, digitizing the Homestead land entry files for Nebraska City and Lincoln; we partnered with Footnote to digitize and describe various Holocaust Assets Records microfilm publications, and we initiated another project with Footnote to digitize Civil War Union Service Records. A project with Ancestry recently culminated in a *Report of the Deaths of American Citizens Abroad.*

We continued to provide outstanding customer service exceeding our FY 2010 targets in almost every area. During FY 2010, we met or exceeded our targets for written requests received from customers answered within 10 working days (93 percent); items requested in our research rooms provided within one hour of the request (96 percent); Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests for Federal records completed within 20 working days (88 percent), and online orders completed within 20 working days (96 percent).

We collect public feedback about our websites through our American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) online surveys. We measure satisfaction by customer groups (e.g., genealogists, veterans, educators, students, etc.) and use this feedback to understand their experience on our websites. As a result of the feedback, we identify customer-focused strategies to develop, modify, or remove web content to improve customer satisfaction levels. We then apply this benchmark for excellence to our archives.gov web site and compare it against other Federal Government portal sites as a gauge to understand how we compare to other agencies. Previous analysis of feedback revealed that our site search capability would benefit from improvement. We enhanced our search engine and noticed an increase in our search score as well as our overall score. Our overall satisfaction score rose from 66 to 69 percent in FY 2009, and currently stands at 74 percent at the end of FY 2010. New questions about NARA's transparency indicate increased customer satisfaction with the way NARA is implementing open government through its main website, archives.gov.

D. NARA's FOIA handbook, the URL of NARA's primary FOIA Web site, and the URL where frequent requests for records are made available to the public;

Our FOIA Handbook is at http://www.archives.gov/foia/foia-guide.html

Our Electronic Reading Room, the website for frequent requests, is at http://www.archives.gov/foia/electronic-reading-room.html

E. A list of your agency's public Web sites disseminating research and development (R&D) information to the public, describing for each whether the website provides the public information about federally funded R&D activities and/or provides the results of Federal research;

Our website disseminates R&D information at www.archives.gov/ncast/advanced-research/. This website is dedicated to research on electronic records and conducted in support of the Electronic Records Archives and the National Archives Center for Advanced Systems and Technologies (NCAST). The website describes information about R&D activities and also provides links to research information relating to ERA Research Laboratories, Partnerships and Collaborations, Technical Reports, and Research Papers.

F. An inventory describing formal agency agreements (e.g., contracts, memorandum of understanding) with external entities (e.g., partnerships with State and local governments, public libraries, industry and commercial search engines) complementing your agency's information dissemination program, briefly explaining how each agreement improves the access to and dissemination of government information to the public;

NARA has entered into several formal agreements relating to digitization of our archival holdings. We have created a section on our public web site, www.archives.gov/digitization/, which contains information about these partnerships as well as our *Strategy for Digitizing Archival Materials for Public Access, 2007-2016*. The *Strategy* document was published in May 2008 after public review and incorporation of comments from more than 300 individuals, organizations and potential partners.

In FY 2010, NARA developed digitization projects with its partners on the following:

- Eight projects with Ancestry (formerly The Generations Network) to digitize criminal case files, naturalization records, Federal prison identification photographs, World War II draft registration cards, Chinese Exclusion Act case files, and slave ship manifests;
- One project with Footnote to digitize Confederate Compiled Service records; and
- One project with Family Search (The Genealogical Society of Utah [GSU]) to digitize World War II draft registration cards.

Other ongoing partnerships, which were announced in previous fiscal years, include:

1. A 5-year partnership with the Genealogical Society of Utah (GSU) to digitize holdings from the National Archives, beginning with case files of approved pension applications of widows of Civil War Union soldiers from the National Archives. The digitized materials are available at no charge in National Archives' research rooms in Washington, DC, and regional facilities across

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the country. In addition, FamilySearch will donate to the National Archives a copy of all the digital images and the associated indexes and other metadata that they create.

2. A partnership with Ancestry (formerly The Generations Network), parent company of Ancestry.com, to digitize holdings from the National Archives. Ancestry.com agreed to make the digitized materials available via subscription and to provide free online access to the digitized materials in all National Archives research rooms nationwide. In addition, Ancestry will donate to the National Archives a copy of all the digital images and technical and functional metadata that will enable retrieval of the material at the level of archival control.

3. A partnership with Google to make 100 moving image titles from our collection available through Google Video and through the Archival Research Catalog (ARC).

4. A partnership with EMC to digitize the entire collection of papers, documents, photographs and audio recordings of President John F. Kennedy, eventually making them accessible to citizens throughout the world via the Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum's web site.

5. A partnership with the University of Texas to create a Presidential Timeline web site to make digital copies of presidential documents available online. The Presidential Timeline was designed and developed by the Learning Technology Center in The University of Texas at Austin College of Education, in conjunction with the Presidential Libraries and Terra Incognita Productions. The Presidential Timeline Project was made possible through a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities with additional support from The Lyndon Baines Johnson Foundation and The University of Texas Libraries. The web site was launched in February, 2007.

6. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Genealogy Society of Utah (GSU) to permit digitization of some Naturalization records, Dawes Commission Applications for Allotment and Applications for Enrollment to the Five Civilized Tribes. GSU had previously microfilmed such records onsite in accordance with our regulations at 36 CFR part 1254 on private microfilming, but with this project GSU began to scan the records in lieu of the microfilm. An electronic copy (CD or DVD) of the scanned image will be provided to NARA-Southwest Region upon completion of certain milestones.

7. A partnership with iArchives/Footnote (now part of Ancestry) to digitize selected records from our holdings, with a focus on microfilm publications. This non-exclusive agreement enables researchers and the general public to access millions of newly-digitized images of the National Archives historic records on a subscription basis from the Footnote web site http://www.footnote.com/nara.php. The digitized materials are available at no charge in National Archives public research rooms including those at the Presidential Libraries and regional archives across the country. After an interval of five years, the National Archives will have the

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option to make all images digitized under this agreement available at no charge through the National Archives web site.

8. A non-exclusive agreement with CustomFlix Labs, part of the Amazon.com, Inc. group of companies to make thousands of historic films from the National Archives available for purchase on Amazon.com. While the public continues to have the option to NARA's College Park, MD research room to view films and copy them at no charge, the new agreement makes our motion picture holdings much more accessible to millions of people who cannot travel to the Washington, DC, area.

G. *An inventory that describes your agency's NARA-approved records schedule(s) of the link to the publicly-posted records schedule(s), and a brief explanation of your agency's progress to implement NARA Bulletin 2006-02. For the brief explanation please report the number of systems for which a record schedule was submitted to NARA in FY 2010 and the number of systems still requiring records schedules.*

On February 5, 2010, NARA issued Bulletin 2010-02, "Continuing Agency Responsibilities for Scheduling Electronic Records," canceling NARA Bulletins 2006-02 and 2008-03, which had expired on October 1, 2009. NARA Bulletin 2010-02 replaced the expired bulletins and provides updated guidance and new reporting requirements to assist Federal agencies in meeting their statutory and regulatory records management responsibilities for scheduling their electronic records. NARA (NARA Records Management Staff, NHR) reports to the Lifecycle Management Division (NWML) twice a year (March 31 and September 30) on this requirement.

On March 31, 2010, in accordance with Bulletin 2010-02, subpar. 4c, NARA submitted:
(a) Names and descriptions of all unscheduled electronic records systems;
(b) Estimated dates by which the NARA Records Officer expects to submit records schedules for the unscheduled electronic records systems; and
(c) The percentage towards completion for scheduling existing electronic records systems is 78 percent.

As of September 30, 2010, NARA is submitting an update to that information. The updated percentage towards completion for scheduling existing electronic records systems is 80 percent.

H. *Describe how your agency has implemented use of electronic signatures for appropriately secure electronic transactions with Government and established a framework to allow efficient interoperability.*

The Office of the Federal Register enables Federal agencies to submit original legal documents in electronic-only form through the use of digital signatures validated via the Federal Public Key

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Infrastructure. Any agency may participate in this program provided that they use digital signature certificates recognized by the Federal Bridge Certificate Authority. Forty to fifty per cent of the documents accepted for publication in the daily *Federal Register* are validated by digital signatures, improving the timeliness and efficiency of the publication process. In addition, all documents published in the official web editions of the *Federal Register* and *CFR* are authenticated by digital signatures, which can be verified on any Internet-connected computer.

I. *Describe how your agency has enhanced public participation in Government by electronic means for development and issuance of regulations. (Ex: regulations.gov)*

In FY 2010, NARA used social media tools, including Blogs and Idea Scale, to engage staff and the public when drafting a proposed rule regarding how NARA posts hours of operation. Using theses tools allowed us to actively interact with individuals wishing to comment, instead of passively waiting for comments from individuals. Five staff members and three members of the public took advantage of these resources. While the number of participants may appear small, the proposed rule was relatively innocuous and non-controversial. Social media tools will continue to be used to disseminate information, and engage the public in discussions, about an upcoming proposed declassification rule. We anticipate this rule to garner much more attention, and should prove the value of using social media tools, or not, when creating and revising NARA regulations in the future.

Since the re-launching of www.regulations.gov, NARA has continued to interface with that public site via www.fdms.gov. NARA supports and participates with these sites, programs which are dedicated to increasing public participation and transparency, as part of our normal course of business.

Also in FY 2010, NARA's Office of the Federal Register launched their "Federal Register 2.0" website www.federalregister.gov, built to make it easier for citizens and communities to understand the regulatory process and to participate in Government decision-making. On this site, *Federal Register* documents are organized and displayed in an easier to read format. Included are various web tools and user aids designed to help people find material relevant to their interests. The stated goal of this new site is to make the *Federal Register* more searchable, more accessible, easier to digest, and easier to share with people and information systems. NARA encourages every citizen to become more involved in the workings of their government and to make their voices heard on the things that matter to them, from the smallest to the largest issues.

J. Describe how your agency has linked performance goals to key stakeholders, private sector, other agencies, and internal operations in delivering information and services through use of IT.

NARA's performance goal to improve agencies' compliance with Federal records management policy is linked directly to Federal agencies. We are using an online survey for agencies to conduct self-assessments of their records management programs. Witnessing an extremely high response rate both in FY 2009 (91 percent) and FY 2010 (92 percent), we are able to assess agencies' compliance with Federal records management policies and the level of risk to many agencies' records management programs. We are using this information to identify tools, examine policy and understand what services we may need to provide to mitigate the risks to records management programs. In FY 2010, we digitized and posted all approved agency records schedules from 1973 to present on our public website. We conducted this effort to improve internal work processes and provide as a reference for agencies.

Through the deployment and implementation of the Archives and Records Centers Information System (*ARCIS*), our IT system for agency customers of the Federal Records Centers, agencies have the capability to better manage their records throughout the records lifecycle. *ARCIS* also enhances our ability to measure performance of the Federal Records Centers. We identified and have monitored system milestones throughout development and deployment of the system, and in FY 2010 monitored progress of incremental releases of functionality.

The issuance of Executive Order 13526 established the National Declassification Center (NDC) under the direction of the Archivist of the United States. In addition to the standup of the NDC, the edict required that we develop a Prioritization Plan that outlined our priorities for efficiently carrying out the declassification, referral and processing, and release to the public of classified records, while maintaining national security interests. We established performance goals directly tied to the number of pages completed in the NDC process and released to the open shelves. We posted a draft of the Prioritization Plan on our publicly available NDC website and established a blog to facilitate discussion of the plan. Encouraging face-to-face communication, we hosted a forum, moderated by the Archivist of the United States, for NARA researchers, Federal agencies and the general public to provide input on the Prioritization Plan. Bi-annually, we issue a public report on the operations of the NDC, highlighting areas of process improvement, interagency cooperation and overall progress with the effort.

In response to the Open Government Directive, we have published high value datasets on Data.gov. We included FY 2000 - FY 2010 datasets from our *Federal Register*, and archival descriptions and organization descriptions from our Archival Research Catalog. We created an open government website that serves as a directory of agency activities related to open government and NARA's Open Government Plan. We created an IdeaScale community called the Open Government Idea Forum, where we captured both public and employee input on

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initiatives such as the development of NARA's Open Government Plan, feedback on proposed designs of *archives.gov*, and input on proposed ways to address budget reductions.

Implementation of the *AOTUS* blog, a communication vehicle for the Archivist of the United States, encourages meaningful exchanges between the public, staff and the Archivist about important initiatives of the National Archives. The implementation of these mechanisms that support transparency, participation, and collaboration relate directly to NARA's goals to advocate and effectively carry out Open Government.

K. Describe how your agency has reduced errors through use of electronic submissions.

NARA submits grant data monthly to USASpending.gov via the online Data Submission and Validation Tool (DSVT), including data for all awards obligated throughout the previous month. Using information from the original application, correspondence with grant project key-personnel, and records from Central Contractor Registration (CCR), NARA staff identifies and corrects any deficiencies or minor discrepancies in institutional records. After completing the initial data review, NARA staff submits the necessary data to the Dun and Bradstreet FTP site (https://ftp.dnb.com/) for validation of the DUNS number and related data. Staff revisits data for any entity that does not receive a passing score, and resubmits the DUNS data to ensure that these are corrected.

Also, NARA posts all contracts, purchase orders and delivery orders to the Federal Procurement Data System (FPDS), which is a feeder system to USASpending.gov. NARA currently verifies that 100 percent of the required award reports are submitted to FPDS. Validation of the FPDS individual data entries contained in the award reports is accomplished by running the automatic validations built into the FPDS system. In addition, the contracting system used by NARA (the BPD provided PRISM system) automatically transfers a large amount of the award data directly from the award document into FPDS. As a further internal control, NARA spot checks the accuracy of the data from the contract that is entered into FPDS.

L. Briefly describe your agency efforts to comply with Section 508.

Under Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. 794d), the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), like all Federal Agencies, must give disabled employees and members of the public access to information that is comparable to the access available to people who do not have disabilities. NARA has a number of individuals and offices who are actively involved in working together to provide accessibility to NARAs employees and customers.

The NARA Equal Employment Opportunity and Diversity Program Office (NEEO) is the starting point for and coordinator of all requests for anyone needing Reasonable Accommodation to use NARA services or interact with NARA. In addition, NEEO arranges for American Sign Language Interpreters for meetings, classes, and other NARA events. NEEO also arranges for Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) services for NARA employees with hearing impairments. NEEO requests help from the NARA IT 508 Coordinator in obtaining 508 compliant Electronic and Information Technology (E&IT) equipment, software, and services needed for NARA's employees with disabilities who request a Reasonable Accommodation. When accessible E&IT equipment or software is needed, the Diversity Program Manager in NEEO fills out NA Form 3043 (Confirmation of Reasonable Accommodation Request) and the NA Form 3044 (Disposition of Reasonable Accommodation Request) and sends them to the NARA IT 508 Coordinator.

The NARA 508 IT Coordinator works in NARA's Office of Information Services. The NARA 508 IT Coordinator processes requests made by NARA's employees and customers for accessible Electronic and Information Technology (E&IT) equipment and software after receiving the NA Form 3043 and NA Form 3044 from NEEO. The NARA IT 508 Coordinator provides information on Section 508 requirements, meets with individuals needing assistance and their supervisors, and requests accessible E&IT desktop equipment and software from the Computer/Electronic Accommodations Program (CAP) at the Pentagon. The NARA 508 IT Coordinator also works with the Web Program Staff (NPOL), the General Counsel (NGC), the Training staff in Organizational and Staff Development Services (NAO), and the Acquisition Services Division (NAA) staff to fulfill customers' needs.

The NPOL Web Staff is responsible for NARA's external and internal web sites. They review web pages for 508 compliance. They assist the NARA web page developers in this by reviewing newly developed web pages with the JAWS screen reader software and provide feedback to the page developers. They also provide guidance and advice on how to improve web pages so the web pages meet 508 requirements.

The General Counsel (NGC) provides advice on the laws regarding 508 compliance and makes legal determinations as to NARA's responsibilities to fulfill the legal requirements for Section 508 and Reasonable Accommodation.

The Training staff in Organizational and Staff Development Services (NAO) provide 508 compliant training for NARA staff. They make training available on-line through NARA's Learning Management System.

The Acquisitions staff works to ensure that procurement documents for E&IT products and services include requirements for Section 508 compliance when appropriate.

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M. Quantify the cost savings and cost avoidance achieved through implementation of IT programs.

In FY 2010, NARA continued deployment of its Storage Network Infrastructure (SNI). The SNI initiative is expected to yield $980K in costs savings in FY 2011 and $3.3M in cost savings through FY 2013 (undiscounted) by virtue of achieving higher disk utilization rates when measured against NARA's current direct attached storage approach to storage allocation. Transition to the Networx contract has also reduced our cost per megabits per second of connectivity.