

# National Archives



SEP 16 1985

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Washington, DC 20408

Date : September 15, 1985  
Reply to :  
Attn of :  
Subject : NNS  
NC1-263-84-11  
To : NIR *KKg, gm 9/14/85*

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## I. Overall concerns:

A schedule is a working document for agency clerks and records officers and for NARA to make effective judgments. The best judgment can be made by direct examination of the records. In lieu of that, we make judgments based on information about the records. Therefore, it is essential to get full and accurate information. The theory that we can only be shown basic descriptions defeats good appraisal.

*It's not a "theory".*

## II. Specific comments:

Machine-readable records (items 17, 50, and 58) fail to be described adequately to distinguish between permanent and disposable tapes. It is now suggested these items be withdrawn pending a file-by-file inventory of its systems. Such a settlement brings us back to a continuation of a bad practice of not scheduling machine-readable records.

*but NNS acknowledges OK in this instance*

Item 5C is described as "printouts" (textual records). What machine readable record does it derive from? Where does it fit into a system of input, output, and transactional files? Item 13, as statistical information, suggests the possibility of automated records. Does this file exist in a machine-readable form?

Finally, a word of caution about "housekeeping" files in automated records. The existence of routine data in a flexible, manipulable medium requires different judgements about its research value, than what might be determined for textual records. What is in these files?

## II. Specific comments:

Cartographic and Architectural Branch needs to know the location and disposition of the finding aids for items 39 and 40 (aerial photography). Item 12g(4) sounds like an index to photo reports; why is it disposable? What is the form of the records on file 12g(2) - paper or film?

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Item 34 is not acceptable as it stands. There is too much ambiguity as to what constitutes a "policy and planning file" and whether any special records are permanent (as suggested in (2)) or disposable (as suggested in (1)).

Motion Picture, Sound, and Video Branch needs to know where the translations and transcripts of the permanent broadcast files (Items 35, 36) are held and if they are permanent.

Still Pictures Branch raises two points. Generally, the practice of referring back to previous job numbers is unsatisfactory. State the disposition and describe the materials covered by previous jobs. Specifically, NNSP calls for prints as well as negatives to be retained.

Finally, some items by the brevity of their descriptions raise questions. Is item 15 the principal locus for station files (as its title suggests)? I do not understand why these files would be "routine administrative support." Similarly, item 16 suggests operational records, not "routine operational activity". What is in these files? In item 18, can you define "telephone statements"? What is held in these files? Item 22, as subject files, suggests the inclusion of processed intelligence reports. Why are these disposable.

Item 26 as a message file should be of interest. Are these being saved somewhere else? Is this file automated? Item 37, refers to personnel files or another job, without indicating if those files are permanent or disposable. Knowledge of that would affect my judgment about this item. Is item 38 limited to translation activities? Certainly, the agency's involvement in the academic would be research value. What action is pending on item 39? What is in item 46? in item 54?

WILLIAM H. DUNLIFFE  
Director  
Special Archives Division

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Date : **MAR 5 1987**

Reply to  
Attn of : **NI**

Subject : **Disposition Job NC1-263-84-11**

To : **Assistant Archivist for the National Archives - NN**

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This is in response to your memorandum of March 2, 1987, concerning disposition job NC1-263-84-11. We agree that Item 1 of the schedule should indicate that the records at issue are duplicates and we have annotated the job accordingly. The other issues you have raised have merit but should not delay NARA approval of NC1-263-84-11.

We share your concern that working papers may be inappropriately characterized as nonrecord. The revised Disposition of Federal Records handbook for example, will provide expanded guidance on this matter. However, item 11 on this schedule is unchanged from item 9a on NC1-263-77-11, which is described as "transitory information, duplicates, working papers, and general housekeeping records." The older schedule indicates that the CIA considers these materials nonrecord, and therefore exempt from the scheduling requirement. This is consistent with the guidance NARS was giving at the time. Further, approving or disapproving the present job has no effect on this item because the nonrecord designation was accepted by the Archivist in approving the 1977 job and is not altered by NC1-263-84-11. We will continue to actively pursue the larger issue of the record status of working papers, but it is inappropriate to delay approval of this schedule because of this item.

We agree that CIA schedules should provide definite offer dates for permanent records. We proposed this to CIA last year, but our suggestion was rejected (see Enclosure 1). At that time, as you may recall, we considered taking the issue to Director Casey. However, we decided not to do so, and the reasons that were operative then are still valid. CIA has already begun transferring important records to the National Archives and is publicly committed to continuing the process. Nevertheless, the agency is adamant that its schedules not include fixed transfer dates, and it is highly unlikely that we can effect a change in this regard, particularly as the CIA may not be legally obligated to transfer records to the National Archives (see Enclosure 2).

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The final matter you raised concerns the inadequate descriptions of two temporary items in the schedule. You

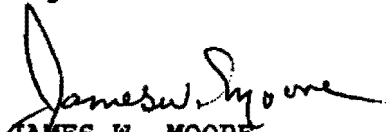
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are absolutely correct on this point. Indeed, few of the entries that comprise CIA schedules are adequate in that they consist only of series titles and lack substantive description.

In 1981, the National Archives agreed to accept such skeletal schedules (see Enclosure 3). We need to persuade the CIA to provide more detailed descriptions of records in their schedules. If they prove unwilling to do so, I am ready to recommend to the Archivist that he consider raising this issue with the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration and the Committee on House Administration, as provided for in 44 USC 3303a(c). However, we should not hold up the approval of NC1-263-84-11 while we try to solve this larger problem.

In sum, all of the points you have raised have merit and we are committed to dealing with them. However, delaying action on this already overdue job will not solve these larger problems. Accordingly, we again recommend that you sign this schedule and forward it to N for his approval.

  
JAMES W. MOORE  
Assistant Archivist  
for Records Administration

Enclosures

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