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MEMORANDUM TO FEDERAL AGENCY CONTACTS: ERA Implementation Update

Over the past year, the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) made significant progress in the development of the Electronic Records Archives (ERA). We want to bring you up to date on some of these activities and alert you to upcoming events that will impact your agency and how you interact with NARA.

In June 2008, NARA launched the first increment of ERA, including support for agency transactions with NARA, and began the transfer of our legacy electronic records holdings into the ERA repository. In FY 2009 we began an initial pilot of the scheduling, accessioning, and electronic records transfer functions of ERA with the support of five Federal agencies. We are refining the system based on this pilot. In January 2009, we launched the Executive Office of the President Search and Access System to preserve the records of the George W. Bush White House. In FY 2010 we are focused on the development of the public interface for ERA and a framework for managing the migration of electronic records from older formats into more accessible, sustainable formats.

We will begin an expanded pilot of the records management functions with approximately 30 Federal agencies in January 2010. The pilot will verify that ERA supports the Federal records management community in its interactions with NARA. We thank the agencies who helped us with the initial pilot phase and welcome the new agencies who will be using ERA in the next phase. If other agencies are interested in participating in this phase during FY 2010 they should contact their NARA appraisal contact to discuss the possibility. The ERA functions NARA will test in this pilot and roll out to all agencies by July 2011 are:

- * Scheduling records in all formats;
- * Accessioning records in all formats, including the annual transfers from NARA Federal Record Centers to the National Archives and direct offers of permanent records from agencies to the National Archives; and
- * Transferring electronic records into ERA.

The target dates for ERA deployment are:

- * January - June 2010: Expand ERA pilot to 30 Federal agencies
- * July 2010 - June 2011: Open ERA to additional interested Federal agencies, pending the analysis of pilot results and completing actions required for wider deployment to more agencies. NARA will open ERA to wider use as soon as technically possible after the pilot.
- * July 2011: ERA is the accepted and preferred business tool for NARA and Federal agencies to use when scheduling records or accessioning records in any format, and transferring electronic records to the National Archives.
- * FY 2012: Use of ERA is mandatory for all Federal agencies.

General information about ERA can be found on the ERA web site at <http://www.archives.gov/era/about/>.

If you have questions about how ERA will impact your agency, please contact the Lifecycle Management Division appraiser or Regional Records Management contact assigned to work with

your agency. A list of the appraisal and scheduling work groups is posted on the NARA web site at:

<http://www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/appraisal/index.html>.

The development and implementation of ERA ensures that NARA will continue to capture, preserve, and provide access to Federal records well into the 21st century and beyond. It is a challenge that NARA and Federal agencies are addressing together.

SUSAN R. CUMMINGS
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