

*Rela
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6 February 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR: [redacted] SA/DDS

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SUBJECT : Background and Status of Correspondence Handbook

1. At present there is on the books the regulatory issuance [redacted] titled "Correspondence Style and Procedures". Some 3,000 copies were printed. Every component with a complete set of Regulations should include a copy of that Handbook despite its May 1955 issuance date. The original distribution was 1,135 copies and the remaining 1,865 were distributed until exhausted in October 1963.

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2. As you will note in the attached folder, (TAB A) a revised version of the Handbook was started in February 1963 and was submitted to Regulations Control in August 1963. That draft was returned to this Staff in October 1964.

3. These attached diary notes indicate the subsequent coordination and re-editing that continued without producing a Handbook. Also, the requests for Correspondence Handbook copies became more and more emphatic. In October 1965 [redacted] reprinted 100 copies of the old 1955 Handbook only updating the Forms in the exhibits. Distribution of these was limited. Fifty were given to OTR for their clerical training sessions. Only a few are available today. (One is attached at TAB B for your information.)

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4. In March 1967 when I moved into this Staff I assigned a Career Trainee to complete the Handbook. He was not pleased with the assignment and requested a transfer within a few weeks. [redacted] worked on it again and in July I had [redacted] rework the draft. His product so imitated the Office of Communications' Correspondence Handbook (including examples) I could not use it as an Agencywide issuance. In August 1967 I talked with the Clerical Training faculty and with Mr. [redacted] their component Chief about my dilemma with the Handbook. They were so anxious to have the Handbook completed they arranged to get me another Career Trainee. [redacted] reworked the drafts, analyzed the various other Handbooks available, and completed a Grid Chart comparing them (TAB C). His draft is the most promising to date (TAB D).

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5. During the summer of 1967 this Staff actively cooperated with National Archives and Records Service in preparing a Correspondence Handbook for the U. S. Government (TAB E). NARS announced its expected

where is this

issuance for September 1967. We felt that it would fill many of the Agency Handbook needs and thereby permit us to issue a small supplement to the U. S. Government Correspondence Handbook. Unfortunately they have the type coordination problems we have and their book has been delayed too.

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6. Your January 1968 inquiries parallel those we received from [redacted] in Clerical Training. I can only respond as follows:

25X1 a. There are [redacted] Correspondence handbooks in the Agency filed with the Regulations in each component. These have 90% of the material that will appear in any new issuance.

25X1 b. Large components with correspondence requirements have issued their own Handbooks. We have received samples of the [redacted] Office of Scientific Intelligence, (3) and Office of Communications. We have examined NPIC's as well. There are several others on which we were not consulted.

c. The Office of Training used to issue a copy of the Handbook to every new employee passing through the Clerical Training Sessions. We urged and hope this practice will no longer prevail.

d. We believe the old Handbook should not be reprinted again until it is revised and updated.

e. I cannot believe the urgency for a new Correspondence Handbook is as pressing as the Clerical faculty is inclined to indicate.

f. I do believe the Agency would save considerable printing costs if it issued the Government Correspondence Handbook and only printed a small supplement concerned with the few special exceptions required by some of our activities. This we could and should wait to do.

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7. We will continue to prepare the [redacted] draft for coordination and probable issuance as the updated Correspondence Handbook for the Agency. We will be flexible enough to change the plan if a useable Federal Handbook is issued soon. Any assistance and information you can provide us on this matter will be most appreciated.

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[redacted]

CIA Records Administration Officer

Copy

(Jan 1968)

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MEMORANDUM FOR: DDS Operations Staff,

↑
Dick: Your suspense system very efficiently reminds me repeatedly that we have not issued a current correspondence handbook. I recommend that we cancel plans to produce a correspondence handbook and that the item be removed from your tickler system for the following reasons:

A. The clerical training faculty is the only source of demand for a correspondence handbook in the Agency. Anything taught in the clerical training classes is subject to modification by the practices and procedures of the individual components to which the students are assigned. The Correspondence Handbook published by the General Services Administration should serve adequately to meet the clerical training requirements.

B. There is no such thing as standard correspondence policy and procedure in the Agency and this is the primary reason that we have been unable to coordinate a proposal even at the informal level during the past several years. The advantages of standard correspondence practice are not so impressive that they are readily salable to managers at any level of the Organization. This militates against the adoption of the recommendation that a handbook be prepared for use at levels of the Agency subordinate to the deputy directors. Coordination of standard-

ized practice at these levels is no less a problem than it is at the upper echelons.

C. C. The resources of the Records Administration Branch are already stretched too thin in supporting activities of the Records Management Board in addition to their normal duties. We have no one available who can be given the task of preparing a correspondence handbook even if it were a necessary and desirable thing to do.

In my discussion of the Records Program with Mr. Bannerman, Mr. Coffey, and members of the DDS Staff a couple of weeks ago I offered the suggestion that we cease to concern ourselves with correspondence management in the conventional sense and that we begin to concern ourselves with correspondence systems. We should be less concerned with width of margins, standard indentations, proper spacing and alignment of date lines and signature lines and so on, and more concerned with the system of correspondence which creates paper in multiple copies, and

assigns a log number to it at each element of the organization it passes through on route to its destination, *we should look for a system, for example,* in such a way that we can identify at the time of creation the copy which ultimately will be stored at the Records Center, *which will permit us to identify* and we should have some way to make it retrievable by any element of the organization which has a requirement for access to it. I believe this is a valid recommendation. The problem is we don't have any resources to devote to this approach either. I am convinced, however, that resources can be much more productively applied to a systems approach than to a minutely detailed procedural

handbook .



Chief, Support Services Staff

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I would like to see this item killed altogether,
but if not that, let's at least put it off until the study group
that's about to be created has had a chance to look at the
Records Program and made its recommendations.