

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING  
BETWEEN THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION  
AND THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

SUBJECT: Procedures for Handling Records Transferred to NARA under the CIA  
Historical Review Program

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding between the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) is to outline procedures for handling records that CIA transfers to NARA under the Historical Review Program for release to the general public.

II. BACKGROUND

The CIA Information Act of October 1984 required the Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) to consult with the Archivist of the United States, the Librarian of Congress, and representative historians and report to four congressional committees on the feasibility of conducting a program for the systematic review, declassification and release to the public of CIA information of historical value. After these consultations the DCI reported to Congress in May 1985 that such a program was feasible, and that a Historical Review Program had been established in accordance with the recommendations of the consultants. Balancing the Agency's statutory duty to protect intelligence sources and methods with legitimate public interest in CIA records, this program aims to release inactive records, appraised as permanently valuable, to the public through the National Archives without risking damage to national security. To select material for review, permanent records held by the Agency are searched chronologically, beginning with the

earliest. Since the panel of consultants (which as Archivists of the United States Dr. Robert Warner convened in 1985 and Dr. Frank Burke in 1987), concluded that the release of sanitized documents is preferable to withholding whole documents, the program will release sanitized or redacted electrostatic copies of documents along with fully declassified and unclassified records to the public through the National Archives.

### III. RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES

The National Archives and Records Administration and the Central Intelligence Agency agree to the following:

- A. In Record Group 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, NARA will establish a subgroup to accommodate the transfer of records from the CIA Historical Review Program. Into this subgroup, the National Archives will accession from the CIA Historical Review Program records from which certain documents have been either withdrawn or sanitized to protect sensitive intelligence sources or methods.
- B. A document will only be sanitized if its essential significance can be retained, and there is no distortion of its bibliographical identity, including authorship and recipient, and use made of the record, even if details of internal dissemination are excised. In such cases, CIA will provide NARA with an electrostatic copy of the sanitized record in place of the original record.
- C. The National Archives will advise users of the Historical Review Program subgroup of RG 263 that they may apply directly to CIA under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act or the mandatory review provisions of Executive Order 12356 to obtain review of withdrawn records or withheld portions of sanitized records.

- D. As additional portions are declassified, CIA will provide NARA with a current electrostatic copy to be accessioned into the RG 263 subgroup, Records of the Historical Review Program. These items will be added to the holdings but not substituted for previously accessioned sanitized copies.
  
- E. When all portions of a record are declassified, the original record will be offered to the National Archives, to be accessioned into the subgroup of RG 263 to which it belongs by provenance. The electrostatic copies, however, will remain in the RG 263 subgroup for the Historical Review Program. Any disposal of electrostatic copies will be in accordance with the procedures for internal disposition of accessioned records.
  
- F. For a withdrawn document, CIA will insert a withdrawal sheet clearly marking the place where it has been withdrawn. If the sensitivity of the withdrawn record decreases and sanitization becomes possible, an electrostatic copy of the sanitized record will be offered to NARA. When a withdrawn record is totally declassified, the original record will be offered to NARA, to be accessioned into the subgroup of RG 263 to which it belongs by provenance.
  
- G. The procedures set forth in this Memorandum of Understanding will become effective upon its execution by both NARA and CIA.

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DON W. WILSON  
Archivist of the United States

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WILLIAM H. WEBSTER  
Director of Central Intelligence

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Date

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Date