A Concept of Operations for a National Declassification Center

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A. Executive Summary

In November 2008, President-Elect Obama stated, as part of his Bipartisanship and Openness Initiative’s Agenda for Change, that he “will institute a National Declassification Center (NDC) to make declassification secure but routine, efficient, and cost-effective.”

In conjunction with agencies holding national security information and declassification authority, the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) is prepared to take the lead in establishing an NDC that will ensure that declassification is secure, but routine, efficient and cost effective. The NDC will ensure that all sensitive materials will remain protected while enabling more information to be accessible to the American people by:

- Consolidating classified records and agency declassification personnel, thereby enabling initial reviews and subsequent referrals to occur in one centralized location;
- Establishing joint declassification review of Federal and Presidential records at one facility;
- Providing secure storage and related services for records containing classified national security information;
- Providing opportunities for collaboration and better understanding of equities among agencies;
- Developing improved and more uniform guidance, training, and quality assurance procedures;
- Upgrading existing systems, and exploring new technologies to document and streamline the declassification process;
- Laying the organizational groundwork to address the emerging challenges of electronic and special media records; and
- Improving oversight of and establishing priorities for declassification activities.

NARA is prepared to expand the existing National Declassification Initiative (NDI) and begin a pilot business process reengineering project to create the NDC at the NARA facility located at College Park, MD. However, the facility can not accommodate the necessary expansions in storage and work areas which would be required in order to achieve the NDC goals. A new facility dedicated to safeguarding, storing, declassifying, and processing classified records should be constructed to meet the needs of the NDC. This facility should include storage for classified temporary, pre-archival, and archival records, space for declassification review and processing, staff and resources to perform archival work on the records, and the Information Technology (IT) infrastructure necessary to support these functions.

Success of this interagency program is dependant on all participants sharing resources, providing staff to complete declassification review, supporting interagency training programs, developing shared knowledge to improve equity recognition, and establish cooperative processes to improve declassification. To achieve this goal NARA created a high level Concept of Operations (CONOPS) white paper that includes general
requirements for the facility, descriptions of participant responsibilities, a summary of
functions to be performed at the NDC, a discussion of the IT infrastructure, and a plan for
converting the NDI into an NDC. This CONOPS is a blueprint for building the
President's vision of an NDC.

B. Overview

The American public expects national security information to be protected, but they also
expect their historical records to be made available over time. Since October 1995,
Executive Order 12958 – Classified National Security Information, as amended (EO
12958), has provided a Government-wide authority and policy framework for securing
classified information and carrying out declassification. While agencies have had success
adjudicating their equities in their own records to meet the declassification deadlines in
the EO, review of referrals and historical records at NARA has been inadequate,
especially for records that have equities from multiple agencies.

Based on estimates NARA collected from agencies with classified holdings, there are
over 1.2 billion pages of permanently valuable classified Federal textual records\(^1\) and
nearly 40 million pages of Presidential papers, materials, and records\(^2\) that require
declassification review over the next 25 years; 51 million pages of referrals generated by
agencies reviewing their holdings under the EO that require review by the 31 December
2009 referral deadline; and a backlog of approximately 400 million pages of historically
valuable Federal records at NARA that require further declassification action. In
addition, ISOO's "Report to the President 2008" shows the volume of records being
classified records increases annually. In 2008 agencies classified 23.4 million pages
under original and derivative classification authorities (an increase of 1% from FY 2007),
while the volume of records being reviewed has declined each year since 2006. In 2008
agencies reviewed 51.4 million pages (a 14% decrease from 2007).\(^3\) Over the next 25
years Federal agencies are facing a massive volume (1.7 billion pages) of classified
textual records that, based on 2008 review statistics, will take over 33 years to complete
initial review, and many more to complete referral reviews and process all the records for
public access. These figures will continue grow each year as more records become 25
years old and require review before the automatic declassification deadline.

In addition to textual holdings, electronic government processes and systems are creating
a growing volume of classified records in electronic and other special media formats
which also require declassification action. While reviewers are faced with growing
volumes of electronic records, they also face problems with obsolete special media and
electronic formats, and deteriorating media in textual and special media formats. All
these problems must be resolved quickly to meet the December 31, 2011, automatic

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\(^1\) The figure of 1.2 billion pages is taken from an unpublished NARA survey of agencies' classified holdings subject to declassification review over the next 25 years.

\(^2\) The Office of Presidential Libraries estimates the total volume of classified Presidential holdings from the Herbert Hoover through George W. Bush administrations at 40 million pages.

declassification deadline (and subsequent annual deadlines) for special media holdings in
EO 12958. These problems will continue to intensify as the volume and complexity of
records increases, and the current problems are not resolved.

In the absence of additional money and resources, agencies must work together to
improve the declassification process in order to fully comply with the provisions and
declassification deadlines in the EO. Without reform in policy and process, agencies will
continue to spend millions of dollars each year\(^4\) perpetuating an ineffective and
inefficient declassification system, while the backlog of records waiting to be processed
for the open shelves continues to grow. Agencies should be committed to declassify and
release records to the public when appropriate, while ensuring classified agency equities
are accurately identified and all justifiably classified information is protected.

Recognizing problems exist in the declassification process, NARA worked to establish
the Remote Archives Capture (RAC) program and the (voluntary) NDI to develop a more
cooperative declassification and referral process. Beginning in 1996, the Presidential
Libraries and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) implemented the RAC program to
facilitate declassification review and referral of classified Presidential papers in remote
locations. This program digitally scans remotely located Presidential classified records
and makes all twenty-five year old classified materials available electronically for
declassification review in a centralized location in the Washington, DC area. In 2006 at
Archives II, NARA incorporated an existing interagency referral center, with a new
Quality Assurance (QA) program, and the development of annual processing and
declassification work plans to establish the NDI. Through examination of these
processes, NARA has identified problems that still exist in the declassification process:

- There is a massive volume of classified historical records at NARA that are 25
  years and older which the public can not yet access. Most of these pages have
  been reviewed by the creating agencies, but cannot be moved to the open shelf
  because:
  - Other agencies need to review these records for their equities
    (referrals).
  - Quality issues have been identified; including missed sensitive
    information and referred non-sensitive information.
- The Federal Government is paying to protect records that, at 25 or more years
  after creation and original classification, no longer contain sensitive national
  security information.
- There is a lack of coordination among agencies on policies and processes.
- Agencies provide insufficient equity recognition training to other agency
  reviewers, leading to misidentification of equities during the review process.

agencies spent $4.6 billion on Information security. Of that total, $44 million was spent on
declassification.
• *Ad hoc* declassification decisions are being made without consulting approved
declassification guides, leading to incorrect decisions and inconsistencies in the
way information is referred, exempted or declassified.

• There is a lack of standardized declassification guidance leading to inconsistent
and conflicting declassification decisions within agencies and across the
government.

• There is no common, interagency system for tracking review progress and
recording declassification decisions.

Through these two programs processing improvements were made, and some success
realized, however, execution of the overall declassification process in accordance with
EO 12958 has been limited. It has become clear that voluntary participation in the NDI
and RAC programs is insufficient, and improvements to existing declassification
processes are needed. One concept that has been studied and discussed for over 10 years,
both inside government and by independent commissions and boards, is an NDC.

The NDC concept has long-standing and broad bipartisan support. In March 1997, the
Commission onProtecting and Reducing Government Secrecy (Moinihan Commission),
recommended “the creation by statute of a central office—a National Declassification
Center—at an existing Federal agency such as the National Archives and Records
Administration to coordinate national declassification policy and activities.” In his
October 2007 “A New Beginning” speech at DePaul University, then-Senator Obama
stated “I’ll turn the page on a growing empire of classified information, and restore the
balance we’ve lost between the necessarily secret and the necessity of openness in a
democratic society by creating a new National Declassification Center.” In December
2007, the Public Interest Declassification Board (PIDB) issued a report to the President in
which they recommended the establishment of “a new National Declassification Center
(NDC)...within the National Archives and Records Administration.” In November 2008,
President-Elect Obama stated, as part of his Bipartisanship and Openness Initiative’s
Agenda for Change, that he “will institute a National Declassification Center to make
declassification secure but routine, efficient, and cost-effective.”

In collaboration with agencies holding national security equities and declassification
authority, NARA is prepared to take the lead in establishing an NDC. An interagency
NDC will establish a cost effective, government-wide system to meet the declassification
goals of EO 12958, while protecting sensitive national security information. The NDC
will meet these goals by:

• Consolidating classified records and agency declassification personnel, and
  enabling initial reviews and subsequent referrals to occur in one centralized
  location;

• Establishing joint declassification review of Federal and Presidential records at
  one facility;
• Providing secure storage and related services for records containing classified national security information;

• Providing a centralized location for communication, collaboration and documentation of equity referrals and review decisions;

• Establishing a system that will allow the sharing of declassification procedures and general guidance between all agencies, and facilitating the development of improved and more uniform declassification guidelines, training, and quality assurance procedures;

• Upgrading existing systems, and exploring new technologies to document and streamline the declassification process;

• Addressing the existing challenges of special media and electronic records;

• Improving the management, prioritization and oversight of agency declassification activities and decisions; and

• Implementing unified strategies to ensure that the records will be preserved for as long as they are needed.

The NDC will, for the first time, facilitate the review of both Federal and Presidential records in one location. Transfer, storage, preservation and declassification review for Federal and Presidential of records will be handled using a lifecycle approach that is consistent with the appropriate laws and regulations governing that type of record. Permanent Federal records are retired, and may require a long period of inactive storage before they are accessioned to NARA in accordance with approved records schedules. Federal records are most often accessioned close to the automatic declassification deadline. Presidential records are transferred to the legal custody of the Archivist every four or eight years, a much earlier point in their lifecycle and many years before the automatic declassification deadline. Presidential records are transferred to the President’s Library where the staff begins initial processing, responding to special access requests and, at the five year point, responding to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests. When these records reach the twenty-five year point and are ready for automatic declassification, the NDC will work with the RAC program facilitate declassification review through RAC review stations at the NDC.

Based on the volume of classified records, the need to standardize disparate declassification processes and guidelines, the lack of suitable secure space for agency reviewers and NARA Staff, and to need to replace the aging, substandard classified storage at the NARA records center located at Suitland, a new secure facility is needed to consolidate declassification programs and classified records in one location. While NARA can provide additional support and resources to begin expanding the NDI into an NDC (see Appendix C), the NARA facility at College Park can not accommodate necessary expansions in security, storage vaults, and work areas required by an NDC. As
a result, a new facility dedicated to declassification should be constructed. This facility will meet the needs of NARA and all agencies that created classified records by including storage for temporary and pre-archival agency records, storage for classified permanent records accessioned by NARA, space for declassification review and processing, staff and resources to perform archival and preservation work on the records, and provide the security and IT infrastructure necessary to support these functions.

While NARA is prepared to take a leading role in the creation of an NDC, the success of this interagency program is dependant on all participants sharing resources. Participating agencies will need to provide staff to complete declassification review, support interagency training programs, and develop shared knowledge processes to improve equity recognition. To establish a general NDC framework, NARA developed a high level CONOPS to outline general requirements for the facility, descriptions of participant responsibilities, a summary of functions to be performed at the NDC, and a discussion of the IT infrastructure.

C. Facility

Once constructed, the NDC will securely store 1.2 million cubic feet of classified temporary, pre-archival and archival Federal records, enable equity holding agencies to access millions of 25 year-old classified Presidential records, and provide a centralized and secure location to perform all functions associated with records storage, declassification, archival processing, accessioning, reference and preservation. To support the work of agency declassification reviewers and NARA staff, the building will include:

Security

- The facility will be certified at the TS/SCI level, and include work and storage space to appropriately protect all classified holdings. It will meet all security requirements established in Director of Central Intelligence Directive Category 6 - Security (DCID 6), DOD National Industrial Security Program Operating Manual (NISPOM) and NARA Information Security 202 standards.
- The facility will house approximately 240 people and have minimal public interaction.
- The facility will be protected 24/7, consistent with all applicable security requirements including, but not limited to military, intelligence community (IC) and NARA.

Physical Storage

- Will be provided for agencies’ classified temporary and pre-archival records, and archival storage for classified accessioned records.
- Will meet all standards established by NARA for records storage and archival facilities.
- Will meet all physical security standards for a TS/SCI facility.
• Will be coordinated with agencies and NARA units responsible for appraisal, accessioning, reference, declassification, processing, and preservation and include:
  o Storage, preservation, reformatting and access to textual and special media holdings.
  o A system, such as the Electronic Records Archives (ERA), that will support storage, preservation and access for classified electronic records.
• Will include RAC stations to handle the review of classified Presidential records.

Work Space
• Will include space for NDC staff to support transfer, storage, reference and recalls for temporary and pre-archival agency records.
• Will include space and equipment for agency reviewers performing systematic review of their agency records and reviewing referrals in other agency records in all formats, including special media records.
• Will include space for NDC staff performing archival functions and supporting the declassification process.
• Will include space for performing conservation and preservation reformatting on textual records.
• Will include space for review and preservation reformatting of special media records.

IT Infrastructure
• Will include a system or systems in place to ensure accurate and timely tracking of all holdings.
• Will include a system to facilitate and document the declassification process from initial review through public access.
• Will include a system that will support NDC staff processing special access requests, to include case tracking and redaction functionality.
• Will include the ability to develop existing technologies, and explore new technologies to improve and modernize the declassification process.
• Will include desktop, e-mail, file, and print server coordination.
• Will include the ability to access classified Presidential Library documents through RAC review stations for declassification review.

D. Staffing

The day-to-day operation of the NDC will be administered, coordinated and overseen by staff experienced in the declassification process, and in the archival principles needed to process and manage temporary and permanent records. Agencies participating in the NDC will work with NARA to establish the policies and procedures that govern NDC work processes. The NDC will be managed by the NDC Director (see Chart B-1), with the assistance of a Deputy Director, NARA Program Staff, and guidance from the NDC Policy Planning Group.
B-1: NDC Management

1) **NDC Director** – The Director of the NDC will be an SES position hired by NARA, and will have extensive experience with government declassification practices, and working with agencies to support the declassification process. The Director will be responsible for the daily operation of the NDC.

2) **Deputy NDC Director** – Will facilitate agency liaison duties and ensure agencies are represented in the implementation of NDC policy. This position will be nominated by a participating agency’s Senior Agency Official for Declassification, and will be approved by the NDC Director and the Policy Planning Group. The candidate should have extensive experience working in the declassification and security fields. The approved candidate will be detailed for at least one year to ensure the Deputy has sufficient input into the NDC, but no more than three years to ensure all agencies have equal opportunity for representation in the NDC management.

3) **NARA Program Staff** – Will include representatives from NARA program offices that provide program guidance for specific functions in the NDC. Positions include a Security Manager, Information Systems Security Officer (ISSO), IT Systems Administrator, Administrative Officer, Facility Manager, Instructional Design Specialist, Presidential Records Coordinator and Preservation Conservator (see Appendix B). This staff will work with the Director and Deputy Director to support the day-to-day operation of the NDC.

4) **Director of Archival Operations (DAO)** – Will oversee day-to-day archival operations in the NDC, direct NDC staff participation in declassification programs and coordinate declassification review with agency reviewers assigned to the NDC.

5) **Records Storage Manager** – Manages the storage and services related to the storage of temporary, pre-archival and archival records in the NDC. Plans and
6) **NDC Interagency Policy Planning Group** – Will set NDC priorities, approve the annual NDC work plan, develop standard declassification guidance, approve NDC policy/procedures and resolve issues which may occur in the NDC. The group will be chaired by the Director of ISOO, and will be made up of senior managers appointed by the Senior Agency Officials, as designated in section 5.4(d) of EO 12958, from DOE, DOD, DNI, State, NARA and NSC. Additional agencies will be invited to participate in the group as necessary to meet the NDC goals. The NDC Director will act as the Executive Secretary, and provide staff to support the group (see Chart B-2).

7) **Agency Staff** – Agencies will provide sufficient staff to perform equity recognition, declassification review, and participate in the development training and guidance. Agency staffing levels may vary over time depending on changes in work load.

**E. NDC Functions** – The NDC will provide secure, high-quality, cost-effective storage and servicing of records for our Federal Customers to support their storage needs and declassification obligations.

1) **Classified Record Storage** – The NDC will provide agencies with records storage and support services for classified temporary and pre-accessioned records, and include the following services:
   a) Storage for classified holdings up through the TS/SCI level, that will be designed to mitigate any preservation risks to the records.
   b) Transfer of records – Using information from approved *Requests for Records Disposition Authority (SF-115)* the NDC staff will work
with agencies to transfer classified holdings for storage and future
declassification processing.
c) Reference – The NDC staff will retrieve records requested by
agencies, and transport the records to the customer.
d) Re-file – The NDC staff will receive records returned from agencies
and replace them in the appropriate location.
e) Interfile – The NDC staff will add additional boxes to a transfer if an
agency adds additional records to a file.
f) Disposal - After a transfer reaches the end of its active life as
outlined in the NARA approved records schedule, then the transfer is
identified for either accessioning to NARA in the case of permanent
records or for destruction according to the records schedule and all
regulations for the proper disposal of classified records. NDC staff
will work with customer agencies to ensure that all permanent
records are accessioned and temporary records are scheduled for
disposal.

2) Archival Functions – NDC will provide records management and preservation
for classified accessioned permanent records, and include the following
services:

a) Pre-Accessioning Activities

- Prioritization – NDC staff will work with NARA units and the
  agencies to develop a plan to prioritize review and processing
  of classified Federal, Legislative and Presidential records.
  - Records identified as being of significant scholarly or
    high research interest will be prioritized at the highest
    level.
  - Records of general research interest will be
    prioritized at a lower level.

- Appraisal – NDC staff will facilitate work by the agencies and
  appraisal archivists to ensure all records in storage are
  appraised and scheduled. Agencies will:
  - Work with NARA to prepare accession paperwork.
  - Verify permanent status holdings.
  - Identify all access restrictions in permanent records.
  - Inform NARA of all existing series descriptions or
    finding aids

- Series identification and verification – NDC staff archivists
  will identify permanent series, and verify all associated
  accessioning paperwork.

- Preservation – NDC staff will work with NARA conservators
  to mitigate preservation risks, complete preservation risk
  assessments and identify urgent or critical preservation issues.

b) Declassification Review of Agency and Accessioned records
• Initial Declassification Review of agency records (under sections 3.3 [automatic] and 3.4 [systematic] of EO 12958)
  o Will be performed by agencies on their records in the NDC prior to accessioning (based on established interagency and NDC priorities)
  o NDC will develop a classified NDC system (similar to NARA's Archival Declassification Redaction and Review System - ADRRSEQ) to track the declassification process and all review decisions.
  o The NDC will employ clerical staff to assist NARA and agencies with document indexing and data input.
  o The existing interagency Quality Assurance Review Team (QART) will examine records for review quality.
    ▪ Record series that "fail" the process will be returned to the agency for a follow-up review (using the NARA QART model)
    ▪ Record series that "pass" the QA process will continue to the referral process.

• Declassification Review of legacy records not reviewed prior to accessioning.
  o NARA and agencies will use the NDC developed system to track the declassification process and all review decisions.

• Agencies will complete initial declassification review (based on established agency and NDC priorities)
  o Reviewed records will go through the QA and referral process as described above.
  o The 400 million pages of legacy records that have been reviewed by agencies will proceed through the QA and referral processes as previously described.

c) Interagency Referral Process
• NDC staff will process records through the referral center based on prioritization plan
  o Based on the Interagency Referral Center (IRC) model established by NARA.
  o In coordination with annual processing work plans.
• Agencies will be notified of existing referrals through electronic queues or alternative methods.
• NDC staff will be responsible for the reintegration process once all referral have been adjudicated.
  o Removing and securing all classified records.
  o Transferring declassified records to open stacks at NARA (Archives II) for public access.
d) Declassification and Referral Process for Presidential papers, materials, and records.

- Through the RAC project, NARA will digitally scan all classified 25 year old documents held by Presidential Libraries and make these images available for review at the CIA review center and via terminals at the NDC.
- Agencies will be notified through the RAC project of any primary and secondary referrals.
- Declassification review decisions will be captured in the RAC system and transmitted to the CIA review center, which will return the images marked with declassification decisions to the appropriate Presidential Library for processing and release.

e) MDR/FOIA/RAC

- For Federal records, the NDC will have staff to process classified FOIA and MDR requests for accessioned archival holdings. If agency declassification reviewers onsite are not approved to conduct FOIA/MDR review, the NDC will perform the following functions:
  o Copying and referring documents to the appropriate agency FOIA/MDR programs for review and redaction.
  o Processing agency responses to FOIA/MDR referrals for public release.
  o Use the classified NDC system to perform redactions required based on agency reviews.
  o Logged and tracking all requests in the classified NDC system.

- For scanned Presidential papers, materials and records, the RAC Project will support the referral process for classified FOIA and MDR requests.
  o Equity holding agencies will be provided with digital copies of the materials for review.
  o Review decisions will be returned to the appropriate Presidential Library for processing and release.

- Future Functionality – NARA and the agencies do not currently have compatible FOIA/MDR systems. Most agencies have electronic FOIA/MDR redaction and tracking systems, but are not currently working toward making these systems compatible throughout the government. To improve this process the NDC will work toward automating the FOIA/MDR process and making it easier for agency FOIA/MDR reviewers to review their documents remotely. To achieve this goal, the NDC will:
  o Develop a process for coordinating documents with agencies using scanned images instead of photocopies.
Use the RAC system as a model to develop (through an R&D process) a secure FOIA/MDR review system that is accessible through the NDC.

f) Quality Review, Training and Guidance
   - Quality Review – The NDC will have a QA program in place to ensure all declassification review meets established standards.
     - The QA program will be based on the QARD established by NARA under the NDI.
     - The team will consist of:
       - Experienced senior reviewers from the agencies performing declassification review at the NDC.
       - Other reviewers who are consulted as needed based on subject matter.
     - The QA team will review all records for quality of review and resolve any issues that arise as a result.
   - Training – The NDC will have a full-time Instructional Design Specialist to develop a detailed training program for declassification reviewers. This program will:
     - Ensure all reviewers have access to the same training on declassification policies and procedures. The NDC training staff will work with individual agencies to ensure reviewers are trained on relevant subject matter and equities.
     - Build on practices established by the existing interagency training committee.
     - Establish a government-recognized certification for declassification reviewers. Certification will include:
       - General equity recognition training for first reviewers.
       - Advanced training that will lead to:
         - Expert certification for specific subject areas
         - Certification for senior reviewers
     - The training staff will develop training that can be delivered:
       - In-person as hands on-training.
       - Remotely through DVDs or as web-based training.
   - This will be a collaborative effort, but does not change the fact that individual agencies have control over who is authorized to declassify their equities.
   - The training staff will work with agencies to create certification training that meets their needs.
• Guidance – The NDC will establish a library of declassification guidance and reference materials that can be accessed at the NDC.
  
  o The guides will be maintained on an intranet in the NDC, and will be based on the Declassification Guide Web Application (DGWA) system that NARA is currently developing.
  
  o The intranet will provide a single, easily accessible location to store Interagency Security Classification Appeals Panel (ISCAP)-approved declassification guidance. The NDC staff will work with agencies and ISOO to ensure guidance on the intranet is current.
  
  o The NDC staff, agencies and ISOO will cooperate to standardize declassification guides throughout the government.
  
  o Agencies will have the ability to restrict, or control access to their guidance stored at the NDC.

g) Archival Processing of Federal Records

• Space management – The NDC staff will manage records storage through the use of classified systems with functionality similar to the Archives and Record Center Information System (ARCIS) and Holdings Management System (HMS).

• Accessioning – The NDC staff will coordinate the transfer and accessioning of records regardless of format between the agencies and NARA.

• Withdrawal and reintegration – The NDC staff will withdraw and reintegrate withdrawn records based on the procedures set in the declassification process.

• Description – The NDC staff will work with NARA reference and processing units to create or update finding aids and Archival Research Catalog (ARC) descriptions as necessary.

h) Preservation – The NDC staff will coordinate with NARA Preservation Programs to implement the following preservation functions at the NDC:

• Assessment of preservation risks
• Mitigation of preservation risks through use of preventive preservation strategies
• Preservation training
• Conservation and preservation and access reformatting of at risk textual and non-textual records
• Declassification of Classified Special Media (CSM) will be supported by providing the following:
  
  o Reformatting of analog media to digital surrogates for review and preservation.
o Equipment and labs required for preservation, reformatting and playback of CSM.

o Staff to perform reformatting and redaction of CSM, and to assist reviewers.

• IT infrastructure required to storage, preservation and reformatting for a CSM system.

F. IT Infrastructure and Applications

IT Infrastructure

Users at the NDC and will require IT and office equipment to support access to multiple classified and unclassified networks. User access will be controlled based on security levels and standalone secure systems/networks will be segregated in separately controlled or compartmented secure areas, as deemed necessary. The networks storage, bandwidth and connectivity will be sufficient to support all NDC business functions and automated systems.

The NDC will offer users unclassified communications, such as Telephone and Fax, and classified communications such as STE telephones and classified Fax equipment. The NDC will have both unclassified and classified secure video conferencing facilities. At the desktop, users will have PCs with access to office automation applications and secure access to shared, and agency-specific internal Web pages. Access and content of agency-specific spaces will be controlled by each agency with support from the NDC IT staff. Shared space will be moderated by the NDC staff, and accessible to all users for the sharing of information and declassification guidance with the entire NDC community.

To facilitate access requirements, the NDC may provide access to multiple physically separate networks and systems as determined by stakeholder requirements. Specifically, the NDC will provide access to outside agency/stakeholders classified networks such as Secret Internet Protocol Router Network (SIPRNet), Joint Worldwide Intelligence Communications System (JWICS) and any other networks as deemed necessary to accomplish declassification work.

All NDC stakeholders will adhere to the information assurance guidelines established in NARA Directive 804, and IT systems will be operated according to the policies in NARA's IT Security Architecture.

IT Applications

While the NDC functions and business processes identified in Section E need to be fully developed and documented, there is core functionality that needs to be supported through the use of IT. The requirements, design, development and deployment of all NDC IT Systems will be conducted according to NARA Directive 805, the System Development Lifecycle.
Business processes will be analyzed and documented and determinations will be made as to the best strategies for both manual and automated processes. As the business processes are more defined determinations will be made as to the levels of classification that will be required for each system. Alternatives studies will be done to evaluate functionality of current systems that may support the NDC versus new development. All new development will ensure that systems are secure, flexible and extensible.

Core IT functionality includes:

- Automated tracking, monitoring and of unclassified and classified material at the record level for all types of media to ensure accurate inventory tracking and accountability. This includes the tracking of:
  
  1. Holdings within the NDC
  2. Records that are transferred to the NDC by agencies
  3. Records that are transferred from the NDC back to agencies
  4. Declassified records transferred to open NARA research facilities

- Automated tracking and recording of declassification decisions to ensure records are reviewed by all appropriate equity holders and prevent the inadvertent release of classified information.

- Automated review and redaction capabilities for both large volumes of records and complex data formats with flexibility for expansion to support increasing number of declassification requests while ensuring timely release of materials.

- A Web-based Declassification Guide to provide one central reference location for users to access and reference all available declassification information. Available information is user-dependent and may consist of declassification guides, general declassification material, as well as shared knowledge among users and subject matter experts (e.g. Question and Responses postings).

- Collaboration tools to support equity holders in the decision making process.

- Workflow to support:
  
  1. Systematic review
  2. Declassification decisions
  3. Referral review
  4. FOIA/MDR processing
  5. IRC functions

- Support the Declassification of CSM including equipment and laboratory environment required for preservation, reformatting, and playback of CSM including the capabilities for the transfer of analog media to digital formats.
• Interface to ERA (now in development) or have functions similar to ERA to support the long-term preservation and migration of classified digital media and formats.

G. Summary and Recommendations

Improving the declassification process has broad bi-partisan support in the government, and high interest in the public sector. Based on the problems identified under the current NDI process, declassification processes must be overhauled to meet the requirements established in EO 12958. The most efficient and effective way to address these problems is through the establishment of an NDC. NARA took the first step in this process by creating the NDI and is prepared to establish the NDC as recommended by the Moynihan Commission and the PIDB.

The CONOPS provides a high level overview of the staffing and functions of an NDC. It does not however address a few specific issues that must be resolved before an NDC can be established. The following issues were discussed, but not addressed in the CONOPS:

1) It is clear that NARA can only support certain aspects of the NDC at the facility in College Park facility. A new facility which will support all functions of an NDC must be built. The next steps in this process will include locating an appropriate site, and designing a building that will meet all storage, preservation and security requirements of the NDC.

2) The declassification process as it currently exists is flawed. Despite being reviewed by originating agencies as required under EO 12958, declassification referral and processing backlogs exist, and declassified records are not publicly available as intended. A detailed business process re-engineering project (BPR) needs to be undertaken to improve the NDI processes that will become the NDC. This process should include NARA staff working on the NDI, agencies involved in the NDC declassification process, and contractors skilled at facilitating BPR projects.

3) This NDC is a new and unique program. This is a true interagency cooperative process and will require resources and support from all participants. An interagency policy planning group needs to be established to address roadblocks in the existing process and develop plans to ensure the NDC meets the requirements of all participants, the public, and the EO. NARA will be working with group to develop a plan that outlines the support required from participating agencies.

4) In their report, the PIDB expressed concern that declassification review and preservation of classified special media and electronic records is not being adequately addressed by agencies. Each year the volume of records created in electronic formats and the risk for loss of information due to obsolete media is increasing. The NDC Director should work with agencies, electronic records
experts and NARA's Lifecycle Management Division records management staffs to determine an accurate volume of classified electronic records, and establish a plan for preserving and declassifying these records.

5) Beyond the automatic declassification provisions of EO 12958, the processing of FOIA and MDR requests is a complex and costly process. The NDC should look toward the future to develop a method of streamlining or improving the referral process. These improvements would allow appropriate agency reviewers to review, redact and refer documents in one centralized system. A process for researching and leveraging new technologies should be established in the NDC.

A National Declassification Center is the best hope for meeting the expectations of the public, access goals of the President, and as then-Senator Obama stated, restoring "the balance we've lost between the necessarily secret and the necessity of openness in a democratic society".  

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APPENDIX A: DEFINITION OF TERMS

Access – The ability or opportunity to gain knowledge of classified information.

Agency – Any “Executive agency,” as defined in 5 U.S.C. 105; any “Military department” as defined in 5 U.S.C. 102; and any other entity within the executive branch that comes into the possession of classified information.

Accessioning – The process of transferring legal custody of records from the originating agency to NARA.

ADRRES (Archival Declassification Redaction and Review System) – A system used by NARA to index exempted materials, track declassification decisions and projects, maintain a FOIA/MDR log, and perform redaction of textual records. This system was developed by CACI and is based on their HighView software.

ARC (Archival Research Catalog) – The online catalog of NARA’s nationwide holdings in the Washington, DC area, Regional Archives and Presidential Libraries.

ARCCIS (Archives and Records Centers Information System) – A web-based system being deployed by the Federal Records Centers (FRCs) of the National Archives and Records Administration to serve as the portal through which all agencies will conduct online transactions with the FRCs. The system allows agencies to document and monitor transactions electronically, giving instant access to information about their records.

CSM (Classified Special Media) – Classified records in formats, such as dynamic media (audio, video and motion picture) or still images. NARA is constructing a system that will reformat, digitize and preserve these formats. The system will have review workstations for declassification review by authorized reviewers, and redaction stations for use by lab specialists.

DAO (Director of Archival Operations) – The person in the NDC who manages day to day operation of functions related to declassification and archival processing.

Declassification – The authorized change in the status of information from classified information to unclassified information.

Declassification Authority means:

(1) the official who authorized the original classification, if that official is still serving in the same position;

(2) the originator’s current successor in function;

(3) a supervisory official of either; or

(4) officials delegated declassification authority in writing by the agency head or the senior agency official.
**Declassification guide** – Written instructions issued by a declassification authority that describes the elements of information regarding a specific subject that may be declassified and the elements that must remain classified.

**DGWA (Declassification Guide Web Application)** – An online application in the ADRRES network, built to provide one central reference location for Users to access shared declassification guidance and information.

**Equity** – Information that originated from agencies other than the creating agency, or the disclosure of which would affect the interests or activities of other agencies. These documents shall be referred for review to those agencies and the information of concern shall be subject to automatic declassification only by those agencies, consistent with the provisions of section 3.3 of EO 12958.

**ERA (Electronic Records Archives)** – The NARA strategic initiative to preserve and provide long-term access to uniquely valuable electronic records of the U.S. Government, and to transition government-wide management of the lifecycle of all records into the realm of e-government.

**Federal Records** – A include all books, papers, maps, photographs, machine readable materials, or other documentary materials, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received by any executive agency or any establishment in the legislative or judicial branch of the Government (except the Supreme Court, Senate, the House of Representatives, and the Architect of the Capitol and any activities under his direction) of the United States Government under Federal law or in connection with the transaction of public business and preserved or appropriate for preservation by that agency or its legitimate successor as evidence of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations or other activities of the Government or because of the informational value of the data in them. The framework for Federal records management is established in the Federal Records Act (44 U.S.C. 3301).

**FOIA (Freedom of Information Act)** – An access law (5 U.S.C. § 552) which gives the public the right and ability to request access to records of the Federal government that are not publicly available.

**HMS (Holding Management System)** – A system being deployed by NARA to track and provide information about accessioned permanent records.

**ISCAP (Interagency Security Classification Appeals Panel)** – A Panel created under Executive Order 12958, "Classified National Security Information," to provide the public and users of the classification system with a forum for further review of classification decisions. The ISCAP is a six member body consisting of senior level representatives appointed by the Departments of State, Defense, and Justice, the Central Intelligence Agency, the National Archives, and the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs. The President appoints the ISCAP's Chair from among its members, and the Director of IVO serves as its Executive Secretary. ISCAP is the final appeal authority.
for decisions made under the Mandatory Review Provision of the EO, and is the approval
authority for agency declassification guides.

ISOO (Information Security Oversight Office) – A component of the National
Archives and Records Administration (NARA) that is responsible to the President for
policy and oversight of the Government-wide security classification system and the
National Industrial Security Program. ISOO receives policy and program guidance from
the National Security Council (NSC), and receives authority from: Executive Order
12958, as amended "Classified National Security Information", and Executive Order
12829, as amended "National Industrial Security Program".

IT Infrastructure (Information Technology Infrastructure) – A general term to
encompass all information technology assets (hardware, software, data) and networks,
including internal and external networks required to operate the NDC,
telecommunications, IT components, systems, applications, and resources.

IRC (Interagency Referral Center) – A program developed by NARA to bring
agencies to one central location to adjudicate all referrals identified in during the
declassification process. NARA supports this process by working with agencies to
complete the identification of referrals, notify agencies that referrals have been made, and
completing the process to make declassified records available to the public.

ISPM (Information Security Program Manager) – An individual and alternate(s)
appointed to act on behalf of the NARA Information Security Officer, who manages the
overall classified information security program in NARA, in providing assistance, advice
and training to component personnel and to implement the classified information security
program at their location.

ISSO (Information Systems Security Officer) – Individual designated with the
responsibility to ensure that the appropriate operational security posture is maintained for
an information system. The ISSO works with the NARA CISSO in cooperation with the
cognizant ISPM and the NARA ISO to ensure IT system compliance with NARA
classified information security program policies.

MDR (Mandatory Declassification Review) – The review for declassification of
classified information in response to a request for declassification that meets the
requirements under section 3.5 of EO 12958.

NDC (National Declassification Center) – A consolidated, interagency program to
improve the declassification process. The NDC will be a centralized physical location
where all agencies could conduct declassification review of their records, and review
their equities in the records of other agencies.

NDI (National Declassification Initiative) – A NARA program, with interagency
participation, to facilitate declassification and referral under EO 12958. This program
supports agency review of classified records and referrals in NARA holdings. NARA
also established a quality assurance program, declassification training, and an automated system to support the process.

**Physical Storage** – A physical location to safely store records regardless of media type. Storage at the NDC would include all media types and national security classification levels.

**PIDB (Public Interest Declassification Board)** – An advisory group, created by Public Law 106-567, to advise the President and other executive branch officials as the Board considers appropriate on the systematic, thorough, coordinated, and comprehensive identification, collection, review for declassification, and release to Congress, interested agencies, and the public of declassified records and materials (including donated historical materials) that are of archival value, including records and materials of extraordinary public interest.

**Presidential Papers, Materials and Records** – Presidential collections governed by statutory authorities including Presidential Papers that were deeded and received under 44 U.S.C. 2111 (Hoover – Carter administrations excluding Nixon); the Presidential Recordings and Material Preservation Act, 44 U.S.C. 2114 note (Nixon administration); and the Presidential Records Act, 44 U.S.C. 2201-2207 (Reagan administration forward).

**QA or Quality Assurance** – The process of verifying or determining whether products or services meet expectations. In the NDI this refers to process of performing a review of a completed project to ensure the original review correctly identified third party equities.

**QART (Quality Assurance Review Team)** – Is a team established by NARA to perform a quality assurance review of agency declassification decisions. This is an interagency group that reviews completed declassification projects to ensure all classified information is identified and all equity agencies are identified.

**RAC (Remote Archives Capture)** – A program established by NARA and the CIA. The program involves scanning of classified documents in the Presidential Libraries, and returns the images to the DC area, where they are reviewed by agencies in a classified review system to identify and redact classified information. Declassified and redacted images are returned to the libraries for release to the public.

**Records** – The records of an agency and Presidential papers or Presidential records, as those terms are defined in Title 44, United States Code, including those created or maintained by a government contractor, licensee, certificate holder, or grantee that are subject to the sponsoring agency's control under the terms of the contract, license, certificate, or grant. Records having “permanent historical value” means Presidential papers or Presidential records and the records of an agency that the Archivist has determined should be maintained permanently in accordance with Title 44, United States Code.
**Record Series** – A group of similar records that are arranged according to a filing system and that are related as the result of being created, received, or used in the same activity.

**Reference** – Refers to the process of locating, retrieving and delivering requested records to a customer.

**Re-file** – The process of replacing records in the appropriate locations for future reference.

**Referrals** – Records containing information that originated with other agencies or the disclosure of which would affect the interests or activities of other agencies shall be referred for review to those agencies and the information of concern shall be subject to automatic declassification only by those agencies, consistent with the provisions of EO 12958. When an agency receives any request for documents in its custody that contain information that was originally classified by another agency, or comes across such documents in the process of the automatic declassification or systematic review provisions of this order, it shall refer copies of any request and the pertinent documents to the originating agency for processing, and may, after consultation with the originating agency, inform any requester of the referral unless such association is itself classified under EO 12958 or its predecessors.

**Security** – The physical protection of the building, IT systems and records. Requirements are based on Director of Central Intelligence Directive Category 6 - Security (DCID 6), DOD National Industrial Security Program Operating Manual (NISPOM) and NARA Information Security 202 standards.

**SCI (Sensitive Compartmented Information)** – Information and materials bearing special intelligence community controls. Information in this category requires special handling, storage and protection.

**SCIF (Sensitive Compartmented Information Facility)** – This refers to a vault that is authorized to store SCI information.

**Senior Agency Official** – The official designated by the agency head under section 5.4(d) of EO 12958 to direct and administer the agency's program under which information is classified, safeguarded, and declassified.

**Special Media Records** – Records in formats that require equipment to review and may require equipment for preservation reformattting prior to use. This include audio, video, motion picture, some photographic negatives and other special format materials.

**Transfer of Records** – This term has two definitions within the NDC:
- The process of physically moving records from an agency to be stored in a record center, until final disposition is implemented.
- The physical and legal transfer of records from the originating agency to the NARA (see accessioning).
TS (Top Secret) – One of the three approved categories of classified information. Confidential and secret are the remaining categories.

Workspace – Office and processing areas for NARA and agency staffs.
Appendix B: Staffing

NDC Management Chart

NDC Director

NDC Policy Planning Group

NDC Deputy Director (Agency Detail)

NARA Programs Office

Director of Records Sharepoint

Director of Archival Operations

1) **NDC Director** – The Director of the NDC will be an SES position hired by NARA, and will have extensive experience with government declassification practices, and working with agencies to support the declassification process. The Director will be responsible for the daily operation of the NDC.

Responsibilities include:

- Supervising NDC Administrative staff, Director of Archival Operations and Director of Records Storage Services.
- Coordinating with NARA program staffs on NARA wide issues related to preservation, reference, storage, record transfers, appraisal, and accessioning.
- Acting as the liaison with senior management of agencies participating in NDC on declassification processes, prioritization, training and guidance.
- Acting as liaison with outside advocates (PIDB, historical groups, etc.) on prioritization and NDC operations.
- Working with agencies to develop and implement a comprehensive NDC work plan.
- Reporting on the NDC status and progress to:
  - NARA
  - ISOO
  - Agencies
- Developing and providing oversight of the annual NDC budget
• Working with the Policy Planning Group to develop and implement standard policies, procedures, training and declassification guidance.
• Generating statistical reporting as required by:
  o NARA
  o Congress
  o Executive Office of the President
  o Federal Oversight agencies (OMB, DOJ, ISOO, etc.)

2) **Deputy NDC Director** – The Deputy facilitates liaison activities between agencies and the NDC, and ensures agencies are represented in the implementation of NDC policy. This position will be a detail from one of the agencies participating in the NDC. The incumbent will be nominated by an agency’s Senior Agency Official for Declassification, and approved by the NDC Director and the Policy Planning Group. Candidates should have extensive experience working in the declassification and security fields. The detail will be at least one year to ensure the Deputy has sufficient input into the NDC, but no more than three years to ensure all agencies have equal opportunity for representation in the NDC management. The Deputy NDC Director will:
  • Assist the Director with oversight of:
    o Physical security
    o IT systems
    o Facilities issues
    o Annual budget
  • Act as the primary advocate for all agencies participating in the NDC.
  • Represent the Director and the NDC when necessary.
  • Work with the Director to implement NDC policy and procedures.

3) **NARA Program Staff** – The staff consists of security, IT, facilities, preservation and administrative personnel that provide NARA program guidance and support the operation of the NDC (see chart B-2).
a) The **NDC Security Manager**'s primary responsibilities will be:

- Coordinating the security program with NARA's Security Management Division and agency security offices.
- Managing NDC security staff working on physical, personnel and information security.
- Ensuring physical security meets Intelligence Community standards.
- Developing standard operating procedures (SOP) that address information security requirements specific to the NDC.
- Managing contracts related to security services at the NDC.
- Creating, submitting and resolving reports of security incidents.
- Serving as the COMSEC custodian for the NDC to set up and maintain secure communications equipment.
- Working with NARA and the agencies to create and implement security inspection and Continuity of Operations Plans (COOP) programs.
- Acting as the primary Information Security Program Manager (ISPM) for the NDC, and administering procedures for the control and protection of classified information.

b) The **Information Systems Security Officer**'s (ISSO) primary responsibilities will be to:

- Ensure that all requirements and security plans prescribed by the NARA IT Security Program are appropriately implemented.
- Ensure the completion, maintenance and testing of all System Contingency Plans.
- Manage the accounts of authorized users.
- Enforce IT security policies, standards and procedures on all personnel having access to system for which the ISSO is responsible.
- Ensure that audit trails are reviewed periodically (e.g., daily, or weekly) and that audit records are archived for future reference.
- Report security incidents in accordance with NARA policy and standards to the System Owner, and/or NARA Computer Security Incident Response Center (CSIRC) as appropriate.
- Serve on the Configuration Control Board (CCB). Evaluate the impact of changes on the security posture of the IT system and provide the report to the CCB.

c) The **IT System Administrator**'s primary responsibilities will be to:

- Establish and maintain classified and unclassified IT systems that support the NDC.
- Coordinate IT issues with participating agencies.
- Provide oversight on system integrity and security issues.
- Coordinate and oversee research and development of IT technologies to improve the function of the NDC.
d) The Administrative Officer's primary responsibilities will be to:
   - Implement and oversee the NDC budget.
   - Coordinate administrative issues with NARA and participating agencies.
   - Assist Director implementing NDC policy and practices.
   - Be the facility coordinator for all NARA time and attendance functions.
   - Coordinate all purchasing activities for the NDC.
   - Manage all contracts for building amenities.

e) The Facility Manager's primary responsibilities will be to:
   - Ensure NDC building meets all preservation standards established by NARA for record center and archival facilities.
   - Manage all contracts related to maintenance and repairs for the NDC (or coordinates facilities issues with building manager for leasing company).
   - Establish and implement preventive maintenance and building inspection programs.
   - Creates and implements building specific emergency procedures and coordinates all plans with the COOP program.
   - Direct all contracts for building amenities.
   - Is responsible for the property management program.

f) The Instructional Design Specialist's primary responsibilities will be to:
   - Develop, establish and deliver a comprehensive interagency declassification reviewer training curriculum.
   - Work with agencies to ensure the curriculum is up to date.
   - Work with the IT staff to develop current and effective ways to provide training that will reach all declassification reviewers.
   - Work with agencies to develop and schedule equity identification training for all declassification reviewers.
   - Work with agencies to ensure the curriculum is maintained and is current with agency policies and procedures.
   - Work with the agencies to develop standard declassification guidance.
   - Manage a staff of training specialists.

g) The Presidential Records Coordinator will serve as the liaison between the Presidential Libraries, the RAC program, and agency reviewers accessing documents through the RAC Project and conducting declassification review of scanned Library documents requested under FOIA/MDR.
h) The **Preservation Programs** at NARA will be responsible for managing preservation risk assessment programs, providing guidance on preservation issues, oversight of preservation actions and reformatting, performing preservation actions on at risk records, and establishing records emergency and recovery procedures. A Preservation Programs Officer will be designated as responsible for preservation functions at the NDC.

4) **Agency Staff** – Agencies participating in the NDC will:
   - Perform declassification review of their agency’s records in the NDC prior to accessioning into NARA.
   - Perform declassification review of legacy textual and special media records in NARA custody.
   - Input metadata on exempted/referred materials identified during the review process, or support NDC staff performing data entry.
   - Provide staff to review records in the referral center.
   - Provide reviewers for special projects that can most efficiently be accomplished by collaborative agency effort.
   - Provide equity recognition training for all reviewers participating in the NDC.
   - Ensure their agency’s declassification guides in the NDC are up to date.
   - Provide reviewers for the Quality Assurance program.
   - Work with Directors of Archival and Record Records Storage Services to address records management issues.
   - Assist the NDC staff to establish detailed equity recognition training programs.

5) **Archival Operations Staff** – NARA archival staff will be organized as shown in chart B-4, and will perform the following declassification and archival functions:

   a) Director of Archival Operations (DAO) – Manages the day-to-day operations of the declassification programs and archival functions. These duties will include:
   - Management and oversight of the declassification teams.
   - Coordination with other NARA offices on reference, processing, preservation, and transfers pertaining to textual and special media records.
   - Working with the Preservation Programs Officer to mitigate any preservation risks in archival storage, on handling and use of records, and to implement preservation strategies to ensure preservation of the records.
   - Coordination of declassification/review processes with agency team leads on-site.
   - Coordination with the Director of Records Storage Services on issues related to transfer of records and accessioning.
b) FOIA/MDR Staff Supervisor
- Assigns FOIA/MDR cases (both incoming and Follow-up).
- Coordinates and collaborates with other agencies on new approaches to improving response times.
- Coordinates FOIA issues with all NARA program offices (especially for classified records).
- Provides support for the classified research room.
- Coordinates with the processing teams on re-filing released records into completed projects.
- Manages a staff of experienced archives specialists.

c) Civilian Records Staff Supervisor
- Participates in work planning/prioritization for civilian agency records.
- Directs pre-accessioning activity (including series identification and holdings maintenance) for civilian agency records.
- Implements annual processing work plan (including workflow, declassification processes, and archival description) for civilian agency records.
- Reports completed projects to the DAO and appropriate program offices.
- Facilitates the move of processed records to Archives II.
- Manages a staff that includes archivists, archives specialists and archives technicians.

d) Military Records Staff Supervisor
- Participates in work planning/prioritization for military agency records.
- Directs pre-accessioning activity (including series identification and holdings maintenance) for military agency records.
- Implements annual processing work plan (including workflow, declassification processes, and archival description) for civilian agency records.
- Reports completed projects to the DAO and appropriate program offices.
- Facilitates the move of processed records to Archives II.
• Manages a staff that includes archivists, archives specialists and archives technicians.

e) Quality Assurance and Declassification Staff Supervisor
• Oversees the interagency QART process based on annual workplan.
• Provides staff support to the QART.
• Provides reviewer support to the QART and reviewers for Orphan records.
• Operates and provides support for the IRC.
• Serves as the contracting officer for the clerical/indexing contract.
• Reviews orphan and similar records in the IRC.
• Provides SME assistance to the instructional design team for training.
• Manages the QART support staff consisting of archivists, archives specialists, and archives technicians.

f) Preservation Programs will provide a Supervisor located at the NDC who will be responsible for:
• Implementing the special media reformatting and access project plan and coordinating a staff that includes conservation and preservation specialists and technicians required for the project plan. The current plan calls for dedicated A/V preservation specialists and conservation technician support. Additional expertise and support, if less than full-time, will be provided from current staffing in Preservation Programs, as needed.
• Advising agencies on special media access and/or preservation or duplication issues as necessary.
• Coordinating special media referrals with the IRC.
• Providing support to the QART for special media declassification issues.
• Providing and maintaining special media equipment for agency review.
• Providing preservation services (or coordinating with NARA Preservation Programs) for the archival processing teams and FOIA team.
• Managing the IT infrastructure that supports the preservation reformatting and access to special media records in the NDC.
• Manages a special media support that includes a conservator, conservation technician, motion picture specialists, A/V specialists, dynamic media technicians and digital imaging technicians.
6) Records Storage Services –

a) Director of Records Storage Services – Manages records storage operations at the NDC. Plans and directs records storage operations and provides leadership and supervision to staff. The Director will:

- Coordinate with agencies on transfer, reference, re-files, interfiles and disposal issues.
- Coordinate with NARA archival staff on appraisal and accessioning.
- Work with the DAO to coordinate transfer or accessioned records.
- Provide statistics and input into development of the program for the NDC.
- Generate statistical reporting for the NDC Director.
- Coordinate with agencies to facilitate initial declassification of temporary and pre-archival records.
- Manage the environment in storage to meet the applicable standards for preservation of records, in collaboration with Preservation Programs Officer.

b) Supervisory Archives Specialist (Assistant Director/Vault Manager) – Manages the day-to-day activities of the staff, performs quality control auditing of reference services, and oversees duties related to searching, retrieving, re-filing, shelving, removing, and screening of agency records and preparing them for shipment to customer agencies. Establishes procedures for and controls access to temporary and pre-archival records in the NDC.

c) Supervisory Archives Specialist (Dock Manager) – Supervises a team of archives technicians/aids and wage grade motor vehicle operators and performs or oversees the performance of duties related
to picking up, receiving, and delivering records to and from Federal agencies. Assists in planning the removal of disposable records.
Appendix C: Converting the NDI into the NDC

Immediate Changes

1) NDC Policy Planning Group – This group will be established by NARA, and will address common roadblocks in the declassification process and establish policies to improve declassification. Using the new Executive order or Presidential statement for high level guidance, the NDC Policy Planning Group will be responsible for directing mandatory participation. This represents a transformational change between the voluntary NDI and a mandatory NDC. NARA has already identified six areas in need of consolidated policy guidance.

a. Review Priorities – NARA has begun developing a list of records that are frequently requested and have high research use. NARA and agencies need to develop a joint prioritization plan to ensure the public has access to high interest records first. This will require agencies to focus declassification and referral review, and NARA to focus indexing, withdrawal and processing on the highest priority records. In establishing a priority list, NARA and the agencies should work with public interest and historical groups to determine which records are high interest.

b. QA Process – One of the roadblocks in the current process is the interagency QA review. Ideally, reviewers identify all classified information and information that requires referral. In practice this is not always the case. However, reviewing all records in the QA process has proven to be a long and slow process. The policy planning group needs to address the validity of performing a QA review on all records. The policy group needs to apply risk analysis methodologies to determine which records require QA review, and to define an error rate below which records do not require an entire page-by-page review.

c. Training – NARA has hired an instructional design specialist to work with agencies to establish standardized training for all reviewers. This training will ensure all reviewers receive the same, comprehensive training on the review process. This will be extremely useful for agencies that have high turnover among declassification reviewers. The NDC will need to expand this idea to strengthen the equity recognition portion of the training. While agency reviewers can not declassify another agency’s equity, it is vital that all reviewers are able to accurately identify another agencies’ equity for appropriate referral. To accomplish this goal the policy group needs to ensure that all participating agencies cooperate to provide the training group with all information necessary to accurately identify their equity.

d. Declassification Guidelines Library – NARA is establishing a web interface on their classified network to create a library of declassification guides. By keeping guidelines in this library up to date, agency reviewers will always have an accurate source for their guides. NARA is very clear that access to these guides does not mean a reviewer can declassify another agency’s equity. The purpose is for agency reviewers to have access to the most up to date version of their own guidelines, and to allow other agency reviewers to
accurately identify other agency equities for referral. The policy group needs
to agree on use of the library.

e. **Consolidate Data Capture** – Agencies performing declassification review
are capturing data about exempted and referred records. NARA is capturing
similar information at the back end of the process. Currently, the data
agencies are creating not always compatible with the NARA system. The
policy group needs to address the consolidation of data across agencies. A list
of common data elements needs to be generated, and agencies need to agree to
turn over the data in a format that can be ingested into an NDC system. By
working together we can eliminate duplication (and sometimes triplication) in
the process.

f. **Kyle/Lott Review** – The Department of Energy requires that all declassified
records be reviewed and certified by a trained Kyle/Lott reviewer.
Completion of this review is not accurately tracked, and as a result records are
sometimes reviewed multiple times. Agencies need to work together to
accurately track when all declassification review has been completed. The
policy group should ensure all agencies are tracking when records have been
reviewed (and by whom), and this information should be tracked by the NDC.

2) **DOD Joint Referral Center** – The NDC should coordinate with DOD on the
establishment of the DOD JRC. As the NDC is established, practices need to be
standardized across all agencies. As DOD sets up the JRC, consideration should be
given to integrate it as a remote aspect of the NDC. Certain aspects such as common
practices and procedures for declassification, a joint system of tracking
declassification review decisions, joint review priorities and a separate QA team on-
site should be developed. This relationship should be established through an MOU.

3) **Existing Referral Center** – To accommodate additional agency reviewers
(participating in the NDC), NARA plans to expand ADRRES to allow all agencies
access to ADRRES. NARA will change the existing process to create two IRC
teams, civilian and military, each with an associated QA team. In addition, NARA
will hire cleared clerical contractors to complete indexing and data input, freeing up
existing staff to complete the more complex declassification and archival processes.

4) **Space at Archives II** – Archives II does not have enough space to accommodate a
fully functional NDC. As a result NARA will re-evaluate the allocation of space to
agency reviewers and the NDC staff to determine the best use space. This will
require relocation of some processes and reviewers. NARA will evaluate workloads
to determine space needs for all agencies and the NDC staff, and reallocate space to
meet existing requirements. During this period of transition, the NDC at Archives II
should be viewed as an opportunity for learning by doing. Workflow and process
approached should be tested and best practices should be adopted. The vision of a
purpose-built NDC, that can fully and completely serve the needs of the Federal
government, should not be abandoned.
5) **Guidance** – To improve the declassification process and reduce invalid referrals, the NDC staff will work with agencies and ISOO to develop a standard interagency guide. This guide will address information common to multiple agencies to ensure it is treated the same by all reviewers, and will identify information that does not require referral to avoid clogging the system with unnecessary referrals. This guide will not affect declassification and referral of information that is unique to individual agencies.

**Mid to long term changes**

1) **Business Process Re-engineering** – With the establishment of an NDC, NARA will begin a BPR of the interagency declassification processes. NARA and agency officials will be asked to examine the process and work together to develop improved and streamlined processes for the NDC.

2) **IT System** – In conjunction with the BPR, NARA will examine the need for a replacement for the ADRES system. This system will facilitate the interagency processes identified in the BPR and begin development of a new system to support the NDC. NARA and agencies will be asked to identify:
   a. What is missing in the process?
   b. What can be done better?
   c. Can we use secure network to allow agencies to use same system when reviewing their records?

3) **NDC Staffing** – In order to establish the NDC, additional staff will be hired. This includes a Director and as envisioned in the draft CONOPS, and a Deputy Director who will be on detail from one of the participating agencies. Additional staff, including contractors, will be brought on board as needed as the NDC functions evolve and expand.
Appendix D: Draft NDC Timeline

National Declassification Center Timeline v 3
2009 – 2015

FY 2009

May 2009
- Develop final draft of CONOPS, including:
  - Staff descriptions
  - Organizational chart
  - Timeline
  - Proposal to convert NDI into NDC
- Continue Site Selection Process

June 2009
- Begin conversations with other agencies on CONOPS
- Finalize plan to convert NDI into the NDC
- Develop final list of sites
- Begin Phase I of the BPR Process

July 2009
- Continue conversations with other agencies on NDC and CONOPS
- Develop technical requirements for NDC building
- Select NDC Site

September 2009
- Complete Phase I of the BPR Process

FY 2010

October 2009
- RFP for builder (60 days)
- Begin Phase II of BPR Process

December 2009
- Begin evaluation and contract award (4-6 months through April)

February 2010
- Complete Phase II of BPR Process

May 2010
- Select builder
• Begin building design process (9 months through January 2011)
• Begin Phase III of the BPR Process

September 2010
• Complete Phase III of the BPR Process

FY 2011

December 2010 – January 2011
• Final approval of building design

February 2011
• Break ground (18 month for construction through October 2012).
• Begin furniture design and purchase process.

FY 2012

October 2011
• Begin development for NDC systems.
• Begin Purchasing and installation of IT Infrastructure (network, PCs, phone, etc.)

November 2011
• Begin procurement for NDC facility computers, cubicles, furniture, etc.

May 2012
• Begin Move Preparations

FY 2013

October 2012
• Final approval of building

November 2012
• Building occupancy
• Begin moving records

May 2013
• Complete records move