

NORTH ATLANTIC MILITARY COMMITTEE

COMITE MILITAIRE DE L'ATLANTIQUE NORD

Standing Group

Groupe Permanent

SGM-404-56

5 June 1956

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Standing Group
Standing Group Liaison Officer
Channel Committee
NATO Defense College
Military Agency for Standardization
Advisory Group for Aeronautical Research and
Development
European Military Communications Coordinating Cmte
European Long Lines Agency
European Radio Frequency Agency
European Naval Communications Agency
European Communications Security Agency

SUBJECT: Records Disposition Schedules

References: a. SGM-388-56
b. SGM-389-56

1. Each agency listed in paragraph 2 of SGM-388-56 will prepare its own records disposition schedules in accordance with the following principles.

2. Materials of transitory value will not be made part of permanent records. They will be used by the operating office until superseded by a new publication, or overtaken by events when they will be discarded. This material includes distribution schemes, requests for passes, etc., requests for documents, rosters and manning charts, letters of transmittal, telephone directories, mail and courier directories, Cosmic Control lists, duplicate copies including those which are reproduced by the agency, receipts for unclassified documents, designation of team responsibilities, etc.

3. Material of temporary value will be removed from permanent records files at the end of each calendar year, that is each document will be retained at least one year and may not be retained over two years. These documents include hand-written notes, control slips,

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routing slips, agenda, and working drafts of documents which have been published in final form. For the Standing Group this would include all preliminary drafts of MC, MRC, and SG documents and intermediate drafts of IPT, LMP and SGIC, etc., papers which have been published in a final form. The cut-off date for this material will be the end of the calendar year succeeding the year in which the final document was published.

4. Material of administrative nature which may be of interest in the development of a final position, but which is incorporated in that final position and has no importance as a separate record will be screened from the permanent files at the end of the third calendar year succeeding the year in which published. In the Standing Group this includes vote sheets, directives and information papers of IPT, LMP, CECS, etc. Also to be screened and destroyed after three years are all correspondence pertaining to administrative matters, such as - mail and postal facilities, courier materials, receipts for classified matter lower than Top Secret, materials pertaining to housing, maintenance, supply and personnel. Routine correspondence which may pertain to policy matters, but does not influence policy to any appreciable extent, also will be removed from the files and destroyed after three years. For the Standing Group this includes practically all letters from members of the Military Representatives Committee, and also routine correspondence dealing with privileges and immunities under the Status of Forces agreements.

5. A final screening will be made of materials which were filed in the records section during the calendar year five years previous to the current year. Material which will be removed from the files and destroyed at the five-year screening is that which is of primary interest to an outside agency or command and which does not directly affect problems dealt with by the Standing Group. This includes North Atlantic Council documents, which have furnished background for Standing Group, but have not directly affected

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Standing Group action. The Standing Group cannot assume responsibility for preserving permanent records copies of these documents except in so far as they enter into Standing Group documents. They therefore are destroyed at the end of the fifth calendar year succeeding the year of origin. Following the same principle documents primarily the responsibility of the Supreme Commands will be screened from Standing Group permanent records after five years. Included in these documents are Supreme Command Defense Plans, Capability Reports, etc. When the records have received the five-year screening, they will be reviewed for downgrading. After downgrading they are ready for retirement. Nothing will be left in these files except essential materials which make the introduction of the problem, present the important steps in the resolution, embody the final solution and action taken, and record any policy follow-up which was required.

6. Records of permanent value will be those which pertain to the policy organization and functioning of the agency and those actions and decisions of the agency which bear upon or determine policy.

7. In addition to the permanent records of an agency, the only materials which will be retained permanently by that agency will be a limited volume of reference material which is of fundamental importance to the agency or organization, and which is required for reference on a continuing basis.

8. No purely public information material will be made part of the central records system of any agency, unless it has been developed at the direction of executive body of the agency. Ordinarily pictures of individuals and groups and press releases concerning them will remain in the working files of the public information officer. Official diaries or journals of an agency when prepared at the command of the executive body of an agency and noted in the records of meetings become part of the permanent records of the agency. Official histories of an agency fall in the

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same category. Personal diaries, journals, histories, biographies, and autographies are individual property and are not part of the permanent records of an agency.

9. It will be the responsibility of each agency to develop its own schedule of records disposition so as to be able to make the annual report required in reference by 31 March of each year as of 1 January of that year. This schedule ordinarily will conform to the work-load of the agency so that maximum work on records disposition can be done when the remaining work-load is lightest.

10. Records which have been subjected to the five-year screening will be reviewed by the originating or responsible office, agency or command to determine the lowest possible classification that may be placed on each document. Appropriate action will be taken to downgrade each document to the lowest security classification which may be authorized. When the five-year screening and downgrading have been accomplished the records will be microfilmed, or when a records depot or depository has been established those screened and downgraded records will be retired to that center. Alternatively to microfilming, if facilities are not available, screened and downgraded records may be placed in standard records boxes which will be stored under appropriate facilities for security protection in accordance with C-M(15)55(Final).

11. Duplicate sets of records which are maintained at alternate War Headquarters should be reduced to the absolute minimum consistent with operational requirements. Only those records which are of current reference value should be retained at alternate War Headquarters. Records at alternate War Headquarters which duplicate those records which have received the third year records screening should be removed from the alternate War Headquarters and destroyed.

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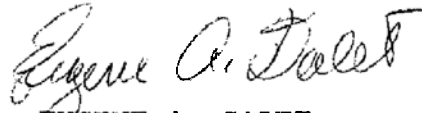
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12. At such a time as the Standing Group establishes a records center or depository, instructions will be issued for the preparation of records material to be retired to this center or depository.

FOR THE STANDING GROUP:



EUGENE A. SALET
Colonel, USA
Secretary

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