

UNCLASSIFIED - NATO

COPY NO. _____

NORTH ATLANTIC MILITARY COMMITTEE

COMITE MILITAIRE DE L'ATLANTIQUE NORD

Standing Group

Groupe Permanent

SGM-406-56

5 June 1956

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE STANDING GROUP
STANDING GROUP LIAISON OFFICER
SUPREME ALLIED COMMANDER EUROPE
SUPREME ALLIED COMMANDER ATLANTIC
ALLIED COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF CHANNEL
ALLIED MARITIME AIR COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF CHANNEL
CANADA-UNITED STATES REGIONAL PLANNING GROUP
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: General Information Regarding Standing Group
Records Management Programs

Reference: SGM-389-56, dated 31 May 1956

By reference the Standing Group has delegated to the Supreme Commanders the responsibility for establishing and conducting records management programs in their respective commands. The following general principles concerning records disposition procedures are furnished so that the commanders will have a basis for determining the procedures they may wish to follow in their commands to complement the permanent records of the Standing Group and the military agencies:

1. The Standing Group recognizes five categories of materials:
 - a. Transitory matter such as rosters and directories, etc. which are destroyed as superseded or overtaken by events.
 - b. Temporary materials - documents concerned with internal development of papers which are destroyed at the end of the calendar year succeeding the year of origin.

DISTRIBUTION: A B C D-4 E G-3 H

IMS Control No. 0509

UNCLASSIFIED - NATO

SGM-406-56

c. Administrative matters - both those used in processing problems dealt with by the Standing Group and its agencies and those dealing with such matters as housing, maintenance, personnel, travel, supply, finance and conferences which are destroyed at the end of the third calendar year succeeding the year of origin.

d. Matter 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 Standing Group action. The Standing Group cannot assume responsibility for preserving permanent record 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.

e. Permanent records materials which are the essential documents for presenting the introduction of the problem to the Standing Group, the important steps in its resolution, the final solution and action taken by the Standing Group, and any policy follow-up which was necessary.

2. When the final screening after five years has been accomplished, the Standing Group and each of the military agencies will take all possible steps to downgrade the remaining matter to the lowest security classification consistent with the general welfare of the member nations and of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization as a whole.

3. When the five-year screening and downgrading have been completed the permanent records will be microfilmed. If micro-filming is impracticable the permanent records will be placed in standard document boxes for storage in a vault as prescribed by C-M(55)15(FINAL). These standard document boxes are so designed as to be used in a Standing Group records center or depository in case such a center or depository becomes necessary and is authorized.

4. Since the Standing Group is an international organization in which individuals taking part in its function continue to play, to a greater or lesser extent, national roles, no purely public information material will be made part of the permanent records of the Standing Group except those materials which have been produced at the direction of the Standing Group and have been approved by them. If miscellaneous public information or historical background material enters into the Standing Group central records, at the time of the three-year screening it will be submitted for inclusion in the official history of the organization but will be removed from the central files as a separate entity.

5. In order to simplify the work of screening the Standing Group records, the Standing Group will publish an annual history of its organization and functioning. This history will be precise, concise and punctilious with only such annexes and appendices as are required to present an adequate and rounded history of the year's work.

6. When the Standing Group becomes the custodian of records of some external agency or organization such as the Western Union Defense Organization, all possible efforts will be made to obtain an explanation with complete instructions concerning the filing system which had been used by that agency or organization. If such standing operating procedure, manual of instructions, or explanation of the system cannot be obtained, the entire body of records will be studied to determine as

NATO UNCLASSIFIED

APPROVED FOR PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

UNCLASSIFIED - NATO

nearly as possible the system used. Then, using that system or as near a replica as possible, Standing Group personnel acting as agents of the agency or organization, will screen those records using as far as possible the same criteria and principles as they would if they were members of the agency complying with Standing Group directives pertaining to Records Management.

7. The Standing Group central records section does not maintain separate complete sets of any series of Standing Group documents. All these documents are filed in the appropriate decimal subject files with cross-index cards arranged by "short-title" number and also by alphabetical cross reference files.

8. Separate indices will be published of materials which are destroyed. There will be separate indices for decimal subject files, for "short-title" cross reference files and for alphabetical cross-reference files. (In the Standing Group, the alphabetical cross-reference index will include only the references of source from the Military Representatives accredited to the Standing Group and the NATO Defense College).

9. In the same manner, separate indices will be prepared for records which have been retired or forwarded to a central records depot. Separate instructions have been issued on the subject indices for microfilmed records. Duplicate copies of indices for microfilmed, retired and control depositories records will be prepared. One copy will remain in the central records section and the other will be stored with the micro-filmed, retired, or depository records.

FOR THE STANDING GROUP:



EUGENE A. SALET
Colonel, USA
Secretary

UNCLASSIFIED - NATO
SGM-406-56

- 4 -

NATO UNCLASSIFIED

APPROVED FOR PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

DECLASSIFIED-PUBLIC DISCLOSURE IMSM-0431-99 DECLASSIFIE-MISE EN LECTURE PUBLIQUE