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Records Management, White House Office of

Subject Files - WH004-01 (Mail Reports)

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Folder Title:

547097

Memo to the Record

To: LP-GWB Archivists

From: Kendra Lightner

Date: 07/17/2018

Collection: White House Office of Records Management (ORM)

Series: Subject Files – WH004-01

Processing ID: 2018-0011-P

RE: 547097

Notes:

The pages of this case file stamped with “Filed by George W. Bush Library Staff” were printed from EOP ERA – White House Office of Records Management RMS because it could not be located in the textual files.

PARKER_D

547097

WH004-01

UPDATE
→

Barcode Scanning Sheet



Collection Code: **CTRACK**

Staff Name: **HARRIET MIERS**

Document Date: **12/12/2002**

Correspondent: **JOHN W. CARLIN**

Subject/Description: **DISPOSAL AGREEMENT OF PUBLIC FAXES TO THE PRESIDENT, THE FIRST LADY, AND THEIR STAFFS, RECEIVED THROUGH THE ELECTRONIC FAX SYSTEM AND MAINTAINED ON THAT SYSTEM**

Filed by George W. Bush Library Staff

DP

547097
WH004-01



National Archives and Records Administration

8601 Adelphi Road
College Park, Maryland 20740-
6001

DEC 12 2002

Ms. Harriet Miers
Assistant to the President
and Staff Secretary
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Ms. Miers:

In accordance with the authority granted to me by the Presidential Records Act, Section 2203(c) (2), I approve of disposal of the category of public faxes described in your letter of October 31, 2002. This category is:

- Certain categories of public faxes to the President, the First Lady, and their staffs, received through the electronic fax system and maintained on that system. These categories include anonymous correspondence, correspondence with an incomplete address, faxes from prolific writers, and public opinion faxes.

As in the past, I recommend that representatives of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), in coordination with the White House Office of Records Management, and the appropriate staff in the Correspondence Office, review these records before disposal and take samples when appropriate. These samples will be retained permanently. NARA will inform you if we identify groups of materials that should not be destroyed during sampling.

I do not intend to take any congressional action with regard to this request as provided for by Section 2203(e) of the Presidential Records Act.

I support your effort to continue the disposal of bulk mail. This practice has been very successful since it began in 1982.

Sincerely,

JOHN W. CARLIN
Archivist of the United States

REQUEST FOR THE ARCHIVIST'S VIEWS ON DISPOSAL OF INCUMBENT PRESIDENTIAL RECORDS

SUMMARY OF REQUEST

President George W. Bush's Staff Secretary, Harriet Miers, has requested the Archivist's views on the disposal of electronically received bulk faxes in accordance with the requirements of the Presidential Records Act, 44 U.S.C. 2203 ©(1). Specifically, the request includes:

- Certain categories of public faxes to the President, the First Lady and their staffs received through the electronic fax system and maintained on that system. These categories include anonymous correspondence, correspondence with an incomplete address, faxes from prolific writers, and public opinion faxes.

The overall policy of Presidential bulk mail disposal was initiated in the Reagan Administration, and was extended to the George W. Bush Administration through the Archivist's letter to Harriet Miers of April 17, 2001. This policy included the disposition of paper faxes. In August of 2001, the Office of Correspondence installed a new system to receive public faxes electronically. The electronic fax system which has been installed has no search or indexing capability. The Bush White House is now requesting disposal of these electronic faxes only after the materials have been sampled as needed under the guidance and auspices of NARA's staff and a textual sample retained of the electronically received bulk faxes.

SUMMARY OF RECORDS

Since 1982, NARA has provided the President with a recommendation for disposal of bulk mail after a selected sample has been taken. At White House request, NARA staff including Sam Watkins, NHT, Nancy Smith and Kate Dillon McClure of NLMS, participated in a meeting on February 6, 2002, with Terry Good of WHORM and representatives from Mail Analysis in the Correspondence Office to discuss sampling protocol for bulk faxes received through the electronic system. The sample will be kept in hard copy. Since Correspondence Office personnel routinely prepare a report of "propaganda" mail, this will serve as the basis for the sample and personnel will print out examples of the types of faxes that they have received each week. These will be retired as the sample. NARA staff will work with the Correspondence unit to ensure that the sample is taken using appropriate criteria and a NARA staff member will periodically review the samples, as we currently do with the textual bulk mail. It is important to note that faxes that are acted upon with return letters or further responses from the White House would be tracked and preserved separately. In other words, these faxes are basically removed from the bulk fax category by virtue of the action taken on them.

The previously established sampling procedure for Presidential bulk public mail has resulted in the disposal of 65,000 cubic feet of records over the last 5 Presidential administrations. I recommend disposal for these bulk faxes after a sample has been taken.

RECOMMENDATION

1. **CONCURRING VIEW ON PROPOSED PRESIDENTIAL RECORD DISPOSAL REQUEST.** The Presidential records described in this request are disposable because they no longer have sufficient administrative, historical, informational or evidentiary value to warrant their continued preservation by the incumbent President.

2. **RECOMMENDATION THAT THE ARCHIVIST REQUEST THE ADVICE OF CONGRESS ON PROPOSED DISPOSAL.** The Archivist should request the advice of the Committee on Rules and Administration and the Committee on Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on House Administration and the Committee on Government Operations of the House of Representatives, in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2203 (e), when (1) these particular records may be of special interest to the Congress; or (2) consultation with the Congress regarding the disposal of these particular records is in the public interest.

SIGNATURES

Title	Signature	Date
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APPRAISAL	Appraiser	<i>Nancy Reagan Smith</i>	04/17/01
	Director, Presidential Materials Staff		
CONCURRENCES	Office of Presidential Libraries	<i>Richard L. Claypole</i>	<i>12/19/02</i>
	Office of General Counsel	<i>[Signature]</i>	<i>12/04/02</i>
	Archivist of the United States	<i>John W. Carl</i>	<i>12-12-02</i>

National Archives and Records Administration

NA FORM 14114

DRAFT

2

DATE

Dear Mr. Carlin:

In accordance with the requirements of the Presidential Records Act, 44 U.S.C.(c)(1), I propose to dispose periodically of the following category of Presidential records:

- Certain categories of public faxes to the President, the First Lady and their staffs, received through the electronic fax system and maintained on that system. These categories include anonymous correspondence, correspondence with an incomplete address, faxes from prolific writers, and public opinion faxes

The White House Office of Record Management will dispose of these materials only after an appropriate sample has been preserved. The sampling protocol has been established with the National Archives and Record Administration using the guidelines followed in the preservation of samples from hard copy public mail. The sample of public faxes would be maintained in hard copy.

This would continue a policy initiated under President Reagan and agreed to by the National Archives.

Sincerely,

Harriet E. Miers
Assistant to the President
and Staff Secretary

Mr. John W. Carlin
Archivist of the United States
National Archives and Records Administration
8601 Adelphia Road
College Park, Maryland 20740-6001

Filed by George W. Bush Library Staff

Note:

The following is an informal NARA appraisal of the facsimile operation within the Office of Presidential Correspondence, and a suggested draft letter to the Archivist proposing to dispose of certain faxed communications.

TWGood
August 1, 2002

Filed by George W. Bush Library Staff

Electronic Bulk Faxes:

Background: In the past, the Office of Correspondence had two paper fax machines that basically ran twenty-four hours a day printing off all incoming faxes. This is the fax number that the White House Switchboard gives out if members of the public call and ask for a way to fax the White House. These faxes were all then reviewed and a decision made regarding further action. Either materials were deemed "NRN" (no response necessary) or were sent to other analysts for appropriate action. In this system, the "NRN" fax printouts went into the traditional textual bulk mail which is routinely sampled.

Life Cycle: In August, 2001, the Office of Correspondence installed a new system to receive these public faxes electronically. The system used is Zetafax. There are two fax lines that come into the server. This part of the system is not used for viewing, but is where all the information resides. Each day's incoming faxes are stored on the system. These are simply image files. There is no indexing or search capability. A paper back-up does exist if the electronic fax server should stop working. The server also has a tape backup. The system automatically sends everything from the server to the client, or viewer. The system is "receive" only. The personnel who previously screened the printouts simply read the incoming faxes on the viewer. This is the main difference between the current system and the earlier one. Experienced reviewers read the faxes for a given day on the viewer and print out materials that need to be further analyzed. These then pass to analysts who decide on further actions to be taken. Once printed off, those particular faxes that demand action rise above the level of "bulk mail" and are preserved appropriately through the normal record keeping practices of the Correspondence Office. "NRN" faxes, mostly consisting of propaganda mail from various organizations, are no longer printed out in toto. Only a small number are printed to produce a weekly "prop report" that documents the types of issues that have been addressed in that week's faxes.

Actions taken (the fact that a fax is printed for further analysis and/or action) are not tracked on the system. It is basically a chron file of images. The analysts who read the faxes online and then print for further action do not track any actions on this system. Recreating the software for NARA would not provide any advantages and in fact, could lead to the troublesome position of maintaining software that has no long-term value.

Decisions: Based on the electronic system and the fact that this mirrors exactly the previous paper bulk fax system, meeting participants felt that the sampling of this type of mail could be done most effectively in hard copy. Sampling in any electronic manner would not be cost- or time-effective for NARA. Since the personnel already prepare a "prop report", that would be the basis for a hard copy sample and these personnel would simply print out examples of the same types of propaganda mail that come in. These would be retired as the sample. NARA will work with Correspondence to ensure that the sample is taken using appropriate criteria. A member of the Archives would periodically review the samples. It is important to note that the faxes that are acted upon with return letters or further responses would be tracked and preserved separately; these are basically removed from the bulk fax category by virtue of the action taken on them.

The future letter granting disposition authority for the files will only deal specifically with electronic bulk faxes. Email will have to be addressed separately.

The sampling protocol envisioned here would ensure that there was an adequate sample preserved of those materials that do not get printed off because they are deemed "No Response Necessary" (NRN).

The Correspondence Office has provided useful flowcharts for its entire process. The electronic fax system is only one aspect of a much larger and more complex function. It is, however, something that can easily be sampled, with minimal disruption to current work processes and minimal investment by NARA, in order to ensure adequate documentation for the future.

Sample language:

In accordance with the requirements of the Presidential Records Act, 44 U.S.C.(c)(1), I propose to dispose periodically of the following category of Presidential records:

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This would continue a policy initiated under President Reagan and agreed to by the National Archives.

Meeting Participants - July 24, 2002
Judith Roddick
Guy Kirby
Glenn
Jerry Good

Magnetic tapes - 5 tapes/month
start Aug 3

NARA didn't see any value -
only NRN

5,000 images -
less than

per day
2,000 high
400 average
85% prof

Matthew instructed Judith to do this -
mainly back up

85 pages fax
2 times/day

get everything off the server
it goes on the tapes

how do you retrieve the info -
now have back up fax machine

From: Matthew Yin on 07/25/2002 08:59:24 AM

Record Type: Record

To: Terry W. Good/WHO/EOP@EOP

cc:

Subject: Re: Electronic Bulk Faxes [\[1\]](#)

10:00 am works for me. We'll stay at NEOB for a few more months.

Filed by George W. Bush Library Staff



Gertrude A. Roddick

09/17/2002 12:35:57 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Terry W. Good/WHO/EOP@EOP, Philip C. Droege/WHO/EOP@EOP

cc: Sarah V. Tees/OA/EOP@EOP, Desiree T. Sayle/WHO/EOP@EOP, Sharon R. Lewis/WHO/EOP@EOP

Subject: fax server

Terry - any word from NARA about the fax server? We have reached the one year, one month status and the faxes keep growing on the server.

Filed by George W. Bush Library Staff

May 23, 2001

MEMORANDUM FOR: BRETT KAVANAUGH
COUNSEL'S OFFICE

FROM: TERRY GOOD *Good*
OFFICE OF RECORDS MANAGEMENT

RE: INCOMING COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED AS FAXED
DOCUMENTS

We have an opportunity to apply a technological solution to what has become a fairly expensive and burdensome challenge within the Correspondence Office. If employed, the result could decrease significantly the costs and the time required to read and process incoming communications from the public that are sent to the White House fax number.

The Correspondence Office, the Post Office's White House Mail Room, the Information Systems and Technology Division (IS&T) of the Office of Administration, and the Office of Records Management all endorse the following recommendation.

Currently all incoming faxes, averaging 28,000 per month, are printed out in the Mail Room and transferred to the Mail Analysis Section where they are individually read and sorted. Approximately, 10% are culled for further action. The other 90% are boxed and stored, along with other correspondence from the public that has been marked for disposition, pending a request from the Office of Records Management to the National Archives (NARA) to review and sample these communications prior to being macerated.

It is worth noting that the majority is, as it has been true in previous administrations, almost exclusively "propaganda mail" from special interest groups lobbying for their individual interests.

The offices involved are in agreement that much is to be gained by switching to a system that allows the communications to be read and sorted at computer stations. Only those requiring further action would be printed out. The rest would be stored in their electronic format and transferred to the National Archives at the Administration's conclusion or, if an agreement with NARA can be reached, deleted, as has been the case with paper based communications since the Carter Administration.

I might add, that if this proposal offers advantages for the Office of Correspondence, it might provide an appealing option to other White House offices that receive large quantities of faxes from public interest groups.

If you see no legal problems with this approach, we will move forward with the technological requirements.

Attached is an in-depth memorandum by Markus Most of ORM on this subject.

APPROVE ✓

LET'S TALK _____

Brett Kavanaugh

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