ADS Chapter 511

Vital Records Program

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ADS 511 – Vital Records Program
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ADS 511 – Vital Records Program

*511.1 OVERVIEW

Effective Date: 09/17/2012

Vital records are the essential records needed to continue operations and protect the legal and financial rights of the Government and those affected by its activities during a national security emergency or other emergency conditions. The vital records program is one element of the Agency's Continuity of Operations (COOP) program.

USAID must identify and protect records that specify how its' organizations will operate in case of an emergency and those records essential to the continued operation of the Agency. The objectives of the USAID Vital Records Program are to:

- Ensure that emergency operating records critical to the continuity of essential USAID activities during a national emergency are available at the Emergency Relocation Sites (ERS);
- Safeguard rights and interests records essential to the preservation of the legal rights and interests of individual U.S. citizens and the Federal Government;
- Ensure that records are evaluated on the basis of whether they are essential in the conduct of emergency operations or in the protection of the rights and interests of citizens and the Federal Government;
- Ensure that records are easily retrievable and that they are maintained in usable condition;
- Ensure that the current inventory of records located at the relocation sites is readily accessible; and
- Inform Agency personnel of their responsibilities under the Vital Records Program.

*511.2 PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

Effective Date: 09/17/2012

a. The **Administrator** is responsible for creating and preserving records that contain adequate and proper documentation of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures and essential transactions of USAID and for ensuring the continuity of essential functions in a national security emergency. The records management functions are delegated to the **Director, Bureau for Management, Office of Management Services (M/MS)**.

b. The **Director, Bureau for Management, Office of Management Services (M/MS/OD)** has overall responsibility to develop and implement an Agency-wide program for management of the Agency's Vital Records.

c. The **Chief, Bureau for Management, Office of Management Services, Information and Records Division (M/MS/IRD)** is responsible for the overall management of the Agency's Vital Records Program.

d. The **Bureau for Management, Office of the Chief Information Officer (M/CIO)** is responsible for maintaining computer operations at the Emergency Relocation Site (ERS), including access to the network drives that contain electronic vital records and computer equipment for use by Continuity of Operations (COOP) officials.

e. **Assistant Administrators, Independent Office Directors, and Mission Directors** are responsible for designating a Records Liaison Officer (RLO), or equivalent, within the bureau/independent office (B/IO) or mission and ensuring that vital records functions are implemented to accomplish the objectives outlined in this chapter.

f. **Emergency Operating Offices** are those offices that immediately mobilize in the event of a national emergency. These offices are responsible for having organized and sufficient records to continue critical functions for a maximum of 30 days.

g. **Rights and Interests Offices** are those offices responsible for records required to protect the legal and financial interests of the Agency and those affected by its activities. These offices are responsible for having organized and sufficient records to assist in returning to normal operations when the emergency is over.

h. **Records Liaison Officers (RLOs) in B/IOs and Missions** coordinate the completion and submission of the annual Vital Records Report and submit any updates to M/MS/IRD.

i. **USAID Employees** identify and protect vital records.

*511.3 POLICY DIRECTIVES AND REQUIRED PROCEDURES

Effective Date: 09/17/2012

USAID must establish and maintain a vital records program to ensure the continuity of critical functions and to protect the legal and financial rights of the Agency and individuals affected by its actions under national emergency conditions. The vital records program enables the Agency to resume normal operations after an emergency. Vital records are divided into the following categories:

a. **Emergency Operating Records:** Records that are essential to the continued operation of the Agency during and after an emergency. These records are necessary to mobilize and protect material and manpower resources, services, and systems, and

to perform critical functions. Emergency Operating Records are divided into two groups:

(1) **Emergency Operating Records – Group 1:** Records that define the basic organization of the Agency, its employees, directives, regulations, and emergency procedures, e.g., the Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP), Information Systems Security Continuity of Operations Plan (ISS COOP), and the Automated Directives System (ADS).

(2) **Emergency Operating Records – Group 2:** Records that show the current status of the USAID programs and administrative functions, e.g., selected program records, critical functions of offices, emergency operating plans, and partner contact lists.

b. Rights and Interests Records: Records that are essential to preserve the legal rights and interests of individual citizens and the Federal Government, e.g., accounts receivable records, payroll records, personnel security files, official personnel files, acquisition and assistance records.

*511.3.1 Emergency Operating Offices
Effective Date: 09/17/2012

Every USAID Bureau/Independent Office (B/IO) and Mission is designated an Emergency Operating Office. Emergency Operating Offices immediately mobilize when a COOP is activated. Each Emergency Operating Office must have organized and sufficient records to continue operating in an emergency for up to 30 days. They must identify the most critical functions of their organization and provide the records required to support these functions. In addition, the Emergency Operating Offices work closely with M/CIO to ensure:

(1) That the appropriate system access and equipment requirements have been submitted to M/CIO and

(2) That the most current vital records have been updated on the B/IO/Mission folder located in the Agency network Vital Records (V-drive). The records liaison officer must replace and purge any dated record/information on the V drive on an annual basis (at a minimum) at the time of the annual vital records report submission. If the records cannot be converted to an electronic format (e.g., pictures, maps, architectural drawings), they must be provided in hard copy to the M/MS/IRD Records Depository, Room B2.6C, Ronald Reagan Building (RRB), 1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20523-2701, c/o USAID Vital Records Officer.

*511.3.2 Rights and Interests Offices
Effective Date: 09/17/2012

Rights and Interests Offices are those offices responsible for records required to protect the legal and financial interests of the Agency after an emergency. These offices must provide organized and sufficient records to assist in rebuilding the Agency. The Rights and Interests Offices must identify the most critical functions and the records required to support these functions. In addition, the Rights and Interests Offices work closely with M/CIO to ensure:

(1) That the appropriate system access and equipment requirements have been submitted to M/CIO; and

(2) That the most current vital records have been updated on the B/IO/Misson folder located in the Agency network Vital Records (V-drive). The records liaison officer must replace and purge any dated record/information on the V drive on an annual basis (at a minimum) at the time of the annual vital records report submission. If the records cannot be converted to an electronic format (e.g., pictures, maps, architectural drawings), they must be provided in hard copy to the M/MS/IRD Records Depository, Room B2.6C, Ronald Reagan Building (RRB), 1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20523-2701, c/o USAID Vital Records Officer.

The following offices are designated Rights and Interests Offices:

USAID/Washington

(1) Bureau for Management, Office of the Chief Financial Management Officer (M/CFO),

(2) Bureau for Management, Office of Acquisition and Assistance (M/OAA),

(3) Office of Human Resources (OHR),

(4) Office of the General Counsel, Assistant General Counsel for Litigation and Enforcement (GC/LE).

(5) Office of Inspector General (OIG), and

(6) Office of Security (SEC).

Missions

(1) Office of the Controller,

(2) The Regional Legal Advisor (RLA),

(3) The Executive Office, and

(4) The Contracting Office or Regional Contracting Office.

***511.3.3 Vital Records Report**
Effective Date: 09/17/2012

The RLOs in USAID/W and field missions must submit a vital records report to M/MS/IRD via email (**recordsinquiry@usaid.gov**) by April 30th of each year. The RLOs in USAID/W and field missions must provide reports that include:

(1) **AID 5-84 Form, Inventory of Emergency Operating Records**, identified by office, which lists the vital records needed immediately in an emergency situation. These records must support the B/IO or Mission's most critical functions in the first 12-48 hours of the activitation of a COOP. Copies of records (except for electronic versions) identified on the form must be included in the submission.

(2) **AID 5-86 Form, Inventory of Rights and Interest Records,** identified by B/IO or Mission office, that are required to preserve the rights and interests of U.S. citizens, USAID employees, and the Federal Government, including those that limit or prohibit disclosure.

(3) RLOs must submit both forms, **AID 5-84** and **AID-86**, when revisions are made to previous reports.

The electronic records identified in the inventory must be stored in the B/IO/Mission folder located in the Agency network Vital Records (V-drive) along with any additional electronic records required to continue operations for up to 30 days. See **511.3.1(2)** and **511.3.2(2)**.

The RLO in USAID/W must forward the report, along with any hard copies of vital records, to the M/MS/IRD Records Depository, Room B2.6C, Ronald Reagan Building (RRB), 1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20523-2701, c/o USAID Vital Records Officer. M/MS/IRD will box, label, and transfer the vital records to either the emergency relocation site or another records storage facility.

The RLO in USAID Missions must forward only the vital records report to the M/MS/IRD Records Depository, Room B2.6C, Ronald Reagan Building (RRB), 1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20523-2701, c/o USAID Vital Records Officer . The hard copies of vital records must be stored at the Mission's local offsite storage facility for safekeeping.

511.3.3 Disaster Recovery Plans
Effective Date: 02/10/2012

M/CIO assists system users in developing a disaster recovery plan. A disaster recovery plan must address how to recover or restore loss of service or data processing

installations, and must include a listing of the organizational units' electronic vital records and any other electronic systems necessary to support the units' critical functions. This includes any systems that have been reported to M/CIO as being needed at the relocation COOP site. A copy of the disaster recovery plan must be provided to the USAID Vital Records Officer. See **ADS 545**.

a. M/CIO also:

(1) Identifies the processing requirements necessary to support electronic vital records and alternate methods and procedures (i.e., suspending processing, using manual or personal computer procedures, or processing on a backup computer);

(2) Maintains a list of offices with approved disaster recovery plans; and

(3) Ensures that electronic retrieval procedures for electronic vital records require only routine effort to locate needed information (as defined by the application system owners), especially since individuals unfamiliar with the records may need to use them during an emergency or disaster.

b. The System User:

(1) Ensures that all electronic vital records systems, whether emergency operating or rights and interest-related, are reported to M/CIO for transfer or duplication for the emergency relocation site. M/CIO only accepts electronic systems that support critical functions. Other systems will be accepted at the discretion of M/CIO.

(2) Ensures that the electronic vital records are current and updated at appropriate intervals as indicated on the vital records forms (i.e., weekly, monthly, quarterly) in relation to the purpose they serve.

(3) Ensures that instructions, as defined by the system owner, required to operate the system and access the records are available at the emergency relocation site.

511.4 MANDATORY REFERENCES

511.4.1 External Mandatory References

Effective Date: 02/10/2012

a. 36 CFR 1223, Managing of Vital Records

b. Executive Order 12656, Assignment of Emergency Preparedness Responsibilities, November 18, 1988

c. **FEMA Federal Preparedness Circular (FPC) 65**

d. **Vital Records and Records Disaster Mitigation and Recovery: An Instructional Guide**

511.4.2 Internal Mandatory References
Effective Date: 02/10/2012

a. **ADS 530, Emergency Planning Overseas**

b. **ADS 531, Continuity of Operations Program**

c. **ADS 545, Information Systems Security**

511.4.3 Mandatory Forms
Effective Date: 02/10/2012

a. **AID 5-84, Inventory of Emergency Operating Records**

b. **AID 5-86, Inventory of Rights and Interest Records**

***511.5 ADDITIONAL HELP**
Effective Date: 09/17/2012

a. **ADS 511saa, Most Frequently Asked Questions**

***b.** **ADS 511sab, Examples of Vital Records**

511.6 DEFINITIONS
Effective Date: 02/10/2012

contingency plan
A written plan of actions to be taken to safeguard assets and provide reasonable continuity of support should normal operations be disrupted due to the occurrence of an emergency situation or other undesirable event. (Chapters 511, **562**, **563**)

contingency planning
Instituting policies and essential procedures to mitigate the effects of potential emergencies or disasters on an agency's operations and records. (Chapter **502**, 511)

continuity
To go on with selected USAID programs in an actual state of contingency operating conditions. (Chapter **502**, 511)

Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)

A contingency action plan which provides the capability for a Department or Agency to continue operations during a crisis which renders the organization's headquarters unusable. (Chapter 511, **531**)

cycling (Cycle)
The periodic removal of obsolete copies of vital records and their placements with copies of current vital records. This may occur daily, weekly, quarterly annually, or at other designated intervals. Update. (Chapter **502**, 511)

disaster
An unexpected occurrence, manmade or natural, that causes loss of life, health, property or livelihood, inflicting widespread destruction and distress and having long-term, adverse effects on Agency operations. It is distinguished from an accident by its magnitude and by its damage to the community infrastructure or the resources required for recovery. (Chapters **502**, 511, **530**)

Disaster Recovery Plan (DRP)
The document that defines the resources, actions, tasks and data required for managing the business recovery process in the event of a business interruption. The plan is designed to assist in restoring the business process within the stated disaster recovery goal. (Chapter 511)

emergency
A situation or an occurrence of a serious nature, developing suddenly and unexpectedly, and demanding immediate action. This is generally a short duration, for example, an interruption of normal Agency operations for a week or less. It may involve electrical failure or minor flooding caused by broken pipes. (Chapter **502**, 511)

Emergency Operating Records
The type of vital records essential to the continued functioning or reconstitution of an organization during and after an emergency. (Chapter **502,** 511)

Emergency Relocation Site (ERS)
The site containing the Agency's emergency operating facility. Executive Order 12656 requires all Federal Departments and Agencies to establish plans, programs, equipment and facilities to ensure the continuity of essential functions. (Chapter 511, **531**)

recovery
To restore USAID programs/activities from a contingency state to their usual state under normal operating conditions (the rebuilding phase). (Chapter **502**, 511)

Rights and Interest Records
Records essential to the preservation of the legal rights and interests of individual citizens and the Federal Government. Examples are legal proceedings, payroll, and retirement records. (Chapter **502**, 511)

safehaven
An approved site where vital records are stored for safekeeping and retrieval in cases of emergency and/or disaster. This site has to be at a location that is separate from where the files originated. (Chapter **502**, 511)

vital records
Essential Agency records that are needed to meet operational responsibilities and to protect the legal and financial rights of the Government and those affected by Government activities during a national security emergency or disaster. (Chapter **502**, 511)

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