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**Date:** January 19, 2017  
**Appraiser:** Meredith Scheiber, ACRA  
**Agency:** National Reconnaissance Office  
**Subject:** N1-525-12-6

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Schedule Overview**

Bucket: Reconnaissance and Mission

### **Administrative History**

The National Reconnaissance Office (NRO), one of 16 Intelligence Community (IC) agencies, was officially established in September 1961 as a classified agency in the Department of Defense (DoD). The existence of the NRO and its mission were declassified in September 1992.

NRO develops and operates overhead reconnaissance systems and conducts intelligence-related activities for U.S. National Security. Their key customers and mission partners include: policy makers; the Armed Services; the IC; Departments of State; Justice and the Treasury; and civil agencies. These customers and partners depend on NRO systems to transmit data that supports their various missions.

NRO does not receive, maintain, nor is the owner of data captured by their satellites. They are tasked to provide an established infrastructure and the physical equipment (satellites, launch equipment, etc.) that in turn allows their customers and partners to access and/or request data.

### **Additional Background Information**

After the declassification of NRO, a comprehensive scheduling initiative was undertaken by NARA in cooperation with the agency. This process started in 1995 and was completed in 1998 under job number N1-525-95-1.

The submission of NRO's bucket schedules marks the first major scheduling initiative undertaken by the agency since the completion of their comprehensive schedule. Interest in the creation of these bucket schedules for the agency started back in 2008. The agency subsequently initiated their Records Control Schedule (RCS) revision project in 2009 as preparation for, and an essential piece toward the creation of, the bucket schedules. The completion of this project, along with subsequent years of planning, allowed NRO to successfully submit their agency wide bucket schedules to NARA in the first quarter of FY12.

NRO made the decision to create bucket schedules for several reasons. Their comprehensive schedule was originally designed to be used by trained NRO points of contact in a mostly paper world. Most of their records are now born-digital in high volume, thereby making existing schedules increasingly difficult to implement and meet the business needs of NRO. A simplified, streamlined approach to the retention schedule will make records management implementation easier for the records office, as well as all other employees, in addition to ensuring records management compliance. Streamlined, aggregate, items will make a RCS that is understandable by an average employee and create less confusion with a reduced scope of valid authorities.

The following applies to the buckets on this schedule:

- The submitted proposed bucket series changes the permanent/temporary status of the previously approved authorities for 701-1-a, 702-1-a, 801-1-a-1, 801-1-a-2-a, 802-1-a, 801-2-a-1, 803-12-a, 901-1-a, and 901-2-a-1. All other dispositions do not change.
- The majority of proposed retention lengths for temporary records in this schedule are the same as, or longer than, previously approved authorities.
- The MARS schedules, will remain stand-alone schedules for use at Aerospace Data Facility-Colorado. NRO is aware that some of the MARS items will ultimately be kept for a shorter period of time than Headquarters records when the bucket schedule is implemented.
- NRO has carefully considered and developed an implementation plan complete with goal, strategy, and communication pieces. It addresses such areas as their file plans, forms & privacy, disposition and Information Management Operations Application, and declassification.
- NRO has stated that they will not pre-accession any permanent electronic records in the bucket schedules. They are aware of the requirement to migrate and maintain their permanent records until transfer to NARA.

### **Overall Recommendation**

I recommend approval with proposed changes to one or more items, as provided below.

### **APPRAISAL**

Records covered in this bucket pertain to general technology studies and research and development activities, as well as records that document the development, acquisition, operation, and launch of specific reconnaissance systems throughout the NRO.

Given the large scope of superseded records series, the agency submitted crosswalk is attached and referenced in this report where appropriate. The crosswalk contains the current authorized authority, the new corresponding bucket number, retention length changes, and titles and descriptions for all items.

As agreed upon in other NRO bucket schedules, the agency will be required to add the following sentence “\*For specific types of records included in these items, please see crosswalk.” under the “600 RECONNAISSANCE AND MISSION” heading to link the SF115 schedule to the crosswalk document.

Information on the records in this appraisal memo are the representation of the agency at the time of appraisal. Appraisal conclusions and recommendations are based on this representation.

**Item 600-01: Research and Development, System Development, Acquisition, Operations, and Launch: Final and High Level Documentation**

This series as proposed contains final and high level documentation on satellite development, creation, launch and operation.

The agency will be required to remove the following records from this item and move them to temporary item 600-02, Weather Support and Discrepancy reports, of this schedule. Explanation of the records and justification for their temporary status is detailed in that item.

- Crosswalk item 701-1-a: R&D Program Files - Office of Record (with the exception of technical reports, conference proceedings, and similar publications maintained in project files)
- Crosswalk item 702-1-a: R&D Program Files - Office of Record, R&D Projects - Contract Officer Technical Representatives (COTR's) Project Files - Final reports, videos, and still pictures
- Crosswalk item 801-1-a-1: System Development - System and Segment Performance Requirements and Specifications - Highest Level System Specification (including all change pages at the block level)
- Crosswalk item 801-1-a-2-a: System Development - System and Segment Performance Requirements and Specifications - All other specifications (e.g. segment specifications, interface control documents, etc.) - Initial and final versions (including major upgrades and block changes).
- Crosswalk item 801-2-a-1: System Development - Configuration Management Plans and Instructions - Program Offices
- Crosswalk item 802-1-a: System Acquisition - Drawings and Specifications - Top Level assembly drawings/specifications that pertain to system segments and their major subassemblies
- Crosswalk item 803-12-a: Systems Operation - Periodic Reports on System Operations (with the exception of semi-annual reports)
- Crosswalk item 901-1-a: Support Files - Contingency Planning Files
- Crosswalk item 901-2-a-1: Support Files - Exploitation Systems Specifications

Records that will remain in this item include:

- Crosswalk item 701-1-a: R&D Program Files - Office of Record - Technical reports, conference proceedings, and similar publications maintained in project files
- Crosswalk item 701-2-a-1: R&D Project Proposals - Approved Proposals and consolidated plans
- Crosswalk item 703-1: Other Technology Related Records - Environmental Subject Files
- Crosswalk items 801-1-a-1, 801-1-a-2-a, 801-2-a-1, 802-1-a: Final set of charts, specifications, drawings, system requirements and configuration management plans and any major modifications that may occur after the final is produced
- Crosswalk item 803-12-a: Systems Operation - Semi-annual Reports on System Operations
- Crosswalk item 803-9-a: Systems Operation - Anomaly Reports and Related Records

- Crosswalk item 804-5-a-1-b: System Launch - Launch Safety Records - Records Pertaining to mishaps/failures
- Crosswalk item 804-6: System Launch - Post Launch Analysis
- Crosswalk item 901-5-a-1: Support Files - Training Materials for Users
- Crosswalk item 901-7-a: Support Files - Operational Support Analysis

Crosswalk item 701-1-a, Technical reports, conference proceedings, and similar publications maintained in project files disseminate the findings, methodology, and conclusions of the projects. These are the records of the R&D project files that contain the most useful and comprehensive information as it relates to a particular project and is what will be most useful to researchers. Project files outside of technical reports, conference proceedings, and similar publications are voluminous and include records of the project process, which are either administrative, facilitative, or also captured in other permanent series (these records of the project file will be moved from this item and added to temporary item 600-02 below). These other permanent series include Budget Formulation, Policy, and Planning files (scheduled as permanent in N1-525-12-2, item 200-01) and Planning and Analysis Records - Planning and Analysis Subject Files (scheduled as permanent in N1-525-95-1, item 106-1 and proposed as permanent in N1-525-12-5, item 500-02) and Planning and Analysis Records - Baseline Agreements (scheduled as permanent in N1-525-95-1, item 106-3-a and proposed as permanent in N1-525-12-5, item 500-02).

Crosswalk item 701-2-a-1, Approved proposals and consolidated plans for R&D projects are maintained as a separate series from the R&D program files. These records give an overarching view of approved project proposals and also information on their continued status. Information contained in these records includes general information gathered thus far on the idea/proposal, anticipated outcome and use of a product, changes in the proposal or requirements from a previous iteration, relevant diagrams and figures, concept schematics, requirements, what has been completed and what will be completed, bidding and RFP information, technical proposals, and management plans.

Crosswalk item 703-1, Environmental subject file records relate to proposals, agreements, or investigations into how NRO technology and capabilities can be utilized and applied by other agencies for environmental purposes. Records include briefing books and slides, correspondence, and memos. Examples of topics include vegetation mapping, the transparency of Mount Pinatubo volcano, and the transportation of heavy metal contaminants. These records do not include any resulting task orders that may occur. This was a function that largely was done in the 1990s to promote NRO capabilities to others. NRO does not currently create many of these records, but needs to maintain the item in their schedules.

Records of the final set of charts, specifications, drawings, system requirements and configuration management plans for reconnaissance systems as well as records that denote major modifications that occurred after the final set is produced are included in this item. These are a subset of records from crosswalk items 801-1-a-1, 801-1-a-2-a, 801-2-a-1, and 802-1-a. These records detail the final product that was produced in its entirety and is the version that is most often requested and used by those researchers interested in the appearance of physical products

produced by the Federal government. This use is one of the findings of the National Science Team's (NST) 2004 report.

Crosswalk item 803-12-a, Semi-annual reports on system operations consist of substantive and aggregate information from monthly and quarterly system operation reports and include information on system status, tasking, collection, reporting, and processing activities. The semi-annual reports adequately document substantial and aggregate information on system operations. Crosswalk item 803-9-a, Files on major anomalies that had a significant impact on the system encompasses incidents that resulted in the incompleteness of a mission, such as not receiving information, information was reported in error, or a detection point is not working. Anomalies, in general, happen quite frequently, but major anomalies occur rarely. The records include an initial write-up of what occurred, why this was a problem, aspects of the problem solving discussions, and a conclusion wrap-up of the issue.

Crosswalk item 804-5-a-1-b, Launch safety records pertaining to mishaps and failures that occur during launch of systems include for example, situations such as booster failure, engine didn't start, valve failure, failure to reach the correct orbit, etc. These types of incidents don't occur often. The records contain documentation on what went wrong, what should have occurred, and oversight board minutes on the incident. These records correlate to, but are not completely duplicated, in post launch analysis records. Combined, the records provide the full picture of an instance of mishap or failure. Post launch analysis records provide a comprehensive document on individual launches and documentation of the last stage of system development prior to active mission use.

Crosswalk item 901-5-a-1, Final products of training materials for users that provide broad overviews of all NRO programs or overviews of specific programs is a subset of other training materials created for end users of NRO systems. These other training materials are scheduled as temporary in N1-525-95-1, item 901-5-b (item 600-03 of this schedule). This aggregate concise information provided in these training materials is not quite captured in other NRO series and will be useful and of interest to researchers.

Crosswalk item 901-7-a, Final versions of reports and substantive background papers on operational support analyses are studies, reports, white papers, and other records that are created on an ad hoc basis to assess and/or improve NRO systems. They could occur because an incident happens or as a pro-active self-analysis. Examples include analysis on specific technologies, verification and validation of models, segment tests, tests of potential applications, etc. Raw data in this item that may be included in substantive background information refers to system performance data and not raw collection data. NRO does not ingest raw collection data.

The agency will be required to add to this item "Audiovisual Records" (crosswalk items 206-1-a, 206-3-a, 206-7-a; this includes motion picture and video, still photos, and posters. These items were originally proposed for inclusion in N1-525-12-5, item 500-01, Historical Files. Grouping audiovisual records with these other records erroneously associates them as being created or collected for "historical" purposes rather than records that were created for other business needs and that document the design, production, launch, and running of satellites or other important mission aspects of NRO. Therefore, they are more appropriate for inclusion in the 600 series.

Motion picture and still photos include for example instances of finished or close to finished products, major stages in the development of a product, stages in the operation of a product such as launch or other key NRO activities. NRO maintains information on each photo or drawing, including dates and titles. Some dates for older records in this item have had to be estimated by the agency. Posters concern mission related activities, operations and NRO officials. Examples include things such as architecture functional flows and satellite imagery to explain satellite capabilities. Paper posters have been retroactively scanned, at 300 dpi, because of preservation concerns, however, both formats are currently being maintained. Posters, with the exclusion of those produced for special events or historical releases, are currently created electronically via PowerPoint.

Below are the volumes, date spans, and formats for records in this item, with the exception of electronic volume which is classified. Records are classified at the Top Secret level to include SCI and SAP.

<b>Bucket</b>	<b>Crosswalk Item Number</b>	<b>Date Span</b>	<b>Volume</b>	<b>Format (if other than paper, MS Office, or PDF)</b>
600-01	206-1-a			audio cassette tapes, open reel film, CDs, data cartridges, DVDs, Bernoulli Disks, floppy disks
600-01	206-3-a	1959-Present	15 c.f.	168mm film, 241mm film, 35mm film, film negatives, photographs, viewgraphs
600-01	206-7-a	1995-Present	10 c.f.	
600-01	701-1-a	1964-Present	260 c.f.*	
600-01	701-2-a-1	1981-Present	22 c.f.	
600-01	703-1	1991-1999	3 c.f.	
600-01	801-1-a-1, 801-1-a-2-a, 801-2-a-1, 802-1-a	1960-Present**	646 c.f.**	
600-01	803-12-a	1945-Present	1204 c.f.*	
600-01	803-9-a	1969-Present	19 c.f.	

600-01	804-5-a-1-b	1992-1993	1 c.f.	
600-01	804-6	1967-Present	18 c.f.	
600-01	901-5-a-1	1977-Present	31 c.f.	VHS, CDs (containing Microsoft Office products)
600-01	901-7-a	1954-Present	107 c.f.	

\*This is total volume for the entire records series as noted in the crosswalk. Based on the appraisal determinations recommended in this memo, NARA would receive a subset of this volume.

\*\*These numbers are an aggregate of the 4 series as noted in the crosswalk. Based on the appraisal determinations recommended in this memo, NARA would receive a subset of this volume.

The agency will be required to revise the description to read, “Final, high level, and other significant files relating to major approvals, finished products or projects, final stages of launch and operation, or significant anomalies or mishaps in the design, development, and operation of reconnaissance systems. This includes records such as R&D program technical reports, conference proceedings, and similar publications, approved R&D project proposals and consolidated plans, environmental subject files, final set of charts, specifications, drawings, system requirements and configuration management plans for reconnaissance systems as well as records that denote major modifications that occurred after the final set is produced, motion picture and video, still photos, and posters that pertain to distinctive and key points in the development and deployment of reconnaissance systems and other mission-related subjects, semi-annual reports on system operations, systems operation anomaly reports, launch safety records of mishaps/failures, post launch analysis files, training materials for users, operational support analysis files.” This revision accounts for the removal of items 701-1-a, 702-1-a, 801-1-a-1, 801-1-a-2-a, 801-2-a-1, 802-1-a, 803-12-a, 901-1-a, and 901-2-a-1 to item 600-02.

The agency will be required to revise the crosswalk:

- Add a row for the final set of charts, specifications, drawings, system requirements and configuration management plans for reconnaissance systems as well as records that denote major modifications that occurred after the final set is produced.
- Add a row for semi-annual reports on system operations. The row will mimic some data points of item 803-12-a from which the semi-annual reports are being removed.
- Add a row for technical reports, conference proceedings and similar publications produced during an R&D project. The row will mimic some data points of item 701-1-a from which the records are being removed.
- For items 206-1-a, 206-3-a, and 206-7-a (motion pictures and video records, still pictures, and posters) column D will be revised to read “600-01”.
- Crosswalk revisions for records removed from this series will be documented in item 600-02.

**Proposed Disposition:** Permanent

**Appropriateness of Proposed Disposition:** Appropriate.

**Appraisal Justification:**

\* Previously approved as permanent. [See crosswalk for item titles and disposition authority citations.]

\* Related to other permanent records. These records complement and provide additional information to records scheduled as permanent in job number N1-525-95-1 item 101-1, Records of the Director, Deputy Director, and the Directors Staff, item 101-4-a, Records of the Director Executive Committee File, item 104-2-a-1, Memoranda of Agreement Executed with Other Domestic Agencies, item 104-2-b-1, Agreements relating to NRO programs executed with representatives of foreign governments, item 106-1, Planning and Analysis Subject Files, and item 106-3-a, Planning and Analysis Records-Baseline Agreements. These items have been proposed as permanent in N1-525-12-5 and again will be recommended for permanent disposition by NARA. Records in 500-01 and 500-02 capture the 'why', and 'who authorized' aspects of NRO missions and reconnaissance systems. Records in this item capture at a high level 'what was created' and 'how did it launch and operate' in regards to reconnaissance systems.

\* High potential research value. These records provide additional information on the creation, operation, and launch of reconnaissance systems that is not captured or not captured in as much detail in other permanent records for this agency on subjects that are of interest to researchers.

**Adequacy of Proposed Transfer Instructions:** Requires Change. NARA requires that the transfer instructions be revised to read, "Cut off at close of activity or on an annual basis. Transfer to NARA 50 years after cutoff. Where feasible, earlier transfers may be negotiated with NARA." This statement has previously met internal agreement between all of the stakeholder units and is the same statement used for permanent items in all other bucket series.

**Media Neutrality:** Approved

### **Item 600-02: Weather Support and Discrepancy Reports**

Weather functional manager requirements files (crosswalk item 703-2) will be moved to item 600-03 of this schedule. Systems operations - discrepancy reports and related records (crosswalk item 803-8), will be moved to item 600-04 of this schedule. During appraisal it was determined that the records for both of these functionally align to other schedule items and the retentions also meet NRO's business needs.

This item number will be reused to account for temporary records associated with research and development, system development, acquisition, operations, and launch that were originally proposed as permanent in item 600-01 of this schedule. This includes:

- Crosswalk item 701-1-a: R&D Program Files - Office of Record (with the exception of technical reports, conference proceedings, and similar publications maintained in project files)
- Crosswalk item 702-1-a: R&D Program Files - Office of Record, R&D Projects - Contract Officer Technical Representatives (COTR's) Project Files - Final reports, videos, and still pictures

- Crosswalk item 801-1-a-1: System Development - System and Segment Performance Requirements and Specifications - Highest Level System Specification (including all change pages at the block level)
- Crosswalk item 801-1-a-2-a: System Development - System and Segment Performance Requirements and Specifications - All other specifications (e.g. segment specifications, interface control documents, etc.) - Initial and final versions (including major upgrades and block changes).
- Crosswalk item 801-2-a-1: System Development - Configuration Management Plans and Instructions - Program Offices
- Crosswalk item 802-1-a: System Acquisition - Drawings and Specifications - Top Level assembly drawings/specifications that pertain to system segments and their major subassemblies
- Crosswalk item 803-12-a: Systems Operation - Periodic Reports on System Operations (with the exception of semi-annual reports)
- Crosswalk item 901-1-a: Support Files - Contingency Planning Files
- Crosswalk item 901-2-a-1: Support Files - Exploitation Systems Specifications

Crosswalk item 702-1-a, Final reports, videos, and still pictures of Contract Officer Technical Representative project files is a subset of the larger COTR file that is scheduled as temporary in N1-525-95-1, item 702-1-b (included in item 600-03 of this schedule). The reports are summations of the project and include information on what they did, the results, and any associated issues that may have arisen. The reports may, and often do, have associated photos and videos that document end products. These records concern mainly mission related projects; however, it does contain some non-mission. An example would be a presentation for a conference. These records routinely, if associated with a program, would be captured in the R&D program files, crosswalk item 701-1-a. Those that are not filed in other series, while unique, do not document significant or substantive aspects of an NRO program, reconnaissance system, or other mission aspect. Other contract files, related to requirements set out in the Federal Acquisitions Regulations (FAR), are scheduled as temporary in N1-525-12-2, items 200-02, 200-03, and 200-05. Given all of these points, these records have been determined to be of temporary value, because they are duplicative of records in item 600-01 of this schedule or do not directly relate to NRO reconnaissance and mission activities.

Crosswalk item 803-12-a, Periodic reports on system operations consist of monthly and quarterly reports concerning system status, taskings, collection, reporting, and processing activities. The information contained in these records is highly duplicative and includes minutiae levels of information. Substantive and significant information from the monthly and quarterly reports are included in the semi-annual reports and they adequately document the function of system operations. The monthly and quarterly reports have been determined to be of temporary in value, because the information is captured at a higher aggregate level in item 600-01 of this schedule.

Crosswalk item 901-1-a, Contingency planning files are records documenting plans in the event of system or mission failure or other emergencies. These records are similar to continuity of operations records and emergency planning records scheduled in GRS 5.3, item 010 as temporary. At this point in time, the agency has not had an event which would require the implementation of guidance found in the records. In the event of system or mission failure, the

contingency plan is a procedural document and does not document system or mission failure or other emergency which might have occurred, how NRO responded to the situation, and/or what changes were put in place after the incident. The more appropriate place to find that type of information is in the launch safety records pertaining to mishaps/failures, post launch analysis records, and system operation anomaly reports and other related records in item 600-01 of this schedule.

Crosswalk item 901-2-a-1, Exploitation specification and interface control documents are created for end users so they can accept and use data from reconnaissance systems. The information consists of ground processing specifications and other technical requirements, including formats, and information on how data moves from one point to another. These records are facilitative in nature and at times fairly technical in depth. Additionally, it also contains information on common system points such as storage of data, system limitations, system vocabulary, and data processing functions, such as what to do in the event of an error message or recovery procedures, which do not provide unique insight on the reconnaissance system. These records have been determined to be of temporary value, because they contain routine information on the use of the system and that will not be of interest to researchers and do not warrant preservation by NARA.

The following sections pertain to the below records series only:

- Crosswalk item 701-1-a, R&D Program Files - Office of Record (with the exception of technical reports, conference proceedings, and similar publications maintained in project files)
- Crosswalk item 801-1-a-1, System Development - System and Segment Performance Requirements and Specifications - Highest Level System Specification (including all change pages at the block level)
- Crosswalk item 801-1-a-2-a, System Development - System and Segment Performance Requirements and Specifications - All other specifications (e.g. segment specifications, interface control documents, etc.) - Initial and final versions (including major upgrades and block changes).
- Crosswalk item 801-2-a-1, System Development - Configuration Management Plans and Instructions - Program Offices
- Crosswalk item 802-1-a, System Acquisition - Drawings and Specifications - Top Level assembly drawings/specifications that pertain to system segments and their major subassemblies

In 2003, five years after the conclusion of the comprehensive scheduling of NRO in records schedule N1-525-95-1, NARA's Office of Records Services – Washington, DC (NW) and Office of Regional Records Service (NR), as part of their integrated records management program, set up a National Science Team to help resolve appraisal issues involving science records. More specifically, the team was tasked with the responsibility for developing formal guidance for the appraisal of science records. The guidance was to be incorporated into NARA 1441, "Appraisal Policy of the National Archives and Records Administration."

The NST decided to make research and development (R&D) records its initial focus. In November 2003, at a gathering hosted by the Deputy Archivist, a number of government scientists, science managers, and outside-of-government experts discussed R&D work processes,

the types of records accumulated during these processes, and their long-term scientific value. To gain further insight into R&D work processes and records, the NST during summer 2004 conducted a series of site visits to discuss the use and management of R&D records with knowledgeable agency staff.

The final report and training guidance from the NST, NARA 1441 Appraisal policy, review of the records and discussions with the agency, and discussions with RDSC (Cartographic) were used to make the final appraisal determinations for the records in the previous bulleted list.

Excerpts (in italics) are included below from the National Science Team Report, 2004, "Research and Development Records", NARA 1441 "Appraisal Policy of the National Archives and Records Administration, and "Appraisal Training - Guidance for Appraising Science Records" to provide context for my discussion of the records that follows.

*"Because many R&D projects have a limited focus and project records often are voluminous, a very strong justification is needed to appraise all of an agency's project files as permanent."*

*"Overall, research use of R&D records at the National Archives is modest. Use of textual R&D records makes up a small fraction of total textual records use. There is somewhat greater use of R&D visual materials such as engineering drawings and still photographs, partly due to the interest of history buffs."*

*"Historians commonly do research into a particular technology such as atomic energy, radar, sonar, etc., but are also interested in watershed technologies and wrong turns. History buffs and hobbyists are usually interested in ascertaining the appearance and technical specifications of an airplane, ship, rocket, etc. so often rely on visual records such as engineering drawings and still photographs."*

*"R&D records are rarely used by scientists to support their research with the exception of databases relating to medical research. Historians and history buffs generally are interested in R&D that involves large scale physical products such as an aircraft or vehicle, rather than R&D involving small components such as nuts and bolts or electronic components."*

*"Also, because of the continuum of effort from R&D records through production, it sometimes is difficult to distinguish between R&D records and production records. Researchers studying a product generally have greater interest in production records showing the final product than R&D records showing its development. Although there is modest interest in records showing how products were researched and developed."*

While NRO has a unique mission centered on the production and operation of satellites, capturing the whole of R&D and satellite production records will not necessarily provide researchers with additional valuable and unique information on particular technologies and/or watershed technologies. The records include in depth levels of detail on anywhere from very minor to major components that can also be highly technical. Also included are large amounts of

facilitative and administrative project management records that researchers would have to wade through. Records that are more aggregate in content and explain the overall project and outcomes more clearly will more readily meet researcher needs. Therefore, technical reports, conference proceedings, and similar publications maintained in project files have been recommended for permanent retention in item 600-01 of this schedule. The remainder of the project file is being recommended for temporary retention as it will not readily meet researcher needs and would transfer records to NARA that are facilitative and administrative in nature.

As was found during the study by the NST and as was corroborated through discussion with RDSC (Cartographic), researchers when interested in physical products created by agencies generally only want to see records, charts, specifications, drawings, requirements, and plans, for the final products. Interim versions at any other point of production are generally not requested by researchers or are often not scheduled as permanent by NARA. Based on specific request from RDSC, the final set of charts, specifications, drawings, system requirements and configuration management plans for reconnaissance systems as well as records that denote major modifications that occurred after the final set is produced are being recommended for permanent retention in item 600-01 of this schedule. All other versions of these records, at any stage in the production process, are recommended for temporary retention. Additional secondary justification that warrants discussion concerning these records is that NRO has found implementation difficult. In the previous appraisal of these records, it was determined to capture these records at various points within the system development and acquisition stages. Because of the high volume of versions and modifications that may occur and because the stages blur into each other during the course of the production of a product, it is not always clear what set at which point should be captured as permanent versus temporary. Additionally, these are often highly technical records and they require subject matter expertise in order to understand enough to make these determinations. Reducing when and what is captured within these records series will allow for better implementation by NRO, while still providing adequate records of interest to researchers, as well as ensuring that records that document the creation of reconnaissance systems are transferred to NARA. Additionally, this will also enable NARA--who will likely not have the same level of subject matter expertise as the agency when handing these records--to more easily identify and provide access to the records after transfer.

*“Program management records that document the planning, policies, and priorities of research programs usually are appraised as permanent.”*

Records that document the planning, policies, and priorities of research programs are scheduled as permanent in N1-525-95-1 (item numbers below) and proposed as permanent in schedule N1-525-12-5, item 500-02, Policy, Agreements, Public Affairs and NRO Senior's Files:

- Crosswalk item 106-1, Planning and Analysis records - Planning and Analysis Subject files
- Crosswalk item 106-3-a, Planning and Analysis Records - Baseline Agreements
- Crosswalk item 106-4-a, Planning and Analysis Records - Assessment and Evaluation Files
- Crosswalk item 104-2-b-1 & 104-2-a-1, NRO Policy Records - Agreement Files - Foreign Governments & Domestic Agencies

- Crosswalk item 103-3-a, General Management and Administration - Directorate-Level Policy/Subject Files

Aspects of program management of NRO reconnaissance programs and their development and acquisition are thoroughly documented in these five records series. Scheduling additional R&D and system development records as permanent within the 600 series will mean that redundant records are sent to NARA. Furthermore, the records will contain information at a much granular level, including on administrative and facilitative matters, than typically warrants preservation by NARA. R&D Project Proposals - Approved proposals and consolidated plans are still being recommended for permanent retention in item 600-01 of this schedule. Item 600-01 will capture additional information on project concepts, intention, rationale, and project status and will complement records proposed as permanent in N1-525-12-5, item 500-02.

The agency will be required to revise the title to read, “Interim documentation on Major Stages of Research and Development, System Development, Acquisition, Operations, and Launch.”

The agency will be required to revise the description to read, “Records relating to interim and/or major stages of system development, acquisition and operation of reconnaissance systems. Records include R&D program files with the exception of technical reports, conference proceedings, and similar publications associated with project files; final reports, videos, and still pictures of R&D program files of Contract Officer Technical Representatives (COTR’s); all other versions except the final set of charts, specifications, drawings, system requirements and configuration management plans, and any major modifications that occurred after the final set is produced for reconnaissance systems; quarterly and monthly reports on system operations; contingency planning files; and exploitation systems specifications. Excluded are records scheduled as permanent in item 600-01.

The agency will be required to revise the crosswalk:

- Add an exclusionary statement for technical reports, conference proceedings, and similar publications of a project file to column F of item 701-1-a. Column A, B, and D will also be revised to reflect the change from permanent in item 600-01 to temporary in item 600-02.
- For items 702-1-a, 801-1-a-1, 801-1-a-2-a, 801-2-a-1, 802-1-a, 901-1-a, 901-2-a-1, column A, B, and D will be revised to reflect the change from permanent in item 600-01 to temporary in item 600-02.
- Remove “semi-annual” from the description in column F of item 803-12-a. Column A, B, and D will also be revised to reflect the change from permanent in item 600-01 to temporary in item 600-02.

**Proposed Disposition:** Permanent

**Appropriateness of Proposed Disposition:** Requires Change.

**Recommended Disposition:** Temporary

**Appraisal Justification:**

\* Captured elsewhere in permanent records. Final, high level, and/or significant files related to developing and executing reconnaissance systems and operations, including research and development (R&D), system development, acquisition, operations, and launch, will be captured as permanent in item 600-01 of this schedule. Records that

document the planning, policies, and priorities of research programs are scheduled as permanent in N1-525-95-1 and proposed as permanent in schedule N1-525-12-5, item 500-02, Policy, Agreements, Public Affairs and NRO Senior's Files.

\* The previous appraisal for N1-525-95-1 (currently proposed in schedule N1-525-12-5, item 500-02) stated that those files will be the most important source of information for researchers studying the overall work of the NRO, as opposed to the technology, design, and operation of specific reconnaissance systems. Through review of the records and discussions with the agency for both this schedule and schedule N1-525-12-5, it was evident that this statement made in the previous appraisal is still accurate.

\* NRO's initial comprehensive scheduling occurred prior to NARA's National Science Team study of R&D and scientific records. This appraisal aligns with the team's findings and conclusions on the content and use of scientific records and researcher interests. It also aligns to NARA's 1441 Appraisal Guidance section on the appraisal of scientific records. These records are redundant of information contained in other permanent series and contain administrative and facilitative information. Those permanent series also contain additional higher level policy, agreements, and plans that give a fuller picture of NRO's reconnaissance mission.

**Adequacy of Proposed Transfer Instructions:** Requires Change. Since NARA is recommending a temporary disposition for these records the agency will be required to determine an appropriate temporary retention length that meets the legal and business needs of both NARA and the agency.

**Media Neutrality:** Approved.

**Item 600-03: Command and Control, Raw Data, Copies, and Working Files**

The agency will be required to add to this item "Weather functional manager requirements files", crosswalk item 703-2, as it relates to other records in this item, as well as still meeting the retention needs for agency business. This item was originally proposed in item 600-02 of this schedule.

The agency will be required to revise the item title to read, "Command and control, and interim low level documentation on research and development, system development, and acquisition." The item description will be revised to read, "Command and control records used to support reconnaissance systems and mission activities as well as low level interim documents related to system research, development, and acquisition. This includes, but is not limited to, suspended pages of requirements and specifications, non-substantial COTR and project/program documentation, daily system mission and operation plans, ground site procedural issuances, weather functional manager requirements relating to weather support activities, training materials prepared to train operating personnel at mission control and ground processing, site logs, telemetry data, operational command data, electronic systems used to support the mission tasking process, raw reconnaissance data, records relating to pre-launch tests and successful launches, ground site technical analysis reports, tests of systems and exercises carried out to evaluate the effectiveness of contingency plans, contract management and administration records held in program offices as a reference, working files used to create other documents described in this section, and copies of documents described in this section held by offices as a reference."

The agency will be required to revise column A, B, and D for item 703-2, Weather functional manager requirements files, to reflect the change from item 600-02 to 600-03.

**Proposed Disposition:** Temporary

**Appropriateness of Proposed Disposition:** Appropriate

**Appraisal Justification:**

\*Previously approved as temporary. [See crosswalk for item titles and disposition authority citations.]

\*Captured elsewhere in permanent records. Final, high level, and/or significant files related to developing and executing reconnaissance systems and operations, including research and development (R&D), system development, acquisition, operations, and launch, are permanent in 600-01 of this schedule.

\*Has little or no research value. The records concern lower level, support, and/or facilitative records for the development and execution of reconnaissance systems. Many of the records are also copies of records held in other offices and non-record material. While some of these records are unique, they are not significant and/or substantive to warrant preservation by NARA.

**Adequacy of Proposed Retention Period:** Inadequate. To add clarity, the agency will be required to revise the disposition statement to read, "Destroy/Delete when superseded, obsolete, or no longer needed, whichever is later."

**Media Neutrality:** Approved

#### **Item 600-04: System Lifecycle Files**

The agency will be required to add to this item "Systems operations - discrepancy reports and related records", crosswalk item 803-8, as it relates to other records in this item, as well as still meeting the retention needs for agency business. This item was originally proposed in item 600-02 of this schedule.

The agency will be required to revise the description to read, "System development records and other records for operating and maintaining reconnaissance exploitation systems needed until the end of a program or system. These records include, but are not limited to, performance requirements and specifications held by non-program offices, configuration management records, drawings and specifications not held in the program/project files, system acquisition records such as engineering designs, test, drawings, and specifications, and management of the contract, problems and malfunctions in a system's operations that did not have a major impact on the system, system operation discrepancy reports and related records, system-prelaunch test records and data whose retention is governed by FAR requirements, launch readiness review records, exploitation system specifications, manuals and other issuances that describe procedures for operating and maintaining reconnaissance exploitation systems".

The agency will be required to revise column A, B, and D for item 803-8, Systems operations - discrepancy reports and related records, in the crosswalk to reflect the change from item 600-02 to item 600-04. The agency will also be required to add a cut off column for all records in this item. Because the item is based on records needed for ongoing system operation and maintenance until the end of the program or system, adding a cut off column will prevent inadvertent early disposal by prescribing when the 5 year retention period clock starts.

**Proposed Disposition:** Temporary

**Appropriateness of Proposed Disposition:** Appropriate

**Appraisal Justification:**

\*Previously approved as temporary. [See crosswalk for item titles and disposition authority citations.]

\*Captured elsewhere in permanent records. Final, high level, and/or significant files related to developing and executing reconnaissance systems and operations, including research and development (R&D), system development, acquisition, operations, and launch, are permanent in 600-01 of this schedule.

\*Has little or no research value. The records concern lower level, support, and/or facilitative records for the development and execution of reconnaissance systems. Many of the records are also copies of records held in other offices and non-record material. While some of these records are unique, they are not significant and/or substantive to warrant preservation by NARA.

**Adequacy of Proposed Retention Period:** Inadequate. To add clarity, the agency will be required to revise the disposition statement to “Destroy/Delete when 5 years old, or no longer needed, whichever is later.”

**Media Neutrality:** Approved



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