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United States Coast Guard

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COMDTINST 5212.12B
26 JAN 2021

COMMANDANT INSTRUCTION 5212.12B

Subj: RECORDS & INFORMATION MANAGEMENT PROGRAM ROLES
AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Ref: (a) The Coast Guard Directives System, COMDTINST M5215.6 (series)
 (b) Coast Guard Freedom of Information (FOIA) and Privacy Acts Manual, COMDTINST M5260.3 (series)
 (c) 36 CFR Chapter XII, Subchapter B, Records Management
 (d) OMB Memorandum, M-12-18 Managing Government Records, August 4, 2012
 (e) OMB Memorandum, M-19-21, Transition to Electronic Records, June 28, 2019
 (f) 18 U.S.C. § 2071, Concealment, Removal or Mutilation Generally
 (g) 44 U.S.C. 2911(2) Disclosure Requirement for Official Business Conducted Using Non-official Electronic Messaging Accounts
 (h) 44 U.S.C. Chapter 31, Records Management by Federal Agencies
 (i) 44 U.S.C., Chapter 33, Disposal of Records

- PURPOSE. This Instruction establishes United States Coast Guard (USCG) policy governing the component Records Information and Management Program for the creation, organization, maintenance, use, and disposition of all USCG records.
- ACTION. This Instruction is applicable to all USCG personnel, Unit Commanders, Commanding Officers, Officers-in-Charge, Deputy/Assistant Commandants, Chiefs of Headquarters Staff Elements, and contractual personnel working on behalf of the USCG. Internet release is authorized.
- DIRECTIVES AFFECTED. Information and Life Cycle Management Manual, COMDTINST M5212.12A is hereby cancelled.
- DISCUSSION. Pursuant to the 36 CFR 1220.34d, the USCG must "...assign records management responsibilities in each program (mission) and administrative area to ensure incorporation of recordkeeping requirements and records maintenance, storage, and disposition practices into agency programs, processes, systems, and procedures." Supplemental USCG Records and Information Management (RIM) guidance is developed on a continuous basis and is provided separately from

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NON-STANDARD DISTRIBUTION:

this Instruction on the Office of Information Management – [Records and Information Management CG-611 site](#).

5. DISCLAIMER. This Instruction is not a substitute for applicable legal requirements, nor is it itself a rule. It is intended to provide operational guidance for USCG personnel and is not intended to nor does it impose legally-binding requirements on any party outside the USCG.
6. MAJOR CHANGES. This Instruction (1) outlines the RIM Roles and Responsibilities at all levels of the USCG, and (2) removes the records retention/disposition schedules, SSIC Codes, and RIM procedural guidance. The records retention/disposition schedules, SSIC Codes, and supplemental RIM guidance are electronically accessible as separate documents via the [Records and Information Management CG-611 site](#).
7. IMPACT ASSESSMENT. This Instruction requires a collateral duty designation of a Records Coordinator. The Commanding Officer in each District described in Paragraph 10(f) must designate Records Coordinators to serve as the POC to the HQ RM Program. This responsibility will normally be assumed at the Program level. No new resources will be provided for this task. The workload for a Records Coordinator is expected to require approximately 2 hours or less per month.
8. ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECT AND IMPACT CONSIDERATIONS.
 - a. Commandant (CG-47) reviewed the development of this Records & Information Management Program directive, and the general policies contained within it, and determined that this policy falls under the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) categorical exclusion A3. No further environmental analysis is necessary in accordance with the U.S. Coast Guard Environmental Planning Policy, COMDTINST 5090.1 (series).
 - b. This Records & Information Management Program directive will not result in any substantial change to existing environmental conditions or violation of any applicable federal, state, or local laws relating to the protection of the environment. It is the responsibility of the action proponent to evaluate all future specific actions resulting from this policy for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), other applicable environmental mandates, and the U.S. Coast Guard Environmental Planning Policy, COMDTINST 5090.1(series).
9. DISTRIBUTION. No paper distribution will be made of this Instruction. An electronic version will be located on the following Commandant (CG-612) [Internet](#) and [CG Portal](#) websites.
10. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES. Each individual assigned to USCG has the inherent responsibility to create, identify, collect, protect, and assist in the management, retention, proper destruction, and transfer of all records/information produced, regardless of medium or classification. Specific responsibilities are outlined below.
 - a. **Commandant:** Under Reference (h), 44 U.S.C. 3101, “the head of each Federal agency must make and preserve records containing adequate and proper documentation of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, and essential transactions of the agency. These records must be designed to furnish the information necessary to protect the legal and financial rights of the Government and of persons directly affected by the agency's activities.”
 - b. **Senior Agency Official (SAO) for RM:** Designated at and within the Department of Homeland Security and is responsible for incorporating records management into the broader

information management framework and strategic planning initiatives, in accordance with all applicable records management statutes, regulations, and National Archives & Records Administration (NARA) policy, and the requirements of OMB M-12-18, superseded by OMB M-19-21.

- c. **USCG Records Officer:** Serves as the component liaison to DHS and NARA for all offices within the USCG, and as the primary point of contact for USCG-wide RIM related matters.

d. **Records and Information Management Program (RIM) – CG-611:**

- (1) Maintains oversight responsibility for the Coast Guard's RIM Program.
- (2) Develops and implements enterprise-wide RIM policies, procedures, and guidance.
- (3) Conducts long-range and strategic planning initiatives for the RIM Program.
- (4) Periodically assesses the effectiveness of the USCG components compliance with federal records regulations records and program requirements.
- (5) Coordinates with directorate/command/unit representatives on legal, business, and policy guidance in support of the RIM Program.
- (6) Develops and implements enterprise-wide RIM training.
- (7) Composes and issues the component comprehensive records schedules for all records, regardless of media.
- (8) Facilitates collaboration on records initiatives, coordinates the USCG's input on regulations, and implements NARA guidance.
- (9) Works with directorates/commands/units to prepare temporary and permanent records for transfer to offsite storage.
- (10) Collaborates with the Assistant Commandant for C4&IT (CG-6) to ensure electronic records requirements are integrated into the technical infrastructure, design, and Systems Development Life Cycle review process.
- (11) Works with the directorate/command/unit Records Coordinator and Commandant (CG-6) to coordinate the transfer of permanent electronic records to the National Archives.
- (12) Develops and implements safeguards to prevent the unauthorized access, removal, loss, or destruction of records and procedures to report records unlawfully removed.
- (13) Works with private and public sector entities on critical RIM policies and initiatives.
- (14) Manages records electronically throughout their lifecycle in accordance with DHS & USCG policies and procedures.

Additional RIM policy/guidance is available via the [Records and Information Management CG-611 site](#).

- e. **USCG Records Council:** Consists of representatives from the RIM Program, Records Coordinators, and other divisions and offices, as assigned within the charter. Ensures reasonable uniformity for RIM related matters within the scope of the charter.

f. **Unit Commanders, Commanding Officers, Officers-In-Charge, Deputy/Assistant Commandants, and Office Chiefs (HQ):**

- (1) Implement the RIM program requirements within the directorate/command/unit and ensure or monitor compliance with Federal records regulations, NARA guidance, and USCG RIM policies and procedures.

- (2) Designate a USCG Records Coordinator to provide RIM guidance to unit personnel and serve as the primary point of contact for all RIM related matters. (See Appendix: Records Coordinator Appointment Letter).
- (3) Serve as liaisons for RIM related concerns in lieu of a designation.
- (4) Ensure directorate/command/unit information technology projects and initiatives are coordinated in conjunction with the RIM Program.
- (5) Manage records electronically throughout their lifecycle in accordance with DHS & USCG policies and procedures.
- (6) Execute the duties pertaining to the management of any essential records maintained by the USCG directorate/command/unit.
- (7) Ensure the records of departing USCG personnel are electronically accessible to the appropriate personnel in an approved electronic recordkeeping system.

Additional RIM policy/guidance is available via the [Records and Information Management CG-611 site](#).

g. USCG Records Coordinators:

- (1) Serve as the RIM POC for the assigned USCG directorate/command/unit.
- (2) Actively participate in implementing and monitoring internal controls in support of the RIM program.
- (3) Coordinate the directorate/command/unit specific RIM training.
- (4) Serve as members of the USCG Records Council.
- (5) Work in conjunction with USCG General Counsel, Privacy, and FOIA offices to confirm that records are not subject to active litigation or document preservation holds, investigations, or open FOIA cases prior to destruction/deletion.
- (6) Participate in USCG Essential Records Program planning and preparatory activities.
- (7) Review/update USCG Records Schedules, File Plans, and Inventories on an annual basis.
- (8) Prepare USCG records for disposition in accordance with established guidance and records retention schedules.
- (9) Retire permanent USCG records and delete/destroy temporary ones in accordance with records disposition schedules.
- (10) Ensure all disposition requests are completed no later than 30 days after request has been made. Processes annual transfers from Federal Records Centers on a yearly basis, completing the life cycle of permanent records.
- (11) Interpret and implement RIM regulations, guidance, processes, and/or procedures.
- (12) Ensure safeguards are implemented and regularly monitored to prevent unauthorized access, removal, loss, or destruction of records and recover records unlawfully removed.
- (13) Manage USCG records electronically throughout their lifecycle in accordance with DHS and USCG policies and procedures.

Additional RIM policy/guidance is available via the [Records and Information Management CG-611 site](#).

h. Assistant Commandant for C4&IT – CG-6:

- (1) Works collaboratively with the RIM Program and USCG Records Coordinators to integrate electronic records requirements into the technical infrastructure review and USCG Systems Development Life Cycle process.

- (2) Ensures all federal records management electronic recordkeeping and metadata requirements are included in all IT system designs and software application acquisitions/upgrades.
- (3) Manages and preserves electronic records and associated metadata to include email and subsequent content (calendars, task lists, conversation history, associated metadata, and etc.) in accordance with federal records regulations, DHS, USCG, and NARA records retention schedules and guidance.
- (4) Ensures the records of departing USCG personnel are electronically accessible to the appropriate personnel in an approved electronic recordkeeping system.
- (5) Ensures safeguards are implemented to prevent unauthorized access, removal, loss, or destruction of records and to recover records unlawfully removed from the custody of the USCG.
- (6) Preserves and protects records from creation through disposition including, to the extent feasible, during natural or manmade disasters to ensure the validity and integrity of the record.
- (7) Ensures backup media and hard drives are not used as a record-keeping system which are not approved as a recordkeeping system.
- (8) Manages USCG records electronically throughout their lifecycle in accordance with DHS and USCG policies and procedures.

Additional RIM policy/guidance is available via the [Records and Information Management CG-611 site](#).

i. Judge Advocate & General Chief Counsel – CG-094:

- (1) Works in conjunction with the RIM Program to establish records and information litigation hold/release processes and procedures.
- (2) Issues litigation hold notices and supplemental instructions.
- (3) Manage records electronically throughout their lifecycle in accordance with DHS and USCG policies and procedures.
- (4) Advises Commandant (CG-611) on record keeping and other related legal requirements.

Additional RIM policy/guidance is available via the [Records and Information Management CG-611 site](#).

j. Assistant Commandant for Acquisitions – CG-9:

- (1) Collaborates with the RIM Program to ensure electronic records management and metadata requirements language/clauses are included in all IT systems and soft/hardware application acquisitions/upgrades.
- (2) Manages records electronically throughout their lifecycle in accordance with DHS and USCG policies and procedures.

Additional RIM policy/guidance is available via the [Records and Information Management CG-611 site](#).

k. **Contract Officer Representative:** Ensures assigned contractor personnel:

- (1) Satisfy mandatory RIM training requirements.
- (2) Execute responsibilities for managing records throughout their lifecycle in accordance with USCG policies and procedures.
- (3) Protect records from unauthorized disclosure, access, mutilation, and destruction to protect the legal and financial rights of the government and persons affected by government activities.
- (4) Records are electronically accessible to the appropriate personnel in an approved electronic recordkeeping system.
- (5) Maintain official records separately from personal papers and other non-records.
- (6) Manage USCG records electronically throughout their lifecycle in accordance with DHS and USCG policies and procedures.

Additional RIM policy/guidance is available via the [Records and Information Management CG-611 site](#).

l. **USCG Personnel, Interns, and Contractors:**

- (1) Ensure records are properly created to document actions and decisions made on behalf of the USCG and that all federal records are maintained separately from non-records and personal files.
- (2) Manage USCG records electronically throughout their lifecycle in accordance with DHS and USCG policies and procedures.
- (3) Retain emails and associated attachments determined to be federal records in an approved recordkeeping system.
- (4) Apply safeguards to prevent the unauthorized access, removal, loss, or destruction of USCG records.
- (5) Complete mandatory training within 60 days of hire or entrance date and annually thereafter.
- (6) If out-processing from USCG, ensure USCG records are electronically transferred to the appropriate personnel (Supervisor/Contract Officer Representative (COR)) and accessible via an approved electronic recordkeeping system.

Additional RIM policy/guidance is available via the [Records and Information Management CG-611 site](#).

11. **RECORDS MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS.** This Instruction has been thoroughly reviewed during the directives clearance process, and determined there are no further records scheduling requirements in accordance with the Federal Records Act, 44 U.S.C. 3101 *et seq.*, and 36 CFR Chapter XII, Subchapter B. This policy does not have any significant or substantial change to existing NARA records management requirements.
12. **FORMS/REPORTS.** The forms referenced in this Instruction are available in USCG Electronic Forms on the Standard Workstation or on the [Internet](#) and [CG Portal](#). DoD forms may be found at: <https://www.esd.whs.mil/directives/forms/>.

13. REQUEST FOR CHANGES. Comments and recommendations pertaining to this Instruction are invited, through your chain of command, and will be addressed to Records and Information Management Program (CG-611) at: HQS-SMB-CG-611-Records@USCG.MIL.

/DAVID M. DERMANELIAN/
Rear Admiral, U. S. Coast Guard
Assistant Commandant for C4IT

Appendix A. Sample Appointment Memorandum
Appendix B. Definitions

APPENDIX A. SAMPLE APPOINTMENT MEMORANDUM

U.S. Department of
Homeland Security

United States
Coast Guard



Commandant
United States Coast Guard

[Street Address]
City, State XXXXXX-XXX
Staff Symbol: XX-XXX
Phone: (XXX) XXX-XXXX
Fax: (XXX) XXX-XXXX
Email: officialemail@uscg.mil

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Dd Mmm yyyy

MEMORANDUM

From: COMMANDING OFFICER,
UNIT

Reply to Office Staff Symbol
Attn: First Name MI. Last Name
Phone: (xxx) xxx-xxxx

To: Commandant (CG-611)

Subj: APPOINTMENT AS USCG RECORDS COORDINATOR

Ref: (a) Records & Information Management Program Instruction, COMDTINST 5215.12B

1. Effective [Insert Date], [Insert Name, Phone Number, Email Address] is appointed as the [assigned directorate/command/unit name] Records Coordinator.
2. Authority. Pursuant to COMDTINST M5215.12.
3. Responsibilities:
 - a. serve as liaison to CG-611, Records and Information Management (RIM) Program for all records-related matters;
 - b. interpret and implement RIM regulations, guidance, processes, and/or procedures;
 - c. coordinate directorates/commands/units specific records management training activities;
 - d. support RIM and Essential Records Program planning and preparatory activities; and,
 - e. ensure safeguards are implemented and regularly monitored to prevent the unauthorized access, removal, loss, or destruction of USCG records.
4. Delegation is cancelled upon the resignation, retirement, change of duties or position of the individual specified above.
5. Forward an electronic copy of this memorandum to Commandant (CG-611) at HQS-SMB-CG-611-Records@uscg.mil. Retain the original with unit files.

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Copy: COMDT (CG-611),
Member

APPENDIX B. DEFINITIONS

1. **Adequate and Proper Documentation.** A record of USCG business that is complete and accurate to the extent required to document the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, and essential transactions of the component, and that is designed to furnish the information necessary to protect the legal and financial rights of the USCG and of persons directly affected by the component's activities.
2. **Disposition.** An action taken with records that have met their retention period and are no longer needed to conduct current USCG business. Such actions include transfer of permanent records to the National Archives and destruction of temporary USCG records. Disposition is the third stage of the records life cycle, following creation, then maintenance and use.
3. **Disposition Authority.** The legal approval granted by NARA, through USCG's Comprehensive Records Schedule and NARA's General Records Schedules (GRS), authorizing USCG to destroy temporary records or to transfer permanent records to the National Archives at the end of their retention period.
4. **Electronic Messaging.** Electronic mail and other electronic messaging systems that are used for purposes of communicating between individuals, as defined in Ref. (g).
5. **Comprehensive Records Schedule.** NARA-approved records schedule that provides disposition authorities for USCG specific program and administrative records, as well as for incorporating NARA's General Records Schedules (GRS), as applicable.
6. **USCG Personnel.** Any person employed by USCG, including any current or former military, civilian, auxiliary, detailees, and contractors.
7. **Contractor Personnel.** Any current or former contractor, contractor's personnel, vendor, or its personnel, including directors, officers, employees, subcontractors, agents, or consultants.
8. **File Plan.** A list of the records created, maintained, or received in directorate/command/unit that contains the retention period and instructions for how to manage the records.
9. **Lifecycle of Records.** A management concept that records pass through three stages: creation, maintenance and use, and disposition.
10. **Non-record.** Informational materials used for reference or convenience that do not meet the statutory definition of a record. Excluded materials include informational copies on which no USCG action was recorded or taken; extra copies of documents kept only for reference or personal use; or stocks of publications, professional journals, and library materials intended solely for reference.
11. **Recordkeeping Requirements.** Statutory, regulatory, DHS and USCG policies and procedures that provide general and specific guidance about particular records to be created and maintained.

12. **Records.** All recorded information, regardless of form or characteristics, made or received by a federal agency under federal law or in connection with the transaction of public business and preserved or appropriated for preservation by the USCG or its legitimate successor as evidence of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, or other activities of the United States Government or because of the informational value of data in them. (See Ref.(h), 44 U.S.C. §3301).
13. **Records Schedule.** Policy document approved by NARA with provision of authority for the final disposition of records that describes records and provides instructions on how to handle records when they are no longer needed for USCG business.
14. **Retention Period.** The length of time that records are to be managed and made accessible, as authorized by NARA. Records must be retained and made accessible for the length of their retention period, before temporary records can be destroyed or deleted, and before permanent records can be transferred into the National Archives.