

CHAPTER 2. DEFINITIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2-1. DEFINITIONS: The terms below have the meaning indicated when used in connection with the Vital Records Program:
- a. Vital Records are those records necessary to the Department in performing its essential functions during a national emergency (including a nuclear attack on this country).
 - b. Vital Records Reporting Organizations (VRROs) are Headquarters organizations whose heads report directly to the Secretary or Under Secretary and Regional organizations whose heads report directly to the Regional Administrator.
- 2-2. RESPONSIBILITIES
- a. Vital Records Reporting Organization Heads (VRROHs) are responsible for the Vital Records Program for their organizations including the identification of Vital Records. Identification is a judgement call made by the program people within the organization who best know the kinds of essential functions most likely to be performed by their organizations during a national emergency, and the kinds of records necessary in performing those essential functions (see Chapter 3, Identifying Vital Records). Specifically the VRROHs have oversight responsibility for all Vital Records functions within their respective organizations including:
 - (1) Designating a Vital Records Liaison Officer.
 - (2) Identifying Vital Records and certifying the list of such records. The records shall be listed on the form, "Annual Report on Vital Records" (see Appendix 1).
 - (3) Gathering copies of each of the records.
 - (4) Preparing the records for shipment to storage center(s).
 - (5) Mailing the records to storage center(s). (Instructions are on back of form.)
 - (6) Assuring the periodic transmittal of those records which need to be updated more frequently than annually.

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- (7) Maintaining a proper correspondence file regarding this Vital Records assignment, including copies of transmittals of Vital Records.
 - (8) Maintaining proper liaison with the staff which has coordinating responsibility for the Vital Records

Program (i.e., in Headquarters, the Emergency Preparedness Staff; and in the Regions, the Regional Emergency Coordinator).

- b. Emergency Preparedness Staff (EPS): The Emergency Preparedness Staff (Office of Administrative and Management Services, Office of Administration), is the overall coordinating unit for all of the Department's emergency preparedness programs. EPS has the responsibility for the design, implementation, and continuing efficient performance of the Vital Records Program.

Specifically this staff shall be responsible for developing and maintaining the system including:

- (1) Initiating the Annual Report on Vital Records in Headquarters by preparing a memorandum of request from the Assistant Secretary for Administration to each Headquarters' Vital Records Reporting Organization. (See Appendix 2 for the general format of this memorandum.)
 - (2) Providing advice and assistance on the selection, transfer, storage and disposition of Vital Records to Vital Records Liaison Officers in Headquarters.
 - (3) Maintaining liaison with the General Services Administration (National Archives and Records Services), FEMA, and other Government agencies, on all Vital Records matters.
 - (4) Receiving, storing, retrieving, disposing and reporting activities related to records, at the HUD National Relocation Site and at the HUD EOF in the FEMA Special Facility.
- c. Vital Records Liaison Officers (VRLOs) serve as the principal point of contact within their organizations on all matters relating to Vital Records. They are responsible for assuring the actual performance of all of the Vital Records activities for which their organization heads are responsible, except of course, the designation of the Vital Records Liaison Officer

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- 2-2. and the actual certification of the organization's list of Vital Records. (Appendix 3 shows a suggested format of a memo from the VRROH to subordinate units that may be useful in the performance of VRLO duties.)
- d. Regional Emergency Coordinators (RECs) have implementation responsibilities in the Regions paralleling those of the Emergency Preparedness Staff in Headquarters. Specifically the REC is responsible for:

- (1) Initiating the Annual Report on Vital Records in the regions by preparing a memorandum of request from the Regional Administrator to each Vital Records Reporting organization. (See Appendix 2 for the suggested general format of this memorandum.)
- (2) Providing advice and assistance on the selection, transfer, storage and disposition of Vital Records to the Vital Records Liaison Officers. In carrying out this advisory function, the REC should bear in mind any space limitations that HUD may be subject to at the Federal Regional Center (FRC). Although records in paper form are desired in order to avoid reliance on special equipment; the use of microfilm and computer microfilm is acceptable provided both the required equipment and its power source are dependable under emergency conditions.