



ICRM Exam Mentor Program

Candidate Packet

Part 6

Marti Fischer, CRM
Mentor Program Coordinator
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THE BIG COMPANY
(60 points)

PROBLEM

The BIG Company, Inc. has roughly 100 employees. Management has decided to move into new offices in another building in three years. The records situation is chaotic and must be addressed before the move commences. The inactive company records (roughly 300 cubic feet - 8.5 cubic meters) are stored wherever space could be found: in closets, the basement, and in a partially-indexed storage area on the third floor. This storage area has twelve foot (3.66 meters) ceilings, solid support from beneath, and an adjacent elevator giving access to the entire building. Most files in department areas have not been purged. All file cabinets in these active areas, estimated at 300 cubic feet (8.5 cubic meters), are bulging. Managers simply buy new cabinets whenever they run out of filing space. The retention of records is determined by what each manager wants for his or her department. A Vital Records Program exists on paper, but is not in force except that the Payroll Department does send to the storage area a list of retirees and the amounts due them each quarter. Department create forms and reports as they are needed. They have 3-drawer, 4-drawer, 5-drawer filing cabinets in various colors and physical condition. The Personnel Department recently sent two representatives to the international conference of an organization called "ARMA" where they learned about side tabs, color coding, and open-shelf filing, and they are now expounding the wonders of this new technology to others in the office. It is rumored that management intends to set up a committee to plan coordinating color schemes for rugs, walls, office furniture and filing equipment for the new offices.

ACTION

Because of your interest in records management issues and your recent attendance at the ARMA International conference, you have been requested by the Manager of Business Affairs to propose a program and methodology needed to get The BIG Company's records systematized and in order before the move into the new offices. You have been given a week, relieved of your usual duties, to assess the situation and prepare a written report to management. The report should answer the following questions: What are your goals, priorities, and recommendations to accomplish this task? In what areas do you anticipate measurable and reportable savings? What technological applications warrant further consideration?

ANSWER GUIDE
THE BIG COMPANY
SAMPLE CASE STUDY

Note: Part 6 case studies are to be answered in a formal report or an essay format unless otherwise specifically requested by the case study. There is no standard answer for case studies. Individual approaches are taken into account in evaluating answers.

Each case study has a series of elements essential to proper response. These are shown in the Answer Guide which is provided to the grader and should appear in the answer in a logically organized manner. Each section of the answer will also be given a point value which the grader will use to determine the maximum point value for the response.

The actual written report should not contain lists as is demonstrated here but should also include adequate descriptions of the issues and elements as well as transitional wording from one section to the other.

GOALS

1. Establish a comprehensive records management program by means of a formal written policy, a budget, and staff.
2. Conduct a comprehensive records inventory.
3. Develop retention schedules for all active and inactive record types.
4. Dispose of all records legally and operationally eligible.
5. Establish a central records center in the third floor storage area by means of creating a numbering system and box index, erecting shelving, boxing newly inactivated materials from the departments, and reboxing older records whose continued retention has been confirmed. Items should be boxed by destroy date, not by subject.
6. Transfer to the new records center all records from the departments that have been inactivated.
7. Pick up all excess cabinets due to deletion and transfer. Eliminate the shabby and useless equipment. Seek management's concurrence and guidance in working toward the new color coordination scheme by identifying and painting the good excess cabinets which would then be traded to departments until the process is completed.
8. Establish a Vital Records Program.
9. Establish a Reports Control Program.
10. Establish a Forms Control Program.

PRIORITIES

1. Clarify management support by means of a written policy that defines authority and responsibility.
2. Hire a records management assistant.
3. Conduct a company-wide staff orientation session on the objectives of the records management program.
4. Inventory records.
5. Establish a retention schedule.
6. Set up an indexing system and shelving in the new records center.
7. Begin working with departmental representatives to inactivate and/or destroy older records.
8. Vacate closets and the basement of records stored there.
9. Locate a paper recycler and negotiate a contract for the sale of scrap paper.
10. Locate a used equipment dealer and negotiate a contract for the sale of excess filing cabinets.
11. Begin identifying filing equipment for sale or repainting and implement the color coordination process.

12. Investigate technological applications.
13. Establish a Vital Records Program.
14. Establish a Forms Control Program.
15. Establish a Reports Control Program.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Management's written support for this program, a policy statement.
2. A budget to support the program.
3. Permission to hire one person to assist in carrying out various phases of the program.
4. A program manual for company-wide departmental distribution to include:
 - a) management's policy statement
 - b) definitions
 - c) an explanation of records control through inventory and appraisal
 - d) an explanation of retention scheduling methodology
 - e) indexing system to be inaugurated for active records
 - f) file inactivation instructions
 - g) file and box charge-out policies and procedures with exhibits of the appropriate forms and logs to be used
 - h) records disposal policy and procedures
 - i) records storage box specifications and loading methodology
 - j) Vital Records Program components
 - k) Forms Management Program components
 - l) Reports Management Program components.
5. Written job descriptions for each records management staff member.
6. A complete records inventory by department.
7. A comprehensive records retention schedule for each records series, including active, inactive, and total retention periods; methods of disposition depending on the sensitivity of the material; citations to regulations and statutes where they exist; and signature lines for functional departmental manager, legal counsel, and the records manager.
8. Disposition (either to an historical archives for long-term retention or to a recycler for destruction) of those records eligible, based upon the new records retention schedule.

PART VI SAMPLE CASE STUDY

CONVEYOR MASTER COMPANY

Background

The Conveyor Master Company has been in business for 17 years in North Carolina. It now has about 400 employees. Up until the last few years they have been the worldwide leader in providing large scale, customized conveyor systems for distribution and warehousing systems. Recently, competition has forced Conveyor Master Company to reexamine its competitive position in the marketplace. While they still seem to have a hold on the domestic market, their competitors in Europe have started to dominate the international market, which now represents the largest new growth market. Some international customers are requiring ISO 9000 registered suppliers and Conveyor Master is losing business because they are not registered.

Another problem that the company has is that its product quality has eroded over the years. The paperwork and computer systems which support Conveyor Master Company have been allowed to grow in an uncontrolled fashion. Their internal systems have become so inaccurate and time-consuming that design takes longer than projected and there is not always adequate time to test the product before it ships to the customer. Thus, the products do not always work, forcing Conveyor Master's Installation staff to expend unnecessary time trying to fix the products in the field using more expensive and unreliable local suppliers.

Their overhead expenses have not been properly tracked to allow the company to see where waste and rework have sabotaged the profit margins. There are no records of inspection of product before it leaves the manufacturing facility for the customer site.

After months of self-examination, Conveyor Master's in-house re-engineering team has put a major priority on improving the document control system. They have selected you to lead the development of the new document control system. You have strong management support, but morale is low. Attempts to change in the past have failed, so you face a doubtful work force.

Upon preliminary review, you have discovered that there are no enforced policies and procedures. Engineering design procedures are especially weak. You also find that many of the forms used in the business are more than 15 years old and even carry the name of the predecessor company.

Project managers have little clerical assistance, so the project records are scattered in numerous manager's offices. Some are labeled and organized better than others, but none are found to be well-organized. Operations manuals and technical manuals describing installed conveyor systems in customer locations are left on open bookshelves in the hallways. There are no computer security procedures, and passwords are shared indiscriminately among staff members.

There are four inactive records holding areas in the plant containing boxes of records dating back to 1979. There is no one controlling what goes into the records holding areas, nor access to the areas. A commercial records storage center is used but few departments know what records have been transferred to the commercial records center. A records retention schedule was prepared and distributed in 1985 by the former holding company, but administrative staff have never implemented it.

Action

Management has given you two months to assess the document problems of the organization and now expects you to deliver a 20-minute presentation to the Management Committee and the re-engineering team to cover the following:

- A Document Management Plan for Conveyor Master Company showing the various components of the improved system for document management
- Staffing requirements
- Training and awareness programs required
- Rough budget projection for the first 3 years to support the Document Management Plan
- Benefits of the improved system

Write a clear, well-organized, narrative paper that can be presented to top management and the re-engineering team. Include a **Statement of the Problem, Summary of Overall Findings**, and the five items shown by bullets above.

This case study has been designed to assess your proficiency in taking direction, setting priorities, solving specialized records management problems and developing plans to set up a formal records management program.

A SAMPLE CASE STUDY FOR PART 6

by

Richard P. Wilke, CRM

(Editor's note: Rick has used this case study exercise a number of times when assisting potential candidates to pass Part 6 in ARMA Golden Gate [San Francisco] Chapter study groups. What follows are his methodology for presenting the case and his observations about the answers. Rick can be reached at 504-674-1067.)

When I have graded Part 6 of the CRM Examination, I have noticed that it is often the *facts* that are answered rather than the *questions*. A records manager is a manager whose expertise is in records. A good manager must be able to present his or her case in a way that will sell to the current audience. Having technical knowledge is not sufficient. Because of this, I developed a set of four different questions based on a single set of facts to help potential candidates understand that the same facts often generate very different responses.

The "CRM Chemical Company" sample is used in the following way:

- Have the people in the study group read the facts.
- Discuss with them what are the obvious problems to ensure that they understand and can describe the facts.
- Have them read Question #1.
- Have them describe how they would answer Question #1. Discuss their answers. If necessary, describe the tone and approach that would constitute an acceptable answer and why, and identify facts and/or solutions that might be emphasized in the answer.
- Repeat these steps for the remaining three questions.

CRM CHEMICAL COMPANY

The CRM Chemical Company has maintained a file department for centralized filing of active material since 1950. Few departments, however, take advantage of the facilities and service offered because the central file group cannot find requested files. The departments are making duplicates to keep in their own files. These files are in many cases over 3 years old. All file cabinets in all active areas are bulging, and management continues to purchase new equipment.

As for inactive records, the central file room has never purged its files. The staff has moved many cabinets to the basement. The other departments have complete control over their own records, making arrangements independently for space in vacant areas of company-owned buildings in which to store records that are no longer needed in the offices. To rid offices and/or storage areas of obsolete material, most departments depend on sporadic housecleaning. There is no retention schedule. The volume of paper in storage grows steadily. Currently, inactive records occupy a total of 18,000 square feet of space divided among seven locations--all in the same geographic area.

Availability of space, rather than systematic arrangement, has governed where department records are stored, and although it is generally known where a particular document might be found, all documents of a specific classification are not necessarily in the same location. In fact, an employee frequently has to visit several of the seven locations to get a complete, running story on one project. Records removed from storage for reference are seldom returned to the container from which they have been taken. Since no one is responsible for keeping the files in order, bundles, boxes, and transfer cases in the storage area have often been left open with their contents spilling about on the floor.

There have been several recent lawsuits regarding hazardous waste disposal. Many older records could not be found, resulting in costly judgments against the company.

CRM CHEMICAL COMPANY (continued)

Question #1

The Comptroller, whose records represent a large portion of the inactive documents in storage, has become concerned that many important records are inadequately protected and hard to find when needed. He has hired your well-established consulting firm to guide the company. Due to the recent lawsuits, the company is close to bankruptcy. You must make a presentation to the Vice President of Finance about what the company can do to solve its problem without spending much money.

Question #2

The company recently began to grow rapidly, and the space formerly available for record storage is now needed for people. In spite of the lawsuits, profits are up. The Comptroller realizes that it is probably better to do something about the records than to lease more office space. He has called you and several other consulting firms to make a proposal. You are new in the field and competing against established consultants. Your proposal will be made to the Comptroller and a committee of his peers who are deciding whether to expand or to spend money on the records. You must convince them that they should implement a records management program and that yours is the firm to hire.

Question #3

The company has just been acquired by another company that has an excellent records management program. A "head-hunter" found you for the position of records manager. You have the full support of the acquiring company and the budget to do whatever is necessary. The only problem is that the management of the acquired company remains, and this "old guard" does not want to change. You have called a meeting to sell them on your ideas. What is your records management program? What will you say?

Question #4

You are the first Vice President of Records Management. You were hired six months ago and feel that you have made good progress. You had just completed the report proposing your full program but had not yet presented it when there was a hostile takeover attempt of your company. In a successful effort to ward off the suitor, your company took steps that hurt it financially. Now it must drastically reduce costs. You and the other Vice Presidents must make a presentation to the Executive Committee and the Chairman of the Board describing your proposals to cut costs. What have you done in the last six months? Justify it. What do you propose? Justify it.

CRM CHEMICAL COMPANY

Observations about each question:

The following observations offer the instructor a *starting point* for guiding the study group participants to understand what each question is really asking and how their answers should be focused.

Question #1

- Your firm is well known and has already been hired. A big selling job is therefore inappropriate.
- Your presentation is to the VP Finance, who will likely focus on the bottom line.
- Solutions need to start with low-cost steps that will produce quick results.
- A focus on changes that will remove obsolete documents that might be damaging in lawsuits and steps that will make it easy to locate needed files (particularly environmental) will be important.
- There are many obsolete files in storage, and many in active office areas. Freeing space and ceasing to purchase cabinets are potential savings.
- Use of a commercial records center may be desirable because it might be able to free a significant amount of space that could be sold or leased.

Question #2

- In this instance it is critical to sell yourself.
- The presentation is to a committee that is trying to decide if records management makes sense. Convince them!
- The company is making money and so has money to spend. The program can be more aggressive.
- Space is a key issue. Show how records management will be cost effective compared to renting more space.
- Point out the many added benefits that will accrue because the company will spend money on records management instead of additional space.

Question #3

- You are the records manager. You have full support and a good budget.
- Your audience is hostile and from a company that has just been bought. Emphasis on the problems they are obviously having and how a good program will make their lives easier is a likely approach.
- The question asks what you plan to do. Be sure to answer!

Question #4

- The question states that you have made good progress. What would have been *possible* in six months?
- Your audience is the Chairman and Executive Committee. They are expecting you to tell them about the cuts you will make. You will want to show how your records management program is already saving money, or that you have laid the groundwork and that spending a little more will be well justified because of rapid and ongoing payback.
- Emphasize the parts of your plan that will be inexpensive and quick and will have a big payback. Steps that would protect the company in the event of another lawsuit may be good also, as long as they are inexpensive.

SAMPLE CASE STUDY
(60 Points)

NATIONAL PICKLE ADMINISTRATION

PROBLEM:

According to government regulation, an individual who wishes to make over four liters of pickles per year for noncommercial use must obtain a certificate from the government. The National Pickle Administration (NPA) is the agency responsible for pickle certificates.

The NPA receives approximately 500 applications a month. The average throughput time for an application is 147 days. At the present time there are 1,416 certificate requests in process or waiting distribution. There are 178 primary applications on hold because the corresponding applications cannot be found. At a recent Legislative Subcommittee hearing, the NPA Administrator stated that his agency was in a "pickle" and that he was taking steps to remedy the situation.

At the request of the NPA Administrator, you, an internal governmental consultant, are brought in to review the situation. The Deputy Administrator is the NPA project manager. You are assigned the task of conducting a records and information management systems study and to provide a suggested resolution blueprint.

HERE IS WHAT YOU DISCOVER:

Background:

The NPA was established in 1961, and over the years, has issued over 245,754 pickle certificates. Within the NPA there are two pickle application examination divisions, one for sweet pickles and one for dill pickles. Issuance of pickle certificate is an application procedure, an examination is not required. Pickle makers around the country strive to receive these certificates and take great pride in displaying their certificates, as they identify this as the premiere pinnacle for pickle makers.

Administration Directives:

The Division's directives were written in 1961. The last revision was completed in 1985. The directives can be very confusing to follow. During the peak pickle-making season the Division can receive up to 50 calls a day requesting clarification on the certificate application process.

Work Flow:

When an application is received by the NPA, the mailroom opens, logs in, and attaches a Mail Control (MC) form to the application, and then routes it to the appropriate pickle application examination division. The supplemental application (if applicable) is routed with the primary application.

When an examination division receives a primary application, the clerk logs in the application, then pulls the previous case file from the Case File Room. If there is not an existing case file, a new case file is created. Each division has separate examiners and separate file areas. Each division files the case files alphabetically by applicant name.

The case file is then routed to an examiner for review and to ensure there are no unresolved problems. If the application is in order, the examiner notes his or hers initials in the Approval box on the form. Any problems are turned over to the inspection staff for resolution prior to approval. If there is a supplementary application, the primary examiner files the back copy of the supplemental application in the primary case file, and routes the application to the secondary examinations division.

When the supplementary application is received by the secondary examination division, the clerk logs in the application, and pulls the previous case file from the Case File Room. If there is not an existing case file, a new case file is created. The application is then routed to one of the examiners for review. If the application is in order, the examiner notes his or her initials in the Approval box on the form, pulls the back copy for filing in that division's files, and routes the top copy of the application back to the primary division. Any problems are turned over to the inspection staff for resolution prior to approval.

When the supplemental application is returned from the secondary examination division, the clerk pulls the file, and routes the file to the appropriate primary examiner. The examiner reviews the applications. If all is in order and signed, the examiner initiates a *Request for Graphics Services* (RGS) form. The top copy of the application(s) and a copy of the RGS is filed in the primary case file.

The RGS is routed to the Graphics Division for certificate production. The RGS is logged into the system and assigned a unique number. A graphic artist is assigned to hand calligraphy the certificate. The unique number is noted on the certificate. One copy of the RSG is filed by certificate number in the Graphics Division office, and the second is attached to the original certificate and routed back to the primary examiner.

The examiner then writes a letter of approval to the applicant. Each letter is individually written and printed. A copy of the certificate and the RSG are filed in the case file. The original certificate, approval letter, and the MC are then sent to the Mail Branch for mailing to the applicant. The Mail Branch logs in the materials and packages the certificate and approval letter, then mails it to the applicant. The final MC forms are filed by MC number in the Mail Branch.

Reporting:

Each section maintains reporting procedures. Data are routinely collected and summarized. Each pickle examination division submits a weekly and monthly report to the Associate Administrator for Noncommercial Licensing. This report lists the number of applications received, examined, and completed during that time period. The Graphics Branch submits a monthly and quarterly report to the Associate Administrator for Administration. These reports list the number of certificates requested and the number of certificates completed during that time period. Mail Branch gives a weekly and quarterly report to the Director of Administrative Services. This report identifies the number of applications received and the number of certificates mailed during that time period. The Assistant Administrator prepares an annual report for the public summarizing all the reports to detail the yearly activities of the NPA.

ACTION:

This case study has been designed to assess your proficiency in developing a plan of action that deals with overhauling and updating a government agency's RIM program. Write a clear, well-organized NARRATIVE report that you can present to the NPA Administrator.

I. Introduction Section (10 points maximum)

A. Statement of the Overall Problem (5 points)

The statement of the Overall Problem should be concise (not more than 2-3 sentences), identifying the major or overall problem in the case study.

B. Summary of the Overall Findings (5 points)

The Summary of Overall Findings should briefly address the specific problems found during the survey (not more than 3-5 sentences).

II. Analysis (50 points maximum)

Divide the remaining part of your report into the following sections:

A. RIM Analysis (15 points)

Identify the appropriate records and information management (RIM) disciplines that you determine should be addressed, then discuss your analysis of the current situation for each discipline cited.

B. Recommendations (10 points)

Explain the overall solution that should be implemented for the NPA and justify your opinion with an appropriate rationale.

C. RIM Alternatives (15 points)

Describe the alternatives that are available to the organization. Based on your analysis, discuss the specific changes you would recommend for each RIM discipline cited.

D. Suggested Next Steps (10 points)

List in sequential order the three to five next steps the NPA should take in order to implement your recommendations.

Note to Candidate

State in your report any facts that you assume in developing your answer. Make sure these assumptions logically support your answer.

Penalty points may be deducted by graders for incorrect format, poor grammar, poor spelling, illegible writing, and/or poor organization of the answer.

Remember, staple all sheets of your response to the case study and gather the original case, loose notes, and extra printouts and place them in the packet to be returned to the proctor.

STOP

Read this note before proceeding!

Note: The attached sample answer is provided as a sample illustration of a case study response. The response illustrated here is not necessarily considered to be right or wrong and a grade point has not been determined. Your actual response to this same case study could be very different or very similar.

This sample answer is provided in response to comments from candidates who have had to retake Part VI. Several candidates have expressed a feeling of frustration because they do not know what is expected in a case study response and do not get much insight from the grader's comments which are returned to them. The italicized notes on the answer give instruction on what should or should not be included in that particular section. These notes essentially indicate some of the things the grader is looking for in the answer.

It is recommended that you write your own response to this same sample case study before reading this sample answer. Then compare your answer to the sample response, noting whether you did what was requested in the instructions and provided what is indicated in the italicized notes.

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT YOU ACTUALLY PRACTICE WRITING SAMPLE ANSWERS IN THE ALLOTTED TIME FRAME. Timing is extremely important in taking Part VI. A thorough, but only half-finished response, will not result in a successful completion of the examination process. Susan Bronder, CRM provides several pointers and suggestions on budgeting your time in her article on "Part 6 Case Studies" in the CRM Examination Handbook, page 2.7.1.

SAMPLE CANDIDATE ANSWER
NATIONAL PICKLE ADMINISTRATION

Note: the Action has a required format. If you did not follow this format it will be very difficult for the grader to assign points to your answer. Specific points are assigned to a each section. If you failed to answer within the required format, points may not be awarded.

I. Introduction Section

- A. Statement of the Overall Problem** *The statement summarizes the general problem. This is supposed to be a broad overview of the problem. Do not detail any problems and do not include any recommendations in this section. It should be concise and direct, saying something to the effect:*

The National Pickle Administration (NPA) is a chaotic organization. Its antiquated and protracted processes are severely impeding the efficiency and effectiveness of pickle certificate issuance.

- B. Summary of the Overall Findings** *The summary should briefly address the specific problems found during the survey. Do not include any recommendations in this section. An example might be:*

The NPA methods for processing pickle applications are laborious and outdated. They have a severe backlog of certificate applications and too many missing files. They have too many copies of forms; excessive mail control; excessive reporting; no disposition of records; unnecessary transmittal letters; antiquated certificate creation; poor organization structure; too many file rooms; and excessive mail routing between offices.

II. Analysis

- A. RIM Analysis.** *It the Analysis section you were to list the specific RIM disciplines that were addressed in the problem. For each discipline you were to discuss the current situation for each discipline cited. Recommendations should not be discussed.*

Directives management: The NPA has directives for the public explaining the forms that are to be submitted for pickle applications. The directives are difficult to read and cumbersome to understand.

Files management: The NPA has four separate file areas, each with their own file staff:

- The Mail Control: files logs of the application, the routing slips.
- Sweet Pickle Division: files sweet pickle application & documentation
- Dill Pickle Division: files dill pickle application & documentation
- Graphics Division: files *Request for Graphics Services* (RGS) forms

Each file room staff is responsible for receiving and logging materials, then routing materials to the responsible parties.

Forms Management: Overlapping forms and redundant forms:

- Application form: Two separate application forms are required, one for the primary pickle application and one for the secondary pickle application.
- Mail Control (MC) form: The Mail Center attaches the MC to the application. The MC is used for routing the pickle applications.
- Request for Graphics (RFG) form: the RFG is sent to Graphics, one part of the form is routed with the certificate to the examiner, the second part of the form is filed in the Graphics office.

Mail management: Very complex procedures: Receives mail from mail service; Creates mail control (MC) form; files original MC form in suspense file; makes entry in application control log; attaches MC copy to the applications and sends to Primary Examining Division.

Receives approval letter, certificate and MC from the Graphics Division, pulls original MC form, files the MC forms by MC number, makes entry in application control log, packages the letter and certificate, and mails package to applicant.

Reports management:

- Examination Division submits a weekly and monthly report to the Associate Administrator for Noncommercial Licensing. Each report lists the number of applications received, examined, and completed for each time period.
- Graphics Branch submits a monthly and quarterly report to the Associate Administrator for Administration. The reports list the number of certificates requested and created for that time period.
- Mail Branch gives a weekly and quarterly report to the Director of Administrative Services. The reports identify the applications received and the number of certificates mailed that time period.
- Assistant Administrator prepares an annual report for the public summarizing all the reports to detail the yearly activities of the NPA.

Retention management: The NPA does not have a disposition schedule. All documents have been retained for the life of the NPA.

- B. Recommendations** *This is where you explain the overall solution that should be implemented for the NPA. Be sure to justify your opinion with an appropriate rationale.*

Convert to an electronic document management - workflow system. The processes can be converted to an electronic document management system (EDMS) to control the paperwork. The application forms and backup materials are imaged as they are received (or the applicants can submit the forms electronically). The fundamental changes in strategic methodology enabled by electronic imaging permits the document manager to focus mostly on the information content of documents rather than the myriad of tasks involved in collecting, organizing, transmitting, storing, and retrieving paper documents.

Upgrade Graphics Division. Eliminate manual calligraphy of certificate. The certificate can be electronically generated and printed on a high-quality color laser printer.

- C. RIM Alternatives** *You are to describe the specific changes you would recommend for each RIM discipline cited in the above RIM discussion.*

Directives management: Rewrite the directives to include:

- electronic submissions - to encourage applicants to electronically file their applications with the NPA.
- Restructure the application procedures to eliminate the primary / secondary applications.

Files management: Consolidate all file rooms into one centralized file room. It is much more efficient to maintain one file per applicant, rather than multiple files and multiple locations to search for documents on an applicant. The records staff could be much more efficient if the file rooms were managed in a centralized location.

Forms Management: Consolidate forms and eliminate extra copies.

- Application form. Create one standardized form for both types of pickles. Construct the form so that it is Optical Character Recognition (OCR) compatible -- to recognize machine printed and handprinted characters. Make the application form available on the Internet so that the applicant can either submit it over the Internet or print the form for manual submission.
- Mail Control (MC) form. Eliminate. No longer necessary with the imaging system.
- Approval letter (certificate transmittal letter). Create a standard form letter that can be automatically generated for inclusion with the certificate.

Reports management:

Implement a database system that will automatically generate statistics on each division on an as-needed basis. DB can compile statistics for annual activities of the NPA.

Retention management: Implement a retention and disposition schedule. Up to 80% of the stored documents can be destroyed.

D. Suggested Next Steps *Explain what the NPA should be doing in the next few months to meet your overall recommendations and RIM alternatives.*

- 1.) Graphics department upgrade. The certificate calligraphy must be upgraded to an digitized certificate and printed on at high quality color printer.
- 2.) Retention research and scheduling of NPA records. A full inventory of the records is required, followed by retention research and the approval cycle of the schedule.
- 3.) Records purge. Destroy the records that have met their retention periods.
- 4.) Consolidate file rooms into a centralized file room.
- 5.) Records assessment and feasibility study. Complete an needs assessment and cost justification study. The final result is a report detailing the components and performance requirements of the EDMS.