Handout 4.2—Sample Records Emergency After-Action Report

Types of Incidents to Be Assessed

1. Any incident in which the Records Emergency Action Plan is activated

2. Incidents which, while not resulting in use of the emergency plan, offer an opportunity to examine safety hazards, risks to records, security vulnerabilities, etc. (an assessment may be requested by the branch or program involved, or by an office head or the agency administrator)

System of Emergency Assessment

1. The Action Team should undertake a records emergency response assessment as soon as feasible after the situation is brought under control, but no more than 30 days after the event. The Action Team may solicit assessments from other involved parties.

2. The attached checklist of questions (see next page) is to be used as a guide or reminder in preparing the assessment; respond to the questions that are relevant to the event and your involvement in it.

3. The assessment may be done by individuals or collectively for an amalgamated report at the discretion of the Action Team leader.

4. The Action Team leader reviews assessments submitted by each program or branch, and prepares a final report on the emergency response and lessons learned within 30 days of receipt of the assessments.

5. The Action Team leader creates a permanent file of all documents relating to the recovery, including the assessments.

Records Emergency Response Assessment Checklist

Facility:	
Date of Incident:	**Response Dates:**
Quantity of Records Affected:	**Cubic Feet:**
Assessment Completed by:	**Date:**
1. Cause	
What were the major contributing factors?	
Additional comments:	
2. Notification	
Were you given timely notice of the emergency?	
Of your assigned role?	
Was the Records Emergency Action Team system activated?	
How were you notified and by whom?	
Were you given accurate and adequate information?	
How can notification procedures be improved?	
Additional comments:	

3. Communication
What methods of communication were used: telephones, runners, radios, beepers, other?
If a manager or supervisor, did you receive a radio or other communication device?
Did you use it?
Were the communications effective?
Additional comments:
4. Records Recovery performed by (respond to all that apply) • In-house Staff (complete section 4) • Contractor Services (complete sections 4 and 5)
Did the damage mitigation procedures and salvage operations reduce or prevent water damage, fire damage, etc.?
How could these operations be improved?
Were conservation efforts well-coordinated and prioritized?
Were adequate personnel available?
Were agency and contractor personnel effectively deployed?
Were movement of records and temporary storage arrangements well-planned and well-handled?

What kinds of specialized preservation tools and supplies were needed that were not available?
Were they obtained subsequently?
Did the delay play a significant role in the outcome of the incident?
Were damage to records and movement of records documented in a timely manner?
Were photos taken?
Was the incident videotaped?
Additional comments:
5. Contractor Performance
Name of contractor (if more than one contractor was hired, duplicate this table as needed):
Performance overall: Excellent_____ Satisfactory_____ Unsatisfactory_____
Timeliness of contractor response: Excellent_____ Satisfactory_____ Unsatisfactory_____
Actions performed by contractor:
Would recommend using this service again: Yes_____ No_____ Perhaps_____
Additional comments:

6. Security
Were operations effective?
Were communications clear and concise?
Were communications timely?
Were events documented?
Were appropriate security personnel assigned to assist?
How can procedures be improved?
Were the security and safety of staff and other visitors properly considered at the outset of the event?
Were an adequate number of security personnel available?
Were security personnel effectively deployed?
Did security personnel use safe methods and equipment?
Was security of records, buildings, and grounds maintained?
Additional comments:

7. Facilities
Was the appropriate pool of equipment and supplies established?
Were adequate facilities personnel available and did they have requisite knowledge of facility systems (electrical, gas and water cut-offs, HVAC system capabilities, emergency back-up systems, etc.)?
Were facilities personnel well-deployed?
Did facilities personnel use safe methods and equipment?
What kinds of equipment or supplies were needed that were not available? Were they obtained? Did the delay play a significant role in the outcome of the incident?
Did all equipment operate properly?
Additional comments:

8. Media Relations
Were the media contacted?
Did the media contact the agency?
Did the staff in contact with the media give only the appropriate information?
How can contact with the media be improved?
Additional comments:
9. Action Checklists
Did you use an action checklist?
Which list(s) did you use?
Were they useful?
How can they be improved?
Additional comments:

10. Unexpected Contingencies
Were records emergency procurement procedures efficient and responsive?
Were there any special circumstances or serious unexpected problems?
Were they handled appropriately?
What other problems could have arisen?
How could they have been handled?
Additional comments:
11. Overall Effectiveness of Records Emergency Action Plan
Was a records emergency declared and did someone take charge?
Was a chain of command established, clearly understood, and followed?
Were duties delegated to the appropriate people and the necessary adjustments made?
Were major decisions and activities documented?
Additional comments:

12. Recommendations and Conclusions
How could the incident have been avoided?
Damage lessened?
What policies and procedures need reevaluation?
What specific lessons were learned?
Additional comments**:**
13. Recommendations for Future Actions

[This page intentionally left blank.]