

Conversation with Bonnie Curtin
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Joan Zimmerman

Curtin is a Management Analyst at National Archives, and she works in the Agency Records Program. She teaches courses for agency personnel responsible for preserving records. She looks at how well agencies are doing in their compliance with NARA regulations and is especially concerned with how agencies are adhering to their schedules.

Schedules are plans for the life cycle of records: when they will be destroyed, how long they will be kept, or when the records will come to the National Archives from the agency that generated them. Schedule is a term of art that describes record control and clarifies what the universe of records of an agency is.

Bonnie Curtin recently completed her review of Secret Service record preservation and retention. She did a random series of checks for different material and found that the Secret Service is doing a very good job of organizing and maintaining its records. She observed that the Secret Service is very thorough in its record-keeping. She said her evaluation of the Secret Service will be available this Fall on the Internet as NARA. Gopher. Cleo. There will also be a paper copy available. She offered that the Secret Service was doing a much better job than Treasury, which failed to meet Curtin's test of compliance with NARA regulations. Curtin gave the names of two contacts with Treasury officers in charge of records:

Steve Milline (202) 622-2502. Milline also does FOIA work in addition to his job as records officer.

Irving Wilson (202) 622-1575 is in the policy office and he works with the records office.

Curtin said she did not recall seeing any material on Gov. Connally's request for assassination records while he was Secretary of the Treasury.

With regard to the Secret Service Curtin offered the following:

1. Request a Records Control Schedule for document we wish to see. Identify various series, categories of records, correspondence, etc., we want to see.
2. Look in administrative offices, e.g. Protective Research Service, for Director's Office correspondence. Another example is the Public Affairs Office, which retains copies of the Director's speeches going back to the 1950s
3. Get current organizational charts for the Secret Service. People currently in charge of administrative departments are in control of their own series of records.

4. Personnel records are retained within the Secret Service.
5. There are 7 Secret Service offices downtown.
6. Center Point is a records staging area (as opposed to an agency records area) in Largo, Maryland. It is less than 5000sq. Ft. A records center must have National Archives approval and meet certain minimum standards, e.g. have a sprinkler system. These two categories--Agency Records Area and Staging Area--are distinct from Program Offices, which refer to administrative offices in agencies themselves. Curtin offered that Center Point does not necessarily have a "cache" of materials that would be interesting to us.(As an aside, Steve Tilley had mentioned that the Secret Service materials at the FRC take up 707 cubic ft.)
7. John Machado's reference to a "form 258" does not indicate that they have an inventory as such but rather a schedule that accompanied Secret Service documents to the National Archives. These are the 11 boxes plus the recently released material plus the "secret" box of withheld materials.
8. Curtin said that NARA's appraisal archivist is Mark Wolfe. He replaced Richard Marcus. Curtin said she would speak to Wolfe about our interest in reviewing Secret Service materials. Curtin said he would have a better grasp of the intellectual content of SS records than she does.
9. Curtin said she would call me back in a day or so after speaking with Wolfe
10. Curtin said that for the Secret Service, ACCESS is their major concern.

From conversation with Steve Tilley, May 8, 1995 at College Park, Archives:

Materials in Secret Service Box SS01 (withheld documents):

RG 87=from Secret Service files

RG 2 72= Warren Commission documents with Secret Service information

RG 64=National Archives

RG 59=Department of State

RG 51=OMB