



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

MAY 9, 2023

Flash Report Series – Architect of the Capitol’s Records and Archives Management

Flash Report 2023-0001-IE-P

MISSION

The OIG promotes efficiency and effectiveness to deter and prevent fraud, waste and mismanagement in AOC operations and programs. Through value added, transparent and independent audits, evaluations and investigations, we strive to positively affect the AOC and benefit the taxpayer while keeping the AOC and Congress fully informed.

VISION

The OIG is a high-performing team, promoting positive change and striving for continuous improvement in AOC management and operations. We foster an environment that inspires AOC workforce trust and confidence in our work.



Summary Highlights

Flash Report Series – Architect of the Capitol Records and Archives Management 2023-0001-IE-P

May 9, 2023

Overview

The Architect of the Capitol (AOC) Records Management and Archives Branch (RMAB) is tasked with managing the AOC's archives and preserving the permanent records that are created and transferred to the archives by agency staff.

In Fiscal Years 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022 the Office of Inspector General (OIG) received complaints of wasteful spending and general mismanagement of the RMAB, which were substantiated in three separate investigations. These incidents and others have been included in the OIG's Statement of Management Opportunities and Performance Challenges since 2018 as the challenge of "Waste and Accountability." In 2022, a fourth complaint was submitted alleging overall mismanagement and waste, which prompted this independent inquiry. This special review assessed the efficiency, effectiveness and internal controls of the AOC records and archives management program.

Key Takeaways

The AOC's RMAB was not efficiently and effectively fulfilling its mission responsibilities. During our review we found:

- Policy development processes were incremental and inefficient, and the RMAB did not follow a standardized timeline to update branch policies and procedures.
- The RMAB lacked adequate staff for the fulfillment of its mission and was unable to retain new hires.

Key Takeaways (cont'd)

- The RMAB branch leadership repeatedly halted the division's work and ignored the mission consequences of a long-term and growing backlog. In addition, the Division leader lacked adequate and effective oversight of this branch.

Recommendations

- 1) The Chief Administrative Officer should prioritize revision of the Records and Archives policies, procedures and all other associated policy directives to establish effective and efficient operational guidance and internal controls. Additionally, develop and implement a standardized timeline for policy revision and update within the current Fiscal Year. Though the AOC is not required to follow the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) guidelines and polices, they are noted as best practices.
- 2) The Chief Administrative Officer should, within 60 days, conduct an organizational assessment of the RMAB structure and responsibilities to determine if the branch is appropriately staffed and assigned.
- 3) The Chief Administrative Officer, to address the immediate need of archival backlog items and digitalization processes, should:

a) source a temporary contracting staffing option to assist RMAB staff with processing and clearing backlog items

b) procure the services of an archival digitalization specialist to assist records retention, processing, research and preservation.


- 4) The Chief Administrative Officer should, within 60 days, develop a corrective action plan for the RMAB and Curator Division leaders to address the leadership and management deficiencies within the Division. At a minimum, the corrective action plan should address communication skills, change management, leading and empowering high-performing teams and effective federal leadership.



INSPECTOR GENERAL

DATE: May 9, 2023

TO: Chere Rexroat, RA
Acting Architect of the Capitol

FROM: Christopher P. Failla, CIG 
Inspector General

SUBJECT: Flash Report Series – Architect of the Capitol Records and
Archives Management (2023-0001-IE-P)

Please see the attached Flash Report for our review of the Architect of the Capitol's (AOC's) records and archives management program as conducted by the Records Management and Archives Branch (RMAB). This review was conducted in response to concerns expressed to the Office of Inspector General concerning wasteful spending and general mismanagement of the division. We found a lack of timely policy development, inadequate resources and ineffective and inefficient management in this division. This report includes four recommendations for improvements to RMAB's record management program.

We are providing this report for your review and appropriate action. Management action should have a corrective action plan to address each of the recommendations. The AOC OIG requires that recommendations be resolved promptly. If you or AOC personnel would like to schedule a briefing to discuss this report, its findings or recommendations we are happy to accommodate and ask that a member of your staff contact our office to coordinate. Otherwise, we will contact you within 60 days to follow up on the progress of your management decisions related to the recommendations in this report.

I appreciate the assistance AOC staff provided throughout this assessment. Please direct questions to Evaluator Audrey Cree at 202.631.2682, or Audrey.Cree@aoc.gov or Assistant Inspector General for Inspections and Evaluations Chico Bennett, at 202.394.2391 or Chico.Bennett@aoc.gov.

Distribution List:

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Introduction

In Fiscal Years (FY) 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022 the Office of Inspector General (OIG) received complaints of wasteful spending and general mismanagement of the Architect of the Capitol's (AOC's) Records Management and Archives Branch (RMAB). Three OIG investigations¹ were conducted, with each substantiating complaints of waste. In response, RMAB management took only one disciplinary action (a memo of counseling for the 2020 allegation). In FY 2022, the OIG received an additional complaint (2023-0007-INVR-P) alleging overall mismanagement and waste, lack of archival policy and standard operating procedures for division work, and improper storage of records, to include sensitive records.

Due to ongoing problems in the RMAB and the ineffective management response to substantiated allegations, the OIG elected to conduct this independent inquiry into the efficiency, effectiveness and internal controls of the AOC records and archives management program.

Records Management and Archives Branch

The RMAB is a branch of the AOC's Curator Division, which is overseen by the Curator and consists of the Curator's Office, the RMAB, and the Photo and Technical Imaging Branch (PTIB). The Curator provides administrative and technical direction through subordinate supervisors at the GS-14 level of the RMAB and Photography branches. The Curator is responsible for preparing performance plans and employee evaluations for RMAB and PTIB branch chiefs; each branch chief is a subject matter expert and specialist in their area.

The RMAB manages the AOC's archives and preserves permanent records ("archival heritage assets") that are created and transferred to the archives by agency staff. Currently, the archival collection contains nearly 200,000 drawings and about 9,000 boxes of various types of files. The RMAB archives include paper and electronic records, along with other unique material such as architectural models and product samples. The RMAB office suite, research room and primary archives space is located in the Ford House Office Building; other physical locations for AOC records are the Rayburn House Office Building, and a National Archives and Records Administration-approved (NARA) records center and archive located in Pennsylvania. The RMAB archive spaces follow archival industry storage standards, including environmental (e.g., temperature and humidity) and physical security controls. The RMAB's mission is to ensure that the AOC's historical records are preserved and accessible for the agency's ongoing business and construction needs.

¹ These include AOC OIG Report of Investigation 2019-0013-INVI-P, 2020-0003-INVI-P, and 2021-0019-INVI-P.

The RMAB is currently staffed with one Supervisory Archivist (the branch chief), two Archivists and two Archives Specialists. There is also a pending hire for an additional Archives Specialist to replace an employee that recently departed, and the division has also received budget approval for an additional employee in the current fiscal year.

Archival Processes

Historically, the AOC's archival processes generally included two phases, accessioning and processing. The accessioning phase included the cataloging and tracking of items when they were received (who sent them, when, how many boxes or drawings, etc.). This also consisted of sorting through textual records and drawings to remove copies, non-records, temporary records, or records not ready to be archived. Textual records determined to be permanent records ready for archiving were organized in labeled boxes and placed in the appropriate location. Drawings determined to be permanent records were, at a minimum, provided with the appropriate conditions, such as unrolling drawings and putting them in flat files and cataloging project files for tracking purposes.

The processing stage included removing duplicates as well as potentially harmful metal attachments, and creating a finding aid, which documents in detail the contents within a series of records, such as a project summary, the provenance of a record (how it came to them and how it was previously stored), and hard data such as how many boxes are in the series, as well as a folder-by-folder listing of what's in the boxes. In this phase documents are put in appropriate archival boxes and drawings are provided archival protections and stored appropriately.

At the time of this review, RMAB staff² interviews revealed that the Branch Chief had directed a pause in the accessioning (and consequentially the processing) phases, and replaced these with a phase the Branch Chief called "pre-accessioning." During our review, the Branch Chief stated that pre-accessioning is a

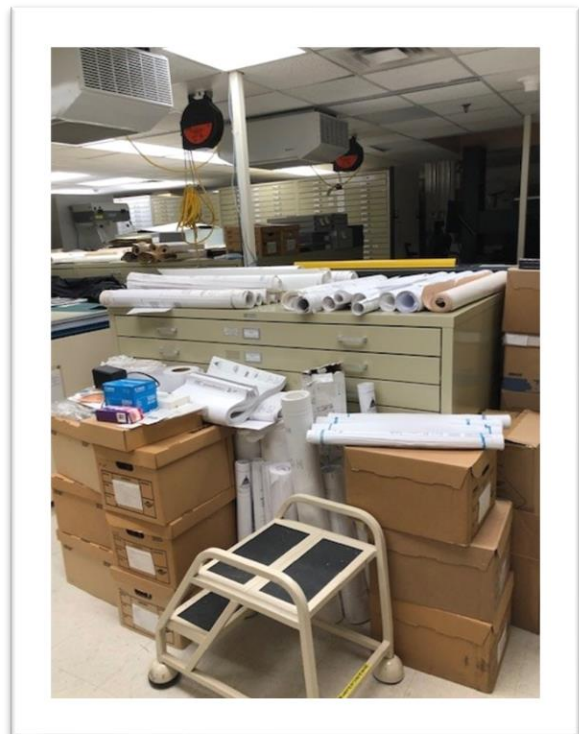


FIGURE 1: RMAB ARCHIVAL SPACE

² Throughout this report we differentiate between RMAB staff (the two Archivists and two Archives Specialists) by referring to them as "staff" and the branch's management personnel (the Branch Chief and the Curator) by referring to them as "RMAB management."

cursory check of the documents and serves only to identify and document that the items have been received. The Branch Chief confirmed the halted accessioning, citing that processes across the branch were not standardized, and there were no policies and procedures in place to ensure that staff had a common understanding of accessioning steps. The Branch Chief described using recurring RMAB staff meetings as a venue for collaborating on the development of standardized accessioning procedures. However, we found that little progress was made on these goals, that pre-accessioning was not an actual archival step and was seemingly not useful, and that it introduced inefficiencies that expanded an already existing backlog and hampered mission objectives.

Policy and Procedures

The RMAB currently has four active records management policies³, and is also responsible for the AOC Records Schedules which provide jurisdiction-specific guidance on record retention. AOC Order 36-3, the directive for the program, states that although the AOC is exempt from some provisions of the Federal Records Act of 1950, the intent and spirit of the act are relevant and applicable to the AOC. The Act requires that the head of each federal agency establish and maintain an active, continuing program for the economical and efficient management of its records, including effective controls over the creation of records, and the preservation of records containing adequate and proper documentation of agency administration and operations. RMAB policies do not specifically address the identification and handling of controlled unclassified information or other sensitive materials, and clear direction to follow AOC Order 42-4, Security of Controlled Unclassified Information⁴, is lacking. Staff reported they followed Order 42-4 when performing their work and were not aware of any oversight measures to ensure they were consistently handling sensitive materials appropriately. Staff also reported that any records they provide to requestors were marked as “Controlled, Reproduced at the RMAB/AOC Archives & Property of the US Government CUI.” RMAB is in the process of developing a new order, Order 36-1, to supersede Orders 36-2 and 36-3, and provided this document to the OIG as well as three additional policy and guidance documents currently under development. All documents appeared to be in an early draft stage, with “last worked on” dates of early 2021 or 2022.

Inefficient Policy Development and Revision Processes

OIG referral 2023-0007-INVR-P alleged that the Branch Chief repeatedly halted the division’s work citing that there were no policies in place for current processing actions. The complainant also stated that although the Branch Chief had been in place

³ Order 36-2, Electronic Records Management, June 25, 1999; Order 36-3, Directive for the Records Management and Archives Program, March 20, 2006; Order 36-4, Access to Records Maintained in the Curator’s Office, June 26, 2001; and Order 36-5, Creation and Maintenance of AOC Records, March 31, 2000. RMAB also operates in accordance with AOC Order 37-1, Preservation Policy and Standards, but is not the office of professional responsibility for this order.

⁴ Issued May 6, 2016.

for seven years, no archival policy or standard operating procedures had been developed. The complainant noted that although there was a monthly policy “boot camp” to discuss and draft policy, the Branch Chief was often late and unprepared, there was no agenda and nothing documented, resulting in meetings that were often a repeat of previous discussions. The complainant further stated that RMAB employees were completing reference work but not processing records or completing archival tasks as described in their specific position descriptions. Finally, the complainant stated that permanent records, including sensitive architectural drawings, were stacked throughout the office and on the floor, which they described as an unacceptable practice for the archiving of permanent records.

Staff interviews and prior OIG investigations revealed that policy and procedures development processes were incremental and significantly delayed due to inefficient processes. Staff interviews revealed consistent themes of lengthy, repetitive and unproductive meetings, rejection of staff input and policy development strategies, and overly complex processes for developing procedures. Staff also cited a lack of written procedures for work functions, to include inadequate guidance for the handling of sensitive material, and reported that although there are several internal standard operating procedures, they were at various stages of completion, with some merely as outlines.

In an interview with the OIG, the Branch Chief did not offer a sufficient rationale for why the development of policies and procedures was not timely. A consistent theme was to reference the state of archival processes and lack of adequate policy when hired seven years prior, and lack of staff expertise in writing policy. The Branch Chief’s statements revealed that policy development was not addressed with a clear and focused plan, with milestones and due dates, or with timely staff training in this area that would result in the development of this expertise. The Branch Chief’s responses confirmed that some policy development happened via ongoing meetings, but these meetings do not appear likely to produce revised policy prior to FY 2024, reflecting collective staff concerns that meetings were largely unproductive.

An interview with the Curator revealed a lack of concern that policy had not been developed/revised “for several years.” Delays in development were attributed to interruptions such as the pandemic, the events of January 6, 2021, a migration to SharePoint, and to prior conditions such as a lack of procedures and inconsistent processes. In addition, the Curator also noted the Branch Chief’s goal was to ensure staff processes were consistent and uniform under a framework all RMAB staff could agree on. The Curator seemed unaware of staff frustration about inefficient policy development and its effect on a significant portion of their work functions and the RMAB’s mission.

Impact

As a result, the lack of revised policies increased the probability for process gaps in records and archival management. RMAB employees are completing reference work, but not processing records or completing archival tasks as described in their specific position descriptions. The resulting process gaps leave RMAB staff unable to respond to records requests efficiently and effectively, although this is a significant portion of the RMAB mission.

Resources

A lack of adequate resources, of both staffing and archival space, was a consistent theme in interviews with RMAB staff and management. Staff feedback focused on the need for an additional staffer or contractor to scan and index the approximately 200,000 drawings in the drawings database, and a frustration that this had not been made a priority. Their concerns centered on significant impacts to their ability to efficiently respond to reference requests, and concerns for a loss of the drawings' intellectual knowledge, as many drawings had deteriorated and were very fragile and/or no longer legible. Staff also stated that additional personnel are needed to assist with processing the backlog of incoming records and completing processing of records that are already in the collection, as well as a need for more depth of departmental expertise in archiving and in records management. Staff also voiced concerns that space planning decisions were not prioritized appropriately, such as by placing archival needs over those of supplies, and that recent office reconfigurations were potentially wasteful due to upcoming additional renovations. In general, staff expressed a lack of confidence that mission needs were effectively prioritized when making resourcing decisions.

RMAB management personnel also cited understaffing as a concern, as well as ongoing archival space issues, which they recognized as a need common to most archival entities. RMAB management stated that the additional hire approved in their FY 2023 budget was intended to assist with processing the backlog and would restore staffing to pre-COVID pandemic levels. RMAB management also noted that they were working with the internal Curatorial Division, AOC-wide master planning, and the House Office Buildings and Construction Management divisions to address a critical need for swing space to store incoming transfers and rack shelving for rolled drawings and oversized supplies.

Review of RMAB Storage Spaces

In conducting this review, the OIG photographed the RMAB's Ford and Rayburn House Office Building archival spaces. The photos document a significant number of stacked boxes, some blocking access to cabinets, as well as a more significant

number of rolled drawings stored standing up⁵ in cartons, bins, recycling bins, or lying in various areas of the spaces. The photos were reviewed as part of most OIG interviews with RMAB personnel.

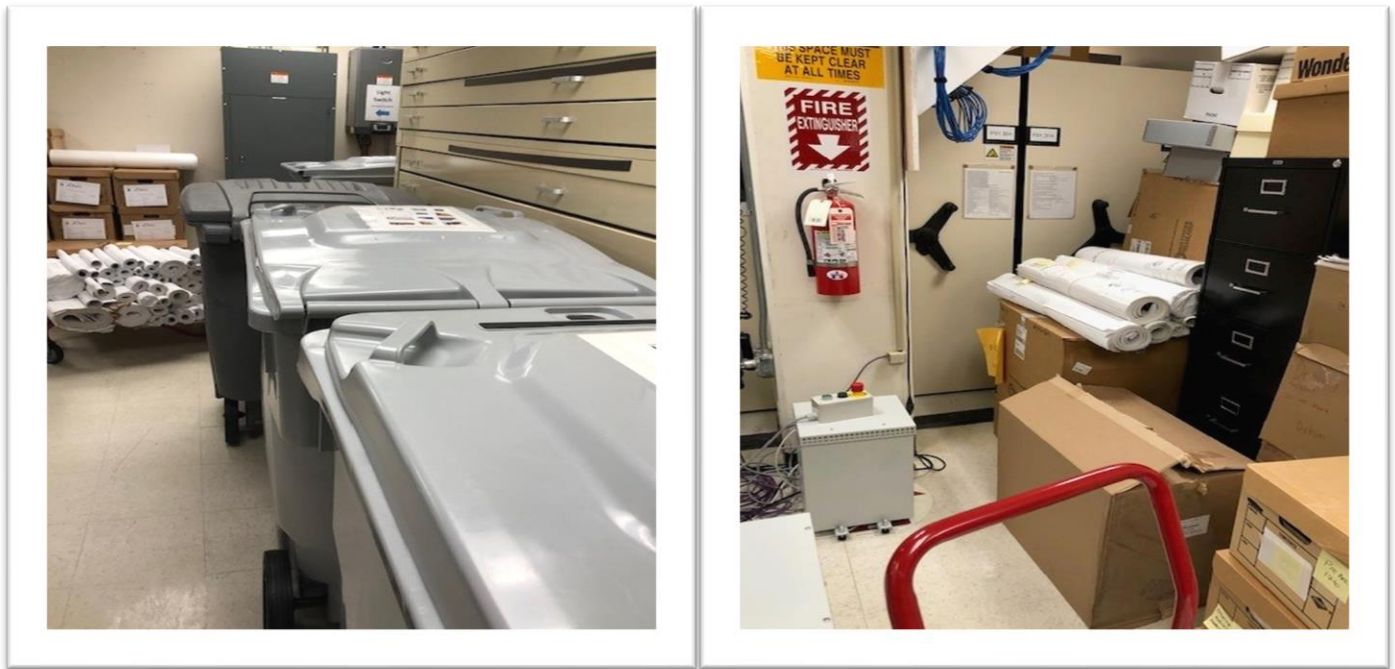


FIGURE 2: RMAB ARCHIVAL SPACES

⁵ While there are no formal standards for storage of rolled drawings, the Society of American Archivists recommends best practices for long-term storage of drawings and notes that ideally drawings should be stored flat in flat files and “Drawings should never be stored rolled on end...as this will damage the edges of the drawings.” Although the drawings in the photos are not in long-term storage, some have been there for a significant period of time.

In their photo review responses, both long- and short-term staff consistently stated the photos showed the largest backlog they had seen during their tenure. The consensus was that while some accessioning backlog was standard for an archive, historically for RMAB this would generally consist of a handful of boxes and a few rolls of drawings. One interviewee identified a set of drawings that included approximately 3,000 Supreme Court floor plans, stating they would have been processed by now if the accession process had not been paused, and that identification of sensitive materials was part of the processing phase, which had been stopped. Staff consensus

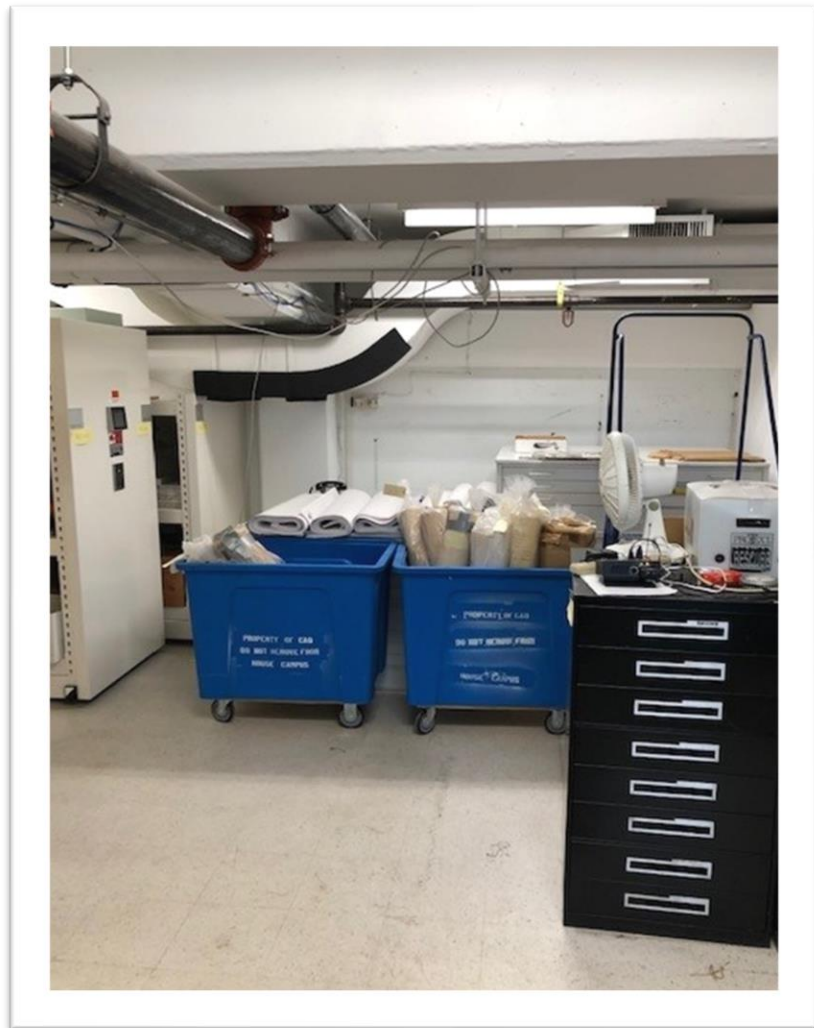


FIGURE 3: SUPREME COURT DRAWINGS

was that due diligence for the processing and appropriate storage of materials had been the norm for this department, the current state was unnecessary and contrary to best practices (for storage of drawings and sensitive documents), and that the backlog hampered their mission of responding to records requests; without the accessioning process, documents were not off the floor and locatable.

Management photo review responses were characterized by what appeared to be low levels of concern for the safe storage of materials or the effect of the backlog on RMAB's ability to perform the records request portion of its mission. Responses indicated that the backlog, while historical, was due in part to the pandemic. Management also indicated that backlogs were standard for archives; however, it cannot be overlooked that RMAB management shifted their priority to developing standardized procedures for accessioning documents versus *performing* actual

accessioning. The Branch Chief also referenced the roll-out of a location numbering scheme and nascent team efforts and trials for improved inventory practices, although this has not resulted in resumption of accessioning. In short, management's lack of concern over the appropriate processing, storage and safeguarding of materials was at odds with the RMAB mission to effectively respond to records requests.

Impact

As a result of understaffing and ineffective prioritizing of immediate mission needs, the RMAB has not fulfilled its responsibility to ensure the AOC's historical records are appropriately preserved and accessible for the agency's ongoing business and construction needs. Staff are unable to appropriately store or efficiently find AOC records and archived materials.

Management Challenges

A primary source of professional frustration for RMAB staff is a long-term backlog of documents and architectural drawings waiting for processing, that has grown significantly in the past year due to the Branch Chief's direction to pause accessioning. Overall, staff stated that strategies meant to address gaps in program components were not efficient and derailed necessary mission functions. An example of this is the resultant increased backlog of un-accessioned materials (in some cases extending to the non-acceptance of materials) hampering the quality and efficiency of responses to research requests. More importantly, staff noted that the policy development process was far too complicated and should already have been completed. Staff also cited an excessive number of overly long and repetitive meetings in which they accomplished nothing.

Staff also described the managerial style of the Branch Chief as dismissive, with professional input solicited but ignored, often to the detriment of the department's functionality.⁶ Staff also discussed incidents of professionally demeaning behaviors, a disdain for past practices, and a secretive environment wherein staff were not allowed to share work assignment information. They also described incidents where RMAB management would bypass seasoned employees with valuable institutional knowledge and assign tasks to new hires. Some interviewees reported that the Branch Chief told them that as AOC employees their hiring status was "exempt" which meant they could be removed at will, and interviews revealed that recent staff turnover was primarily due to the Branch Chief's management style. Staff reported that guidance was often unclear, resulting in having to reperform tasks, and the Branch Chief often extended deadlines. Finally, staff cited micro-management and an excessive focus on collateral tasks as opposed to primary position description duties

⁶ An example provided was a decision to allow volunteers from the U.S. Capitol Visitor Center to have full access to clean up an internal database. The project was announced at a team meeting by the Branch Chief, who dismissed what staff felt were legitimate questions and concerns. The result was that predictable mistakes made by the volunteers damaged aspects of the database searching and cataloguing functions, thereby making it more difficult to search the material on the whole.

as factors hampering the RMAB's mission. Overall, interviewees consistently expressed a loss of faith in the Branch Chief's professional determinations, a pattern of overcomplicating tasks and a focus on the wrong objectives.

Management Inadequately Addressed RMAB Mission Components and Staff Concerns

In an interview with the OIG, the Branch Chief provided an overview of branch strategic goals, which were to standardize RMAB operations to NARA and professional best practices; formally define RMAB procedures and work processes; increase quality controls; and establish metrics and performance measurements as elements of supervision. The examples presented included establishing time-based metrics for work processes (e.g., how long work processes, such as reference, archival accessioning, holdings maintenance and description should take) and transitioning the team from self-directed projects to formalized project management. In a follow-up interview, the Branch Chief stated the accessioning pause had been lifted in February; however, this was not reflected in staff interviews. The Branch Chief further indicated accessioning was happening during team meetings which were also used as training sessions for the accession process, in the manner of "an active laboratory."

The Branch Chief also provided the OIG with an extensive assessment of where the AOC's archives and records management program lacked essential components and modernization.⁷ While this vision may have merit, the OIG considers the misalignment between current and future states as a contributing factor in departmental issues; it is possible that the Branch Chief has not effectively separated RMAB's immediate needs from AOC's long-term records management challenges, or right-sized the vision to align with AOC's mission and budgetary realities. In OIG interviews the Branch Chief responses were often extensive but eventually vague, with some question responses not credibly explaining adverse conditions, such as why policy development efforts that began in 2019 would not be complete until FY 2024.

Overall, the Branch Chief did not offer a sufficient rationale for limited policy development progress and an ongoing backlog. A consistent theme was to reference the state of archival processes upon hire seven years prior, and a lack of staff expertise. However, in the ensuing time, the Branch Chief did not address these issues with a clear and focused plan including milestones and deadlines, or focused training for staff. There was also a disconnect between the Branch Chief's belief that the staff meetings were where planning and goals were established and communicated, and staff consensus that meetings were meandering and accomplished

⁷ This vision addressed records and information management and governance (G) and knowledge management, and required that the AOC install a central RIM/G Officer as a direct report to the Architect to coordinate and ensure audit compliance where AOC's information/records policies and requirements (CUI, PII, RM/records retention) intersect with business practices throughout the agency.

nothing. An explanation regarding the resumption of accessioning processes was unclear.

In interviews with the Curator, we found a lack of awareness that the Branch Chief's deliberative processes and management style had a hampering effect on the mission of the RMAB, and that employees in this department were experiencing significant professional despair. The Curator also seemed unaware that the growing backlog was largely due to the Branch Chief's direction to stop accessioning processes, and the tension this had generated amongst RMAB staff. The Curator did not see the backlog as a cause for concern and believed it reflected the success of the Branch Chief's jurisdictional outreach efforts. When asked if the substantiation of complaints submitted to the OIG in recent years indicated that closer oversight of this division should be considered, the Curator attributed the complaints to long-term employee disgruntlement over the hiring of an outside candidate to the Branch Chief position seven years prior.⁸

Interviews with the Curator also revealed a notable contrast between the Curator's own management style ("I don't micromanage my staff") and that of the Branch Chief.⁹ Although the Curator described consistently advocating simplification and focusing on "are we supporting the agency's mission" in guidance to branch chiefs, the Curator seemed unaware that the Branch Chief's approach was characterized by micromanagement, overcomplication, and behaviors that were interpreted as disrespectful of staff expertise, potentially to the detriment of staff morale and RMAB's mission. The Curator appeared to have little connection with the employees in this department, leaving them without a venue for their concerns other than the submission of complaints to the OIG.

Impact

Overall, our review of the RMAB revealed an operating environment where excessive deliberation over process improvements has impaired its ability to fulfill its mission. While significant attention has been paid to necessary program improvements, progress has been incremental, poorly planned, and implemented in a manner that marginalizes staff expertise and hampers daily archival work efforts. This has resulted in considerable professional frustration for RMAB staff, leaving them unable to fulfill mission responsibilities and engage in the primary tasks of their

⁸ Note: two of the current staff were hired after the Branch Chief, and two employees left this division within two years or less of being hired. All staff interviews were characterized by professional frustration over decisions and processes that damaged the mission and kept staff from performing primary archival functions; at no time were any personally derogatory comments made about the Branch Chief.

⁹ The Branch Chief conducts oversight via twice daily emails from staff, one at the beginning of the day reporting what they were going to work on, and again at the end of the day reporting what they had done. Staff were also required to submit monthly reports consisting of a narrative statement of their activities, and separate metrics submitted via a bi-weekly Excel workbook sheet documenting tasks performed per WebTA codes, which pulled into a separate spreadsheet showing yearly totals. The Curator's oversight of the Branch Chief consisted of regular communications via phone, Microsoft Teams meetings, and emails as issues arose, as well as regular meetings with both branch chiefs.

profession. In addition, the lack of efficient and effective leadership leaves this branch unable to adequately fulfill its mission responsibility to establish and maintain mechanisms of control with respect to records creation, maintenance, use, and disposition.

Other Matters

There were three prior complaints to the OIG about the RMAB that alleged waste; these complaints were substantiated by prior OIG investigations. The fourth complaint, which the OIG is addressing through this Special Review, again addresses overall mismanagement and waste, to include the handling of sensitive architectural drawings and generally unacceptable practices for the storage of such materials. This review again substantiates these complaints, and that the safeguarding of unprocessed sensitive materials needs improvement.

During our review, another waste-of-funds concern was raised about the acquisition and stalled implementation of a contract for ArchivesSpaces, an information management system for archival needs. Staff again reported a prolonged decision-making process and unproductive meetings about its potential use, with dates on further action repeatedly extended. This contract has been in place since F Y2020, with a total spent to date of \$10,800, and a pending FY 2023 September obligation of \$12,300, but this system is still not in use. This indicates a potential funds put to better use issue that merits further review.

Conclusion

Our review of the policies and practices of the RMAB revealed that the issues raised in prior OIG complaints of waste and mismanagement continue to adversely affect its ability to fulfill its mission. This division's history of management disregard for employee input has persisted, although OIG report 2021-0019-INVI-P substantiated a waste of funds complaint, which could have been prevented had employee input not been ignored. Further, our review found that prior OIG substantiated complaints do not appear to have resulted in improved management oversight of this branch, which should ideally have happened. As a result, waste and mismanagement concerns remain.

This Flash Report serves as an independent inquiry into the efficiency, effectiveness and internal controls of the AOC records and archives management program. This report is not intended to serve as an all-inclusive report but rather to provide information on select areas of interest. We provide four recommendations for improvements in this review report.

Recommendations

We recommend that:

- 1) The Chief Administrative Officer prioritize revision of the Records and Archives policies, procedures and all other associated policy directives to establish effective and efficient operational guidance and internal controls. Additionally, develop and implement a standardized timeline for policy revision and update within the current Fiscal Year. Though the Architect of the Capitol is not required to follow the National Archives and Records Administration guidelines and polices, they are noted as best practices.
- 2) The Chief Administrative Officer should, within 60 days, conduct an organizational assessment of the Records Management and Archives Branch (RMAB) structure and responsibilities to determine if the branch is appropriately staffed and assigned.
- 3) The Chief Administrative Officer, to address the immediate need of archival backlog items and digitalization processes, should:
 - a) Source a temporary contract staffing option to assist RMAB staff with processing and clearing backlog items.
 - b) Procure the services of an archival digitization specialist assist with records retention, processing, research and preservation.
- 4) The Chief Administrative Officer should, within 60 days, develop a corrective action plan for the RMAB and Curator Division leaders to address the leadership and management deficiencies within the Division. At a minimum, the corrective action plan should address communication skills, change management, leading and empowering high-performing teams and effective federal leadership.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

AOC	Architect of the Capitol
CUI	Controlled Unclassified Information
FY	Fiscal Year
NARA	National Archives and Records Administration
OIG	Office of Inspector General
RMAB	Records Management and Archives Branch
RIM/G	Records and Information Management and Governance
PTIB	Photography and Technical Imaging Branch



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