ELECTRONIC RECORDS
at the George W. Bush Presidential Library

The Electronic Records Archive (ERA) system is used to store and process electronic records from the George W. Bush Administration. The Executive Office of the President (EOP-ERA) version of the system exclusively stores presidential records.

Electronic records, such as emails and shared drive files, were ingested into EOP-ERA at the close of the George W. Bush Administration. EOP-ERA currently holds:
- 82 TB of data
- 250+ million electronic records indexed and available for search, including:
    - 200+ million e-mail messages
    - 4+ million digital photographs
    - 30+ million other electronic records

Organization of Records

Electronic records from the George W. Bush administration are preserved within EOP-ERA in groups called "Search and Access Sets" (SAS). Records are included in a SAS based on the system that originally created the records. There are multiple email SASes (because the White House transitioned from one email managing client to another, midway through the Bush Administration); other SASes include data created by additional electronic data systems used for photograph organization, scheduling, correspondence management, and other functions.

Primary Search and Access Sets (SAS):
- **Automated Records Management System (ARMS) Email – Presidential:** ARMS was used as the White House email system from January 20, 2001, until April 25, 2007.
- **Exchange Email – Presidential:** Exchange was an additional email system within the White House used as early as January 20, 2001, but the bulk of the email covers the later portion of the administration.
- **Exchange Email Restored – Presidential:** These are email messages that were restored as the result of litigation by the Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (CREW) and the National Security Archive (NSA).
- **Worker and Visitor Entry System (WAVES):** WAVES contains records of visitor entry to the White House complex.
- **White House Photo System:** The White House Photo System contains digital images and their associated metadata.

EOP-ERA also contains files from hard drives on White House computers, including home drives maintained by individual staffers and shared drives used across White House offices.

Primary Hard Drive locations:
- **CEA (Council of Economic Advisors)**
- **NSC (National Security Council)**
- **OA (Office of Administration)**
- **OPD (Office of Policy Development)**
- **PFIAB (President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board)**
- **WHO (White House Office)**
- **RNC_PST (Republican National Committee – Post Office Tables):** The White House preserved this body of records and provided it to NARA. Some of the messages may be duplicative of material found in the email Search and Access Sets (SAS).

Preferred Citation for electronic records of the George W. Bush Presidential Library

Email:

Email To, Email From, Email Subject, Date (mm/dd/yyyy), CC (if any), Collection. George W. Bush Presidential Library and Museum.

Photographs:

Filename/frame, Date (mm/dd/yyyy), White House Photo Office. Courtesy George W. Bush Presidential Library and Museum.

Access to Electronic Records

All Bush Presidential records (both electronic and textual) are processed and reviewed for access under provisions of the 1978 Presidential Records Act (PRA), as amended, (44 U.S.C. §§ 2201-2209), which incorporates the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. § 552) in substantial part. Records may be exempted from release – either in whole or in part – in compliance with the restrictions of the PRA and applicable FOIA exemptions, which specific what material may be released to the public.

PRA Restrictions and FOIA Exemptions Codes:
Presidential Records Act – [44 U.S.C. §2204(a)]
- P1 – National security classified information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P2 – Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
- P3 – Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
- P4 – Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
- P5 – Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
- P6 – Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

Freedom of Information Act – [5 U.S.C. §552(b)]
- (b)(1) – National security classified information

- (b)(2) – Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency
- (b)(3) – Release would violate a Federal statute
- (b)(4) – Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information
- (b)(6) – Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy
- (b)(7) – Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes
    - (b)(7)(a) – Release would disclose information concerning pending or prospective law enforcement proceedings
    - (b)(7)(b) – Release of information would deprive a person of a right to a fair trial or an impartial adjudication
    - (b)(7)(c) – Release of information could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy
    - (b)(7)(d) – Release of information could reasonably be expected to disclose the identity of a confidential source, including a State, local, or foreign agency or authority or any private institution which furnished information on a confidential basis, and, in the case of a record or information compiled by a criminal law enforcement authority in the course of a criminal investigation, information furnished by a confidential source
    - (b)(7)(e) – Release of information would disclose techniques and procedures for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions, or would disclose guidelines for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions if such disclosure could reasonably be expected to risk circumvention of the law [(b)(7)(e) of the FOIA]
    - (b)(7)(f) – Release of information could reasonably be expected to endanger the life or physical safety of an individual
- (b)(8) – Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions
- (b)(9) – Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells

Additional codes:
- Court Sealed – Records with the notation of "court sealed" remain closed due to the rule of a specific court case.
- Personal Record Misfile (PRM) – Records withheld under this category have been determined to be personal records, and therefore not legally subject to the Presidential Records Act.

Viewing Electronic Records

Electronic records may be viewed in the Research Room of the George W. Bush Presidential Library at no charge to researchers. Reproductions of electronic records may be ordered from the Library at a charge of $5.00 per CD.

Currently, electronic records are exported from the EOP-ERA system in packages organized by Search and Access Set (SAS). Records are exported in various formats, including PDF, EML (if the original files were email records), or the original file format (such as .doc, .xls, .ppt, etc.)

The packages will look different, depending on the method through which they were exported from the system. FOIA requests typically contain multiple packages; it is possible that packages from the same FOIA request were exported through different methods.

If the records were converted to PDF, the package will display like the image below. See the "Records that have been converted to PDF" section.
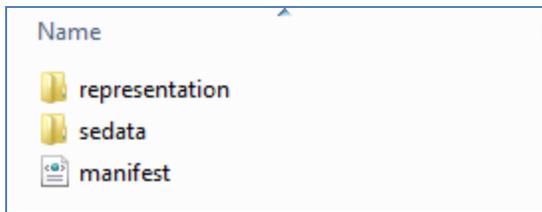
If the records were exported in their original format, the package will display like the image below. See the "Records that remain in their original format" section.
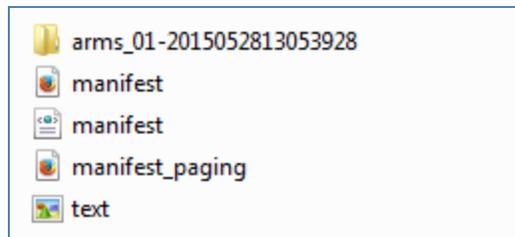
Records that have been converted to PDF

Some records were converted to PDF upon being exported from the EOP-ERA system.
In these cases, each package is organized into two folders ("Representation" and "sedata") and one XML (Extensible Markup Language) file titled "manifest."
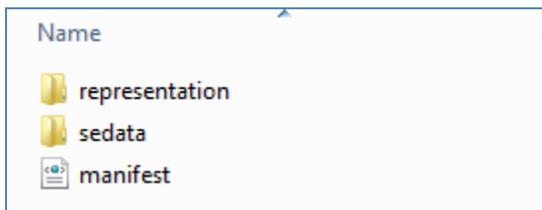
The "representation" folder contains the actual electronic records, in PDF format. Each record is named by its Asset ID number. (This number is used within the EOP-ERA system to identify each unique record.) Because Asset IDs are assigned randomly, the records within the "representation" folder *are not* organized chronologically.

```
Name
🔲 2.0.0.cb321f55-3df3-4ec6-98f0-c42985bdc0a4.CV
🔲 2.0.0.a9badfef-3459-4e09-8804-fa6a9ba6b7cb.WS.CV
🔲 2.0.0.a9badfef-3459-4e09-8804-fa6a9ba6b7cb.RV
🔲 2.0.0.0080ca30-826c-482b-beac-f4188370881e.WS.CV
```

Each file has an extension at the end of its filename that explains its record type:

- **Files ending in ONLY ".CV"** – These files are electronic records that have been released in full – meaning they contain no restrictions or redactions.

  Sample email record:

  > **From:** "CN=Marcus J. Mollmann/OU=WHO/O=EOP [WHO]" <Marcus J. Mollmann>
  > **To:** "Joseph W. Hagin" <CN=Joseph W. Hagin/OU=WHO/O=EOP @EOP [WHO]>
  > **Sent:** 2001-08-17T05:49:17
  > **Subject** : EO for Critical Infrastructure Protection and Continuity Board
  > ###### Begin Original ARMS Header ######RECORD TYPE: PRESIDENTIAL (NOTES MAIL)CREATOR:Marcus J. Mollmann (CN=Marcus J. Mollmann/OU=WHO/O=EOP [WHO])CREATION DATE/TIME:17-AUG-2001 09:49:17.00SUBJECT:: EO for Critical Infrastructure Protection and Continuity BoardTO:Joseph W. Hagin (CN=Joseph W. Hagin/OU=WHO/O=EOP @EOP [WHO])READ:UNKNOWN###### End Original ARMS Header ######Joe, in the EO for the &President,s Critical Infrastructure Protection and Continuity Board8 the Chair is designated to be Senior Advisor to the President for Cyberspace Security. Is this the right title as the only other Senior Advisor to the President is Karl. Sec. 7. Chair. (a) The Chair shall, in addition, be the Senior Advisor to the President for Cyberspace Security. As designated by the Board, the Chair shall serve as a liaison to industry and academia, and as a national spokesperson on issues within the purview of the Board. Departments and agencies shall keep the Chair fully informed in a timely manner and to the greatest extent permitted by law, of all programs and issues within the purview of the Board. The Chair shall, in consultation with the Board members, set the agenda for the Board and may propose policies and programs to

- **Files ending in ".WS.CV"** – The "WS" in these filenames indicates a "Withdrawal Sheet." If an electronic record has been restricted in full or redacted under either the Presidential Records Act (PRA) or Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), it will have a corresponding withdrawal sheet which lists all codes under which the record (or a portion thereof) has been closed. (See the above list of PRA restrictions and FOIA exemption codes.)

  Sample Withdrawal Sheet:

  > **From:** Oscar Gonzalez
  > **To:** Heidi Tringe
  > et al
  > **Sent:** 2004-04-14T11:24:00
  > **Subject** : LRM OGG225 - - HOMELAND SECURITY Testimony on the Continuity of Operations Program
  > THIS RECORD IS A WITHDRAWAL SHEET Date created: 20140908_112708Releasability: Withheld In PartReasons for Withholding:------------------------b(3), P3Notes:-------50 USC 403gCase ID:gwb.2014-0149-FAdditional Information:----------- -------------

- **Files ending in ".RV"** – The "RV" in these filenames indicates a "Redacted Version." The redacted version will be a duplicate of the original record where the portions of restricted information have been sanitized. Each redacted section will be labeled with a

code that explains the reason why the information has been redacted. (See the above list of PRA restrictions and FOIA exemption codes.)

Sample Redacted Version:

NOTE: If an electronic record has a "Redacted Version," it will also have a corresponding Withdrawal Sheet within the "representation" folder. The Withdrawal Sheet will reiterate the PRA restriction or FOIA exemption code cited as the reason for redacting a portion of the record.   These two files can be distinguished by the ending of the filename:


The "sedata" folder contains an XML file that corresponds to each electronic record. Again, each ".SE" file is named with the record's Asset ID number. These files contain additional metadata about the individual asset, as marked up using XML tags. (XML files will typically open in the computer's default web browser.)

The "manifest" file is an XML list of every electronic record contained in the package, as it was exported from the EOP-ERA system. This file provides additional metadata about the overall package, including the SAS it originated from. (Again, XML files will typically open in the computer's default web browser.)

Records that remain in their original format

In these cases, the records are exported in one folder. This folder is titled using the name of the original Search and Access Set (SAS).
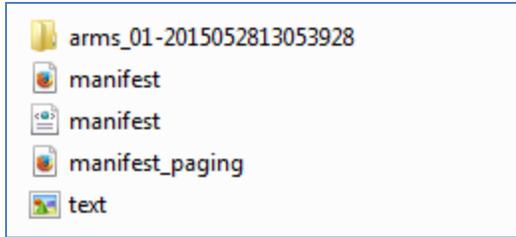
The folder contains the actual electronic records. Each record is named by its Asset ID number. (This number is used within the EOP-ERA system to identify each unique record.) Because Asset IDs are assigned randomly, the records within the folder *are not* organized chronologically.

Records within this folder will be in various formats.
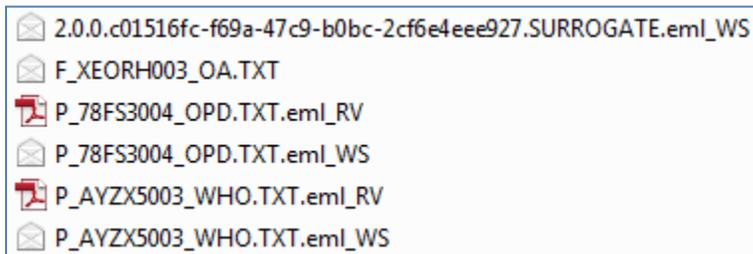
Each file has an extension at the end of its filename that explains its record type:

- **Files that DO NOT end in RV or WS"** – These files are electronic records that have been released in full – meaning they contain no restrictions or redactions. The file may have a file extension indicating its format, or it may only have a file name and no obvious extension. None of these files should end in "RV" or "WS," however.

  Sample email record:
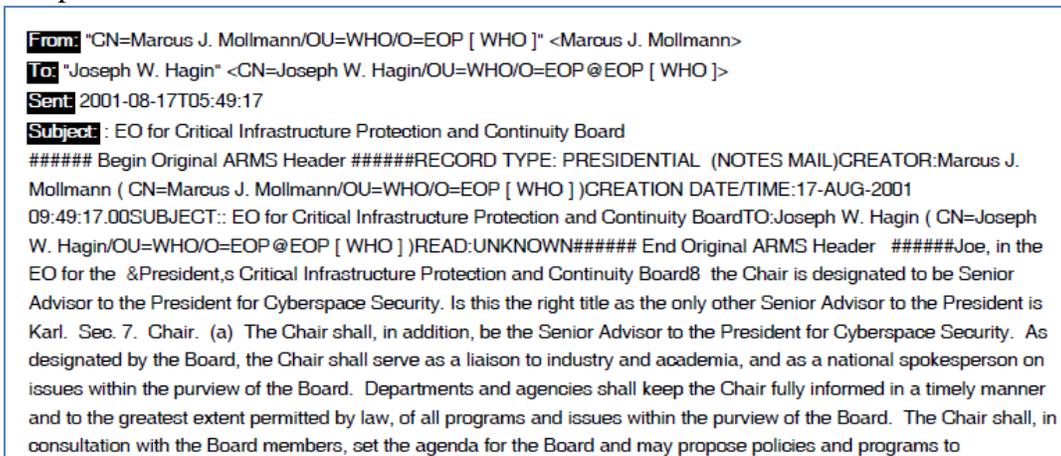
- **Files ending in "_WS"** – The "WS" in these filenames indicates a "Withdrawal Sheet." If an electronic record has been restricted in full or redacted under either the Presidential Records Act (PRA) or Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), it will have a corresponding

withdrawal sheet which lists all codes under which the record (or a portion thereof) has been closed. (See the above list of PRA restrictions and FOIA exemption codes.)

Sample Withdrawal Sheet:

> **From:** Oscar Gonzalez
> **To:** Heidi Tringe
> et al
> **Sent:** 2004-04-14T11:24:00
> **Subject** : LRM OGG225 - - HOMELAND SECURITY Testimony on the Continuity of Operations Program
> THIS RECORD IS A WITHDRAWAL SHEET Date created: 20140908_112708Releasability: Withheld In PartReasons for
> Withholding:------------------------b(3), P3Notes:-------50 USC 403gCase ID:gwb.2014-0149-FAdditional Information:-----------
> -------------

- **Files ending in "_RV"** – The "RV" in these filenames indicates a "Redacted Version." The redacted version will be a duplicate of the original record where the portions of restricted information have been sanitized. Each redacted section will be labeled with a code that explains the reason why the information has been redacted. (See the above list of PRA restrictions and FOIA exemption codes.)

Sample Redacted Version:

> **From:** "Lago, V. Phillip"
> **To:** "Hagin, Joseph W","Fox, Mark","Mulligan, George D."
> **Subject:** ECGCC
> **Received(Date):** Sun, 11 Sep 2005 08:32:07 -0500
>
> David Shedd would like [ ] to come to the 27 September meeting. Can we make that happen?
>
> P3/(b)(3)
> 50 USC 403g

NOTE: If an electronic record has a "Redacted Version," it will also have a corresponding Withdrawal Sheet within the "representation" folder. The Withdrawal Sheet will reiterate the PRA restriction or FOIA exemption code cited as the reason for redacting a portion of the record. These two files can be distinguished by the ending of the filename:

> 📄 P_78FS3004_OPD.TXT.eml_RV   - Redacted Version
> ✉ P_78FS3004_OPD.TXT.eml_WS   - Withdrawal Sheet

The package also contains two files titled "manifest." The manifest is a list of every electronic record contained in the package, as it was exported from the EOP-ERA system. The manifest is presented in two formats: XML and HTML. (Both manifest files will likely open in the computer's default web browser.)

The **XML manifest** provides additional metadata about the overall package of records.

The **HTML manifest** provides information about each record. The "Record File name" corresponds to the each file in the file folder. The "Releasability" decision is also listed for each record. If a Withdrawal Sheet or Redacted Version was created, the HTML manifest will list the filename of each. *NOTE: While the HTML manifest formats so that some of the filenames appear as hyperlinks, these links will not work.*

The package contains two additional files – **manifest_paging** (HTML) and **text** (GIF) – that are necessary for the creation and function of the package, but do not provide any added benefit to researchers.