INTRODUCTION

1. PURPOSE. This manual establishes a policy framework for the Information Resources Management (IRM) Program in the U.S.Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) (also referred to as the Agency). Information Resources Management means planning, budgeting, organizing, directing, training and controlling information. It encompasses both information itself and related resources such as personnel, equipment, funds and technology. This document is intended to provide EPA with a structure for the implementation of the Brooks Act of 1965, of 1974, the Freedom of Information Act of 1966, as amended in 1974 and 1986, the Federal Records Management Amendments of 1976 and policies and regulations issued by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the General Services Administration (GSA), the two primary oversight agencies for Federal IRM programs.

In addition, this manual establishes the authorities and responsibilities under which the IRM Program will function at EPA. The manual is limited to the IRM policy domain in order to provide the primary documents in a concise and consolidated manner. Detailed procedures and operating guidelines such as the EPA Freedom of Information Act, Privacy Act and Records Management Manuals are issued separately.

2. SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY. This manual applies to all EPA organizations and their employees. It also applies to the facilities and personnel of agents (including State agencies, contractors and grantees) of the EPA who are involved in IRM related activities.

3. BACKGROUND. The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980 (P.L. 96-511), herein referred to as the "Act," introduced Information Resources Management to the Federal Government, emphasizing information as a resource with associated costs and values. The Act established a broad mandate for agencies to perform their information activities in an efficient, effective manner. Concepts advanced by the Act through the IRM approach include the life cycle management of information activities (i.e., creation, collection, and use); information functions (i.e., automatic data processing, records management, reports management, and telecommunications); the integrated approach to managing information resources (i.e., total systems concept) and the

promotion and use of new technologies to improve the effective use and dissemination of information.

The objectives of this Act are to reduce costs, improve the efficiency and effectiveness of information systems and information technology in the Federal Government and to provide specific mechanisms to control and reduce the paperwork burden on the public.

The Act requires each agency head to designate a senior official to carry out the agency's information management activities in an effective and efficient manner and in full compliance with the information policies and guidelines prescribed by the Director of OMB.

Among other things, the Act requires each agency to:

° Develop and maintain an inventory of its information systems and review periodically its information management activities

° Ensure its information systems do not overlap with each other or duplicate the systems of other agencies

° Assign to the designated senior official the responsibility for the conduct of and accountability for any acquisitions made pursuant to delegations of authority from GSA.

The Act also states that the Director of OMB, with the advice and assistance of the Administrator of GSA, shall selectively review, at least once every three years, the information management activities of each Federal agency.

4. FEDERAL AUTHORITIES. A number of Federal laws, regulations and policies prescribe, recommend or suggest policies, procedures and reporting requirements for managing information resources in all Federal agencies. Specific references will be made in the subsequent chapters of this manual. A compendium of key legislation, directives and regulations is found in Appendix B of this manual. The exhibit on the following page presents a structural framework for Information Resources Management in EPA.

5. EPA IRM AUTHORITIES AND ORGANIZATION The primary responsibility for managing EPA's IRM Program is shared by

the Office of Policy, Planning and Evaluation (OPPE) and the Office of Administration and Resources Management's Office of Information Resources Management (OIRM). Other Offices listed on pages iv-vi are also involved with supporting the Agency's IRM Program.

a. Office of Policy Planning and Evaluation. The Assistant Administrator for Policy, Planning and Evaluation (OPPE) is the Senior Official responsible for directing and overseeing the Agency's activities administered under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980. The Assistant Administrator of OPPE has delegated much of the Act's authority to the Director, Office of Information Resources Management (OIRM). However, the Assistant Administrator of OPPE has retained authority for managing and developing policy for EPA's IRM Program in regulatory situations, reviewing all Agency rules, regulations and other data collection instruments to ensure that the Agency does not impose an unnecessary paperwork burden on the public. This Assistant Administrator also retains authority for managing the clearing process for data collection instruments. The vehicle for this activity is the Information Collection Request ICR) clearance process. OPPE is also responsible for collecting, preparing and submitting the Agency's Information Collection Budget (ICB) to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

b. Office of Information Resources Management. The Director, OlRM, has the primary functional responsibility for IRM policy development and overall management of the Agency's IRM Program. This includes the planning, development and operation of information systems and services in support of the Agency's administrative, programmatic and research functions. It also includes administering Agency programs for library systems and services, records management, information security as well as implementing the requirements of the Privacy Act. OIRM is also responsible for:

° Acquisition management of office automation hardware and software

° Review and approval of technical specifications for software requested by OARM, ORD and the program offices

° Management of Agency-wide ADP support contracts.

c. Office of Administration and Resources Management, RTP (OARM-RTP) and the National Data Processing Division (NDPD-RTP). The Director, OIRM, has delegated to the Director, Office of Administration and Resources Management-RTP (OARM-RTP), functional responsibility for the acquisition, management and operation of ADP resources including telecommunications resources as defined in Chapters 6 and 7 of this Manual. The Director, OIRM has delegated to the Director, OARM-RTP, authority to 3 approve requisitions for ADP equipment, computer services and telecommunications. The Director, National Data Processing Division (NDPD), is responsible for implementing these functions. In particular, this includes:

° Acquisition management of hardware not delegated to the Senior IRM Officials

° Acquisition of general purpose, non-application specific software such as operating systems, data base management systems, etc.

° Approval of system-oriented proprietary software.

d. Office of General Counsel. The Office of General Counsel provides legal opinions, legal counsel and litigation support for the Agency's implementation of the requirements of the Privacy Act and the Freedom of Information Act.

e. Office of the Administrator. In coordination with the Office of General Counsel, the Office of the Administrator manages the implementation of the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act.

f. Office of External Affairs. The Office of External Affairs (OEA) manages EPA's press services, serves as congressional liaison and coordinates communications with State and local governments. OEA also has responsibility for

the review and clearance of proposed legislation and reports on current and pending legislation.

g. Assistant Administrators, Associate Administrators, Regional Administrators, Heads of Headquarters Staff Offices, the General Counsel and the Inspector General. These senior managers are responsible for ensuring that activities carried out by their respective organizations

comply with Federal and EPA IRM policies and regulations. To assist them in meeting their IRM responsibilities, the General Counsel and the Inspector General and each Assistant Administrator, Associate Administrator and Regional Administrator have designated a Senior Information Resources Management Official (SIRMO), whose responsibilities are described in the following section. It should be noted that the SIRMO in the Office of Executive Support for the Office of the Administrator serves the two Associate Administrators as well as all of the Staff Offices in the Office of the Administrator.

h. Senior Information Resources Management Official. Senior Information Resources Management Officials (SIRMOs) are responsible for directing and managing office-wide information resources planning and budgeting and for assuring that the information systems and information technology acquisitions within their organizations comply with Federal and EPA policies and regulations.

i. IRM Steering Committee. The IRM Steering Committee is chaired by the Director, OIRM, and has members representing EPA national and Regional programs, the EPA research community and the States. The Committee is responsible for advising OIRM concerning IRM policies, resources and priorities and assisting OIRM in communicating and implementing these policies and priorities within EPA. The Committee assists OIRM in conducting periodic reviews of the Agency's information resources and the policies and programs for managing these resources and in designing improvements where needed.

6. OBJECTIVES. The objectives of EPA's IRM Program are to:

a. Support program and administrative components in the fulfillment of their responsibilities by providing them with high-quality information services in the most efficient and cost-effective manner.

b. Use effectively the capabilities afforded through rapidly evolving information related resources and technologies in support of the Agency's mission and implementation of EPA's basic programs, with a focus on achieving environmental results.

c. Ensure that EPA information, goals, policies, plans and strategies comply with Federal IRM laws and regulations and that they support Agency missions.

d. Facilitate the integration and coordination of information systems across media, functional and program lines.

e. Provide adequate security for proprietary or privileged information maintained in EPA information systems.

f. Minimize unnecessary duplication of information systems and data bases.

g. Reduce the Federal information collection burden on members of the public and on State and local governments.

h. Promote data sharing with states and other Federal agencies to achieve environmental results.

i. Provide effective automated data processing systems, computing and telecommunications resources and facilities.

j. Promote productive utilization of EPA's human resources in support of the Agency's mission.