

Declassified E.O. 12356 Section 3.3/NND No. 785016

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Declassified E.O. 12356 Section 3.3/NND No. 785016

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ORG & ADMIN, FILING SYSTEM
MAR. - MAY 1944

Declassified E.O. 12356 Section 3.3/NND No. 785016

WAR REPARATIONS
ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION
APO 374
ADMINISTRATIVE SECTION

Li (*Li*)

3/17/44.

16 May 44.

SUBJECT: Office Filing Routine.

To: Legal, Public Health, Public Safety
and Property Control Sub-Commissions.

1. It is reported that 15 Army Gp Files were handed over for safe custody as shown below. Will you please have any of their files in your custody looked out with a view to handing them over to the Archive Officer who will be visiting this HQ on Monday 22 May 44 for the purpose of receiving them.
2. If you require any of these files for frequent reference they may be retained but if for only very occasional reference they should be handed over as they will be kept available for your requirements.
3. If you have any other files in your custody which were the property of some body or branch no longer existent they also will be handed over.
4. Any of your own files which are no longer required should first be weeded all duplicates, drafts, office instructions etc being retained. Letters of purely transient interest (i.e. Routine) e.g. reference between branches will also be removed.
5. All files will be bundled. List of contents of each bundle will be prepared in duplicate; one will be attached to the bundle the other will be retained by the Archivist and retained.

Li
S.H. WHITE,
Major,
for GPO Adm Sec.

File numbers of 15 Army Gp files alleged to be in possession of Sub Comms -

Legal - 200/238 208/A.B.C.D.E.G. 627 A/E.
PH. - 500/520
PH (Supplies) 137.
PS. - 500/469
Prop. - 600/4

1121

All numbers are inclusive - A list of file titles is available and may be inspected if desired up to Thursday after which it will be returned.

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JAPAN HEADQUARTERS
 ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION
 APO 396
 ADMINISTRATIVE SECTION

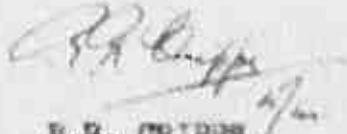


3/1.7/AS.

30 Apr 44.

SUBJECT : Filing Systems.TO : All Adm Sub Comans.

- 1 There is high level criticism of the diverse filing systems in use by Sub Comans and instructions have been given that a greater degree of uniformity must be obtained throughout HQ ACC.
- 2 The filing system outlined in the memo issued to Adm Sub Comans at the beginning of March has been commended.
- 3 Attention has been drawn to the following common faults.
 - a Non-separation of policy - routine and action papers.
 - b The filing of related subjects on one file.
 - c The retention on files of working papers used as a step towards a decision or document but unnecessary thereafter.
- 4 Main HQ intends to send an officer to see the filing systems of Sub Comans with a view to giving guidance and advice. It is desired to ensure that as little as possible shall be open to criticism before this visit takes place.
- 5 Each Adm Sub Coman will appoint an officer (if possible one with knowledge of modern office system) to be responsible for its office procedure with power to impose essential alterations.
- 6 A meeting of these officers and Chief Clerks will be held in Room 71 at 14.00 hrs on Wednesday, 3 May to discuss the steps to be taken to obtain greater uniformity and to eradicate from the files practices to which objection has been taken.


 R.R. CRIPPS,
 Lt Colonel,
 ACC Adm Sec.

REAR HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION
APO 394

Administrative Section

1 Mar 44

310./AS

SUBJECT : Office Organization

TO :

Education Sub-Commission
Interior Sub-Commission

Legal Sub-Commission
Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives Sub-Commission
Public Health Sub-Commission
Public Safety Sub-Commission
Property Control Sub-Commission

1 From 1 Mar 44 the Administrative Section and its Sub-Commissions will work as one unit for Registry and Filing purposes.

2 For these purposes each Sub-Commission Registry will constitute a branch of the Admin Registry.

3 Incoming correspondence on matters dealt with by Sub Comms will be passed direct to and registered by the appropriate Sub Comm.

4 Papers passing by hand inside Admin Sec (i.e. between Sub Comms or between Sub Comms and Admin Sec) will be passed direct by hand at the earliest possible moment and not through the message centre.

5 Sub Comms will keep the following records:

Register of Secret Letters IN.
Register of Secret Letters OUT.
Register of Letters IN.
Register of Letters OUT.
File index numerical.
Index to files alphabetical.
File transit register.

6 The present file organization of Sub Comms will continue.

7 The separation of Policy from Routine matters (see memorandum on office organization) when filing is important. Questions of policy and the action taken thereon are then not lost in a mass of routine papers. File a should be kept very strictly to a minimum of the policy decisions and to the actual instructions issued so as to be a clear picture unobscured by any other papers whatsoever. Correspondence about the instructions and what they do or do not contain should be

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 - File transit register.
- 6 The present file organisation of Sub Comms will continue.
- 7 The separation of Policy from Routine matters (see memorandum on office organisation) when filing is important. Questions of policy and the action taken thereon are then not lost in a mass of routine papers. File A should be kept very strictly to a minimum of the policy decisions and to the actual instructions issued so as to be a clear picture unobscured by any other papers whatsoever. Correspondence about the instructions and what they do or do not mean should be on file B. Particular cases or reports should be confined to consecutively numbered files. An example of such numbering would be 67/34 67/35 67/36 67/37 67/38 67/39 67/40 etc. The files most likely to move out of the branch would be the A files.
- 8 All internal correspondence will be conducted on minute sheets in accordance with the attached memorandum, and files will pass between Sub Comms and between Sub Comms and Admin Sec.
- 9 Working papers personal to a branch which merely lead to a ^{daily} which is recorded on the file and are not essential to any further action need not be circulated with the file.
- 10 A file which does not circulate between branches need not have a minute sheet unless so desired.
- 11 While there is no present intention of making any changes in the systems of filing or registration in use in Branches it is nevertheless necessary, as branch registries work as part of the Admin Sec

-2-

Registry, that they conform to instruction of the officer for the time being in charge of Office Organisation, Adm Sec.

- 12 It is not intended that any instruction will be given except such as may be regarded as essential for the efficient running of the Registry as a whole.

[Handwritten signature]
[Handwritten signature]

H.R. COLLIER,
 Lt Col
 for VP Adm Sec.

The Minutes System for Internal Correspondence

- 1 All communications INTERNAL to the headquarters will be conducted on minute sheets attached to the left hand side of the open file. These minutes will be consecutively numbered.
- 2 To the right hand of the opening will be affixed only letters passing in or out of the Headquarters, reports, proposed drafts of documents or other exhibits referred to in the minutes. These documents will be numbered according to the number of the minute which refers to them, followed by a letter a b c according to the number of documents referred to by that minute.
- 3 The LOWER two thirds of the outside of the front cover will be ruled into a series of pairs of columns headed . TO . DATE . to control the movement of the file. When the file is to be sent to another branch the initials of that branch and the date will be entered across in the first available space and the last previous entry struck out.
- 4 As no copies of minutes are required (the original always being at hand when the file is under consideration) a great saving of paper is effected.
- 5 As it takes no longer for a staff officer to write a short minute than to write the appropriate draft for typing, it is usual for staff officers to write the minutes in their own hand, this effects a considerable saving of typing time. The only exceptions are lengthy minutes which require careful consideration and may require altering in draft.
- 6 As no letters pass internally, the number of documents to be filed is most substantially reduced. The amount of time spent filing

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- 5 As it takes no longer for a staff officer to write a short minute than to write the appropriate draft for typing it is usual for staff officers to write the minutes in their own hand, this effects a considerable saving of typing time. The only exceptions are longish minutes which require careful consideration and may require altering in draft.
- 6 As no letters pass internally, the number of documents to be filed is most substantially reduced. The amount of time spent filing is also greatly reduced.
- 7 The system depends for its success and flexibility on the subdivision of subjects to the smallest detail, every slightest change of subject should have its own cover. Every single application or case should be treated separately and the papers put away as each case is finished. It is quite impracticable to have the papers of related subjects on a file and then find that when you want to deal with paper "f" that the file is with another branch to whom paper "e" has been referred. The maxim is to keep the files small and subdivided.
- 8 A disadvantage of the system is the number of file covers needed, but a cover for a file that is not likely to run to more than a dozen or so papers can conveniently be improvised from a stout sheet of paper of foolscap size folded in half.

A. PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE SYSTEM.

1. The requirements of every branch are different but the following system can readily be adapted to any requirements.
2. Analyse the correspondence and determine the main heads into which the correspondence falls. To each head allot a number - which is an index number and not a file number.
3. To every subject which falls within the head allot a sub number e.g. if the number 57 is allotted to the mainhead "Italian Officials", all files dealing with Italian Officials will fall within that group and receive sub numbers e.g.
 - 57/ Italian Officials.
 - 1 Appointments
 - 2 Transfers etc.
4. A Policy file, which will contain nothing but the discussion with higher authority of questions of policy, the Decisions reached and the instructions actually issued, may be distinguished by the addition of a letter B A (or P for Policy if preferred) e.g. 57/L. A special coloured cover is an advantage.
5. A Routine file which will contain all correspondence about the carrying out of the policy, enquiries and other routine administrative matters related to the subject may be distinguished by the addition of a letter B (or R for Routine if preferred). Special coloured cover is an advantage.
6. Action files. A new file is started and an individual number allotted for each distinct action e.g. the first appointments made are of Smith, Brown, Jones and Robinson, the files would be numbered 57/L.1.2, 57/L.3, 57/L.4 and so on. Action files deal with particular incidents, they do not generally live very long, often not more than two or three weeks. Improvised paper covers are often sufficient as file covers.
7. Files are most conveniently stored vertically. If there are no filing cabinets, boxes can be made or improvised. Not only is this most convenient, but the cases make the office more mobile. Action files die quickly, dead ones must be stored in separate boxes so that only LIVE files are behind the main head cards. This is important.
8. Index cards can be improvised out of half file covers inserted vertically in front of the files to which they refer. They should be cut down to stick out about 2" above the files and the number and main head printed thereon in bold letters. Not only do these cards serve as an index but they also act as guide cards. They indicate exactly the whereabouts of the group of any file required and enable it to be picked out at once.
9. Records. Each mainhead is given an index card. The sub heads are written on successive lines and are followed by the letters of the policy or routine files opened, and the total number (in pencil so that it can be kept up to date) of the action files which have been opened.
10. The main Index Cards relating to Italian Officials might therefore

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10 The main Index Cards relating to Italian Officials might therefore look as follows:

57/		ITALIAN OFFICIALS	
1	Appointments	A	B 27
2	Transfers	B	
3	Promotions		
4	Discharge		
5	Dismissal	A	B 5
6	POW's release of	A	B 17
7	Screening	A	B 35
8	Complaints	B	B 15

Those for entries are an index to 129 files.

11 On the sub index card, (e.g. 57/8 Italian Officials Screening of) are listed the action files. These are kept with the dead files for which they act as Guide Cards.

12 A block of 100 numbers is sufficient to carry a filing system of some 50,000 files. Most Sub Cards will find 20/30 main heads sufficient if judiciously chosen, to carry all their files. Clerks will quickly get to know these so well that they have no need to refer to any index except the card for the sub file number.

2 3 5 8