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**Additional Instructions for Completing the
COSHRC Survey of State Archives and Records Programs**

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Vicki Walch provided the following additional guidance by email after the launch of the survey.

If you have further questions, contact Vicki (vwalch@coshrc.org) or Jenifer Burlis-Freilich (jbfreilich@coshrc.org).

>>Annotate/document your decisions

A number of people have asked how to calculate financial or FTE figures or what to include/exclude from certain responses. I'll provide some specific guidance, below, but the most important thing you can do is to annotate the figures you provide if, for whatever reason, you want to explain your reasoning or provide context. It's important that we know how you arrived at your answers. That will help us compare apples to apples across state lines. Equally important, it will help us compare FY2004 with FY1994 figures from our last comprehensive survey, and it will give guidance to whoever responds to and analyzes the follow-up survey 10 years from now in comparing FY2004 numbers with FY2014 numbers.

I would suggest that all of you start a word processing document and make notes, question-by-question, whenever you make a decision about how to calculate a figure or want to explain your unique situation or have struggled with what information to include or exclude. We'll include those annotations in the final report to clarify each state's responses. Once you're done with the online survey form, you could email me a copy of the Word document with your annotations so I have it for our files and the analysis.

>>State profiles from last survey are available

If you're wondering how your predecessor responded to the last survey of state archives and records programs (it was based on FY1994 data), I can fax you a copy of your state's profile from that project. Just let me know. Some profiles have more detailed annotations than others, but you might find them helpful. We plan to compile similar state-by-state profiles using this year's data, so we would welcome your comments/suggestions on what you think we should to include in them.

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Now for some of the specific questions that have come in:

>>"I was looking over the survey and was wondering how we'd ever be able to come up with anything, given that so many of our state archival functions are integrated into the larger educational, processing, technology, conservation and reference functions of the historical society as a whole."

Many states have this problem. Our best suggestion, one that a number of institutions used in responding to the last survey, is to estimate the percentage of time spent on archives/records management by each individual (or workgroup) and report only the number of FTEs represented by that percentage. If you can't do that, then report the total number of FTEs, but tell us what other functions these individuals perform, e.g., library, museum, historic site management (use the Word document, described above, for annotating your responses).

Someone suggested that one of our findings this year may be that all of these functions have become more integrated as a result of budget reductions and consolidation of responsibilities into smaller staff

sizes. Bottom line: as long as you explain what you're reporting, you can report the numbers in whatever way is most appropriate for your own institution. If we have questions, we'll get back to you during the analysis stage.

>>"Our microfilm camera operators are part of the Government Records Branch, and do preservation microfilming for the Archives along with microfilming that will allow film to be used in governmental offices, replacing non-permanent records."

I would count these FTEs under "Other" in question 3.1. I'm assuming that the filming of nonpermanent records is still considered a records management related function. If so, it's ok to include all of the FTEs since the survey is supposed to cover all archives and records management functions, not just those related to permanent records. If you feel that some portion of what they do has nothing to with records management in any sense, you could estimate the percentage of time they spend on records-related work and adjust the total FTE count by that percentage.

>>"Your measurement of microfilm is not by roll. I presume that you are asking for cubic feet of film (number of rolls of microfilm fitting in a cubic foot box). Is this right?"

The Survey Management Team decided that the most important thing to know about volume of records in your holdings is how much space they occupy, so we went with the linear/cubic foot rather than item counts. Making this calculation depends on how the rolls are stored. If they are in record center cartons on a shelf, then you could just measure the running feet of shelving that the cartons occupy. Or you could calculate the volume of the boxes in which they are stored (roughly 1 cu ft per RC carton or 0.5 cu ft per document case/Hollinger box). If they're in drawers, you could measure the width, length, and height of the drawer and convert that volume to cubic feet.

This same approach would apply to other media. Again, just annotate how you made your calculations, or what combination of approaches you used if they are housed in different ways throughout the facility.

>>Questions 8.7-8.14 re: target response times for various kinds of reference services.

The online form will only accept numbers, but we didn't specify what those numbers should be (e.g., days, weeks, hours). If you try to write "14 days" or "2 weeks" it will return an error message.

If you haven't already completed these questions, go with number of days. But don't worry if you've already done it another way. You don't have to bother going back to change a response you've already entered. Just explain in your annotations document what kind of number you entered for this if it's something other than days.

>>"I need some guidance on the questions about establishing retention and disposition standards, etc. (4.2 ff.). We have a State Records Committee which has ultimate authority for retention scheduling, but I chair that Committee (as the rep of the Secretary of State), so I'm not clear whether to say the "Reporting Program" has the authority or "Another state agency"."

Personally, I would say that the reporting agency has authority, since you, as head of the reporting agency, manage the commission. I think that the Survey Management Team expected "another agency has authority" to be used in states in which the archives and records management functions are separated and one would be pointing to the other for these functional responsibilities. You should make an annotation in the Word document that you'll send to explain your responses.

>>Re: responding to questions 4.2-4.12 about the extent of state authority and services provided by state agencies for specific types of records creators and repositories.

One state archivist wondered how to respond to these questions because her agency shares responsibility for records scheduling/disposition with another state agency. She was concerned that if she indicated "reporting program has authority," it would appear as if her agency had *sole* authority for the function. I suggested that she go ahead and say "reporting program has authority" (since that's true), but use the annotation document to clarify the parameters of the shared responsibility.

>>Navigating through the online form: it is possible to jump from the last question back to the first question.

once you start the data entry process, you have to use the form's own "Previous" and "Next" buttons to move back and forward from one screen to the next. When you log on, the system will begin your session at whatever point you last entered data. That means that, if you skip questions during the data entry process, you'll have to use the "Previous" button to scroll back to enter data on those questions which is, admittedly, a little tedious.

However, we did include a button on the screen following the last question in the survey that will jump you all the way back to the beginning of the survey. That may save you some time if you're near the end when you need to go back to enter data near the front of the form. It also will allow you to start at the beginning for a final review of all of your answers before you finally submit your form.

>>One more: If you need to report fewer than one FTE on section 13, question 12, about the staff time spent for SHRAB administration, the survey won't accept any fractions or decimals. You can put a note in your annotations that gives the correct figure and we will manually enter it here.