



Office of the Chief  
Records Officer for the  
U.S. Government

***Sent Via Email. No Hard Copy to Follow.***

September 18, 2024

Tonia Austin-Douglas  
United States Coast Guard  
Attn: Records Manager  
US Coast Guard Stop 7710  
2703 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave., SE  
Washington, D.C. 20593-7710

Dear Ms. Austin-Douglas:

Thank you for notifying the National Archives and Records Administration about the loss of records maintained on the local file server of the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter *Steadfast*. You identified that the records were destroyed because the decommissioning schedule for the vessel was modified, and this complicated normal backup procedures. We understand that the vessel's server did not have connectivity for a full backup to occur when one was attempted. The server was removed before a backup was successfully performed, and the equipment was destroyed. You identified that the records lost were dated from September 3, 2023 to March 18, 2024.

We need some additional information about these records to ensure that the requirements of 36 CFR 1230.16 are fulfilled. First, you reported that the volume of records lost was "118G." Should we understand this to be 118 gigabytes (GB)? Second, please let us know which items on NARA-approved records schedules provide disposition authority for the records. Your report supplied a number of file codes and series titles, but we need the applicable schedule items as well. Third, please indicate which office or organizational component was responsible for maintaining the records.

I appreciate your attention to this matter. If you have any questions or wish to discuss this further, please contact the Records Management Oversight and Reporting Program by email at [UnauthorizedDisposition@nara.gov](mailto:UnauthorizedDisposition@nara.gov).

Sincerely,

WILLIAM FISCHER  
Chief Records Officer  
for the U.S. Government (Acting)

cc: Michelle Thomas, Department of Homeland Security, Department Records Officer



Office of the Chief  
Records Officer for the  
U.S. Government

***Sent Via Email. No Hard Copy to Follow.***

October 29, 2024

Tonia Austin-Douglas  
United States Coast Guard  
Attn: Records Manager  
US Coast Guard Stop 7710  
2703 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave., SE  
Washington, D.C. 20593-7710

Dear Ms. Austin-Douglas:

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) acknowledges receipt of the U.S. Coast Guard's report about the loss of records maintained on the local file server of the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter *Steadfast*. This report identified that the records were destroyed because the decommissioning schedule for the vessel was modified, complicating normal backup procedures. NARA understands that the vessel's server did not have connectivity for a full backup to occur when one was attempted. The server was removed before a backup was successfully performed, and the equipment was destroyed. The report indicated that the records lost were dated from September 3, 2023 to March 18, 2024 and were all temporary records, consisting of approximately 118 gigabytes (GB). Several authorities provided for temporary disposition of these records including: N1-26-04-03, item 2; NC1-26-76-02, item 499; NC1-26-76-02, item 500; NC1-26-80-04, item 299; N1-26-05-17, item 1; NC1-26-76-02, item 137; NC1-26-76-02, item 138; NC1-26-76-02, item 146; NC1-26-76-02, item 141; NC1-26-80-04, item 81e; DAA-GRS-2013-0005-0004; DAA-GRS-2013-0005-0010; DAA-GRS-2013-0006-0001; and DAA-GRS-2022-0005-0002. These authorities provide for retention periods of between one year and twenty years.

NARA understands that upon discovering the error in procedures, the USCG attempted to bring the local server back online. However, this was unsuccessful because the server's hard drives had already been sent for destruction when the server was removed from restricted space.

To mitigate future incidents, NARA acknowledges that the Coast Guard has revised its procedures to request that a full backup be performed as soon as the Operating Facility Change Order (OCFO) is issued for a decommissioning Cutter. USCG is also instituting a process for verifying proper performance of backups on all Cutters.

Based on this information, the reporting requirements of 36 CFR 1230.14(a) have been met and NARA considers this matter closed. I appreciate your attention to this matter. If you have any

questions or wish to discuss this further, please contact the Records Management Oversight and Reporting Program by email at [UnauthorizedDisposition@nara.gov](mailto:UnauthorizedDisposition@nara.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William Fischer". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first letters of "William" and "Fischer" being capitalized and prominent.

WILLIAM FISCHER  
Chief Records Officer  
for the U.S. Government (Acting)

cc: Michelle Thomas, Department of Homeland Security, Department Records Officer