



Building the Archives of the Future

Digital Preservation for the Nation:

An Introduction to the

Electronic Records Archives (ERA)

2007 Special Libraries Association

Annual North American Convention, Denver, CO

June 5, 2007

Rita Cacas

ERA Communications Officer

ERA Program

National Archives and Records Administration

6/8/2007

National Archives and Records
Administration

1



Overview

- **NARA's History and Mission**
- **ERA history and vision**
- **Electronic Records Challenges & Strategies**
- **Three components of the ERA Program**
- **The ERA Timeline: *Where we are now***



NARA's Mission

**To ensure access to records of three branches of the U.S. Government.
Records that:**

- Protect citizen's rights
- Hold Government officials accountable
- Facilitate historical understanding of our national experience



ERA History

- **Since 1968** - 40 years experience preserving electronic records
- **1970** First electronic records transferred to NARA
- **1995** NARA is heading for Mission failure
- **1998** Begin ERA Research Partnerships
- **2000** ERA becomes an Official Program



ERA's Long-range Vision

**ERA will be a comprehensive,
systematic, and dynamic means of**

**preserving and providing continuing access
to any type of electronic record**

**free from dependence
on any specific hardware or software,
created anywhere in the U.S. Federal Government**

enabling NARA to carry out its mission into the future



NARA's Challenges

- **Scope** The entire U.S. Federal Government
- **Variety** Different/Complex Types of Records
- **Complexity** and Records Formats
- **Obsolescence** Constantly Changing Technology
- **Access** Ability to view records over time
- **Volume** Large amounts of records arriving to NARA



Examples of Variety & Complexity

The 9-11 Commission Records

Office Automation Files

- Word processing documents
- Spreadsheets
- Presentations
- E-mail w/ attachments
- Scanned paper documents

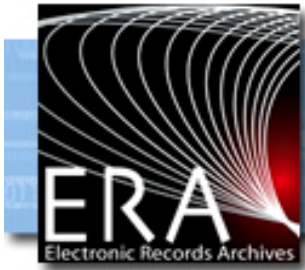
Complex Formats

- Digital Photography
- Satellite Imagery
- Digital audio files
- HDTV
- Web pages
- Databases
- Geospatial Information Systems

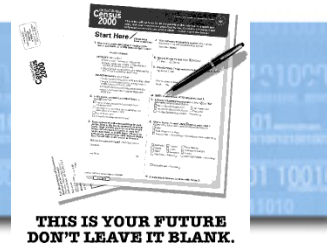


Records ALREADY at NARA: Examples of Volume

- **Clinton Administration**
40 million email messages
- **State Department**
25 million electronic diplomatic messages
- **Department of Defense**
54 million images from electronic official military personnel files annually
- **Census Bureau (2000 Census)**
600 - 800 million image (TIFF) files



U.S. Census Bureau



1890



2000



THREE Components of the ERA Program

1. **Research** and Exploratory Development
2. **Acquiring a System** that meets our requirements and our mission
3. Organizational **Change Management**



ERA Research Partners



National Science Foundation



Global Grid Forum

San Diego Supercomputer Center



National Computational Science Alliance



National Agricultural Library

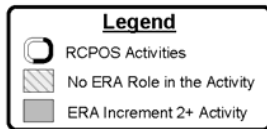
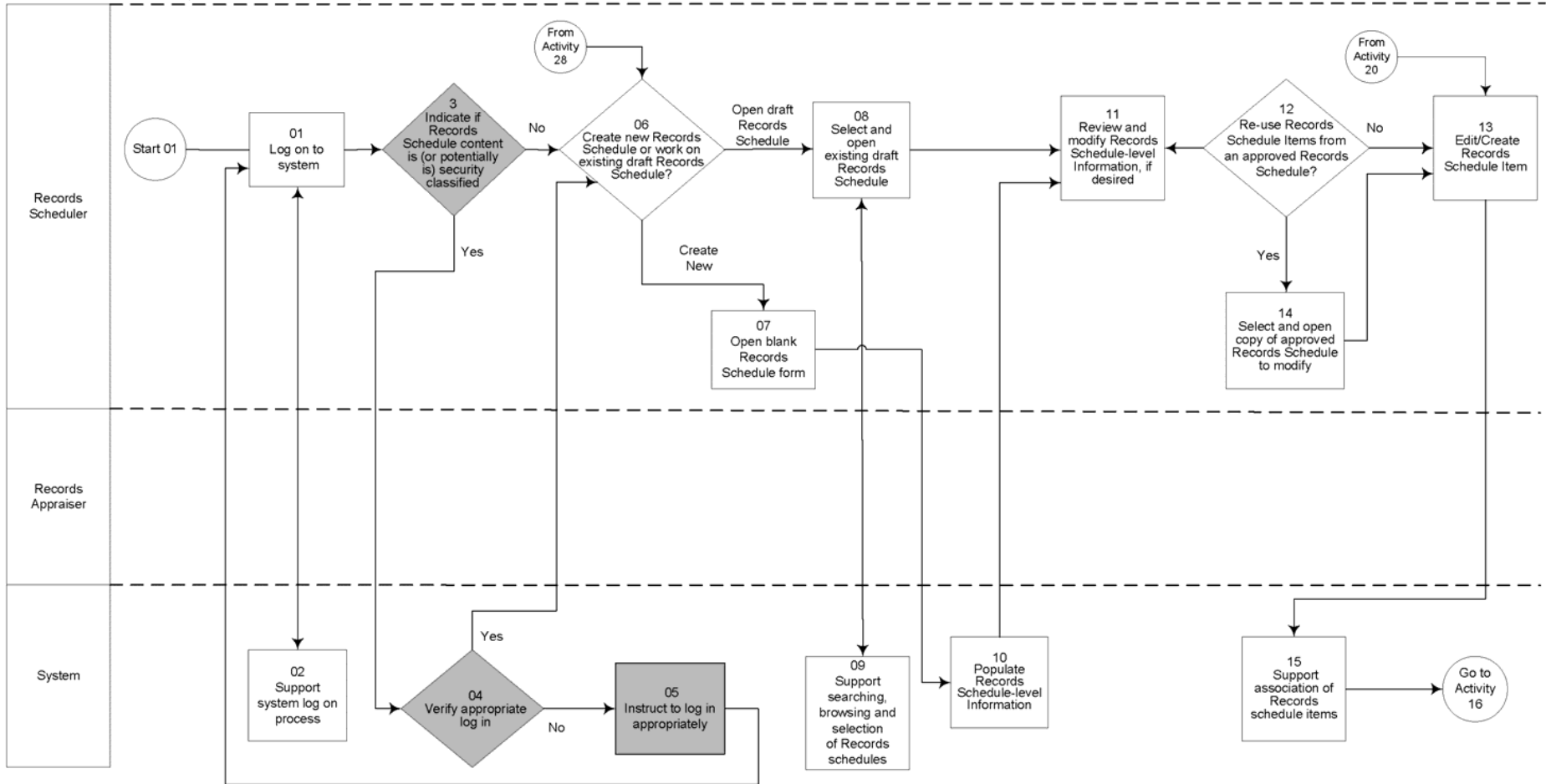


...and many other Federal Agencies and their Records Officers



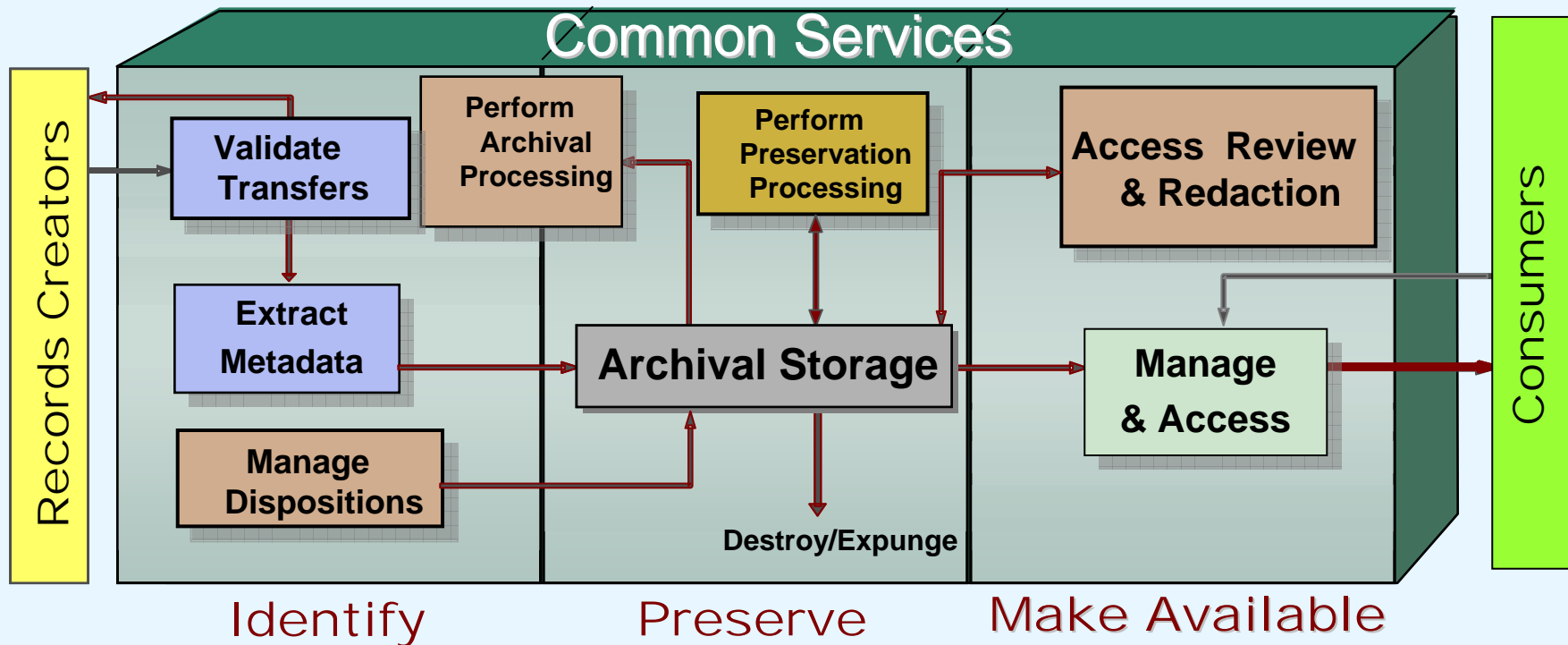
Business Process Re-engineering: Studying The Lifecycle of a Record

1.01 Creation and Submission of Records Schedule (page 1 of 2)
(version 4.2, Jan. 27 2006)





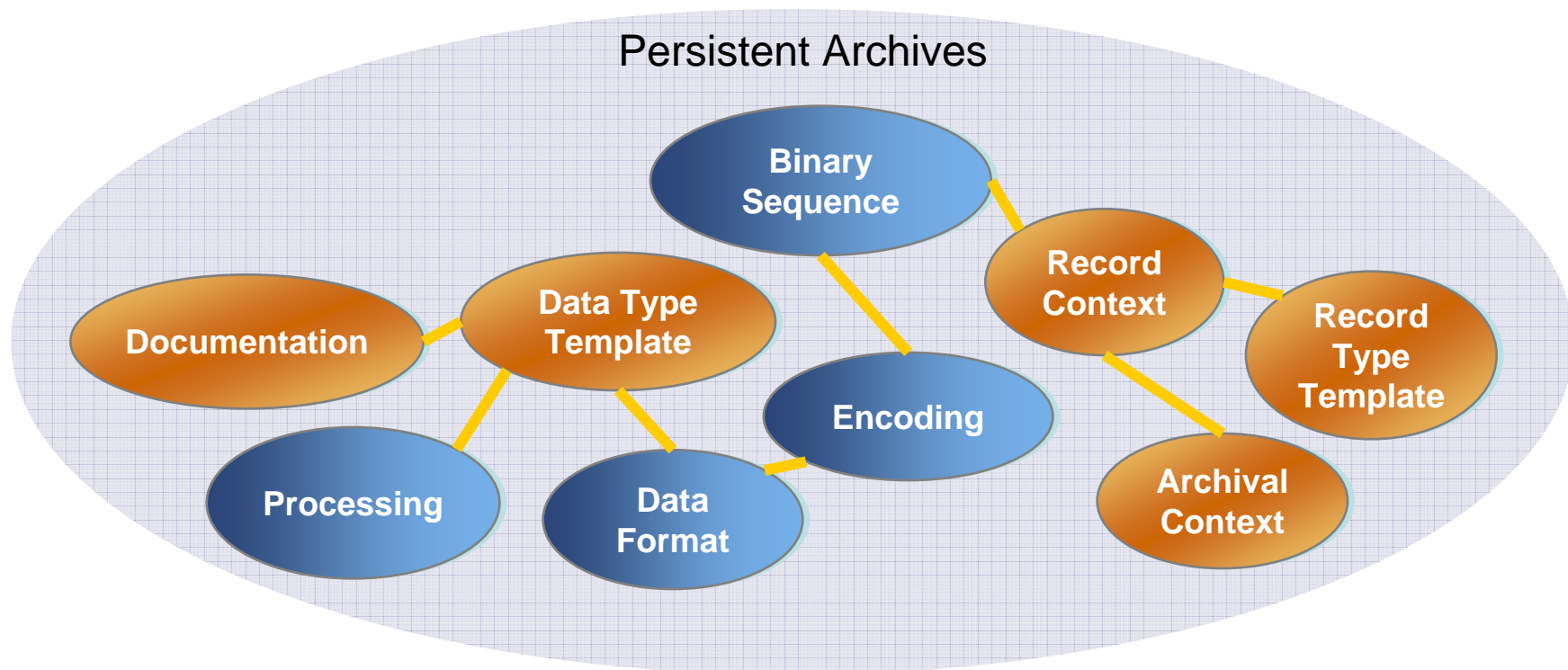
The ERA System is based on a Service-oriented Architecture





Making the Connections

Making sense of the 0s and 1s
is dependent on a web of connections

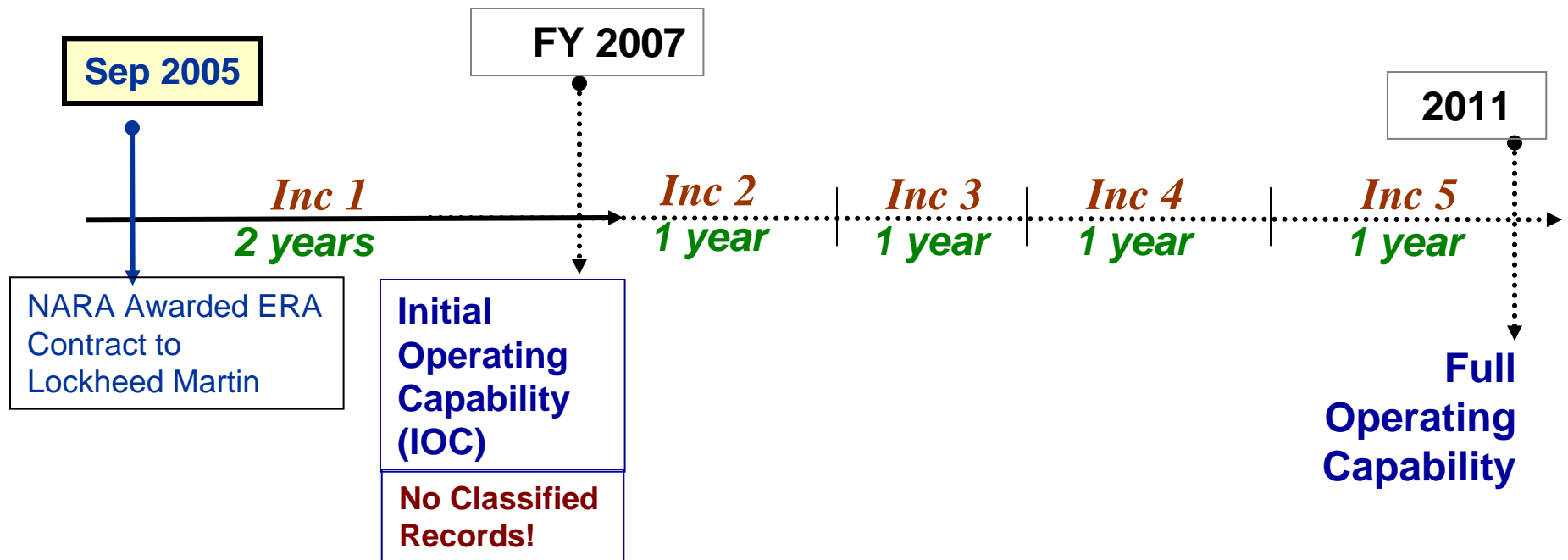


The Persistence of an Archives is Only as Strong as its Weakest Link



The ERA Development Timeline

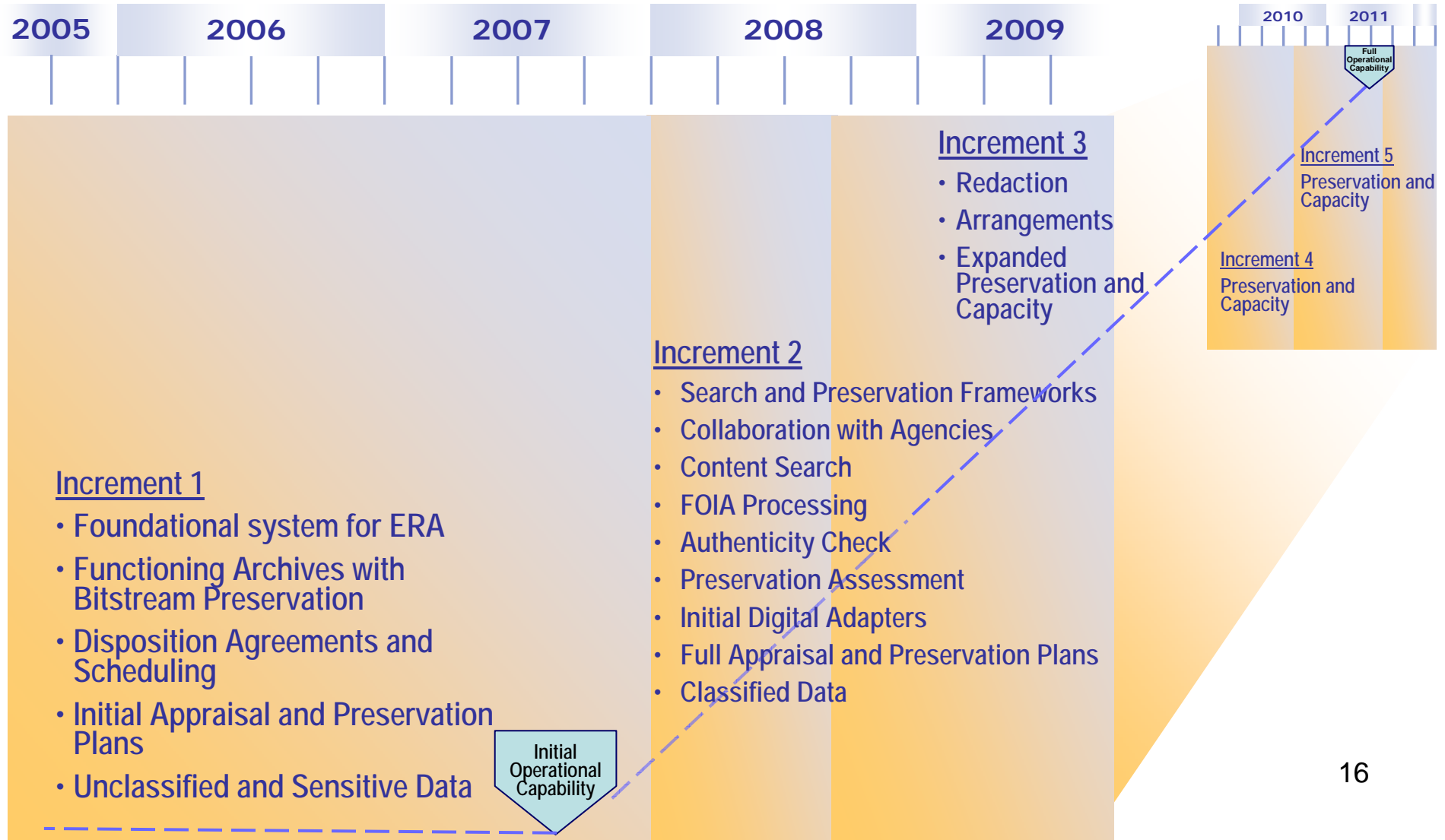
ERA will be developed and released in five phases, (or increments) spanning from FY2005 - FY2011:



6/8/2007



ERA System Functions for each Increment





The Four Increment 1 Agencies

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE





Your Contact in the ERA Program Office

Rita Cacas

Communications Officer
301-837-1564

Rita.Cacas@nara.gov

The ERA Web site is:
<http://www.archives.gov/era>