

Changing Business Practices for eGrants

**Presented at the Scanning Steering Committee
Meeting of Tuesday, November 27, 2001**



Changing Business Practices for eGrants

The Quotes

- **When the only tool you have is a hammer, there seem to be a lot of nails around**
 - Traditional proverb
- **The times they are a changin'**
 - Robert Zimmerman
 - (aka Bob Dylan)



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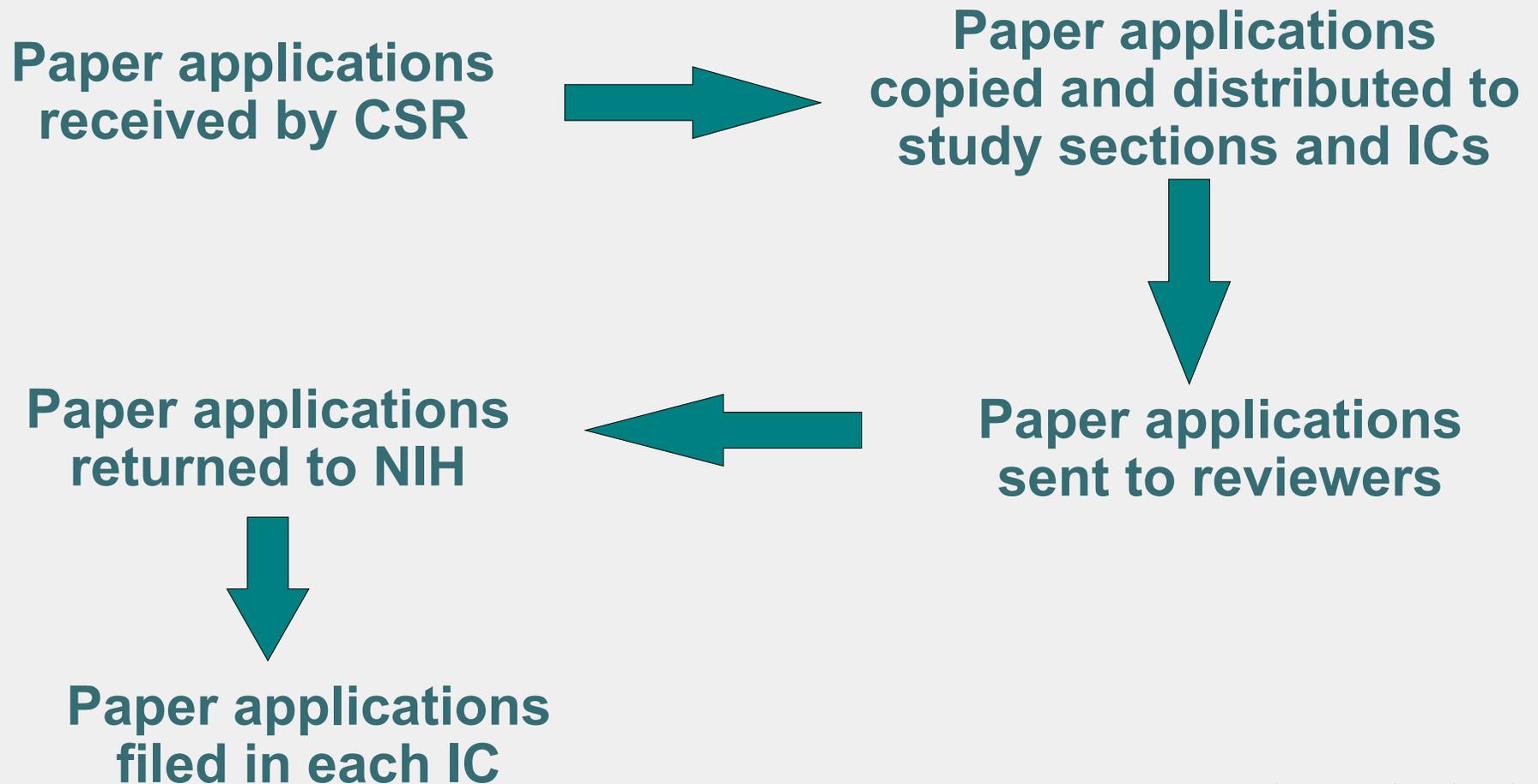
The Rules

- **Rule #1 - We are currently, and will continue to be, in a state of transition for the foreseeable future.**
- **Rule #2 - Transitions are hell.**



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The Current Process for Applications



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One Result of the Current Process: The Paper Intensive Office



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Another Result of the Current Process



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- Many questions and issues, but perhaps not so many answers.



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The Questions - 1

- **What are we doing to prepare for e-Grants?**
 - **Short Term**
 - **Long Term**
- **Should standards be set for eFiles for the ICs?**
- **Should files be stored in the IC or the enterprise?**



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The Questions - 2

- **What are the archival issues involved?**
 - ▶ **Record retention**
- **What do we do with old paper files?**
- **How do we deal with file disposal?**
- **What about items that come in apart from the application?**
 - ▶ **Letters and other correspondence**
 - ▶ **E-mail**
 - ▶ **Phone messages**



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The Questions - 3

- Which items are “FOIable?”
 - How do we redact from eFiles?
- What are the issues related to “shadow” files maintained by program staff?
- What are the issues related to file stability and format? (The “8-track dilemma.”)
- What are the issues related to image quality?



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The Questions - 4

- **Should all applications be placed on a website?**
 - ▶ **Bandwidth Issues**
 - ▶ **Connection Speed Issues**
- **Should the NIH continue to be a paper environment?**
- **Apart from grants, what are the document management issues?**
- **Who pays for all of this stuff???**



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The Questions - 5

- How do we handle Conflicts of Interest?
 - Digital Rights Management
- Do program staff get CDs
- Can we use eBooks?
- Can applications be eliminated from the grants folder?
- What are the training requirements for staff?
 - i.e., burning CDs



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Vision

- **Given the new tools that are available, what can be done to enhance, streamline and otherwise modify our work procedures?**
- **What will we be able to do in the future that we cannot do now?**
 - ▶ **Sharing Documents**
 - ▶ **Electronic Stapling**
 - ▶ **On-line Editing**
 - ▶ **eForms**



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An Example: The H-P Digital Sender



- **Compact Size**
- **Converts paper to pdf image**
- **Connected to the Internet**
- **Documents can be scanned, filed, stored and sent**



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The EPA/FDA Story

- The EPA wishes to establish a standard for electronic records that are kept to comply with the laws it administers.
- EPA records, however, need not be stored electronically. But, like the FDA, anything that was ever on a computer is considered to be an electronic record.
- Both the FDA and EPA require that records must have an audit trail - to deter fraud, as a tool for government inspectors to use, and as evidence for legal cases alleging environmental concerns.

What are the NIH issues related to electronic records?



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NIH eRecords Issues

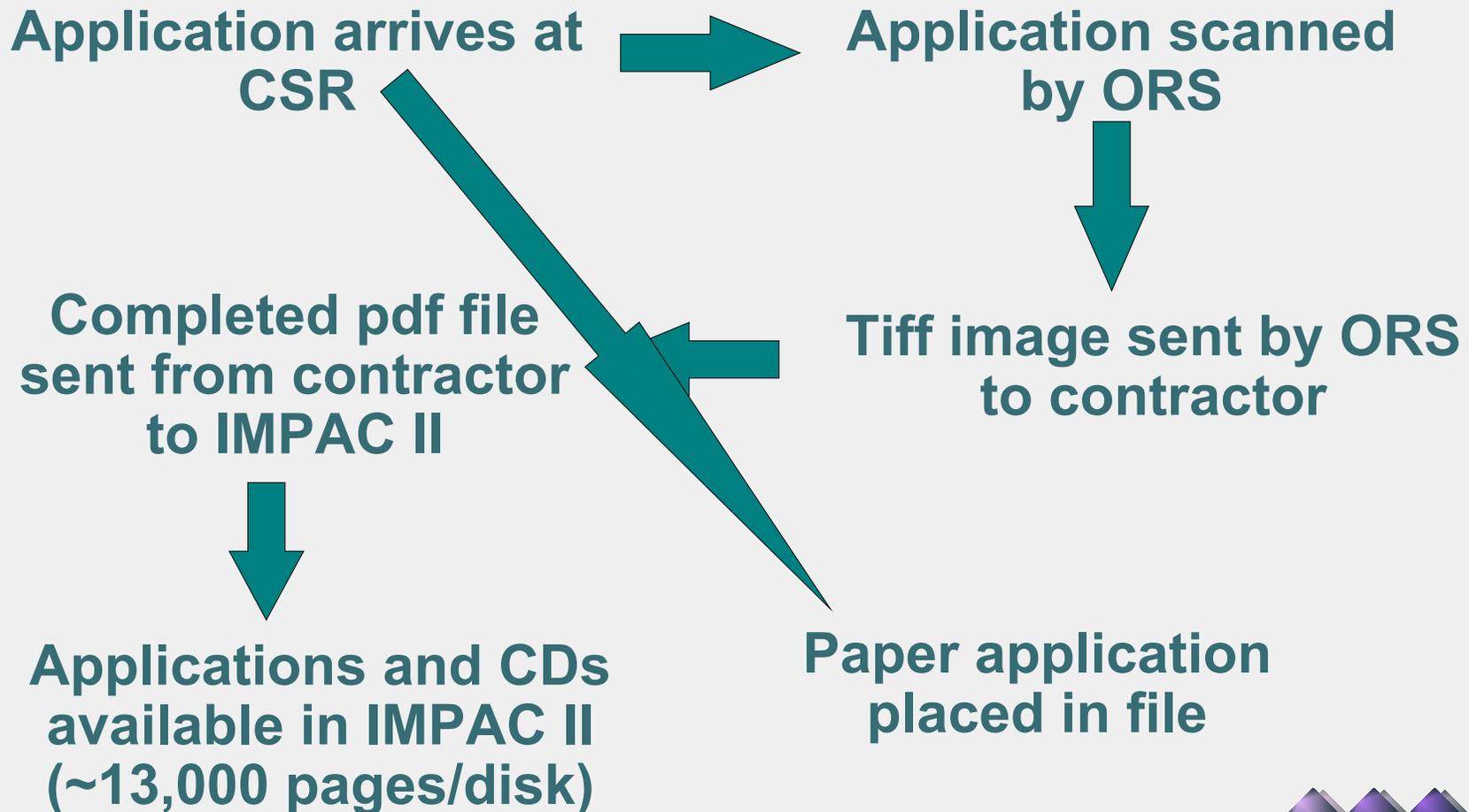
- Technology
- Cost
- Consistency/Uniformity across IOs
- Archiving
- The Records Control Schedule
- Legal Issues

**Tobacco
Litigation!**



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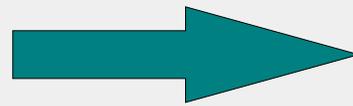
The Intermediate Process for Applications



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The Future Process for Grant Applications

eGrants received via
the Commons



Data captured and
images formed



Images available to
reviewers and staff



Electronic review at
all levels



Electronic storage of all
records



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The Result of a Total eProcess



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And now the demo...

