



UNITED STATES GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

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GENERAL GOVERNMENT
DIVISION



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APR 22 1981

Admiral John B. Hayes
Commandant of the Coast Guard

Dear Admiral Hayes:

Subject: [Coast Guard Personnel Records Storage Areas
Need Fire Protection Systems] (GGD-81-72)

The General Accounting Office reviewed the official personnel records for Coast Guard officers and enlisted personnel to determine how efficiently the records were being maintained.

The Coast Guard maintains about 6,400 officer and 31,000 enlisted personnel records in two rooms of over 700 and 1,000 square feet, respectively, at the Transpoint Building in Washington, D.C. The records are stacked on open shelving about 6 feet high. Neither of the rooms has a sprinkler or other fire protection system. We believe that the Coast Guard should acquire fire protection systems to protect the records.

Although the Government leases the Transpoint Building, Government-occupied space is subject to building firesafety standards established by the Public Buildings Service (PBS) of the General Services Administration (GSA). According to PBS regulations, automatic sprinkler protection is to be provided for (1) record centers and archives with open file shelving, (2) library areas exceeding 1,000 square feet, or (3) library areas with open shelving higher than 9 feet regardless of size.

According to a PBS official, construction of sprinkler systems in the storage areas has not been required because PBS has not inspected the Transpoint Building since the Coast Guard began occupancy about 1-1/2 years ago. The official said that PBS inspects buildings for compliance with firesafety requirements every 4 years and had the Transpoint Building scheduled for April 1981. Based on our description of the two storage areas, the official said he would consider them to be library areas rather than records centers.

Under the PBS firesafety criteria, the enlisted personnel records storage area, which exceeds 1,000 square feet, requires a sprinkler system, whereas such a system is not required for

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Copies of this report are being sent to the Secretary of Transportation and the Administrator of General Services.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Arnold P. Jones". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "A".

Arnold P. Jones
Senior Associate Director