

QUALITY ASSOCIATES CONVERTS EXCHANGE VISITOR'S FILES FOR THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Background and Challenges

The Department of State's Educational & Cultural Affairs, Private Sector Exchange (ECA/EC) identified a requirement to scan significant volumes of paper records related to the bureau's legal, supervisory, and administrative responsibilities in order to automate the file reference process and provide wider access to the files.

By cataloging and formatting the scanned records into searchable PDF files, the ECA/EC could make the files accessible to a larger ECA user base in an electronic format instead of the single-source access through the paper-based file room.

Solution

QAI was awarded a Blanket Purchase Agreement (BPA) in 2012. Through this BPA, the U.S. Department of State utilizes QAI's expertise to provide a wide-range of conversion services and workflow solutions related to the management and/or re-purposing of DoS mission-critical documents.

QAI provides an on-site cataloging, scanning and indexing staff to inventory the 1 million page record collection and to prepare the documents for scanning and indexing followed by the upload into the DoS case file management system. QAI also provides for the transfer of the documents in order to move the digitized paper records into the Federal Record Center.

The Document Conversion Project Included the Following Elements:

- QAI provided cleared staff members in order to work in the secure DoS file room and facility.
- QAI staff performed a complete record inventory of the DoS file room including the preparation of the required Federal Record Center SF18 transfer forms, labels and boxes.
- Files were prepared, scanned and indexed.
- Completed files were uploaded into the DoS Remedy Case Management System.



The US Department of State (DoS), Office of Private Sector Exchange (ECA/EC) administers the Exchange Visitor (J visa) Program through three offices: the Office of Designation; the Office of Exchange Coordination and Compliance, and the Office of Private Sector Outreach. Annually, over 350,000 foreign nationals enter the United States under the Exchange Visitor Program's fifteen categories (programs) of exchange. The Office additionally serves as the 2019-issuing office for the Post-Initiated Exchanges.



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Results

The objectives of the project were to implement document-scanning services to support the bureau's supervisory, legal, and administrative operations. Because most of the ECA documents contained sensitive data that needed to be protected from disclosure throughout the document scanning processes, the scanning operations provided by QAI were established on-site at the ECA/EC's central office on the Department of State's main campus in Washington, DC. The scanning project was a high-priority, short-turnaround effort, which needed to be completed within a firm timeframe. QAI's efforts resulted in the project being completed ahead of schedule and with a very high level of quality.

Background:

- United States Government agency
- 896,400 hard-copy pages, 498 storage boxes, 597 cubic feet of fileroom storage
- Single document location made access and research time-consuming and difficult
- Potential for miss-files and lost records

Solution

- QAI provided on-site services including all processing steps at the DoS secure location
- QAI ensured that all files were properly inventoried, scanned, indexed and uploaded to the host application
- QAI prepared the completed records for transfer to the Federal Record Center

Benefits

- Eliminated the need to transport documents to multiple building/ locations
- Reduced the wait time for document access from two days to immediate online access
- Scanning & OCR enables full document searching capabilities

“QAI’s use of state-of-the-art scanning technology and human resources has provided us with verified high-quality electronic documents. We can move forward knowing our e-documents are equal to our paper documents. I highly recommend Quality Associates Inc. for high value and quality digitization of documents, and a professional and highly trained staff.”

*Mindy Covington
Contracting Officer Representative
United States Department of State*

About QAI QAI's Information Systems Division specializes in the conversion of documents and other media to electronic formats. We offer a full range of document scanning/imaging products and services. These include hardware, software, optical technologies, storage systems, conversion applications, integration, and training.



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