



# Reorganization Plan No. 3 of 1970

July 9, 1970

## Special Message from the President to the Congress About Reorganization Plans to Establish the Environmental Protection Agency and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

*To the Congress of the United States:*

As concern with the condition of our physical environment has intensified, it has become increasingly clear that we need to know more about the total environment--land, water, and air. It also has become increasingly clear that only by reorganizing our Federal efforts can we develop that knowledge, and effectively ensure the protection, development and enhancement of the total environment itself.

The Government's environmentally-related activities have grown up piecemeal over the years. The time has come to organize them rationally and systematically. As a major step in this direction, I am transmitting today two reorganization plans: one to establish an Environmental Protection Agency, and one to establish, with the Department of Commerce, a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

## Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Our national government today is not structured to make a coordinated attack on the pollutants which debase the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the land that grows our food. Indeed, the present governmental structure for dealing with environmental pollution often defies effective and concerted action.

Despite its complexity, for pollution control purposes the environment must be perceived as a single, interrelated system. Present assignments of departmental responsibilities do not reflect this interrelatedness.

Many agency missions, for example, are designed primarily along media lines--air, water, and land. Yet the sources of air, water, and land pollution are interrelated and often interchangeable. A single source may pollute the air with smoke and chemicals, the land with solid wastes, and a river or lake with chemical and other wastes. Control of the air pollution may produce more solid wastes, which then pollute the land or water. Control of the water-polluting effluent may convert it into solid wastes, which must be disposed of on land.

Similarly, some pollutants--chemicals, radiation, pesticides--appear in all media. Successful control of them at present requires the coordinated efforts of a variety of separate agencies and departments. The results are not always successful.

A far more effective approach to pollution control would:

- Identify pollutants.
- Trace them through the entire ecological chain, observing and recording changes in form as they occur.
- Determine the total exposure of man and his environment.
- Examine interactions among forms of pollution.
- Identify where in the ecological chain interdiction would be most appropriate.

In organizational terms, this requires pulling together into one agency a variety of research, monitoring, standard-setting and enforcement activities now scattered through several departments and agencies. It also requires that the new agency include sufficient support elements--in research and in aids to State and local anti-pollution programs, for example--to give it the needed strength and potential for carrying out its mission. The new agency would also, of course, draw upon the results of research conducted by other agencies.

## Components of the EPA

Under the terms of Reorganization Plan No.3, the following would be moved to the new Environmental Protection Agency:

- The functions carried out by the Federal Water Quality Administration (from the Department of the Interior).
- Functions with respect to pesticides studies now vested in the Department of the Interior.
- The functions carried out by the National Air Pollution Control Administration (from the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare).
- The functions carried out by the Bureau of Solid Waste Management and the Bureau of Water Hygiene, and portions of the functions carried out by the Bureau of Radiological Health of the Environmental Control Administration (from the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare).
- Certain functions with respect to pesticides carried out by the Food and Drug Administration (from the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare).
- Authority to perform studies relating to ecological systems now vested in the Council on Environmental Quality.
- Certain functions respecting radiation criteria and standards now vested in the Atomic Energy Commission and the Federal Radiation Council.
- Functions respecting pesticides registration and related activities now carried out by the Agricultural Research Service (from the Department of Agriculture).

With its broad mandate, EPA would also develop competence in areas of environmental protection that have not previously been given enough attention, such, for example, as the problem of noise, and it would provide an organization to which new programs in these areas could be added.

In brief, these are the principal functions to be transferred:

[extensive discussion of specific functions proposed to be transferred has been omitted]

## Advantages of Reorganization

This reorganization would permit response to environmental problems in a manner beyond the previous capability of our pollution control programs. The EPA would have the capacity to do research on important pollutants irrespective of the media in which they appear, and on the impact of these pollutants on the total environment. Both by itself and together with other agencies, the EPA would monitor the condition of the environment--biological as well as physical. With these data, the EPA would be able to establish quantitative "environmental baselines"--critical if we are to measure adequately the success or failure of our pollution abatement efforts.

As no disjointed array of separate programs can, the EPA would be able--in concert with the States- -to set and enforce standards for air and water quality and for individual pollutants. This consolidation of pollution control authorities would help assure that we do not create new environmental problems in the process of controlling existing ones. Industries seeking to minimize the adverse impact of their activities on the environment would be assured of consistent standards covering the full range of their waste disposal problems. As the States develop and expand their own pollution control programs, they would be able to look to one agency to support their efforts with financial and technical assistance and training.

In proposing that the Environmental Protection Agency be set up as a separate new agency, I am making an exception to one of my own principles: that, as a matter of effective and orderly administration, additional new independent agencies normally should not be created. In this case, however, the arguments against placing environmental protection activities under the jurisdiction of one or another of the existing departments and agencies are compelling.

In the first place, almost every part of government is concerned with the environment in some way, and affects it in some way. Yet each department also has its own primary mission--such as resource development, transportation, health, defense, urban growth or agriculture--which necessarily affects its own view of environmental questions.

In the second place, if the critical standard-setting functions were centralized within any one existing department, it would require that department constantly to make decisions affecting other departments--in which, whether fairly or unfairly, its own objectivity as an impartial arbiter could be called into question.

Because environmental protection cuts across so many jurisdictions, and because arresting environmental deterioration is of great importance to the quality of life in our country and the world, I believe that in this case a strong, independent agency is needed. That agency would, of course, work closely with and draw upon the expertise and assistance of other agencies having experience in the environmental area.

## **Roles and Functions of the EPA**

The principal roles and functions of the EPA would include:

- The establishment and enforcement of environmental protection standards consistent with national environmental goals.
- The conduct of research on the adverse effects of pollution and on methods and equipment for controlling it, the gathering of information on pollution, and the use of this information in strengthening environmental protection programs and recommending policy changes.
- Assisting others, through grants, technical assistance and other means in arresting pollution of the environment.
- Assisting the Council on Environmental Quality in developing and recommending to the President new policies for the protection of the environment.

One natural question concerns the relationship between the EPA and the Council on Environmental Quality, recently established by Act of Congress.

It is my intention and expectation that the two will work in close harmony, reinforcing each other's mission. Essentially, the council is a top-level advisory group (which might be compared with the Council of Economic Advisers), while the EPA would be an operating, "line" organization. The Council will continue to be a part of the Executive Office of the President and will perform its overall coordinating and advisory roles with respect to all Federal programs related to environmental quality.

The Council, then, is concerned with all aspects of environmental quality--wildlife preservation, parklands, land use, and population growth, as well as pollution. The EPA would be charged with protecting the environment by abating pollution. In short, the Council focuses on what our broad policies in the environmental field should be; the EPA would focus on setting and enforcing pollution control standards. The two are not competing, but complementary--and taken together, they should give us, for the first time, the means to mount an effectively coordinated campaign against environmental degradation in all of its many forms.

## **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

[discussion of the establishment of NOAA has been omitted]

## An On-Going Process

The reorganization which I am here proposing afford both the Congress and the Executive Branch an opportunity to re-evaluate the adequacy of existing program authorities involved in these consolidations. As these two new organizations come into being, we may well find that supplementary legislation to perfect their authorities will be necessary. I look forward to working with the Congress in this task.

In formulating these reorganization plans, I have been greatly aided by the work of the President's Advisory Council on Executive Organization (the Ash Council), the Commission on Marine Science, Engineering and Resources (the Stratton Commission, appointed by President Johnson), my special task force on oceanography headed by Dr. James Wakelin, and by the information developed during both House and Senate hearings on proposed NOAA legislation.

Many of those who have advised me have proposed additional reorganizations, and it may well be that in the future I shall recommend further changes. For the present, however, I think the two reorganizations transmitted today represent a sound and significant beginning. I also think that in practical terms, in this sensitive and rapidly developing area, it is better to proceed a step at a time-- and thus to be sure that we are not caught up in a form of organizational indigestion from trying to rearrange too much at once.

As we see how these changes work out, we will gain a better understanding of what further changes--in addition to these--might be desirable.

Ultimately, our objective should be to insure that the nation's environmental and resource protection activities are so organized as to maximize both the effective coordination of all and the effective functioning of each.

The Congress, the Administration and the public all share a profound commitment to the rescue of our natural environment, and the preservation of the Earth as a place both habitable by and hospitable to man. With its acceptance of the reorganization plans, the Congress will help us fulfill that commitment.

Richard Nixon  
The White House  
July 9, 1970

[This condensation of the President's Special Message to Congress transmitting Reorganization Plan No. 3 of 1970 was prepared by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in conjunction with the 20th Anniversary of the Agency's creation. The omission references with regard to specific functions to be transferred to EPA and to the establishment of NOAA were added by EPA; the full text appears in *Public Papers of the Presidents: Richard Nixon, 1970*, on pages 578 through 586.]

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### **REORGANIZATION PLANS NOS. 3 AND 4 OF 1970**

On July 9th, President Nixon submitted to Congress Reorganization Plans Nos. 3 and 4 of 1970 to establish (3) an Environmental Protection Agency and (4) a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The texts of the Plans and of the President's Message that accompanied them follow. 116 Congressional Record H 6523 (H.Doc. Nos. 91-364, 91-365, 91-366).

### **REORGANIZATION PLAN NO. 3 OF 1970**

*To the Congress of the United States:*

I transmit herewith Reorganization Plan No. 3 of 1970, prepared in accordance with chapter 9 of title 5 of the United States Code and providing for an Environmental Protection Agency. My reasons for transmitting this plan are stated in a more extended accompanying message.

After investigation, I have found and hereby declare that each reorganization included in Reorganization Plan No. 3 of 1970 is necessary to accomplish one or more of the purposes set forth in section 901(a) of title 5 of the United States Code. In particular, the plan is responsive to section 901 (a)(1), "to promote the better execution of the laws, the more effective management of the executive branch and of its agencies and functions and the expeditious administration of the public business;" and section 901(a)(3), "to increase the efficiency of the operations of the Government to the fullest extent practicable."

The reorganizations provided for in the plan make necessary the appointment and compensation of new officers as specified in section 1 of the plan. The rates of compensation fixed for these officers are comparable to those fixed for other officers in the executive branch who have similar responsibilities.

Section 907 of title 5 of the United States Code will operate to preserve administrative proceedings, including any public hearing proceedings, related to the transferred functions, which are pending immediately prior to the taking effect of the reorganization plan.

The reorganization plan should result in more efficient operation of the Government. It is not practical, however, to itemize or aggregate the exact expenditure reductions which will result from this action.

Richard Nixon  
The White House  
July 9, 1970

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## **REORGANIZATION PLAN NO. 3 OF 1970**

Prepared by the President and transmitted to the Senate and the House of Representatives in Congress assembled, July 9, 1970, pursuant to the provisions of chapter 9 of title 5 of the United States Code

### **ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**

#### **Section 1. Establishment of Agency.**

(a) There is hereby established the Environmental Protection Agency, hereinafter referred to as the "Agency."

(b) There shall be at the head of the Agency the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, hereinafter referred to as the "Administrator." The Administrator shall be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, and shall be compensated at the rate now or hereafter provided for Level II of the Executive Schedule Pay Rates (5 U.S.C. 5313).

(c) There shall be in the Agency a Deputy Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency who shall be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, and shall be compensated at the rate now or hereafter provided for Level III of the Executive Schedule Pay Rates (5 U.S.C. 5314). The Deputy Administrator shall perform such functions as the Administrator shall from time to time assign or delegate, and shall act as Administrator during the absence or disability of the Administrator or in the event of a vacancy in the office of Administrator.

(d) There shall be in the Agency not to exceed five Assistant Administrators of the Environmental Protection Agency who shall be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, and shall be compensated at the rate now or hereafter provided for Level IV of the Executive Schedule Pay Rates (5 U.S.C. 5315). Each Assistant Administrator shall perform such functions as the Administrator shall from time to time assign or delegate.

## **Sec. 2. Transfers to Environmental Protection Agency.**

(a) There are hereby transferred to the Administrator:

(1) All functions vested by law in the Secretary of the Interior and the Department of the Interior which are administered through the Federal Water Quality Administration, all functions which were transferred to the Secretary of the Interior by Reorganization Plan No. 2 of 1966 (80 Stat. 1608), and all functions vested in the Secretary of the Interior or the Department of the Interior by the Federal Water Pollution Control Act or by provisions of law amendatory or supplementary thereof.

(2) (i) The functions vested in the Secretary of the Interior by the Act of August 1, 1958, 72 Stat. 479, 16 U.S.C. 742d-1 (being an Act relating to studies on the effects of insecticides, herbicides, fungicides, and pesticides upon the fish and wildlife resources of the United States), and (ii) the functions vested by law in the Secretary of the Interior and the Department of the Interior which are administered by the Gulf Breeze Biological Laboratory of the Bureau of Commercial Fisheries at Gulf Breeze, Florida.

(3) The functions vested by law in the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare or in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare which are administered through the Environmental Health Service, including the functions exercised by the following components thereof:

(i) The National Air Pollution Control Administration,

(ii) The Environmental Control Administration:

(A) Bureau of Solid Waste Management,

(B) Bureau of Water Hygiene,

(C) Bureau of Radiological Health,

except that functions carried out by the following components of the Environmental Control Administration of the Environmental Health Service are not transferred: (i) Bureau of Community Environmental Management, (ii) Bureau of Occupational Safety and Health, and (iii) Bureau of Radiological Health, insofar as the functions carried out by the latter Bureau pertain to (A) regulation of radiation from consumer products, including electronic product radiation, (B) radiation as used in the healing arts, (C) occupational exposures to radiation, and (D) research, technical assistance, and training related to clauses (A), (B), and (C).

(4) The functions vested in the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare of establishing tolerances for pesticide chemicals under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, as amended, 21 U.S.C. 346, 346a, and 348, together with authority, in connection with the functions transferred, (i) to monitor compliance with the

tolerances and the effectiveness of surveillance and enforcement, and (ii) to provide technical assistance to the States and conduct research under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, as amended, and the Public Health Service Act, as amended.

(5) So much of the functions of the Council on Environmental Quality under section 204(5) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (Public Law 91-190, approved January 1, 1970, 83 Stat. 855), as pertains to ecological systems.

(6) The functions of the Atomic Energy Commission under the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, administered through its Division of Radiation Protection Standards, to the extent that such functions of the Commission consist of establishing generally applicable environmental standards for the protection of the general environment from radioactive material. As used herein, standards mean limits on radiation exposures or levels, or concentrations or quantities of radioactive material, in the general environment outside the boundaries of locations under the control of persons possessing or using radioactive material.

(7) All functions of the Federal Radiation Council (42 U.S.C., 2021 (h)).

(8) (i) The functions of the Secretary of Agriculture and the Department of Agriculture under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act, as amended (7 U.S.C. 135-135k), (ii) the functions of the Secretary of Agriculture and the Department of Agriculture under section 408(l) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, as amended (21 U.S.C. 346a(l)), and (iii) the functions vested by law in the Secretary of Agriculture and the Department of Agriculture which are administered through the Environmental Quality Branch of the Plant Protection Division of the Agricultural Research Service.

(9) So much of the functions of the transferor officers and agencies referred to in or affected by the foregoing provisions of this section as is incidental to or necessary for the performance by or under the Administrator of the functions transferred by those provisions or relates primarily to those functions. The transfers to the Administrator made by this section shall be deemed to include the transfer of (1) authority, provided by law, to prescribe regulations relating primarily to the transferred functions, and (2) the functions vested in the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare by section 169 (d) (1) (B) and (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (as enacted by section 704 of the Tax Reform Act of 1969, 83 Stat. 668); but shall be deemed to exclude the transfer of the functions of the Bureau of Reclamation under section 3(b) (1) of the Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 466a(b) (1)).

(b) There are hereby transferred to the Agency:

(1) From the Department of the Interior, (i) the Water Pollution Control Advisory Board (33 U.S.C. 466f), together with its functions, and (ii) the hearing boards provided for in sections 10(c) (4) and 10(f) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, as amended (33 U.S.C. 466g (c) (4); 466g(f)). The functions of the Secretary of the Interior with respect to being or designating the Chairman of the Water Pollution Control Advisory Board are hereby transferred to the Administrator.

(2) From the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, the Air Quality Advisory Board (42 U.S.C. 1857e), together with its functions. The functions of the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare with respect to being a member and the Chairman of that Board are hereby transferred to the Administrator.

### **Sec. 3. Performance of transferred functions.**

The Administrator may from time to time make such provisions as he shall deem appropriate authorizing the performance of any of the functions transferred to him by the provisions of this reorganization plan by any other officer, or by any organizational entity or employee, of the Agency.

### **Sec. 4. Incidental transfers.**

(a) So much of the personnel, property, records, and unexpended balances of appropriations, allocations, and other funds employed, used, held available, or to be made available in connection with the functions transferred to the Administrator or the Agency by this reorganization plan as the Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall determine shall be transferred to the Agency at such time or times as the Director shall direct.

(b) Such further measures and dispositions as the Director of Office of Management and Budget shall deem to be necessary in order to effectuate the transfers referred to in subsection (a) of this section shall be carried out in such manner as he shall direct and by such agencies as he shall designate.

#### **Sec. 5. Interim officers.**

(a) The President may authorize any person who immediately prior to the effective date of this reorganization plan held a position in the executive branch of the Government to act as Administrator until the office of Administrator is for the first time filled pursuant to the provisions of this reorganization plan or by recess appointment, as the case may be.

(b) The President may similarly authorize any such person to act as Deputy Administrator, authorize any such person to act as Assistant Administrator, and authorize any such person to act as the head of any principal constituent organizational entity of the Administration.

(c) The President may authorize any person who serves in an acting capacity under the foregoing provisions of this section to receive the compensation attached to the office in respect of which he so serves. Such compensation, if authorized, shall be in lieu of, but not in addition to, other compensation from the United States to which such person may be entitled.

#### **Sec. 6. Abolitions.**

(a) Subject to the provisions of this reorganization plan, the following, exclusive of any functions, are hereby abolished:

(1) The Federal Water Quality Administration in the Department of the Interior (33 U.S.C. 466- 1).

(2) The Federal Radiation Council (73 Stat. 690; 42 U.S.C. 2021 (h)).

(b) Such provisions as may be necessary with respect to terminating any outstanding affairs shall be made by the Secretary of the Interior in the case of the Federal Water Quality Administration and by the Administrator of General Services in the case of the Federal Radiation Council.

#### **Sec 7. Effective date.**

The provisions of this reorganization plan shall take effect sixty-days after the date they would take effect under 5 U.S.C. 906(a) in the absence of this section.

(Source: U.S. Code, Congressional and Administrative News, 91st Congress--2nd Session, Vol. 3, 1970).

Last updated on September 6, 2016



