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Description of document:	Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Position Description for the DHS Historian 2021 (records are undated)
Requested date:	08-October-2020
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Source of document:	FOIA Request Privacy Office, Mail Stop 0655 Department of Homeland Security 2707 Martin Luther King Jr. AVE SE Washington, DC 20528-065 Fax: 202-343-4011 Email: <a href="mailto:foia@hq.dhs.gov">foia@hq.dhs.gov</a>

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**Homeland  
Security**

*Privacy Office, Mail Stop 0655*

February 24, 2021

**SENT BY ELECTRONIC MAIL**

Re: 2021-HQFO-00292

This is the final response to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), dated October 8, 2020, and received by this office on December 7, 2020. You are seeking a copy of the position description for the DHS Historian. I also request a copy of the most recent annual summary of accomplishments or internal annual report of the DHS Historian.

We conducted a comprehensive search of files within the Chief Human Capital Officer (OCHCO) for documents responsive to your request produced a total of five pages. Portions of these records are partially releasable pursuant to Title 5 U.S.C. § 552: (b)(6), FOIA Exemptions (6).

Enclosed are 5 pages with certain information withheld as described below.

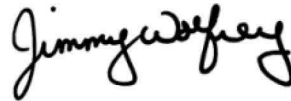
**FOIA Exemption 6** exempts from disclosure personnel or medical files and similar files the release of which would cause a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy. This requires a balancing of the public's right to disclosure against the individual's right to privacy. The privacy interests of the individuals in the records you have requested outweigh any minimal public interest in disclosure of the information. Any private interest you may have in that information does not factor into the aforementioned balancing test.

You have a right to appeal the above withholding determination. Should you wish to do so, you must send your appeal and a copy of this letter, within 90 days of the date of this letter, to: Privacy Office, Attn: FOIA Appeals, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2707 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue, SE, Mail Stop 0655, Washington, D.C. 20528-0655, following the procedures outlined in the DHS FOIA regulations at 6 C.F.R. Part 5 § 5.5(e)(2). Your envelope and letter should be marked "FOIA Appeal." Copies of the FOIA and DHS FOIA regulations are available at [www.dhs.gov/foia](http://www.dhs.gov/foia).

You may contact the DHS FOIA Public Liaison at 202-343-1743 for any further assistance and to discuss any aspect of your request. You may also contact OGIS at the National Archives and Records Administration to inquire about the FOIA mediation services they offer. The contact information for OGIS is as follows: Office of Government Information Services, National Archives and Records Administration, 8601 Adelphi Road-OGIS, College Park, Maryland 20740-6001, e-mail at [ogis@nara.gov](mailto:ogis@nara.gov); telephone at 202-741-5770; toll free at 1-877-684-6448; or facsimile at 202-741-5769.

If you need to contact our office again about this matter, please refer to 2021-HQFO-00292. This office can be reached at [FOIA@HQ.DHS.GOV](mailto:FOIA@HQ.DHS.GOV) or call 202-343-1743 or toll free 1-866-431-0486.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jimmy Wolfrey". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jimmy" and last name "Wolfrey" clearly distinguishable.

Jimmy Wolfrey  
Senior Director, FOIA Operations and Management  
(Acting)

Enclosure(s): Responsive Documents, 5 pages

# POSITION DESCRIPTION (Please Read Instructions on the Back)

HS0864

1. Agency Position No.

015864

2. Reason for Submission

☐ Redescription ☒ New  
☐ Reestablishment ☐ Other

Explanation (Show any positions replaced)

3. Service

☒ Hdqtrs ☐ Field

4. Employing Office Location

Washington, DC

5. Duty Station

Washington, DC

6. OPM Certification No.

7. Fair Labor Standards Act

☒ Exempt ☐ Nonexempt

10. Position Status

☒ Competitive  
☐ Excepted (Specify in Remarks)  
☐ SES (Gen.) ☐ SES (CR)

8. Financial Statements Required

☐ Executive Personnel ☐ Employment and  
☐ Financial Disclosure ☐ Financial Interest

11. Position Is

☐ Supervisory  
☐ Managerial  
☒ Neither

12. Sensitivity

☐ 1--Non-Sensitive ☐ 3--Critical  
☒ 2--Noncritical Sensitive ☐ 4--Special Sensitive

9. Subject to IA Action

☒ Yes ☐ No

13. Competitive Level Code

14. Agency Use

15. Classified/Graded by	Official Title of Position	Pay Plan	Occupational Code	Grade	Initials	Date
a. Office of Personnel Management		GS				
b. Department, Agency or Establishment	HISTORIAN	GS	0170	14	RD	
c. Second Level Review						
d. First Level Review						
e. Recommended by Supervisor or Initiating Office						

16. Organizational Title of Position (if different from official title)

CHIEF HISTORIAN

17. Name of Employee (if vacant, specify)

18. Department, Agency, or Establishment

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

c. Third Subdivision

a. First Subdivision

d. Fourth Subdivision

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

b. Second Subdivision

e. Fifth Subdivision

19. Employee Review – This is an accurate description of the major duties and responsibilities of my position.

Signature of Employee (optional)

20. **Supervisory Certification.** I certify that this is an accurate statement of the major duties and responsibilities of this position and its organizational relationships, and that the position is necessary to carry out Government functions for which I am responsible. This certification is made with the knowledge that

this information is to be used for statutory purposes relating to appointment and payment of public funds, and that false or misleading statements may constitute violations of such statutes or their implementing regulations.

a. Typed Name and Title of Immediate Supervisor

b. Typed Name and Title of Higher-Level Supervisor or Manager (optional)

ROBERT M. SMITH  
Assistant Commissioner, OHRM

Signature

Date

Signature

Date

21. **Classification/Job Grading Certification.** I certify that this position has been classified/graded as required by Title 5, U.S. Code, in conformance with standards published by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management or, if no published standards apply directly, consistently with the most applicable published standards.

22. Position Classification Standards Used in Classifying/Grading Position

Typed Name and Title of Official Taking Action

(b)(6)

Supervisory Human Resources Specialist (Classification)

**Information for Employees.** The standards, and information on their application, are available in the personnel office. The classification of the position may be reviewed and corrected by the agency or the U.S. Office of Personnel Management. Information on classification/job grading appeals, and complaints on exemption from FLSA, is available from the personnel office or the U.S. Office of Personnel Management.

Signature

Date

23. Position Review	Initials	Date	Initials	Date	Initials	Date	Initials	Date	Initials	Date
a. Employee (optional)										
b. Supervisor										
c. Classifier										

24. Remarks

FPL =

25. Description of Major Duties and Responsibilities (See Attached)

## **HISTORIAN, GS-0170-14**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This position is located in the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and serves as the Historian and chief advisor on matters pertaining to history. This includes provision of historical information and analyses for DHS to use in interactions with leaders of other nations, political-military consultations with the U.S. Ambassadors, and in deliberations on national security policy and strategy with decision makers at the highest levels of the U.S. Government, including National Security Council, Washington inter-Agency, Department of Defense, Office of the Secretary of State, U.S. Diplomatic Corps, and members of Congress.

### **MAJOR DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES**

Serves as executive agent to manage history program requirements established by DHS executives. Manages individual or collaborative projects involving classified and unclassified historical data. Studies serve as background material for high-level DHS policy deliberations on subjects of international significance involving such considerations as strategic determinations and DHS policy. Such studies typically include a great variety of historical fields like political, economic, and cultural subjects from one or more major historical timeframes.

Establishes liaison and coordination within the larger historical community. Develops associations with DHS components and other federal historical offices and connections with relevant university departments to ensure support and recognition for the DHS historical program and to stimulate and increase interest. Meets with professional counterparts through conferences, seminars, and discussion groups to establish and maintain professional exchanges and cooperation, and to open lines of communication.

Formulates the strategic plan and sets professional standards for DHS's historical function. Formulates the vision, mission, core values, goals, and objectives. Determines the short-term and long-term staffing needs.

Manages and performs the work for the DHS Oral History Program. Consults with DHS Office of General Counsel and Privacy Office staff and other governmental history offices on National Archives policies, copyright, privileged and restricted material, Freedom of Information Act, Code of Federal Regulations, and other legal and historical issues relating to oral history. Designs and drafts legal documents, including deeds of gift, access agreement, and system of records notice in consultation with the DHS Office of General Counsel and the DHS Privacy Office. Develops surveys/questionnaires for use in the DHS oral history program, Conducts interviews of DHS leadership, to include the principals, assistant secretaries, and major department heads. Directs, guides, and reviews the results of



contract interview transcription. Establishes and maintains auditing and editing standards for transcription review process and supervises production of final interview transcripts.

Establishes and develops the DHS History Office Archive. Determines the types of documents to be collected and develops a standardized system for organizing, retrieving, and preserving electronic and paper documents held. Responsible for the preservation of records vital to ensuring public accountability. Conserves information resources.

Alerts DHS leadership, including the Office of General Counsel and the DHS Chief Information Officer, to the probable destruction of DHS electronic federal records and advises on ways to avoid this eventuality. Establishes, in consultation with OGC staff, a working group designed to quickly address and remedy outstanding IT, legal, and historical issues related to the preservation of DHS electronic records.

Directs one historian (GS-13) and oversees the work of a contract archivist (at the GS-13 level of responsibility). Evaluates and reviews work performance. Participates to hear and resolve personnel-related matters.

## **FACTOR LEVELS**

### **Factor 1 - Knowledge Required by the Position FL1-8     1550 points**

Expert knowledge of a wide range of concepts, principles, practices, methods, and techniques pertaining to historical research for relevant issues, project planning, and presentations.

Knowledge of national and international contemporary history/affairs, including the war on terrorism, the history of the Federal government and DHS service, as well as general intelligence and intelligence activities related to DHS interests.

Ability to organize, analyze, synthesize, and edit scholarly/historical material to include material prepared for publication in professional journals, or unpublished written material for use as historical reference sources.

Skill in oral communication to carry out classroom lectures, workshops, seminars, presentations, and briefings for a variety of audiences.

Knowledge of archival research techniques and archive recording processes, to create and maintain a standardized system for organizing, retrieving, and preserving electronic and paper documents.

Skill to direct/perform research and surveys, including selecting sources and methodologies and ensuring completeness and conformance to professional

standards and DHS policies.

**Factor 2 - Supervisory Controls FL 2-5** **650 points**

The Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs provides administrative direction, making assignments in terms of broadly defined missions or functions. Incumbent is responsible for formulating and carrying through historical program plans and for the technical interpretation and application of archival/research findings. The incumbent's technical expertise is rarely questioned, and review of work is to assess the results achieved.

**Factor 3 - Guidelines FL 3-5** **650 pts**

Guidelines are broadly stated, nonspecific, and often incomplete or nonexistent, such as policy issuance and regulations, Federal regulations and legislation, and major guiding principles of national or international professional historian/library groups. The Historian uses considerable independent judgment and discretion in determining the intent of guidance, and in interpreting and revising existing policy and program guidance for use by others. When no guidelines exist, develops original guidelines and implementation guidance. Within the scope of the assignment, the employee develops guidance to be followed by others, and works as an authoritative agency historical expert.

**FACTOR 4. Complexity Level 4-5** **325 points**

The work is concerned with the acquisition, preservation, restoration, reconstruction, and interpretation to the public, Federal government officials, and the highest ranking agency leaders of the major/significant events and historical heritage of DHS. The Historian is responsible for determining requirements, setting historical priorities, organizing associated activities, and establishing milestones for the completion of projects. The incumbent may be called upon to provide "on the spot" witness material/data during hearings, orate background historical data in connection with urgent problems, or to attend interagency or international conferences for the same purpose. Historical problems are intensified by the broad scope or great complexity of the varied subject matter involved. The incumbent must visualize and anticipate management's requirements for historical information for both current and long-range program planning and policy deliberations and to tailor the scope and emphasis of the studies for most effective use by management in making important program and policy decisions.

Decisions regarding what needs to be done include major areas of uncertainty in approach, methodology, or interpretation and evaluation processes that result from such elements as continuing changes/updates in the current events, program, or public interests.

**FACTOR 5. SCOPE & EFFECT Level 5-5** **325 Points**

The purpose of the work is to conduct historical studies and manage historical/archival programs of key importance to the agency. Conducts historical research projects that have as their products monographs and special historical studies for the agency. The incumbent works on major research and oral history projects to gather material and disseminate historical information.

The work impacts planning, policy direction, and decision-making efforts for DHS.

**Factors 6/7. PERSONAL CONTACTS/PURPOSE OF CONTACTS Level 3c 180 points**

Personal contacts are with high-level congressional officials; agency heads within the DHS; other Federal agencies; and leaders of national, international, professional, and trade organizations and associations. Contacts take place under circumstances that are not necessarily recurrent, and it is often not possible to prepare for the types of questions, problems, and issues that will be raised in conferences, meetings, or presentations. The historian must be skillful and diplomatic in offering guidance as a DHS representative at regional, national, international conferences; meetings; surveys; and interviews where matters of historical policy, program development, and research are discussed and acted upon.

**Factor 8 - Physical Demands FL 8-1** **5 points**

The work is sedentary.

**Factor 9 - Work Environment FL 9-1** **5 points**

The work is performed in an office setting.

**TOTAL = 3790 POINTS**

**GRADE CONVERSION = GS-14**