

# INFORMAA

## QUARTERLY

VOLUME TWELVE NUMBER 1 FEBRUARY 1996  
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VOLUME TWELVE NUMBER 1 FEBRUARY 1996

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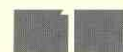
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# INFORMAA QUARTERLY

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# Federal President's Message

The Federal Executive met in Brisbane on Friday 10th November 1995 to discuss a wide ranging agenda. The major topics concerned the following matters:

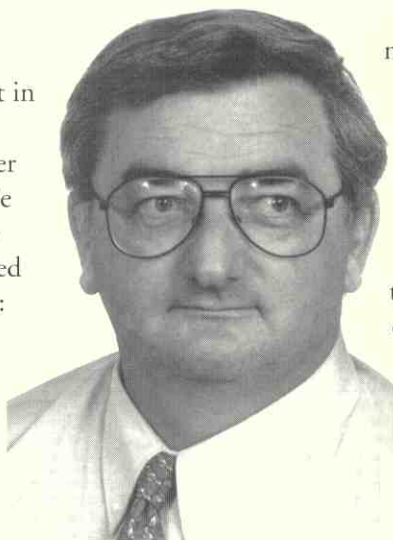
## 1. Review of the Memorandum and Articles

Our Federal Vice-President, Ray Holswich agreed to undertake a comprehensive examination and review of the Memorandum and Articles of the Association. Ray's initial steps are to seek expert legal advice concerning the framing of a new document. Once this advice has been received, Ray will commence the task of systematically drafting a new set of rules for the Association.

## 2. Records Management Standards

According to recent advice received from David Moldrich, the re-edited version of the 'draft' Standards will be published by Standards Australia some time during December 1995/January 1996. It is anticipated that the final document will incorporate many of the changes that were recommended by the Association and that the revised document will be truly representative of the best standards in records management within Australia.

All Federal Directors and Branch Council's have been urged to undertake a careful examination of the revised Standard for the purpose of assessing its ability to meet our needs. The Standard will also be discussed at the February 1996



meeting of Federal Directors.

## 3. Code of Ethics

A review of the Code of Ethics has been completed and the revised draft is currently in the process of being examined by the Membership Status and Ethics Committee, Chaired by Judith

Ellis. The Committee is also in the final stages of producing a revised edition of the Membership Status Guidelines. Both documents are expected to be available by February 1996.

## 4. Marketing Plan

The Federal Executive invited Joy Siller to articulate her plans for the implementation of marketing strategies for the coming year. Joy tabled a revised [amended in accordance with the comments made by Federal Directors at our September 1995 Meeting] Marketing Plan which was accepted by the Federal Executive.

The new plan is now with Federal Directors and Branch Councils. The implementation schedule for the Marketing Plan provides for the implementation of a series of prioritised key tasks which will enable the Association [at Federal and Branch level] to properly implement initiatives which are directed at greater market penetration and the provision of quality service to our members.

## 5. Finances

Our Federal Treasurer, Alan Kavanagh has worked very hard on

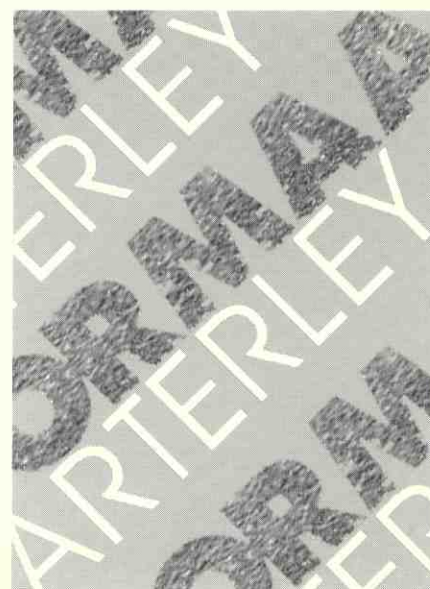
producing and maintaining, a consolidated financial report on the Association's finances. The financial and audit report on the National Convention, Victoria is nearing completion and present indications are that the Association will make a healthy profit from this event. The ACT Branch was granted a loan of \$10,000 to assist with expenses related to the Canberra 1996, National Convention.

## Competency Standards

Special congratulations also go to Ray Holswich and his Competency Standards Committee. Ray has been a driving force in obtaining funding from the Federal Government for the purpose of advancing the work of the Committee.

On behalf of all Federal Directors, I would like to wish all members all the best for 1996 and look forward to providing a more outwardly looking Association and one which can capitalise on the significant advances made in 1995.

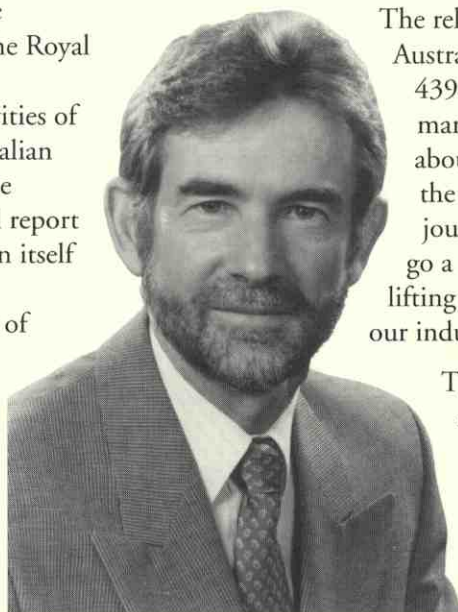
**Denis Comber ARMA  
Federal President**





# Editorial

After browsing the numerous press clippings that I have accumulated on the Royal Commission into Commercial Activities of the Western Australian Government in the 1980's, the official report of the Commission itself and now the recommendations of the Commission on Government, I am convinced that a window of opportunity exists to promote all aspects of records management reform not only to the legislature, but also to administrators, auditors and the wider business community. Indeed, such a window may well not present itself for another quarter century or more. The submission of the Western Australian branch of the RMAA to the Commission on Government is published in this edition and of course much remains to be done to maintain the



momentum and to ensure real reform is achieved.

The release of the Australian standard AS 4390/1-6 for records management, expected about the same time as the publication of this journal will, I am sure, go a long way towards lifting the credibility of our industry.

The existence of records management systems and standards can lead to organisational accountability but to what

extent? Auditing such systems is essential as pointed out by Karuna Raj in her article on defining and auditing recordkeeping regimes.

We also are pleased to publish the Reserve Bank of Australia's guidelines for the storage of electronic records. The editorial committee would be pleased to hear from other organisations that are coming to grips with managing both

paper and electronic records. As most of us try to manage information in both forms of media, it is interesting to note that the computers and high technology section of the Australian newspaper recently reported on a company in the USA that is 100 per cent electronic and there is no paper! The company, VeriPhone, is based in California but sees itself as a company without headquarters. It operates in many countries and employees get a laptop before they get a desk, internal paper mail is banned and there is a 24 hour a day real time computer network. Brave new world! The article does note however, that no matter how advanced the technology a company is still made up of human beings and the greatest challenge is changing the way people work.

**Ken Ridley**



## Australian Standard for Records Management Approved

Standards Australia is pleased to advise that the six part standard for records management has been approved and will be released on the 5th February 1996. The project brings to finality work commenced over two years ago

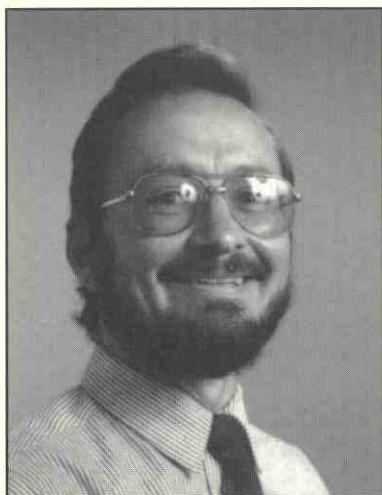
to write standards for the operation and evaluation of recordkeeping systems. The project brought together a wide range of people to formulate a standard applicable for industry, organisations and professional staff.

The Standard is AS4390/1-6.

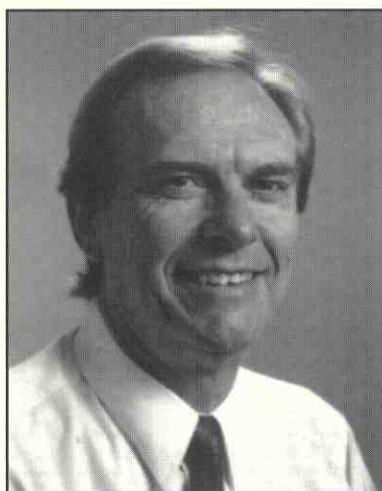
**Copies of the documents are available from Standards Australia offices in each state.**



# Guidelines for Storage of Electronic Records in the Reserve Bank of Australia



Allan Seymour BA, Dip Arch Adm



Trevor de Groen ARMA

Allan is the Manager, Records Management in the Reserve Bank. He is a member of the Australian Council of Archives Electronic Records Sub-Committee, the Australian Society of Archivists Electronic Records Special Interest Group and was a founding member of the Canberra branch of the RMAA.

Trevor is the Senior Records Systems Officer in the Reserve Bank and has been managing the Bank's Electronic Records Project since November 1994. He was granted Associate status of the RMAA in 1991.

*Allan and Trevor have been involved in the development of the Bank's records system for almost 15 years. In that time they have overseen the implementation of a computerised record management system and have been involved in managing the records system through a number of organisational restructures.*

## ABSTRACT

*As part of a project set up to look at managing unstructured information being created and stored in its microcomputer network, the Reserve Bank recognised that there was a need to establish standards and controls. Naming conventions and directory structures were seen as areas of concern and which needed to be addressed with some urgency.*

*In January 1995 the Records Management Section of the Reserve Bank of Australia surveyed unstructured electronic records being generated by individual officers and work groups throughout the Bank. The Bank has some 1,400 microcomputers within local area networks in every department and branch. This represents virtually a one to one microcomputer to staff ratio. These microcomputers are used for a wide range of purposes including word processing, spreadsheets, databases and electronic mail (e-mail). The Bank has a mixed environment with both PC and Macintosh computers in operation with Windows as the main operating system.*

The increasing use of microcomputers had resulted in the creation of electronic records which, we assumed, were not being duplicated in the traditional paper records system. The information on

personal microcomputers and servers was being managed in varying degrees depending on the experience and training of individual staff members.

Against this background, it was decided to develop a common approach to the management of unstructured electronic records which would satisfy good information management practices as well as ensuring that the Bank continued to meet its basic legislative requirements. Accordingly, a small project team was established to investigate and develop a system for the management of information created in the Bank at microcomputer level and stored locally on hard disks or centrally on each department's file server.

An extensive range of areas of the Bank was then surveyed on the use of microcomputers for creating and storing data. While the survey revealed marked inconsistencies across the Bank in directory structure and naming practices, there was a strong indication that some guidelines would be welcomed. Some similar overseas organisations were also contacted for information on how they were approaching the challenge of managing electronic records. Publications of the Australian Archives and the Information Exchange Steering Committee were also important reference sources.

Drawing on this collected information, we then compiled the Guidelines for the Storage of Electronic Records. The Guidelines focus on directory structures and consistent file or document naming conventions.



At this stage the Bank's primary corporate records are still being maintained in hard copy form. Consequently the Guidelines represent an interim step in the educational process to prepare staff for the formal move to corporate electronic records. This will require the development and implementation of an electronic document management system which will improve access to the Bank's electronic information sources and provide a decision and accountability trail for our business functions.

The Guidelines are reproduced below.

## RESERVE BANK OF AUSTRALIA GUIDELINES FOR STORAGE OF ELECTRONIC RECORDS

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The Reserve Bank of Australia is a knowledge and information-intensive organisation. Much of its work revolves around locating information, integrating data from internal and external sources and making, documenting and recording decisions. Historically, paper has been the primary medium for maintaining the "institutional memory". However, as greater investment is made in information technology, procedures are needed to ensure that the information we require to carry out our many functions continues to be both secure and accessible.

These guidelines have been produced to assist staff with the management of information stored electronically on microcomputers and servers. They have been written in accordance with guidelines published by the Information Exchange Steering Committee of the Australian Public Service. They should be read in conjunction with Privacy and E-mail guidelines and Security Instructions. [Internal Bank

policy documents]

#### *What is Information?*

Information is one of the Bank's most valuable assets. When created or received in an electronic format, that information may be stored in directories as part of the computer network. Directories themselves are simply tables containing details of stored data items, including their locations. The establishment of a standard system for organising and naming these directories and the individual documents stored in them will help to protect the Bank's information and greatly assist in the retrieval process. The efficient management of information also requires procedures be in place for the review and orderly deletion of data that is no longer required.

Information can be divided into three types:

- corporate information "owned" by the Bank and contained in Bank records;
- group information "owned" by a work group; and
- personal information "owned" by an individual staff member.

Corporate Records are kept because they provide evidence of business activity or because they are required for use by others or affect the work of others, or comprise a Commonwealth record as defined in the Archives Act 1983. They are of importance to the Bank and should only be disposed of with the proper authority. They are controlled by Bank procedures and/or processes and are stored for corporate access. Once corporate records are finalised, they must not be altered although they may be copied for other uses. Examples are:

- final versions of reports;
- policy documents and statements;

- formal communications between officers of the Bank or with external agencies, organisations or individuals; and
- formal minutes of Bank committees.

Work-group Documents are worked on by one or more persons for work-group purposes and have been created in the work-group or received from external sources. They are retained for their informational content and for the possible re-use of that content (i.e. they can be changed or updated). They are stored in a shared environment because of the need for access by all members of the group and are managed by the group. Both work-group and personal documents may be deleted at the discretion of the author. Examples of work-group documents are:

- drafts being finalised by the group;
- copies for information of the group;
- staff lists; and
- administrative arrangements of the group.

Personal Documents are worked on or used by one person only. They may have been created by the user or received from an external source and do not affect the work of anyone else in the organisation. They are managed and stored by the individual owner. Examples are:

- personal invitations;
- copies of documents for information;
- personal notes; and
- job applications.

The identification and classification of information into one of these three categories is a vital part of the efficient management of information. The physical location of these categories of records is not important.



Unless otherwise stated, the guidelines set out in the following pages primarily apply to Corporate records.

**Keep in mind that for the time being, wherever practicable, copies of all important (i.e. Corporate) records should be printed out and forwarded to Records for filing.**

## 2. DIRECTORY STRUCTURE

### *The Subject Classification Approach*

A logical arrangement needs to be applied to all information we store in directories to make it as accessible as possible. This arrangement should reflect the structure and functions of the work area creating the information.

The classification system used in the Bank's Records Handbooks has been developed over a number of years to organise our paper records. It is constantly updated and directly reflects all the programs, activities

and tasks performed in the Bank. While computers should not be used to replicate manual systems, the Records Handbooks' hierarchical structure is a good model for organising information in directories. In most cases, the information which is now being kept in an electronic format was previously only on paper.

Assistance with designing or modifying the hierarchical structure of directories should be sought from Records Management section of Support Services Department. New directory structures should be implemented by your computer co-ordinator in consultation with Office Automation section of Systems and Technology Department.

Departmental or branch directories should directly reflect the departmental or branch structure/functions. For example:

### 1. Bank Supervision

#### Group 1

- ANZ
- Global

### 2. Support Services

#### Training Services

- Internal Courses
- Departments
- Financial Administration

## USE OF "SHARE" DIRECTORIES

Share directories are used by the members of multiple work-groups who need joint access to a document, and by users for viewing/amending copies of documents. Some areas already have share directories, which are usually named with the appropriate abbreviation (two letter) followed by share, e.g. adshare, bssshare. Everyone in the relevant area has access to the share directory.



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## USE OF "PERSONAL" DIRECTORIES

The personal directories located in G Drive have been installed specifically to store system files relating to each individual user's set-up. They should not be used for personal information, such as resumes and personal correspondence which should only be stored on microcomputer hard disks (C Drive) or floppy disks. Staff should be aware that information stored on any other drive is the property of the Bank.

Whatever basis is chosen for the design of your directories, the following principles should be kept in mind:

- it should be as simple as possible;
- it should be logical - the subject of the document should dictate the arrangement;
- it should use clear and consistent words to describe subjects; and
- it should be flexible to allow for additions and deletions.

## 3. NAMING CONVENTIONS

Each department or branch should set up its own directory names. A person should be nominated to take responsibility for coordinating the establishment of consistent directory structures. Sub-directories and file names would be determined by work groups, but all users should be involved in the setting of these titles to ensure that they meet work needs. Once the directories and sub-directories have been established, it is essential that all staff adhere to these conventions for consistency.

Some of the advantages this will provide include:

- easier and quicker location of documents stored on the network;
- greater access to information where workspace is shared; and

- easier to review and delete information in work-group and personal directories which is no longer useful.

For the present, PC users are restricted to 8 character titles for directories and similarly for documents which have the standard software application extension (e.g. .doc, .xls, .tmp, etc.). To make identification of documents easier, they should be given a name rather than accept the automatic allocated number. While Macintosh users have a 32 character field to use, it is important that titles still be applied in a consistent manner to ensure that users, other than the authors who have named the documents, are able to recognise and retrieve the information they require. With the advent of Windows 95 in the near future, PC operators will have a 255 character field for naming directories and files. Nevertheless, a consistent approach must still be used and uncontrolled or free form naming not allowed.

Using a subject classification system, and subject to the 8 character limitation on PCs, one of the following naming methods could be applied:

- use the first main word in the subject title. For example, for the title Human Resources, use HUMAN;
- use the first syllable of each word up to a maximum of 4 characters per word and omitting spaces. For example, for the title Human Resources, use HUMRES;
- use the first two main words in the subject title, eliminate spaces and specify the number of characters allocated for each word, e.g. dividing the number of characters allowed by the operating system by two. For example, for the title Human Resources, where each word is allocated four characters, use HUMARESO;

- use consonants only, omitting all vowels, double consonants, spaces and plurals. For example, for the title Human Resources, use HMNRSRC; and
- where the classification of the information to be stored is determined by a date or period of time this detail may be included in the title. For example, for the title Budget Papers 1995/96, use BUDGET95 or BUD9596.

In many areas standard abbreviations are common and these could be used in preference to a variety of individual choices. Examples of these are the International Standards Organisation BIC (Bank Identifier Code) and the Clearing House Code, both of which are used in a number of areas of the Bank. The official department and branch abbreviations could also be used e.g. AD, AL, BN etc. [List of standard abbreviations for departments and branches used within the Bank]

In some cases it may be appropriate, where there are a number of commonly occurring words, to use a set of abbreviations which have been agreed on within the department, branch or section. These abbreviations should be circulated to all staff concerned and should be strictly followed to ensure consistency.

Remember that certain symbols such as slashes, ( \ or / ), full stops, dashes etc. may not be used in directory or file titles. If you wish to split up the 8 character name you must use an underscore, e.g. HUM\_RES.

The convention selected should be documented and made available to all staff. Its application should be strictly followed and no individual variations should be allowed. If functions change and existing naming conventions are no longer appropriate, they should be formally modified.



## P4. DELETING ELECTRONIC RECORDS

The Archives Act 1983 requires, among other things, that the Bank dispose of its records only in accordance with procedures approved by the Australian Archives. These include the application of approved retention periods [Australian Archives RDA Nos 1137 and 1138] for all the records created or acquired by the Bank. These retention periods, which are formally set out in the various departmental and branch Records Handbooks, are determined in accordance with the appraisal criteria detailed in the Appendix to these guidelines.

The same retention periods should be applied to all electronic records if they have not been printed to paper and sent to Records. Staff should make themselves aware of the correct retention period for records which are retained only in electronic

formats and ensure that they are not deleted or otherwise destroyed contrary to the Bank's legal and other obligations. If, after consultation with your Records staff, it appears that there is no direct hard copy equivalent, please assess the type of record in relation to the first four appraisal criteria then contact Records Management.

Privacy, confidentiality and security requirements must be observed over the "life" of the electronic record and officers should ensure that access to information falling into these categories is limited to staff with appropriate clearance or a "need to know." Particular care needs to be taken with information in shared directories.

### *Reviewing of Directory Contents*

The contents of directories should be reviewed on a regular basis. Electronic documents and records

do not carry signatures, are relatively fragile and are subject to unauthorised alteration and deletion. Deletion of information should only take place after consultation with authors.

If a paper copy has been taken of a corporate record and forwarded to the Records area, consideration should be given to deleting the electronic version. If it is no longer of use, e.g. as a precedent or as a template, it should definitely be deleted.

Group information should be reviewed by a formally nominated officer of the group and deleted when no longer required.

Personal information is, of course, the responsibility of the individual. However the same procedures - of review and deletion of information no longer required - should apply.

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## REFERENCES

1. Management of Electronic Documents in the Australian Public Service. Information Exchange Steering Committee (IESC), 1993

2. For a discussion of the differences between documents and records see pp 15 and 16 of Documenting the Future. Archives Authority of New South Wales, 1995

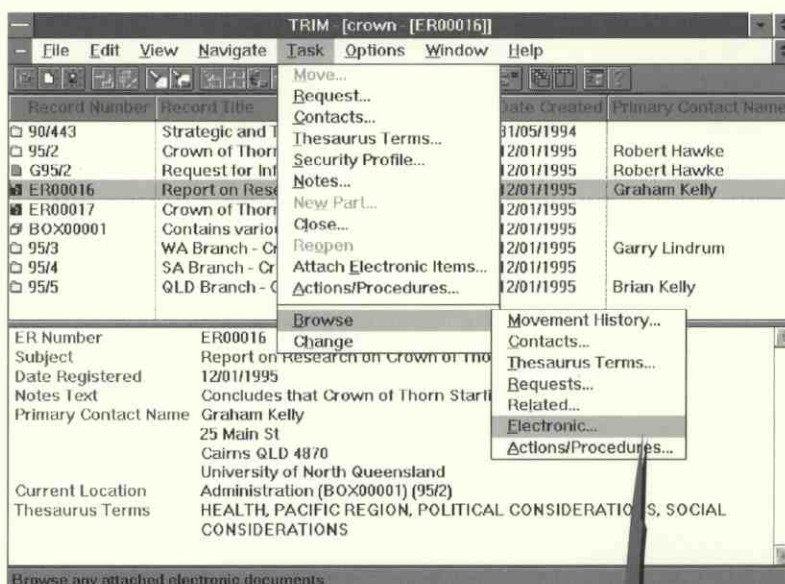
3. Adapted from Managing Your Computer Directories and Files. National Archives and Treasury Board of Canada, 1993

4. Adapted from Australian Archives Appraisal Handbook. Australian Archives, 1991



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Authority  
Griffin Coal Mining Company -  
WA  
Griffith University  
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High Court of Australia  
HMAS Cerberus  
HMAS Coonawarra  
HMAS Penguin  
Hunter Institute of Technology  
(Educational)  
Independent Broadcasting  
Authority (South Africa)  
Insurance & Superannuation  
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VIC  
Ministry of Premier and Cabinet -  
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# Reform of Public Sector Records Management Legislation in Western Australia

*In October 1992, the findings of the Western Australian Royal Commission into the Commercial Activities of Government and Other Matters were published. The massive report made many recommendations for reform and of particular interest to records managers and archivists, was recommendation number 20 calling for a separate and independent archives authority to be established acting under its own legislation and the Commission on Government to enquire into the terms of legislation. The RMAA WA Branch subsequently made a submission to the Commission on Government (COG) which appears below.*

## Submission to the Commission on Government from the Records Management Association of Australia (Western Australian Branch)

### Reference Nine

### The Setting up of a Separate and Independent State Archives Authority [Public Records Office]

SEPTEMBER 1995

**T**his submission has been written with the assistance of Associate Professor Allan Peachment, Professor of Public Administration at Curtin University and contains the views of the Records Management Association of Australia (Western Australian Branch). It takes into account:

- the report of the Royal Commission into Commercial Activities of Government and Other Matters.

- the dramatic developments occurring in information technology and telecommunications.
- the role of accountability in records management.

The submission concludes by presenting arguments favouring the creation of an independent State Records Office for Western Australia.

The submission requests the Commission on Government to make the following recommendations to the Parliament.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: Introduce legislation to establish an independent State Records Office (SRO).

Recommendation 2: Ensure the SRO reports directly to the Parliament.

Recommendation 3: Adequately resource the position of chief executive officer, support staff and related SRO facilities.

Recommendation 4: Ensure that executive direction and management of the SRO is controlled by neither LISWA nor the Library Board and is not part of the Arts portfolio.

### 1.0 The Report of the Royal Commission

1.1 There are at least two good reasons why the Commission on Government should give serious consideration to the recommendations made in this submission.

1.2 First the Report of the Royal Commission into Commercial Activities of Government and Other

Matters sets down arguments in relation to the need for effective records management in the Western Australian government (Report, 1992 4-7).

1.3 The views concerning state public administration and the management of public records in WA are clearly a major indictment of our Westminster System of government. In summary the Commissioners made the following points:

- 1.3.1 official papers were lost, deliberately destroyed or removed by officials and records of major decisions were often not made.
- 1.3.2 proper record keeping is a prerequisite to effective accountability and the records themselves form an integral part of the historical record of the state itself.
- 1.3.3 records creation, maintenance and retention practices of government and its agencies are matters for which ministers and chief executive officers bear particular responsibility.
- 1.3.4 experience in other Australian states suggests that the general responsibility of public records should be given to a separate and independent authority acting under its own legislation.
- 1.3.5 The RMAA endorses the royal commission's call for the establishment of an independent authority equipped with adequate powers to oversee the management of public sector records.



1.4 When it is recalled that the Royal Commission's inquiries were adversely affected not only by poor record keeping on the part of public sector bodies but also by the decision of the Parliament to uphold privilege in relation to its own records, the importance of creating independent public records of integrity is underscored.

## 2.0 Information Technology and Telecommunications

2.1 The second reason for giving serious consideration to the recommendations made in this submission is the dramatic developments that have taken place in the information technology and telecommunications industry in the past ten years or so. These include the common use of facsimile machines, E-Mail, interactive computers, multi-media and the use of the internet by a few governments and parliaments as a means for informing

their citizens. (eg the White House, some Canadian provinces and the House of Commons). At the time of writing some senior Australian federal ministers and a few WA state government departments (eg. DOHSWA, Commerce and Trade, Minerals and Energy and the Office of Senior Interests) have developed internet links or have home pages on the World Wide Web. This number is likely to grow dramatically over the next few months.

2.2 For several reasons it is regrettable that the Royal Commission did not consider the technological aspects of records management. For example, as the continuing development of this technology moves into the home it will raise important questions for representative democracy which in liberal democracies like our own may well be irresistible. Second,

technological advances will allow the costs of implementing an effective records management system to be kept to a minimum. Third, the technology already makes it much easier to police the integrity of the records system electronically. These last two points have been commented on by David Roberts, Manager, Records Management Office Archives Authority of New South Wales in his recent (July 1995) monograph, *Documenting the Future*. Roberts writes: "The insight that not all electronic information systems are record keeping systems is one of the most fundamental contributions...to the theory of electronic records management. Electronic information systems are designed to support current business needs for information... They are not designed to keep records of transactions carried out using them



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unless that record keeping functionality is built into the system." (p22-23)

2.3 This last point is of course particularly relevant to the WA Inc years and has been well illustrated by Professor Allan Peachment of Curtin university in his recent publication: *Westminster Inc: A Survey of Three States in the 1980's*. Peachment quotes the journal *New Scientist* which reported the case of Colonel Oliver North who was employed as a senior adviser in the White House and who was successfully prosecuted in relation to the Iran-Contra scandal. Prior to the investigation North had attempted to delete incriminating evidence from his computer files but unknown to him the evidence in question remained on backup tapes. North was found guilty but this verdict was later reversed by the US Court of Appeals.

2.4 The extent to which files may have been deleted or improperly modified prior to the Royal Commission is not known.

2.5 As Peachment points out, in modern fraudproof electronic record systems the computer may now record the identity of anyone opening (and presumably reading) a document and what alterations may have been made, by whom and at what date and time. (Peachment 1995, 77-78) Such technological developments will continue and must be incorporated into records management systems.

## 3.0 Accountability

3.1 As the Royal Commission pointed out proper record keeping serves as a prerequisite to effective accountability. This view was endorsed by the 1994 report of the state Auditor-General, a report that is timely for two reasons: (Auditor-General WA, 1994, 43)

3.1.1 The apparent failure of the state government to act on a wide

range of matters but in particular the recommendations of the Royal Commission with respect to the establishment of an independent State Records Office.

3.1.2 The credence it gives to the value of recorded information per se, its budgetary saving implications, and the vital link it provides to the accountability of agencies and executive government to the Parliament and ultimately, the people of Western Australia.

3.2 The report goes on to highlight the inadequacies of the *Library Board of Western Australia Act 1951-1983* and makes two key recommendations:

3.3 At a strategic 'whole of government' level, government should ensure that a comprehensive records management framework is developed, implemented and resourced to assure the effective and efficient management of public records. Government should ensure that the records management framework is supported by legislation which:

3.3.1 addresses the deficiencies in the current legislation.

3.3.2 is sufficiently flexible to address the technological advances being made in record keeping.

3.3.3 is complimentary to other legislation impacting on public sector records management such as the *Financial Administration and Audit Act 1985*, *Public Service Act 1978*, (now the *Public Sector Management Act 1994*) and the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*.

3.4 At a tactical individual agency level accountable officers and authorities should, within the records management framework:

3.4.1 ensure that their records management units provide the level of integrity, service and

support necessary to assure effective and efficient records management practices and appropriate discharge of accountability.

3.4.2 provide adequate induction and training to all personnel (both records and non-records staff) with respect to records responsibilities.

3.5 While the Auditor-General's report does not recommend the establishment of an independent State Records Office (nor is it argued against) it does identify the need to resource a comprehensive records management framework that is sufficiently flexible to address the technological advances being made in records keeping.

3.6 Except for the emphasis it would wish to place on the creation of an independent State Records Office, the RMAA wholly endorses the views of the Auditor-General.

3.7 We note however that the Records Management Office in the Public Records Office of LISWA has been consistently understaffed and under resourced since its inception in 1989 and that the Library and Information Service of WA (LISWA) has been unable, or unwilling, to secure funding to support adequate records management in this State. Notably, additional funds have been found to support other LISWA operations.

3.8 The Commission on Government should avoid the error made by the Burt Commission on Accountability (1988) which adopted a narrow and outdated model of accountability. This model, based on Gladstone's "circle of control" focuses on an old version of a Westminster system of parliamentary control of the public purse. A critical reference to this model may be found in a 1966 publication on the subject by former



Governor, G.S. Reid (p.95-96). A further critical reference may be found in a 1985 report of the Legislative Council which described the Gladstonian circle as "sadly deficient". (Legislative Council 1985 Sixth report, p.34-5)

3.9 Accountability should not be confused with 'control', a concept which tends to focus on error. A more positive and proactive notion of accountability is that which is supportive of the application of initiative and is directed to the achievement of agreed goals.

3.10 Such a model has been put forward in a United States context by Romzek and Dubnick (1987, p.227-38). These two writers describe "public administration accountability" as involving *the means by which public agencies and their workers manage the diverse expectations generated within and outside the organisation.*(p228)

3.11 The writers go on to suggest four alternative systems of public accountability each based on variations involving two critical factors:

- (i) whether the ability to define and control expectations is held by some specified entity inside or outside the agency; and
- (ii) the degree of control that entity is given over defining those agency's expectations. The interplay of these two dimensions generates four types of accountability systems which they label bureaucratic, legal, professional and political. The Commission is urged to give consideration to these four types, an abbreviated version of which may be found in Peachment, 1991, p196-7.

#### **4.0 An Independent State Records Office For Western Australia**

4.1 In four states: Victoria,

Queensland, New South Wales and South Australia a long series of official inquiries has identified a crisis in accountability and records keeping in all tiers of government. At this time, Western Australia is the only state to have outdated records management legislation administered by a Library Board.

4.2 The RMAA urges the establishment of an independent State Records Office (SRO) equipped with adequate powers to oversee the management of public sector records.

4.3 The SRO should be a wholly separate entity from LISWA, the Library Board and the Arts portfolio for the following reasons.

4.3.1 Records management is a business related activity driven by economic issues, effectiveness, accountability and efficiency and is an integral part of the day to day administration of the public sector.

4.3.2. Public records need to be viewed and managed as a continuum from creation to authorised destruction or archiving. Archival administration and historical considerations should not take precedence over issues relating to the 'real time' creation and management of current operational records. This is a vital issue when related to electronic document management systems, E-Mail, facsimiles, document imaging and electronic data interchange.

4.4 The new agency should be created by statute and report directly to Parliament in the same manner as Freedom of Information Commissioner and the Ombudsman. As with these bodies and others, it should be placed beyond ministerial and political interference insofar as the 1994 *Public Sector Management Act* allows.

4.5 The new agency should be established as a single entity and appropriately staffed and resourced via the consolidated revenue fund as with agencies such as DOHWSA, the Ministry of Justice and the Information Commissioner.

4.6 Just as the *Financial Administration and Audit act* regulates the use of financial resources and the *Public Sector Management Act* the use of human resources, so too legislation is required to control, manage and preserve government information - particularly in its formative and confidential stages as with cabinet documents.

4.7 The importance of making this recommendation for the creation of a State Records Office cannot be overemphasised. Under the Westminster system of government, public servants are accountable to ministers, ministers to parliament and parliament to the electorate. Without adequate and proper records the very core of public administration is open to threat and abuse.

4.8 Recorded information is a valuable resource to both government and the people of Western Australia. It follows that the new legislation should include provisions to strongly discourage the destruction of information about transactions of government, set down minimum record keeping standards and to provide audit trails for accountability. This would assist in avoiding a repetition of the infamous "whiteboard" affair that recently occurred within a Federal Government Ministry. What this and other incidents suggest is that the principle of accountability through proper record keeping is not properly understood or recognised by politicians, or if it is, they find it politic at times to place it in abeyance.



## 5.0 Role and Function of the State Records Office

5.1 The proposed State Records Office should be responsible for:

5.1.1 The development, promulgation and promotion of policies, practices and standards for records creation, use, storage and disposal, including departmental and ministerial recorded information regardless of format (eg. paper, electronic and micrographic).

5.1.2 Training and education of public servants at all levels, but particularly an early focus of the Senior Executive Service.

5.1.3 liaison with the Information Policy Committee (IPC) and Strategic Information and Information Technology Unity (SIITU) or replacement agencies charged with information technology issues on a whole

of government basis.

5.1.4 liaison with the Information Commissioner, Auditor-General, Ombudsman and the Office of Official Corruption.

5.1.5 development of "whistle blowing" procedures for uncovering any illegal destruction and manipulation of public records.

5.1.6 managing the provision of an advisory and consultancy service to government agencies.

5.1.7 the identification, access, storage and preservation of state archives.

**6.0 The position of chief executive officer of the proposed State Records Office should equate to that of the Information Commissioner.**

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Roberts, David (1995).

*Documenting the Future: Policy and Strategies for Electronic Recordkeeping in the New South Wales Public Sector* Sydney, The Archives Authority of New South Wales. 44Pp

In December 1995 the Commission on Government submitted its report on reference nine to the Parliament making 24 detailed recommendations spanning some 120 pages. The most significant recommendation calls for the establishment of a Public Records Act and for a Public Records

Authority headed by a Commissioner for Public Records. Other salient points include:

- The development of standards for the creation, maintenance, preservation and disposal of public records
- The definition of a public record to include cabinet records
- The definition of a public office specifically includes the WA Parliament and government trading enterprises and corporatised bodies
- The right of the (Commissioner) to inspect public records
- Specific provision for retention and disposal of electronic records

and identification of metadata

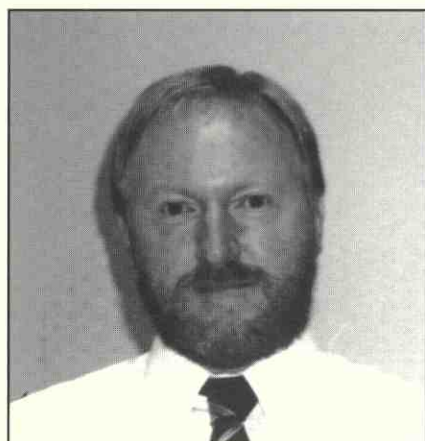
- Substantial penalties for unlawful removal, damage or destruction of public records

It is important to note that these are only *recommendations* to the government of the day and it remains to be seen if the government will legislate prior to the next election which is due in early 1997.

**Ken Ridley**

[Reference: Commission on Government Report Number 2 Part 2 Perth, Western Australia 1995.]

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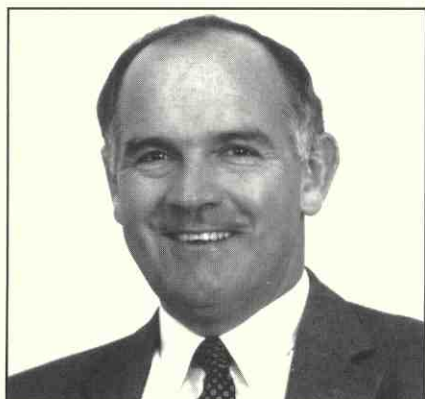


**Stephen Renouf, ARMA - Shoalhaven City Council**

Stephen's early career was as an Administrator in the NSW Public Service in Sydney.

He moved into Local Government as a Records Manager, completed relevant studies, then left Sydney to pioneer the profession in high growth regions such as Hervey Bay, Cairns, Noosa and now Shoalhaven.

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Records managers are expected to have an understanding of workflows within an organisation, of how business is being re-engineered and the concomitant impact on documentation, as well as knowing how to organise, index, preserve, access, and protect this documentation in all its various formats. A striking aspect of this dilemma is the seeming lack of personnel equipped to handle the management of organisational information at a senior level. This is a job for the new, improved, records manager - the Corporate Information Officer.

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# Defining and Auditing Recordkeeping Regimes

## AUTHOR

### Karuna Raj

*Karuna has completed a Bachelor of Economics and Post Graduate Diploma in Archives and Records Management at Monash University. She commenced a Masters in Archives and Records Management at Monash University in 1994 and is currently undertaking the thesis component. Karuna has worked as an Archivist for CSL Ltd, an Auditor for KPMG Peat Marwick Chartered Accountants and on the Victorian Records Review Project for Australian Archives.*

## ABSTRACT

*The concept of organisational accountability has brought with it unique challenges to Records Managers. Specifically the design and/or implementation of effective recordkeeping regimes which target the evidential requirements of the organisation. The work of the Standards Australia Committee IT/21 on Records Management Systems aims to provide guidance in this respect but has also brought the concept of auditing recordkeeping regimes into deliberation among professionals. Records Managers are confronted with the challenge of not only defining recordkeeping regimes but also auditing them. As a profession we are left to reflect on what is the ideal strategy to adopt. One option would be to look to other professions with more established auditing frameworks; such as, auditing within the context of the accounting profession and its applicability in auditing recordkeeping regimes to ensure organisational accountability.*

One of the greatest challenges for Records Managers in any organisation is to facilitate organisational accountability via reliable recordkeeping regimes. Respectively, the Records Manager does not only require a clear understanding of the concepts and definitions underlying recordkeeping regimes in themselves but must also be au fait with the concepts and logistics of on-going monitoring and auditing of such regimes.

The work of the Standards Australia Committee IT/21 on Records Management Systems has brought the concept of auditing recordkeeping regimes into deliberation. The standard aims to be a voluntary code of practice in the provision of guidance for the implementation of records management strategies, procedures and practices in any organisation which needs to control and manage its records to meet business, legal and fiscal requirements<sup>1</sup>. The standard can also be used to measure the effectiveness of records management systems and programs already in place or designed and implemented as a result of applying this standard. Effectively the standard provides a dual role. Firstly, as a management tool which can be used to improve the quality of evidence generated within an organisation, and secondly as an analytical framework for diagnosing the effectiveness and adequacy at which an organisation meets its evidential requirements. It is through this second role that auditing recordkeeping regimes becomes a crucial concept.

The current state of literature and research provides a dearth of auditing

methodologies and concepts as they might apply to recordkeeping regimes. As a profession we are left to reflect on what is the ideal strategy to adopt? We are in an interesting predicament: as we attempt to define key concepts which relate to recordkeeping regimes and define recordkeeping regimes in themselves we must also begin to formulate the correct strategies in terms of performance measurement and compliance indicators of such regimes. Fortunately we are at a favourable vantage point in that we have the opportunity to perform the necessary analysis; to determine the ideal auditing strategy(s) as they might apply, by looking to other professions with more established auditing frameworks.

Auditing within the context of the accounting profession is one such well established framework from which the records management profession can possibly draw expertise. How are the concepts and methodologies underlying auditing of financial statements applicable in auditing recordkeeping regimes?

Within the accounting profession, auditing is linked with accounting principles and procedures as embodied in accounting standards. The financial statements are the product of an accounting system and the judgements made by management. Specifically, taking raw data and allocating it to present, past and future profit and loss statements and balance sheets. The ultimate objective of the audit process as described above is to form an opinion about the financial statements. To make such a judgement the auditor must look beyond the financial statements and question the reasoning for allocations.



Clearly, the relationship between accounting and auditing is close but the scope of the auditor's work is broader in that it must bear in mind the total organisation. The accountant does not necessarily need to distinguish between the data which must be accounted for and the operations which affect that data. Given that the audit function extends beyond the accounting function, how portable are the methodologies to other professions?

The main justification for the financial statements audit is to close the credibility gap which arises because of the potential conflict of interest between those who prepare the financial statements and those who use them. Additionally, audits pick up accidental errors and deviations from accounting standards. Even though the onus of preparing financial statements lies with management<sup>2</sup>, the independent auditor provides some assurance of its credibility.

IT/ 21 provides the justification for auditing recordkeeping regimes: recordkeeping is seen as a critical function in any organisation - "making and maintaining of complete, accurate and reliable evidence of business transactions in the form of recorded information"<sup>3</sup>. An audited recordkeeping system provides enhanced records. That is, a recordkeeping regime which is subjected to regular audits ensures a certain degree of confidence that the records of the organisation are complete, accurate and reliable evidence of the business transactions.

This might be seen as a comparable justification to that outlined for financial statements audits. Conflict of interest is certainly not restricted to financial records and this is clearly illustrated in areas such as quality assurance and where legal obligations exist between the organisation and interacting third parties. For example, obligations

with employees, shareholders, suppliers and other stakeholders. The added benefit exists of detection of accidental error or deviation from policies and procedures established internally, other external regulatory factors and the standards themselves.

Within the accounting profession different types of auditors exist which provide a different slant on the outcome of a particular audit. The concept of independence with respect to the external auditor is critical, given that they aim to provide an objective opinion so as to reassure those relying on the financial statements of a company.

Internal auditors are usually employees within an organisation and they are primarily concerned with assisting management. For example, promoting efficiency of the company, checking the accuracy and reliability of financial data upon which management bases decisions and suggesting improvements.

The organisation could well benefit from both internal and external recordkeeping auditors based on the same principles as those of the accounting profession. IT/ 21 prescribes the need for regular performance measurement of recordkeeping systems implemented in an organisation. For companies with reporting requirements or other external regulatory pressures, the added credence provided by an external recordkeeping auditor could be seen as critical.

The essence of the audit function can be traced back to the expression of the audit opinion which is based on gathering and evaluating evidence. The evidence which the auditor obtains must be sufficient and appropriate and obtained through the performance of compliance and substantive audit procedures<sup>4</sup>. Accordingly, the nature and type of audit evidence collected is an important aspect of the audit and I

will expand upon this momentarily. It is important at this point to overview the audit process.

Generally, all audits begin with the acceptance of a client, or the decision to continue with an existing client, and end with the issuance of an audit report. The various phases in between involve different aspects which revolve around the collection and evaluation of audit evidence. This is a key activity in the process. Based on the evidence collected, auditing is essentially concerned with the verification of "assertions" as represented by management.

Once the decision has been made to accept or continue with the client the next step in the overall audit process is the development of the appropriate audit strategy. Three major steps can be identified in the development of a strategy:

1. Knowledge and overall understanding of the client's business.
2. Planning the audit of the business unit.
3. Preliminary decisions upon business unit components<sup>5</sup>.

Audit strategies for individual clients are akin to corporate strategic plans and are based on an appraisal of internal and external factors. Once this is complete a more detailed plan can be constructed.

The auditor can gain knowledge of the client's business from three broad areas: general economic matters, the industry in which the client operates and specific entity related factors.

A sound knowledge of the client's business is paramount as it permeates the whole audit process. The sources available to obtain such knowledge include: previous experience with the organisation and its industry, discussions with people within the entity, discussions with internal auditors, discussions with industry experts, regulators and other external



parties, publications, reference material, visiting the premises and reviewing internally generated documents, such as, minutes, reports, marketing plans, job descriptions, policy manuals, etc..

Applying this specialised knowledge during an audit and at the pre-planning stages is the primary reason for its emphasis. This knowledge will affect judgements in all areas, including: assessing risk factors, evaluating the effectiveness of management controls designed to deal with risk factors, developing the overall audit plan and program, choosing materiality levels, assessing integrity factors, identifying areas requiring special audit consideration and skills, identifying non-arms length transactions, recognising conflicting information, recognising unusual circumstances, making informed inquiries and considering the appropriateness of policies<sup>6</sup>.

The second step in developing the audit strategy is planning the audit of the business unit. This involves taking a closer look at the organisation and identifying the various units which make it up. For example, they could be departments, divisions, geographical locations. Upon identification of these units the auditor then assesses risks, the internal control environment and the extent to which reliance can be placed on the internal controls. These aspects are determined by the preliminary collection of evidence.

The third step involves the auditor making a policy decision on exactly how to divide the organisation to enable the audit to be executed in an effective manner. The components may be financial report amounts taken from the financial statements. For example the individual assets, liabilities, revenues and expenses. Within those individual classifications groups of transactions could be identified as high risk areas warranting detailed attention. It follows that

after identifying the relevant components that corresponding risk factors are attached which ultimately determine the scope of the audit program and the expected approach for each component<sup>7</sup>.

The final outcome of these three steps is a detailed audit plan which involves two major steps: firstly, gathering further information to support areas insufficiently accounted for during preliminary investigations, and secondly selecting actual audit procedures.

Selection of actual audit procedures can be traced back to the auditing standards requirements collect "sufficient and appropriate evidence" which aim to verify assertions underlying the accounting records of the various components.

The audit program is the culmination of the above steps. The program outlines the actual audit procedures, the timing and the extent to which they are carried out, budget matters, specific timing estimates to complete various stages of the audit and assignment and scheduling of audit staff.

A key aspect of the planning phase is identifying and documenting internal control mechanism. During the execution of the audit these controls may or may not be relied upon. Functional internal controls determine whether material misstatements are prevented or detected on a timely basis by the system. Therefore, if the internal control environment is effective it follows that the internal control risk is low and the auditor can place a relatively greater degree of reliance on these controls and will not have to carry out extensive substantive procedures.

Factors which are considered in assessing the control environment include: management's operating philosophy, the organisational structure, assignment of authority and responsibility, the internal audit

function and policies used in information technology. Evaluation of the internal control environment is done via compliance testing. Procedures which may be used include: enquiry and observation techniques, inspecting and reviewing documentation and physical flow through procedures. That is, tracing a transaction right through the organisation and evaluating the factors listed above along the way. In compliance testing, the auditor is concerned about three main assertions:

1. Existence: that the control exists
2. Effectiveness: that the control is operating effectively
3. Continuity: the control has so operated effectively through out the period of review<sup>8</sup>

Other inherent risk factors must also be considered. Regardless of whether internal controls can be completely relied upon, the auditor must perform some degree of substantive testing during the audit. Where internal controls are weak, substantive testing is extended. Substantive testing aims to satisfy some of the following accounting assertions about the business of the organisation:

1. Existence
2. Ownership
3. Occurrence
4. Measurement
5. Completeness & Accuracy
6. Valuation
7. Presentation and disclosure

The auditor determines the optimal mix of compliance and substantive testing based on preliminary planning and evaluation of internal control and inherent risk as described above. These are translated into the audit program and during the execution of the audit where these procedures are implemented the auditor must gather "sufficient and appropriate" audit evidence. A key



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concept in determining "sufficiency" of audit evidence is materiality which refers to both the size and nature of a transaction. The nature of the transaction is important for example where the illegal circumstances or conflict of interest may surround the transaction<sup>9</sup>. The amount or size of the transaction clearly will affect its relative importance.

The "appropriateness" of audit evidence relates to the relevance and reliability of underlying information and any corroborating evidence. For example, the auditor may gather evidence as to the value of a particular asset but secondary audit procedure may not provide corroborating evidence. In this situation, the auditor must gather further evidence to substantiate initial findings or confirm its inaccuracy.

The five main methods of collecting "sufficient and appropriate" audit evidence are described in auditing standards: inspection, observation, enquiry and confirmation, computation and analytical procedures. Substantive audit procedures are applied in an order dictated by efficiency considerations. During the course of the audit "audit differences" are accumulated and unless they are clearly insignificant, management is encouraged to amend the financial statements by adjusting for "audit differences".

Once the auditor is convinced that "sufficient and appropriate" audit evidence has been collected, then an informed opinion of the financial statement may be made. If the auditor cannot come to an informed conclusion then either the audit program must be modified to extend the collection of evidence or in the extreme case issue an inability to form an opinion. Finally the auditor communicates the audit opinion via the official publication of the audit report.

The methodologies and conceptual reasoning underlying financial

statements audits could arguably provide an approach to recordkeeping audits. The premise being the common requirement to collect evidence to support certain assertions. Obviously these assertions will be different for each type of audit given that the outcomes of each system is different. But given that assertions can be equally made about recordkeeping systems, then it may be possible to utilise the strategies adopted and refined in financial statements audits.

Examples of recordkeeping assertions could be taken from the functional analysis performed and the recordkeeping requirements identified:

- Compliance
- Accuracy
- Complete
- Authentic, etc...

Specific procedures for testing and gathering sufficient and appropriate evidence will obviously depend on the individual organisation and this is where the audit methodologies identified in financial statement audits become useful. IT/ 21 describes strategies for documenting business activity through recordkeeping. Essentially the standard discusses capturing, maintaining, preserving and making accessible records to meet business and archival requirements via adopting policies, procedures and practices, designing new systems and implementing them<sup>10</sup>. Therefore to adequately audit a recordkeeping system which aims to document business activity it is essential to have an understanding of business of the organisation - the first major step in developing an audit strategy in the context of a financial statements audit. The benefits of this process in the recordkeeping context are similar especially given that recordkeeping systems aim to document business activity via the satisfaction of

evidential requirements. Primarily, it arms the recordkeeping auditor with the necessary knowledge to ensure informed judgments and opinions result, both during the planning and execution of an audit.

The second and third steps in developing an audit strategy in the context of financial statements audits is also pertinent to the recordkeeping context. The performance of a recordkeeping audit involves an audit of the entire organisation, given that;

*"...Recordkeeping is not the province of archivist, records managers, or systems administrators alone, but an essential role of all employees..."*<sup>11</sup>

Theoretically the recordkeeping auditor could adopt the financial statements approach in taking a closer look at the organisation but instead of dividing the organisation into organisational or structural units it would be more beneficial to use a functional basis for division. This approach would account for all areas of recordkeeping and not just the formal records management system(s) in place. Clearly the analysis of what is required of the recordkeeping auditor brings to light the need for a clear understanding and capacity to apply the theoretical underpinnings of recordkeeping concepts.

The realisation of these steps would bring together the detailed recordkeeping audit plan. Selection of actual audit procedures can begin, followed by drafting of the audit program as described above.

Evaluation of internal controls could further supplement the audit process. The internal control environment and principles underlying internal control mechanisms can be expanded in the recordkeeping context. Specific control mechanisms could be identified in all aspects of the organisation and not just restricted to the accounting system. For example, what control mechanism



are in place to ensure that records are captured? In the electronic records environment, EDP controls may be more relevant. Looking to design specification to ensure that evidential requirements are met. Taken further, appraisal processes could also be subjected to internal control evaluations. What controls exist to ensure that disposals are properly authorised? Has the appraisal process as documented in policies and procedures adequately addressed risk factors in determining appropriate retention periods? Are procedures in place which require periodic review of disposal authorities?

Specific compliance tests of internal controls can be designed to address these questions. The assertions being tested will be the same as those described in financial statements audits: existence, effectiveness and continuity.

Financial based audits utilise statistical techniques to determine the timing and extent of substantive testing required during the performance of the audit. Incorporated are key concepts of "sufficient and appropriate" audit evidence as I described earlier and complimentary concepts such as materiality. These concepts can have application in the recordkeeping context. Recordkeeping systems should be designed and implemented to provide for appropriate levels of evidence to be stored as records.

Given this attribute the relevance of materiality and other concepts described above is clearly seen. The context in which records are created within an organisation gives rise to different levels of risk associated with non-compliance of the recordkeeping requirements and auditing assertions. Functional analysis once again becomes a necessary precursor in determining the application of materiality and other gauges in the recordkeeping context.

The methods of collecting sufficient and appropriate audit evidence would be similar to that of financial statements

audits with primary objective of collecting underlying evidence about the recordkeeping assertions and corroborating or supporting evidence. Inspection, observation, enquiry and reperformance would be the most powerful tools in the performance of audit procedures. In the case of compliance testing on internal controls physical flow through procedures would be most emphasised. For example tracing a particular transaction through the organisation, noting satisfaction or failure of recordkeeping requirements along the way.

The above discussion has brought to light many useful facets of financial statements audits and their applicability to the recordkeeping context. The strategies adopted do provide the profession with some clues but obviously need to be further refined to fit the recordkeeping framework. They do provide an important starting point if only to direct us purposefully. The analysis of audit methodologies should not stop here, prematurely, as the profession could certainly benefit from the expertise of other auditing professions which might prove to be more relevant for the circumstances. An influential implication that comes out of this analysis is the need to accurately define and evaluate recordkeeping regimes and the underlying conceptual framework within practical and operating circumstances. With this knowledge in hand a clearer understanding of the corresponding auditing requirements will prevail.

## FOOTNOTES

1. IT/21 Draft Australian Standard Records Management: Part 1: General Requirements
2. Statement of Auditing Standard AUS 1, Para 9.
3. IT/21 Draft Australian Standard Records Management: Part 1: General Requirements, Foreward, p4
4. *ib. id.*, para 23

5. *op. cit.*, Gul F. A., et. al., p116.
6. *op. cit.*, Gul F. A., et. al., p117.
7. *op. cit.*, Gul F. A., et. al., p118
8. Statement of auditing practice AUP 14- Audit Evidence, para 6 & 7
9. Australian Accounting Standard ASS 5- Materiality in Financial Statements., para 14
10. IT/21 Draft Australian Standard Records Management: Part 2: Strategies for Documenting Business Activity Through Recordkeeping, para 4.3.
11. IT/21 Draft Australian Standard Records Management: Part 1: General Requirements, Foreward, p4
12. IT/21 Draft Australian Standard Records Management: Part 1: General Requirements, , para 4.2.

This paper was presented at the twelfth National Convention in Melbourne September 1995.

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- Micrographics
- Personnel Placements
- Record Retention Scheduling
- Reprographics
- Restoration
- Stationery - Filing
- Storage - Secondary
- Storage - Systems
- Training

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**Tel: (03) 417 3738**



# Branch Reports

## QUEENSLAND BRANCH REPORT

The seminar program continues to be of interest to members. In past months seminars have covered the topics of Disaster Planning, and recovery, To Image or Not to Image, and Convincing Management You Have the Right Solution with Tony

Poynton of Canon Australia. Videos of each presentation are available for \$20 from the Branch Secretary. Forthcoming topics include: Quality Management and TQM practices, and What the Computer Consultant Won't Tell You about your New Computer System.

Planning for the 1996 academic year in the Advanced Certificate in Records Management is underway. A wide range of subjects are being offered over 3 terms.

Phillip Taylor MRMA  
Vice President  
Education and Professional Development

## NSW BRANCH REPORT

The NSW Branch has enjoyed a high degree of success in the latter part of the year and has been particularly active in planning the future direction of the Branch for the coming 12 months. A number of administrative decisions have been made which have enabled the Branch to rationalise its special events by focussing more on Seminars, Workshops and Breakfast events. We have also reduced the number of members meetings, to six per annum and have concentrated on obtaining quality presenters for all meetings. Our 1996 Branch calendar has been produced and distributed to members. It shows all

events and meetings for the year, thus giving members ample opportunity to record important dates.

During the past three months, the Branch has mounted a concerted effort to follow-up lapsed members. Our efforts have been rewarded and we have found that direct telephone contact with members has personalised our image and assisted us in keeping members we thought were lost to the Branch. Furthermore, it has also permitted us to update our membership list. As a consequence, these renewals and new membership applications have resulted in an overall increase in our Branch membership numbers.

We have farewelled the year on a high note the Branch can be well pleased with what has been a long and but highly productive year. Special thanks to all members of Branch Council who again have given their valuable time to promote the Association.

Denis Comber ARMA  
Branch President



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# Branch Reports

## TASMANIAN REPORT

I hope everyone has returned from their Christmas break re-energised and ready for all the records management challenges this year has to offer - there will undoubtedly be many.

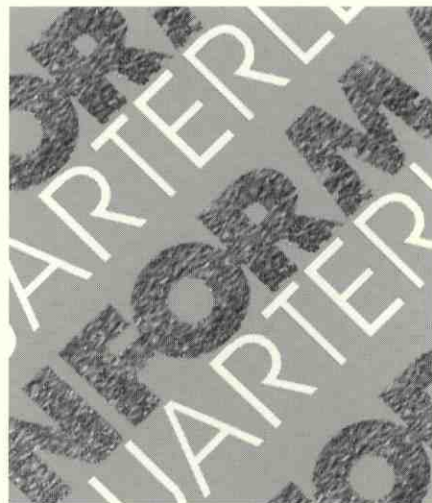
This Branch has planned a most active year with training courses and information sessions scheduled for every month. Training courses have been tailored to cater for all levels with subjects such as Records Management Operations (Intermediate), which is a follow-up to our Records Management Operations (Basic) held last year, right through to such things as

thesaurus compilation, systems architecture and conflict resolution and negotiation skills. As you can see from this sample there will be something for everyone.

With the National Marketing Plan now a reality the Branch can tailor its own strategic plan to complement it and ensure that we are all working towards the same goals. I feel that we all sometimes tend to get lost in parochialism and forget that we are one organisation striving for the same end result. This plan should go a long way towards making us a single entity consisting of eight member Branches, rather than eight Branches each doing their own thing without

necessarily considering the welfare of the whole.

Trish Wichmann ARMA  
Branch President



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# Branch Reports

## ACT BRANCH REPORT

In November 1995 the ACT Branch in conjunction with the University of Canberra held a seminar featuring Dr Luciana Duranti, Associate Professor of Archival Studies in the School of Library, Archival and Information Studies at the University of British Columbia.

She is well known internationally and the seminar focused on her research on the application of the science of 'diplomats' to current-

day recordkeeping. She promotes the concept of archives as places 'where records are deposited so that they remain uncorrupted and serve as authentic evidence.'

In December we held a Christmas Breakfast with Dan Daley from Canon Australia Pty Ltd presenting the Canon Exchange System. Dan's presentation highlighted the need for control over electronic information which prompted many questions and a lively discussion from the floor.

One of our tireless and long standing Council members Kate McCarthy resigned as the Branches Federal Director in November and on behalf of the Branch I would like to thank Kate for her contribution as our representative on Federal Council.

The 1996 Convention is progressing on schedule and we hope to have a full program ready for distribution in February.

J Lenson ARMA  
ACT Branch President

## NT BRANCH REPORT

It has been some time since the NT Branch reported in the Quarterly and my apologies for that. Our Branch Council for 1995/96 is as follows:

*President:*

Ray Holswich

*Vice President:*

Greg Coleman

*Secretary:*

Linda Bell

*Treasurer/Registrar:*

Kay Moody

*Branch Councillors:*

Jenny Zerna

Barbara Klose

Judy English- Ellis

Murray Maynard

Pauline Hollier

Barry Garside.

Barry was re-admitted as an Associate after a long sojourn to his home country and Pauline is the new chum, (approved by Council 6/12/95). As new "Associates" we

extended our Christmas wishes to them by welcoming them to Branch Council the following week.

The Branch is hopeful that Territory records management people will continue to take advantage of Murray Maynards very hard efforts and the RM Certificate course offered by Edith Cowan University together with NSW TAFE courses offered by flexible delivery through the Faculty of Open Learning at NTU.

We have been very fortunate to gain, con or simply co-opt the services of Arthur Langford-Smith (ACT Branch) to assist us with the Storage Media and the Law seminar during March 1996, we are also looking forward to having Ric Barry one of the keynote speakers from the National Convention in Canberra join us afterwards (mid September) for a one day seminar.

Recognition of records management and those working in our profession and/or industry has always been of concern for most of us in the NT

and I guess we are not unique in that respect. The NT government has finally recognised those concerns and the associated problems, so much so they are forming a group to promote and help co-ordinate records management in the NT. I would like to think that other agencies and organisations will be given the opportunity to participate, but I guess the government is a good place to start. Perhaps good records management practices, principles and systems will avoid a Royal Commission on the Top End.

A belated Happy New Year to all our friends and colleagues in the South, West and Eastern States of Australia.

Ray Holswich ARMA  
NT Branch President





# Textbase Software

## The convergence of Database and Text Retrieval Technology

---

In the last issue of INFORMAA, Trimagic Software announced the availability of INMAGIC DB/TextWorks for Windows, a newly released textbase software for records management.

Approximately 30,000 professionals throughout the world use INMAGIC software to more effectively manage records, archives, documents, and other types of textual information. This is because DB/TextWorks has several advantages over traditional records management systems or off-the-shelf database products, principally its flexibility and affordability.

### GREATER FLEXIBILITY TO MANAGE INFORMATION

Unlike many 'hardwired' records management systems, INMAGIC software does not impose a pre-set structure on your data. You, as the expert professional managing the information of your organisation, are free to customise the software in a way that best fits your information, needs and preferences, no matter how subtle or sweeping they may be.

Because all fields are unlimited in length, your descriptions, comments, or any other text can be as detailed as necessary. Just as important, each field can hold an unlimited number of entries. For example, a CONTENTS field may have several entries for one record, and twenty for another. Given the diversity of information within an organisation, flexibility may be an essential requirement for you. In spite of this flexibility, search speeds are still very rapid, because each field (up to 250) can be keyword indexed.

### IMAGES SUPPORTED

DB/TextWorks can accommodate scanned information in two ways. It can store pointers to vast libraries of images (with complete retrieval, display, and reporting capabilities) through an embedded imaging engine. It can also accommodate optical-character recognition to convert paper documents into electronic character-based records.

### MANAGING TEXTUAL INFORMATION

In the past twenty years, organisations around the world have invested heavily in database management systems (DBMS) to manage and control large quantities of information. Primarily, these DBMS capture, manage, sort, report and derive greater value from numeric information - sales statistics, receivables schedules, inventory counts, and similar data. However, total information is not only in numbers, but also in text. In fact, recent studies suggest that at least 70 percent of corporate information resides in a textual form.

Textual information means not just documents, but also electronic files and e-mail. Examples of textual information include: contracts, bids, proposals, customer and prospect information, correspondence, company policies, industry or governmental regulations, insurance policies, resumes, meeting minutes, competitive intelligence, electronic mail, legal documents, schematics, blueprints, even photos or images. This textual information is frequently undermanaged or



mismanaged. Given the large productivity and competitive advantages gained from numerically oriented DBMS that manage 30 percent of the information, it is logical to conclude that similar benefits are accrued through the management of text information.

### THE NEED TO MANAGE TEXT

At first glance, the need to manage text might not be apparent - until you have tried. However, word processing software, e-mail, OCR, on-line databases, and CD-ROM publishing have converged to create vast volumes of text that can provide not only operational advantage, but also strategic insight. Consider the following examples from organisations:

1. A custom engineering firm uses a separate textbase to track all of the documents associated with each of its complex projects. The firm tracks proposal, invoices, bids, contracts, memos and correspondence including author, product type, and deadline.
2. A human resources department creates a resume textbase that is used to match applicants to job openings, saving outside recruitment time and costs.
3. A shop floor employee has instant, unattended access to detailed regulations for handling hazardous materials. With this access, he or she avoids time-loss injury, potential fines, and litigation.

4. A consumer goods firm tracks customer inquiries, comments, and complaints in a textbase. Operators can instantly retrieve recommended responses through a linked knowledge base. By collating enquiry trends, management can identify areas for redesign, recall, or upgrade.

On closer examination, the need for managing text is, indeed, widespread.

Recently Trimagic has provided solutions for information management needs as diverse as a large government department, and a Barrister-at-Law, using INMAGIC software.

The government department located in Sydney had a very large collection of plans, architectural drawings, documents and contracts electronically stored using a standard database product. Due to certain limitations, they required a more flexible text retrieval software which could also display images. All the documents have been scanned and stored on CD ROM, and can now be linked to a comprehensive index to the data which has been created using DB/TextWorks. As this project has not been finalised, the name of the department cannot yet be disclosed.

INMAGIC was also used in conjunction with CD ROM to present evidence by counsel for the one Australia syndicate in a US court. Dr Dayle Smith, Barrister-at-Law and Counsel for John Bertrand and the one Australia America's Cup

campaign, chose this solution for two boat protest for America's Cup XXIX heard in December 1994. He required (very quickly) a portable system which would enable him to rapidly identify precise documents, and display them on screen. According to Dr Smith, the effect of the final product did improve his ability to present the case in a more persuasive light. He said, "The quality of the digital images was superb, and the flexibility of being able to use them in different ways was appreciated".

INMAGIC products and services are available from Trimagic Software, located in Sydney. Trimagic has been distributing the INMAGIC range of products and services throughout Australia and Asia for over 10 years, and our company is an experienced provider of information solutions in the records management field. We have authorised representatives throughout Australia who can assist you in customising applications to suit most needs. Bar code processing, image processing, CD production, records management applications, consultation and training are provided by Trimagic.

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# TRIM for Windows

## Records Management and Its Changing Face

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TOWER Software has continued to develop its product TRIM for Windows and is offering customers a records management system that will effectively manage all types of records whether they be paper or electronic based.

In addition to the traditional management of files customers can through the selection of appropriate modules record, catalogue, relate, apply workflows, archive and restrict access to:

- paper documents
- electronic stores
- archive boxes and,
- electronic records (eg Word, Excel, images, CD-ROM etc).

### FEATURES

1. TRIM interfaces with Oracle and a number of other Microsoft ODBC compliant client/server RDBMS systems.
2. TRIM was engineered from the ground up, using modern Object Orientated techniques and represents a generational; leap forward in records management systems.
3. TRIM was designed in accordance with the Microsoft Standard Windows style known as Multiple Document Interface (MDI) like your MS Word, MS Excel and MS Mail.
4. TRIM is capable of managing multiple and diverse records within a single database (for both paper, electronic records and multiple media).

5. TRIM includes a highly sophisticated retention and archiving system, the implementation of which alone justifies the purchase costs.

6. TOWER Software has been certified as an "Endorsed Supplier to the Australian Government".

7. Leading edge software that will interface with other information management software eg, Watermark, DocsOpen, etc.

### BENEFITS

Apart from having a system that will record paper and electronic documents implementation of TRIM for Windows will provide two significant benefits:

1. ease of use
2. long term savings in resources, time and money

Since the release of version 2 of TRIM in April 1995 over 100 organisations in Australia, New Zealand, USA and South Africa have selected our product. (Refer to advertisement on page 8)

TOWER encourages organisations to talk to us about their records management needs to see how TRIM for Windows can help.

### CONTACT:

**Michael Cliff**  
**TOWER Software**

**10 Geils Court**  
**DEAKIN ACT 2600**

**Phone: (06) 282 4655**  
**Fax: (06) 281 5082**



# Opticon Sensors Close Range Laser Scanner

A new handheld laser terminal from Opticon, the CLT1923, can scan from a distance and at very close range, making it both unusual and very versatile.

Able to read from 380mm - 0mm, the CLT1923 goes beyond the traditional laser scanner that reads only from a distance. It provides a host of good features.

At 190 grams (including batteries) the unit is very light. Use of commercially available dry cell batteries means there is no need to recharge batteries. This makes it very cost effective.

The CLT1923 also has a RS232 port built in that allows direct or remote downloading to a host computer. No cradle is needed.

For easy reading at night time and early in the morning, the CLT1923 is equipped with a large graphic LCD (16 characters x 8 lines) that is backlit. Ability to change font sizes further enhances use by the operator.

Other key features include a high scan rate of 100 scans per second for productivity, an IP65 'splash water' rating for durability, a powerful 32 bit RISC processor for speed, C programming for customising applications and a variety of available memory sizes.

The CLT1923 performs well in many different applications.

## CCD SCANNING AT A DISTANCE

Those looking for a CCD contact scanner that can also read from a

distance will like Opticon's new XLT1000 scanner.

The XLT is packed with nice features. It reads from a contact scan and also up to 130 mm, on average, from the barcode. There is a choice of a 60mm or 80mm scanning aperture both of which have the ability to read barcodes wider than the aperture width. A standard onboard decoder and interface on the XLT means it can connect directly to virtually all computer systems. Interfacing options include RS232, wand emulation, keyboard wedge and OCIA. Using one scanner for all interfaces creates a great deal of flexibility.

The scan rate is programmable up to 200 scans per second on the XLT and the scanner is fast enough to process every scan. This quick sampling allows a fast handling of products.

The XLT1000 can easily read very high density labels, dot-matrix labels as well as coloured labels. And with power consumption of only 50mA (at 200 scans/sec), the XLT1000 is well suited to portable applications.

The XLT's onboard programmable flash-ROM means the unit is not just menu programmable. This scanner has the ability to store a program written by users for specialised applications. Its programmability also provides easy software upgrades for both firmware and applications using Opticon's powerful DMC interpreter language.

The XLT1000 aims to broaden the

scanner's usefulness for those mainly doing contact scanning work.

FOR MORE INFORMATION  
CONTACT:

**Dennis O'Connor**  
**Opticon Sensors**

**Phone: (02) 878 5577**

**Fax: (02) 878 5827**

## CALL FOR PAPERS

Readers are invited to submit articles for publication. They may be in the form of case studies, conference papers, book reviews, surveys or any report which may be of national interest.

Contributions should be typed & double spaced. Please include a short biography together with a black and white photograph.

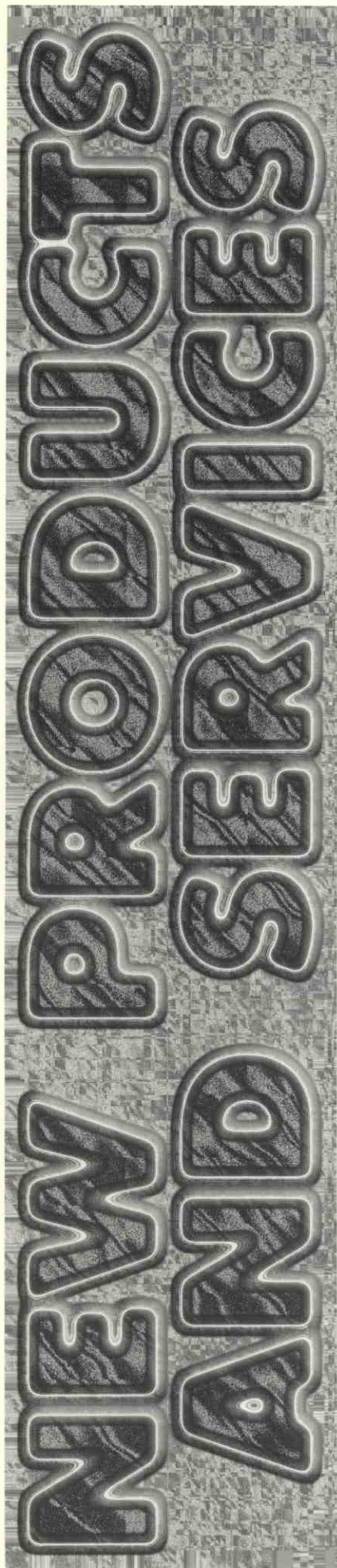
Submissions may also be made in electronic format on a 3 1/2 inch diskette with Wordperfect 5.1 preferred or alternatively as a standard ASCII text file from other word processing software.

Send articles to  
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**Quarterly Editorial Committee,**  
**PO Box 8213**  
**Perth Business Centre**  
**PERTH WA 6849**

**Deadline for the**  
**May 1996 issue:**

**23rd March 1996**





# UCollect Items Management

**E**xpanding and Simplifying your Information Management...It's hard to find information with your hands tied. Traditional systems let you manage and locate files and correspondence. But other relevant information sources such as books, maps, drawings and photographs, electronic documents or geological core, go into separate databases, if at all. You may even have to use a different software package! Then separate searches of each database take forever. Valuable information just doesn't get found!

## **Total records management system for all information sources**

Logical Technologies has designed a system to overcome this problem. UCollect is an innovative, flexible, full-function records management system that can handle all your information sources.

UCollect's focus is "item type" management. It is designed to make the customisation of each item type easy. Your system administrator can set up an unlimited number of item types and can then customise any or all of the following attributes for registration fields for each Item Type:

- field labels; you can use the terminology you want, and it may be different for each item type.
- whether the contents of the field are indexed; you may wish to index the contents of new fields for some item types and not for others.
- whether a look-up (legal list) is to be provided.
- whether entry is mandatory
- the length (up to 240 characters)

- the format: alpha/numeric; date; whether an item is an electronic document and may need to be viewed electronically.

You may choose from 29 fields. Nine of these are linked to records management tasks such as titling, numbering, movements and classifications. The remaining 20 fields are user-defined which can be used for any purpose eg. to record old file names, name and addresses of correspondents or to call up electronically stored documents.

## **Simplifying Information Management**

UCollect can be really useful in simplifying your work and lessening your workload.

UCollect provides easy navigation between records management functions. For example, the Registration screen includes pull-down menus for everyday records management tasks required by you, the records staff: Search, Movements, Actioning and Disposal. You do not have to leave one module to carry out other commonly used tasks.

Searching for information is performed from the one easy to use screen. UCollect's design means that users do not have to nominate which item type and field to retrieve information; the user can search across all indexed fields for any or all item types.

Other features designed to make your task easier include:

- physical or logical cross-references (association) to other items; you may set up links



individually or in bulk with other items, even if they are of different item types.

- online thesaurus for vocabulary guidance during registration and searching.
- structured titling linked to classification schema.

UCollect also addresses one of the most repetitive tasks in records management - disposal. Many records managers find the tasks associated with sentencing and disposal of individual records onerous, but all recognise the importance of the task. UCollect reduces the burden of one-by-one sentencing by providing automatic sentencing at registration. If you use this option, all you will need do is to link item classifications with appropriate disposal templates.

Then those items will have their sentences allocated automatically when they are registered, and sentence schedules will be triggered when the items are closed.

As normal within UCollect, functions such as automatic disposal are provided as options which you choose to apply to relevant items. Depending upon the business rules you set for yourself, you will also have the facility to manually intervene and make changes later.

UCollect "Items Management" offers a whole new approach to the task of managing information, yet incorporates all traditional records management functionality. It is designed to empower records managers, to place them at the centre of an 'information hub' that facilitates decision-making and that covers all information sources

relevant to individual organisations.

**For further information or demonstration, please contact Jenny Robins at Logical Technologies, 2nd Floor, 535 Flinders Lane, Melbourne, Victoria, 3000,**

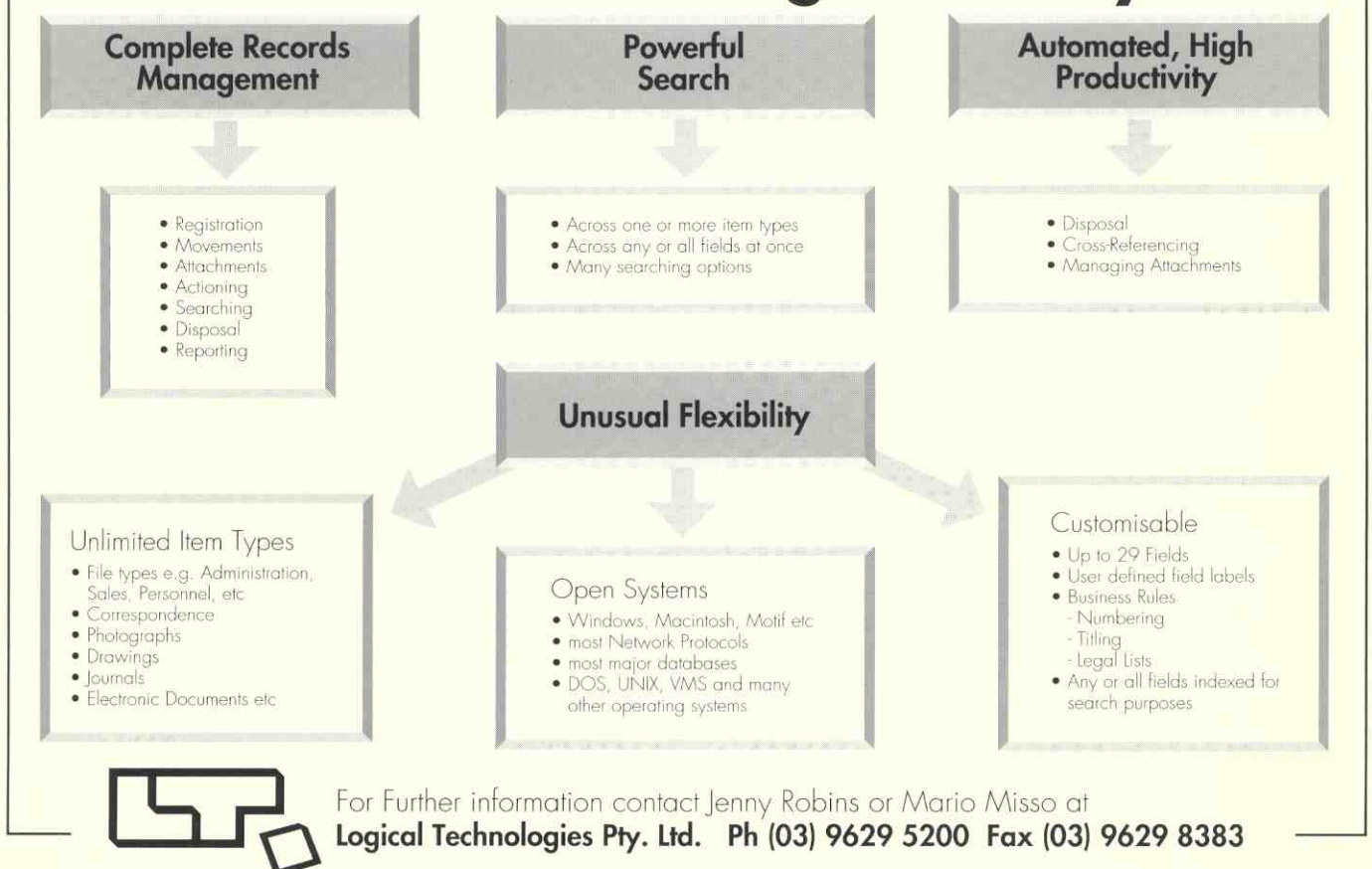
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## UCollect Items Management System





# MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

Professional  
development through  
Branch meetings, State  
Seminars & National  
Conventions

Opportunity for  
Professional recognition  
as Associate (ARMA),  
Member (MRMA) &  
Fellow (FRMA)

Reduced fees for  
conferences & seminars

Branch newsletters &  
Informaa Quarterly

Networking  
opportunities with  
people who speak  
"your language"

# RMAA



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Informaa needs your help to report on the new faces that are emerging in the Records Management Industry.

In every edition of Informaa there will be a new section that reports on new people in new positions or people with new ideas. If you or anyone you know has recently changed positions or developed a new idea for records management, Informaa would like to know about it.

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