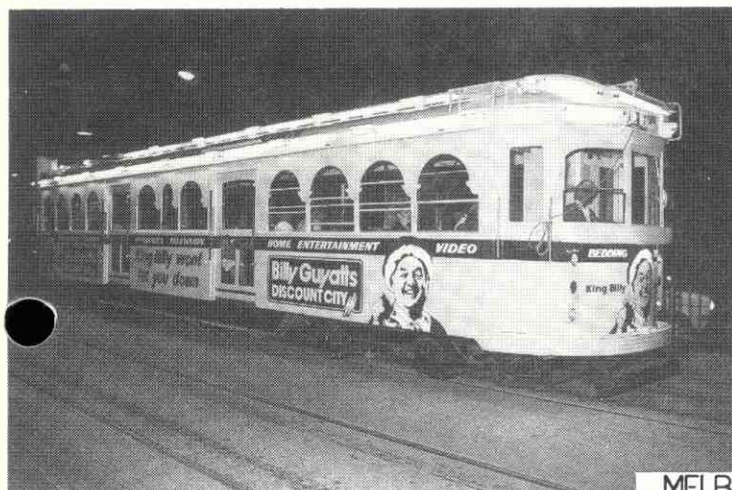


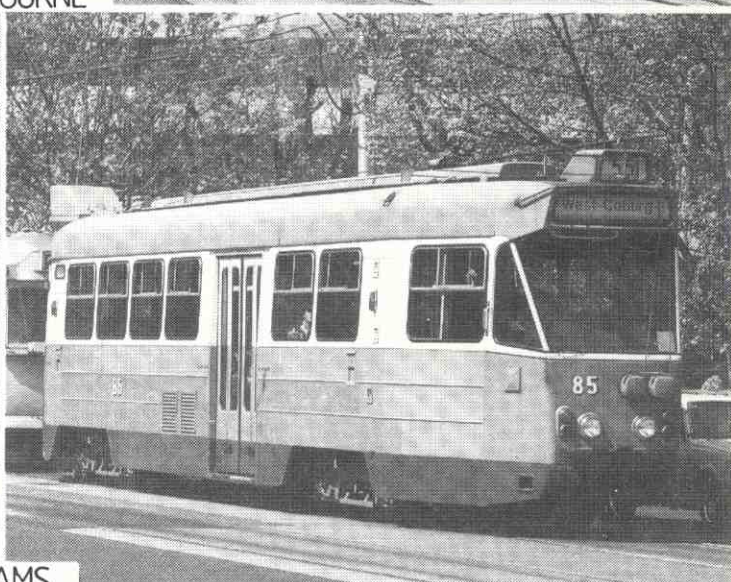


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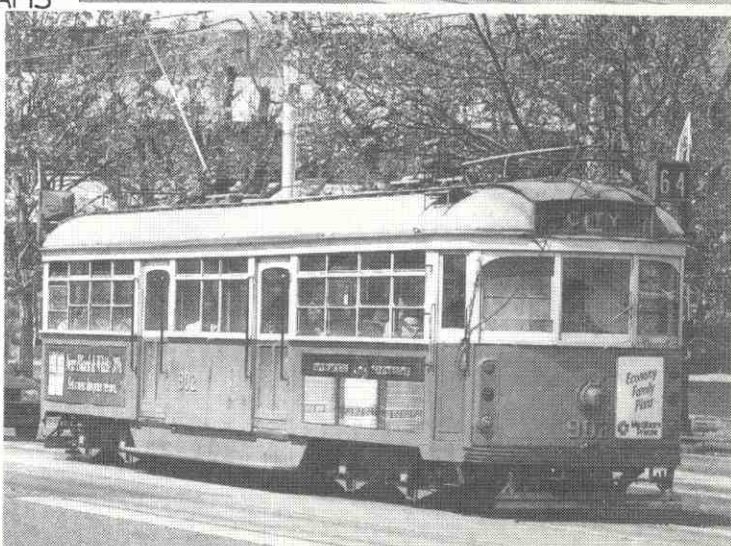
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MELBOURNE



TRAMS



FROM THE FEDERAL PRESIDENT

Another Convention over - so what - you say!

Three years ago we challenged Records Management people within Australia (and a few others) to join together for worthwhile discussions on subjects covering our profession.

Last year we grew a little more confident and dared to suggest the quality of the Convention would be even better than the previous year.

Records Management selling itself? Never! We were taken at our word and people came, two hundred and sixty to be exact. Obviously the Association was producing a commodity that was a necessary one that was needed to fill the void in a thirst for knowledge.

The two years had been a learning process for the Association as well as those attending; none of us really know if we were going to be successful both in terms of "product" or financially.

When the South Australian Branch offered Alice Springs as the venue for the Third National Convention the reaction was, by some not particularly encouraging with remarks like "your got to be joking", but the package the Branch presented was professional and thorough and the confidence grew. The resounding success of "Spring into Records at Alice" is now history, but there are few things that occurred which make this Convention so very important.

Although the venue was remote for some, it was excellent in all other respects and, this was reflected in the numbers attending each session.

The speakers and the subjects chosen were of a high quality and it is important to note the continued improvement each year.

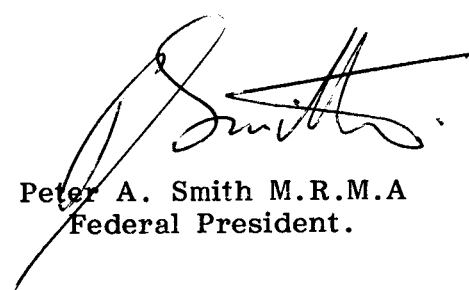
To my mind, the acceptance of R.M.A.A.'s Convention as an important, professional event each year is paramount.

It has now been accepted by Government and private organisations alike, as a conference that their staff should attend.

Trade people budget annually for this event, and with this support, we are assured of a sound future.

So congratulations South Australia for a job extremely well done!

Good luck Victoria - we're right behind you for the "Big One" in 1987.



Peter A. Smith M.R.M.A
Federal President.

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EDITORIAL NOTES

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EDITORIAL

Do we have a theme for this issue or not? Such a heady decision. It seems that every issue has a theme - which means that we would eventually run out of ideas and begin to back track. After much soul searching I decided to forgo a theme for this issue and put in articles of general interest.

But then it struck me - why not give the readers of this issue an insight to Records Management within the Big Australian - BHP, which should be an easy task. After much cajoling the articles were written and submitted for critical evaluation, which thankfully did not require much criticism.

But what to offset this heady look into the bowels of Records Management within BHP and where it is going?

Why not a light hearted look at our profession? A pleasant diversion from the seriousness of BHP, plus a quiz to determine your dedication as an Information Manager?

Thankfully articles were submitted with this theme, so the overall concept for this issue was complete - not bad considering there wasn't going to be any theme at all.

I hope you find this issue of INFORMAA QUARTERLY entertaining as well as educational with its look at BHP as I did in producing it.

I would also like to thank D. Ryan and B. Kennedy without whose assistance and time this edition could not have been produced.

Kenneth Elliot, Editor (Records Officer, BHP Petroleum).

RECORDS MANAGEMENT IN BHP

by Lindy Saul

SENIOR RECORDS MANAGEMENT OFFICER

In a profession where the majority of people are employed in the government sector, one tends not to hear a great deal about the practice of Records Management in private industry. Indeed it is difficult to find literature or packaged systems that are not based on the government-favoured centralised registry concept. This dearth of information may be, in part, because private industry Records Managers are still "getting it together" and, I suspect, because no-one likes to publicise failures.

As a Records Manager to a private company one quickly comes to terms with the notion that private sector organisations do not exist to serve the "public good". They are motivated by philosophies quite different to those that drive elected governments. Records Managers operating in these laissez-faire environments have to cope with the particular problems of private administrations while at the same time providing the anticipated benefits of efficient record-keeping and records-disposition programmes.

PRIVATE ADMINISTRATIONS VS. PUBLIC ADMINISTRATIONS

The disparity between the administrative approaches to record-keeping can be summarised as follows:

1. (a) The public sector is highly regulated in its record-keeping practices by federal Archives Legislation, state archival legislation and the Freedom of Informations Acts.
- (b) Over seventy items of legislation include clauses on record-keeping practices and are applicable to the private sector. No statute pertains specifically to retention and disposal of records (the exception being the various Evidence Acts), the penalties for non-compliance with existing clauses are minimal and liability for their

contravention has not, to my knowledge, been tested in a court of law. The main items of legislation - the Companies Act, the Income Tax Assessment Act, the Sales Tax Act and the Worker's Compensation/Accident Compensation Acts - are complied with as a matter of course, but the same can not necessarily be claimed for some of the more obscure statutes.

2. (a) The level of regulation in the public sector implies a strong sense of accountability which is reflected in government record-keeping systems. The client element dictates the manner in which records are organised.
- (b) The private sector is bound by the same responsibilities to the public and is not accountable to a higher authority for its actions. However in many companies, and certainly in BHP, the "user pays" principle (ie. charges levied for services provided) has considerable impact on records management. Record-keeping systems are only a reflection of the commitment of the organisation and the willingness of its management to pay for upgraded record-keeping systems.
3. (a) Public sector organisations exist in large part to serve the community. Record-keeping systems reflect the range of activities performed at each level of the organisation structure and the passage of these levels.
- (b) Private industry is self-motivated and profit-oriented. These administrations are not great "recorders" of information. Much communication is informal and the perceived need to record all transactions or business dealings varies.
4. (a) Record-keeping in the public sector is for the most part centralised and controlled by specialist staff.
- (b) In private industry it is rare to find centralised registries. It is more normal to find a proliferation of personal filing systems held and maintained by all levels of management in their office file cabinets.

5. (a) Administrative change in the public sector is well documented and often provoked by a change in government. The functions of administrative groups usually remain intact.

(b) In private industry administrative change is usually undocumented, can be frequent (eg. several times over a two year period) and is often associated with functional change.

ORGANISATION OF BHP

BHP is no longer a monolithic giant where all decisions emanate from a central authority. The Company has been diversified into three main groups - Minerals, Steel and Petroleum - operating as independent "businesses" with briefs to acquire/produce, market and sell their products competitively and with due regard to the "bottom line".

Each of these economic units is autonomous in terms of its operation and to a large extent, the policies that govern those operations. With the exception of the Petroleum group, a corporate centre is maintained in Head Office by each division to perform service functions supporting their operations.

The fourth significant "division" is the Head Office administration itself and it is this, together with the "corporate centre" functions of the other business units that records management group is required to service. BHP Petroleum has its own Information Services group incorporating a records management function. They have different correspondence controls and an article on the operation of the system appears in this issue of the INFORMAA. In Head Office, centralised control of records was abandoned in 1983 in favour of decentralisation of record-keeping responsibilities to individual departments. The Petroleum records management function is completely autonomous from the Head Office group and indeed we are pursuing the common goal of control of records and information from a different perspective.

THE RECORDS MANAGEMENT FUNCTION IN BHP (HEAD OFFICE)

The Records Management Group as it is presently constituted was set up in 1984 and took over from the recently disbanded central correspondence registration function. At that time the group consisted of two professionals (one from an archives/records management background, the other from librarianship/systems analysis) and one clerical officer. The group now comprises two qualified records management professionals and two computer/information professionals. The primary objectives of the records management function in BHP are:

1. Establish effective decentralised record-keeping systems that provide efficient files management, information retrieval and records disposition practices and procedures.
2. Establish, using the preferred text-retrieval software BASIS, corporate information databases to facilitate the sharing of information and minimise the duplication of effort associated with information gathering, throughout the BHP group.

The first objective is directly in the mainstream of traditional records management. That is, organising the record-keeping systems that support, by their evidential and informational value, the administrative and operational requirements of the Company.

The second objective is directed at particular collections of records gathered artificially, as a result of a pre-defined need for specialised information. The realisation that the isolated gathering of information by one area of the Company might be of use on a much wider scale if it could be made universally available, led to the purchase in 1984 of the BASIS product.

FILING/RETRIEVAL SYSTEMS AND DISPOSAL PROGRAMMES

BHP moved from centralised to decentralised control of record-keeping because the centralised system was outdated and poorly maintained. Usage within Head Office had dropped to less than 10% of all

documentation produced. At the time this decision was made, there seemed little justification for building up the central registry given that the organisation was already well on its way to being a loosely connected conglomerate of autonomous "businesses". Even within Head Office, departments like Treasury, Superannuation, Transport, operate like self-contained companies and are actively engaged in competition with their market-place counterparts.

The decision to decentralise dictated the type of filing system that would be effective in this Head Office environment. Obvious considerations were:

1. A system that would withstand frequent administrative change.
2. A system flexible enough to accommodate the diversity of functions performed from within Head Office and by the other "divisions".
3. A system with adequate regulation and control, but which could be administered and maintained at departmental level by non-specialist staff.
4. A system that users would be prepared to pay for ie. simple but effective.

Working to these specifications and relying heavily on available technology to minimise the need for manual finding-aids, a standard filing structure has been developed. It is worth stressing that although the structure is standard, the informational content of each department's system is different. The introduction of a "universal" control document, whether in the form of a classification scheme or thesaurus, was quickly recognised as an unrealistic goal.

The System

- * A classification scheme of approved terms is provided for each department based on the major functions performed and the activities that support those functions. While the content varies between departments, the three level hierarchical arrangement of terms (Primary, Secondary, Tertiary), is standard.

- * The classification scheme is supported by a list of non-approved terms cross-referenced to the approved terms. This list contains all the approved terms (in alphabetical sequence) as well as synonyms, commonly used alternative terminology, "pet" terms etc. The main purpose of the cross-reference concept is to promote consistency in classification of documents, however in a strictly manual system, it will also provide a measure of retrieval capability.

- * The approved terms do not represent full file titles. The system has been designed to provide flexibility in naming files and the users are able to make their own decisions about information that should be recorded additional to the approved classification terms.

- * All files undergo a registration process to record and validate their existence. Again, users provide the information for the registration of files by completing data entry forms that record:
 - classification term and number
 - sequential file number within a discrete classification
 - file title and description of file
 - file type (administrative, project, information, confidential)
 - file format (if other than paper)
 - location of file (administrative unit, agency, floor level, holder of file)
 - creator of file
 - date of registration
 - disposal information (review date, disposal sentence, disposal code)

- * None of this information is held manually and no indexes are created manually. All information relating to filing systems, including control documents and of course the retrieval process, has been automated. Every filing process with the exception of completion of the data entry forms and the make-up of the physical files can be performed from a terminal. Indexes are generated from the system automatically or according to keywords specified by the users. The classification scheme and supporting cross-reference document can be produced in hard copy as can detailed reports about file location.

- * Two automated systems have been implemented by the Records Management Group: one uses the text-retrieval software BASIS (running on the Head Office IBM3083 machine); the other is written in the fourth generation language ORACLE and can operate on the Data General computers installed in Head Office and at most remote mine sites. Filing applications on BASIS allow universal searching of databases by anyone able to log onto the IBM Head Office computer; the ORACLE system is application specific ie. it must be installed on a specific machine and the user group is defined by access to this machine.

- * Use of Personal Computers for dedicated filing systems within departments is currently being investigated. Moving towards PC applications would involve trading-off the ability to support multi-user searching however the advantages are seen to be increased user-friendliness and the potential to interface with office automation at a fairly basic level. If a PC-based system was applied generically throughout Head Office, we would consider downloading departmental file registers into BASIS to provide a searching capability across departmental systems.

Disposal Programmes

Records disposal has not been undertaken on a large scale by the Records Management group although this will change with the recent increase of the staff establishment. Regular transfer of records from Head Office department to the semi-current records store and Archives has been taking place for some years. This has been relatively uncontrolled with departments making ad hoc decisions about the required retention period of records, but it has helped clear a large number of non-current records from BHP House.

There remains a substantial problem of non-current backlog which is being addressed on a department by department basis and scheduled for disposal in "particular instance" schedules. Where the records are very miscellaneous and without obvious order, the survey process is strongly supported by personal interviews with the record creators or the most recent custodians of the records. This is proving to be a successful method of dealing with collections of records for which

definite series cannot be identified (in private organisations this is a large proportion of records) and no inherent filing structure applies.

Formal disposal schedules to provide an on-going tool for regular disposal of records will be developed, again on a department by department basis, according to the new filing structure currently being implemented.

We are handicapped in the matter of records disposal by the "user pays" principle: while users can see the tangible benefits of a well organised, effective filing and retrieval system, they can be reluctant to pay for a records disposal programme that does not provide the same quantifiable benefits. We are trying to overcome this by combining disposal programmes with a filing system revision wherever possible.

INFORMATION DATABASE DEVELOPMENT:

Nineteen information databases have been developed to facilitate the sharing of information throughout the BHP group. These contain:

- internally generated information such as speeches and reports;
- Minerals, Steel and Petroleum information showing a record of their activities including customer relations;
- published information collected by BHP and of special interest to people within the Company;
- filing and retrieval systems giving access to information held in departmental files.

BASIS allows flexibility in the way this information is provided by indexing every word in a document plus any additional information required by the user. This indexing capability means that regardless of the original purpose of the document, a user is able to retrieve information on a subject of interest. The strength of a text-retrieval product lies in its ability make widely available information collected from a variety of sources for a variety of purposes.

Two types of information databases are available in BHP:

- The first indicates where information can be located and is for reference purposes. These include the Library Catalogue, Internal Reports database, Photographic database, Minerals Technical Information (mining, mine management and minerals processing literature), Archival and Historical Information etc.
- The second actually displays the information sought by the user rather than referring them to another source. These include Biographical Profiles and Company Profiles databases containing information on customers and competitors of the Minerals Division, Steel Industry Profiles database containing information on the world's steel companies and their operating centres and a Public Affairs Information database containing details of speeches, transcripts, media enquiries, press releases etc.

The major developmental work in the area of on-line information has been covered in the existing databases. There will be new developments from time to time but the next important step in the provision of this information on a large scale is consolidation and marketing of the products we have already developed.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

The Records Management group has had responsibility, with the Corporate Archives, for developing a Records Policy for BHP. The policy covers the correct handling of records through their current and non-current (semi-current and archival) phases and is supported by appendices covering:

- State and Federal Legislation with implications for record-keeping and disposal practices in private industry;
- Archives' collection policy and procedures for transferring records into archival custody;
- procedures for transferring records to semi-current storage;

- guidelines on the admissibility of micro-reproductions and computer records as legal evidence;
- the storage potential of microfilm, magnetic media and optical disc;
- document security procedures.

The policy has not yet been promulgated but we anticipate the issue of such a document will have a positive effect on attitudes towards record-keeping and increase the awareness of managers and administrators towards correct and consistent records practices and procedures.

CONCLUSION:

Records and information organisers in BHP are still handicapped to an extent by the attitude that information is "owned" by particular groups within the organisation. In the Records Management group we are trying to educate our clients and Company personnel generally, that information is a corporate resource meant to be shared. This concept is accepted at the highest levels of the Company, however it will be some time before it becomes part of Company culture.

Attitudes and inefficient record-keeping practices are, for the present, a problem for the "doers" rather than the theoreticians. Our reputation as information professionals and change-merchants will be based on the number of successful systems operating. This in turn will provide a lever for changing attitudes towards the value of records and information retrieval systems. Our efforts are currently concentrated in the grassroots area of systems development and disposal programme initiation, to this end.

YOUR PLACE OR OURS?

Brambles Records Management offers secure offsite document storage and retrieval at rates that are designed to minimise your administration costs. In addition, vault storage protected by a halon gas fire suppressant system ensures that irreplaceable computer tapes/discs are maintained in a climate-controlled environment and, whilst in transit, in our purpose-built air-conditioned courier vehicles.

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**Brambles
Records Management**

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(incorporated in N.S.W.)



BHP ARCHIVES

by Narelle Crux
Corporate Archivist

The Broken Hill Proprietary Company - BHP - is Australia's largest company. It was formed in August 1885 by a group of sheep-station men turned prospectors, to mine silver, lead and zinc. Today it is an Australian-based international resources company with interests in more than 20 countries. It employs 58,000 people and has 186,000 shareholders.

By any criterion it is an extraordinary organisation. There is probably no other example in the world where a company is so proportionately vast and pervasive in its country of origin, as BHP is in Australia. Its directions and fortunes are linked, inextricably, with the economic and industrial progress of this country and with the machinery of its governments.

As a miner of the world's richest deposits of silver, lead and zinc at Broken Hill, BHP was the vanguard of industrialisation in Australia. In 1912 its decision to become an iron and steel producer laid the base for development of a viable Australian iron and steel industry and since the 1960's it has pioneered the oil and gas exploration and production industries. It has had a key role in the development of Australia's mineral resources for domestic use and for export, and in recent years, it has dominated expansion by Australian companies into the arena of international business through overseas acquisitions.

The archival record of BHP is a tremendous resource not only for its administrative value to the Company, but for its broader value, as a document of BHP's place within Australia.

BHP first appointed an Archives and Records Officer in 1966. He died early the following year and the programme lapsed until 1972. In that year, separate premises were allocated and two elderly Company Officers were seconded to the Archives. By 1976 it was recognised

that the work was getting beyond the resources of these officers and, after failing to interest anyone in the Company's Head Office, the first professional archivist was recruited externally. The present staffing level is three qualified archivists, each with Graduate Diplomas in Information Management - Archives Administration, from the University of N.S.W., one clerical officer and one archives assistant.

Since 1985 the archives have been housed in a warehouse-style building, separate from the Company's Head Office, in South Melbourne. The building was fitted-out specifically for its present purpose, and includes separate office accommodation, research, exhibition and processing rooms. An area of 831 m² is devoted to the storage of Semi-Current records and a central storage area of 368 m² houses the archives. The building is equipped with sophisticated air-conditioning, fire and security systems.

BHP Archives is amongst the largest corporate collections in Australia, and is one of only a few in-house Archives operated by industrial companies. It comprises approximately 1700 metres of documentary records; a collection of more than 35,000 photographs; films; plans and drawings; a representative sample of publicity material; in-house journals, and a small collection of museum items representing BHP products. In addition, the Archives operates a Semi-Current Records Repository for records from Head Office departments.

Material in the Archives dates from 1883 to the present and includes Minutes and Papers of the BHP Board, shareholders' meetings and standing and special committees; memoranda and correspondence files; overseas visits, technical, administrative, Half Yearly and Annual Reports, share and property registers; leases, agreements and contracts. Archives has records from 14 Head Office departments; records of Chairmen, Managing Directors and senior Company executives; and small groups of records from subsidiary companies and works' centres.

File control is provenance based. Where possible, records are listed and stored according to the original order used by their creators. The total holding is divided broadly into four natural groups of records and two artificial collections.

The natural groups are, Executives' Records; departmental records; Board and secretariat records and works' subsidiaries records. The two artificial series were unusual cases in which provenance was unknown or uncertain. The first is a group of correspondence dating from 1885 to the mid-1950's and the second is a group of odd records which came to the Archives from outside the Company, from no recognisable source within it, or as fragments from defunct systems or departments.

The principal finding-aid is the series list based on the provenance of records. The contents of the lists are subject indexed at file title level in order to draw together records of the like subject. Almost the entire holding is covered by some kind of list and there are multiple access points to most records.

In 1985, the Archives began the process of converting its lists and indexes for archives and photographs to an automated system. The system is BASIS, a sophisticated, large capacity text management and retrieval system. For this application, the key features of BASIS are its data manipulation capabilities and extensive search and indexing facilities. Automation of the control system for Semi-Current Records is planned for 1987.

The great majority of the Archives holdings are drawn from BHP's Head Office. The management organisation of the Company has traditionally been such that key records documenting policy, forward planning and executive decision-making, have been created within the corporate centre. In recognition of this, some 40% of the entire archival holding are records of senior BHP officers. In general, BHP centres such as Newcastle, Port Kembla and Whyalla, have had operational, rather than policy responsibilities. Apart from plainly historical material collected by Archives staff during visits to centres, this type of record constitutes only a small part of the total building.

This is not to underestimate the potential archival value of operational records created by managers and departments in the centres. Neither does it ignore the difficulty in making a practical and neat distinction between policy and operational records. The problem, however, is one of resources and of responsibility. The Archives does not have the staff, the budget or the space to be a central Archives for the whole Company. Its charter does not give it this responsibility, either - it can advise, but not direct. Moreover, the very desirability of a central Archives for a Company of BHP's size and diversity is questionable. There is strong argument for subsidiary companies, and for works, to maintain their own records, particularly as the structure of the Company has altered to create largely autonomous business groups. They are better acquainted with the purpose and functions of such records, and therefore better equipped to make decisions as to their disposition. It makes sense also, for records to be maintained on site where they are readily available to those who require them for reference. In the "best of all possible worlds", each centre and subsidiary would have a records manager and archivist; some have already taken steps towards this end, although comprehensive records programmes are some time away.

The Semi-Current Records Repository, operated by the Archives, stores records from 50 departments in Head Office, representing a majority of departments. The total holding is approximately 2,200 metres. Retention period for records in this area is seven years. In addition to the storage and retrieval function of the repository, it also manages the security controlled destruction of records. A small percentage in the repository are earmarked for Archives to review, to determine their ultimate disposition. General responsibility for disposal instructions lies with the transferring department, although Archives is often consulted, and can recommend alterations to the instructions.

This form of ad-hoc sentencing also takes place with records which are transferred direct to the Archives. BHP has never had a formal records disposal programme. A Records Management department was only established in 1984, and only now is it in a position to address the

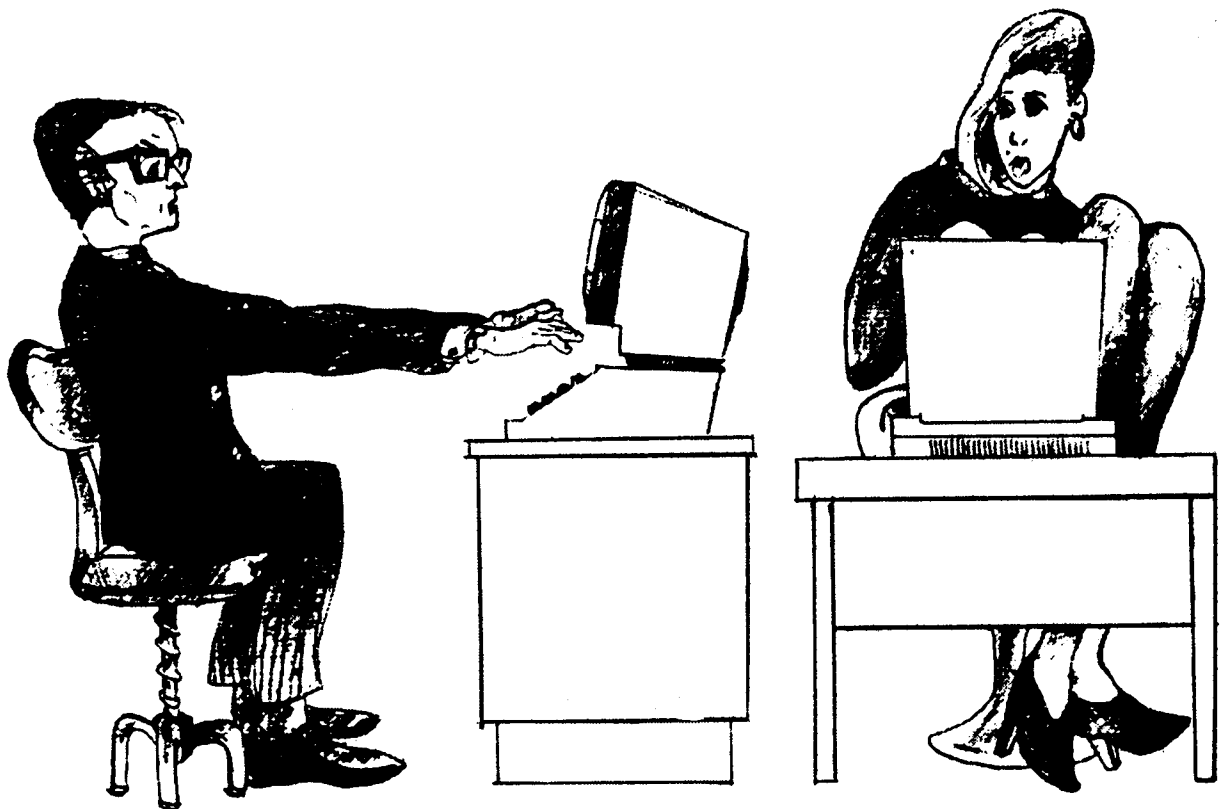
question of records disposal. Although reporting to different managers, Archives and Records Management are both part of the Information and Communications Service department, within Corporate Information Systems. This link allows the two areas to work closely on matters of policy, automation and disposal.

In 1970, a Records Retention and Disposal Manual for the BHP parent company was drawn up, but was too broad in its coverage of records classes and quickly became obsolete. For almost 40 years, until 1983/4, the Company also operated a Universal Filing Index (UFI), for file classification of current records. Within Head Office, the UFI was administered by a Correspondence and Records Department, but its work never extended to the development of a total records programme.

In the absence of records disposal schedules, disposal decisions currently made by the Archives are determined by legislative requirements, and by consultation with BHP departments and with other archival institutions. Careful assessment of the relevance of records to the existing collection - do they duplicate material already held, do they fill gaps in, or supplement, the collection - is also made, along with an element of crystal-ball gazing into the future value and application of records.

Without disposal schedules to regulate the transfer of records to Semi-Current Records or to Archives, the Archives must negotiate with individual departments and with Company Executives for deposit of their records. This arrangement relies solely on good will as there is no power vested in Archives to insist upon deposit. While the Archives has enjoyed considerable success in its arrangements with departments and Executives, without disposal schedules it is not possible to know the total records scene in any given area. Disposal schedules will also help to overcome - they will not solve - the notion, common though not peculiar, to BHP, that records are the property of their creators, and not held, by their creators, in custody for the organisation.

In addition to its principal responsibility to preserve and administer archives and semi-current records, a major part of the Archives' work is occupied with research and reference enquiries from the Company and from the general public. Enquiries from the public are generally of an historical nature and subject to certain access provisions, anyone is welcome to use the Archives. Company enquiries are generated usually by a need to consult records for administrative use. The task of educating Company officers about the administrative value of records is difficult. The view that archives have little value other than for historical interest is still held within some sectors of the Company, and until the use of archives is acknowledged as a natural part of the administrative process, the true potential of this valuable resource will not be realised.



THE GUISE OF RECORDS MANAGEMENT UNDER AN INFORMATION SERVICES UMBRELLA

Sue Hill, Coordinator Information Services. BHP Petroleum Pty Ltd.

INTRODUCTION

This article reviews the development and integration of the records management function within the Information Services department of BHP Petroleum Pty. Ltd. as of October 1986. Records managers concerned with initiating, overhauling or restructuring may find of interest certain deviations from traditional records management practice tried by this organisation. Bold and flexible application of appropriate skills and technologies is encouraged as most likely to meet the challenge of effective records management in a demanding modern environment.

BACKGROUND

Formerly the Oil and Gas Division of "the Big Australian", BHP Petroleum Pty Ltd is responsible for conducting BHP's petrochemical investment and hydrocarbon exploration, development and production in Australia, Europe, Africa and the Far East. Its headquarters in Collins Street, Melbourne (not BHP House!) is the location of 360 of its approximately 500 staff.

Taking its first oil exploration leases in 1954, BHP Petroleum has a well-known joint venture with Esso in the Bass Strait producing 75% of Australia's oil. Other major activity includes 25% interest in the North West Shelf Project (through shareholding in Woodside Petroleum Limited) and being the operator in the Jabiru production development in the Timor Sea.

A decision to integrate and improve information provision within the company led to the creation of the Information Services Department headed by a Coordinator Information Services from January 1984. The following describes records management programs and developments which ensued.

INFORMATION SERVICES

Since January 1984 staffing levels in Information Services increased 66%. Including positions created with functional reporting to Information Services, there has been a doubling in size, with an increase in the number of professionally qualified staff from one to six graduates plus two technicians/paraprofessionals. Whether the management support indicated by Information Services growth (which has kept pace with overall company expansion) is a cause or the result of

visible and valued accomplishments is an interpretation open to speculation.

The following outlines the major units within Information Services and its reporting line through the Coordinator to the Personnel and Administration Manager on the Executive Committee.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- Executive General Manager
- General Manager Exploration
- General Manager Production
- General Manager Petroleum Marketing
- General Manager Development
- Principal Solicitor
- Financial Controller
- Personnel and Administration Manager

COORDINATOR INFORMATION SERVICES-----

- Central Records Officer
- Office Systems Administrator
- Office Services Supervisor
- Librarian-----

Legal Librarian---

Information Officer (Exploration)-----

Information Officer (Production)-----

Information Officer (Petroleum Marketing)-----

This article focuses on the functional concerns within Central Records which are most similar to traditional registries and likely to be of broader interest to Informaa readers than our records management programs for specialised records peculiar to this industry.

CENTRAL RECORDS

Although Head Office responded to various pressures by changing from a central to a completely decentralised approach to records management (see Lindy Saul's article), BHP Petroleum retained the "Central Records" terminology for the organisational unit coordinating a distributed (as opposed to decentralised) approach to corporate records management. The distinction is significant.

Confronted with the same problem of an outdated, poorly maintained status quo, the Petroleum division agreed with Head Office against "more of the same". Development of a distributed records management strategy can be seen in terms of at least four early key decisions:

¹ Both decentralised and distributed systems imply localised, dispersed activity; the difference is that a distributed system retains more centralised guidance and control of that activity.

1. The scope of Central Records and existing Central Records files was redefined to correspondence only (eg letters, memoranda, telex, minutes of meetings, file notes, etc).
2. Unlike head office and most records management programs, indexing and retrieval systems were to address individual documents, not just files of documents.
3. Filing paper into files was to be virtually eliminated as a Central Records function.
4. Microfilmed documents in a sequential (not classified or file) order would suffice as the record copy for most business correspondence.

With apologies to readers desiring more on the supporting philosophy behind this strategy (a worthy topic the author is known to launch into at the slightest encouragement), what follows is how these decisions were put into action.

DOCUMENTS OTHER THAN CORRESPONDENCE

A network of information professionals known as departmental information officers (DIOs) was established to be responsible for storage and retrieval of the more technical functional or operational records in the company. These staff have dual experience or qualifications in both information work and the department's subject area: engineering, geology, marketing, or law. Through functional reporting to Information Services, they help establish and maintain company-wide standards and procedures as well as advise on specialised terminology or needs serviceable by Central Records or the Library.

Administrative reporting to that department, however, was the preferred structure. By thus extending our distributed approach even into reporting relationships we enhance information staff's acceptance, awareness, responsiveness and accountability to and within that department. Therefore each has different emphases (database development, research, report writing, etc) including important records management roles which extend beyond the scope of this article.

FILES AND DOCUMENTS

Records management traditionally sees and uses subject classifications to control file creation or titling or to indicate the file location of the document.

Our division did not see an umbrella subject classification scheme as an unrealistic goal. However, the four objectives we set dictated that the classification tool be put to slightly different uses.

Our classification looks very much like the traditional list of file titles or flexible hierarchy of accepted functional terms permitted in file establishment: each entry has a corresponding file reference or "code".

Although these appear as "Our Ref" on generated correspondence and are still called file refs, they refer only to subject categories and NOT physical centralised files. Because our registration number indicates the location of the document (see following section), multiple references can be and are assigned to one document. This overcomes the dilemmas encountered when attempting to design and apply a classification intent on specifying "the" correct subject file for the many documents which insist on fitting well into several subject categories or files.

This did not happen overnight. Initially our references DID apply to files maintained by Central Records. Having inherited a alpha-numeric file classification designed to suit only Bass Strait activity of interest to a non-operating partner, changing how it was applied had to come after complete revision of the classification to reflect:

- international activity
- new project organisational structures as well as departmental organisational units
- the greater reporting requirements of an operator as well as those of existing joint ventures.

As departments continue to assume responsibility for filing hardcopy for handy reference, there are files in the company identified by these references or subject categories, but the official microfilm record copy is not.

CAPTURE OF RECORD COPIES

More effective capture of record copies of incoming correspondence also needed immediate attention. Until 1984, the mailroom was opening and registering correspondence in a log book prior to delivery -- as long as the recipient didn't object. If/when the correspondence was returned by the recipient it was coded, noted in the register and filed. What an invitation for improvement!

The mailroom now has management endorsement to open all company mail which does not fall into clearly defined exceptions such as private and confidential, Recruiting, Industrial Relations, Personnel or the Executive General Manager's mail. As our objective is selective and intensive coverage rather than comprehensive document control, Central Records staff in the mailroom open mail received via Australia Post or couriers which could contain correspondence with substantial business significance.

Correspondence thus identified as significant is registered, computer-indexed and microfilmed prior to the original being delivered to the recipient in the first mail round of the day. The original is actioned and retained in local working or departmental files while needed for current reference only.

When new secretaries begin or are not providing copies of significant internal and outgoing correspondence as required, Central Records follows up individually or with training/refresher seminars.

Having quickly progressed toward all secretaries having word processing, we are in stage one of capturing the needed documents as computer-output-microfilm (COM). Because such a system reduces for both secretaries and Central Records the time and operating costs associated with producing and filming those paper record copies, we can expect fewer significant items of correspondence to be missed with secretaries, systems and Central Records in this COM collaboration.

REGISTRATION AND INDEXING

The registration number assigned to significant correspondence was altered to a unique identifier consisting of date received (in YYMMDD format) followed by a sequential number that day. (Eg, the third piece of correspondence registered on 14 March 1985 has a registration number 850314-003.)

This registration number uniquely identifies the document, indicates the date the document was received, and specifies the location of the document in the fiche collection.

Indexing details consisting of author company's name, date of correspondence, recipient (BHP staff name), file reference and descriptive heading or subject keywords started to be recorded manually while a simple indexing application was being developed using Script/DCF on head office's IBM mainframe.

The value of introducing such an admittedly unsophisticated computer application at an early stage included:

- enhancing staff morale by giving them higher-status tools to use,
- providing staff with an opportunity to become familiar with computers before introducing more powerful and complex computerised information retrieval, and
- a low-risk means of experimenting with indexing requirements and gathering quantitative data on volumes and processing time involved.

Previous familiarity with IBM software and its accessibility via the most prevalent terminals in the company were the reasons for that choice; otherwise, our Wang system could have done the job equally well.

Indexing of correspondence changed over in mid-1986 to a BASIS application. In addition to a number of minor enhancements to even further improve its greater suitability, we hope to soon start benefitting from automatic indexing, eg tagging and downloading suitable fields from archived word processing documents into the correct field in the BASIS index.

MICROFILM

Having decided quite early to move from labour-and-space-intensive photocopying and/or filing of record copies to microfilm-only record copies of correspondence requiring limited presorting or processing, within several months a small volume jacket microfiche camera/processor (3M's FS6) was acquired.

Correspondence was filmed in registration number order (eg, as received). Critical to the success of this approach was the existence of the computer index: it enabled identification of a document by subject, file classification, company, recipient, and/or document date. The registration number system (discussed earlier) was found to be so effective that several suppliers of fiche cartridge CAR (computer assisted retrieval) systems were unable to demonstrate any greater efficiency possible from adopting their product!

The introduction of a second unit and automatic document feeders on both now handle not only the company's correspondence but the Finance department's external documentation and Industrial Relations material.

THE INTEGRATION CHALLENGE

Before looking at the records management interfaces with other Information Services areas, let's review how moving into COM brought up additional concerns needing to be addressed as part of an integrated system.

In our case, the relatively late introduction of microfilm as a storage media for records was fortuitous. Having amassed a reasonable amount of computer-based documents by this time meant we could develop a microfilm program with source document filming thoroughly COM compatible. The computer-association gave our micrographics program a positive "high tech" character contributing to its acceptance.

Having begun with bureau services for routine financial and purchasing/supply computer data reports, we are just commencing capture of record copies of telex messages and correspondence generated from our word processing system. Although technically the same process as for computer data reports, capturing record copies of telex and correspondence as COM presented more challenging procedural issues primarily because we wanted it done as part of a more comprehensive system addressing document archiving.

This presents a good example of the greater initial complexities encountered when attempting to integrate records management and related document-handling processes. Records staff, secretaries and computer operations administration all have different understandings of "archiving". We are still archiving in the traditional records management sense of sending older files properly boxed and labelled to the specified South Melbourne Archives location for retention as scheduled. But future effectiveness and efficiency rests on current priority efforts to forge a more comprehensive procedure whereby

clerical, computer systems, information and evidence requirements are all met with the optimum interface.

LIBRARY

Although the library's role is to provide access to published and semi-published technical and business information resources, it does handle reports for departments without information officers and is a substantial microfilm user.

OFFICE SERVICES

Office Services is involved in records management in several important ways. One Central Records staff member is actually located in the mailroom to identify and index significant correspondence which arrives through the mail or by courier deliveries throughout the day. Telex operators ensure that telex transmitted by dedicated telex machines have proper file references, are prepared for microfilming before sending to Central Records, and may assist with indexing telexes. Until the advent of extensive word processing and the electronic capture of record copies, stationery provided correspondence packs of pressure sensitive paper to produce identified record and other reference/file copies. Design of letterhead and other forms accommodating file references was due to liaison with Office Services and secretaries.

OFFICE SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATION

Office Systems supports records management not only in the design of the indexing system for testing by Central Records, but by keeping records management issues in the forefront as more sophisticated word processing systems producing the documents are introduced.

Having document level control does enable integration with word processing, which is already a document-level technology. Direct connections would be more difficult to realise within traditional file-level records management. Integration means we build into the word processing procedures or structure certain features which parallel or support records management requirements.

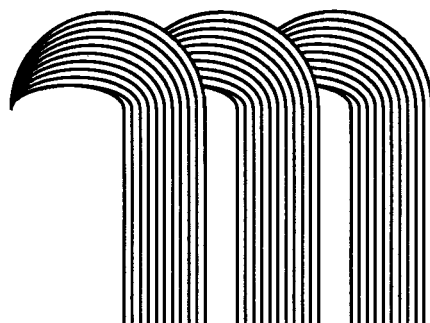
Integration also means we can -- via current developmental work on automatic indexing -- have the computer copy or "tag and dump" data from the electronic record copy of the word processing document into our correspondence index. Having moved beyond writing on cards to keying into a computerised index, we now move beyond straining our RSI-susceptibles to straining our heads to get the computer to handle that chore for individual telex and correspondence.

CONCLUSION

Although much work remains to extract the greatest benefit from our plans and progress over the past couple of years, we feel the steps

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*Most of the sessions will be 1 hour duration
but a number will be 1 1/4 hours duration.*

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*Education and Training
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TECHNOLOGIES

*Digital Image Technology
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Integrating Technologies
Optical Disk
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*Information Systems
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Correspondence Management
Information Resource Management*

RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

*Vital Records and Disaster Recovery
Scheduling and Retention
Files Management
Records Centers
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Records Creation
Legal Aspects
Records Conservation
Classifying and Indexing*

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*Selling Records Management
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* * * PROJECT P R I M E * * *

POTENTIAL RECORDS & INFORMATION MANAGEMENT EXECUTIVE

Speakers stream two (6 sessions) have been set aside for the young up and coming Records Managers (Project P R I M E) to present a particular pet subject or give evidence of a successful implementation of a Records Management system. Two Federal Directors and a chairperson will be in attendance to assist and report with the view of any status applications.

All these sessions will be 1 hour duration

SPEAKERS' PRIVILEGES

Consideration will be given to provide speakers with full or part complementary registration, luncheons, the welcome reception and/or the Convention Committee Invitation dinner on Monday night.

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*If you would like to submit an abstract to be considered for presentation at
the RMAA's 4th National Convention Melbourne 1987,
please complete and return this form.*

*Also, enclose three (3) copies of a 250-300 word abstract
and a brief resume of qualifications and
speaker's credentials on an attached sheet of paper.*

Abstracts are required by 30th January 1987

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION.

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I will require assistance in travel NO YES Part Cost \$ _____

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PREFERRED SESSION STREAM AND TIME

- Speaker Stream One 1 Hour OR 1 1/4 Hours Session No. S1- _____

- Speaker Stream Two (Project PR9ME) 1 Hour Session No. S2- _____

CORRESPONDENCE

All correspondence should be addressed to:

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taken under this information management umbrella were in the right direction. It is not disguised records management; it is the "new look" records management, providing opportunities for professional development and management support for those accepting the challenge.

SCORING

ARE YOU AN INFORMATION MANAGER?

1. A 1 B 2 C 1	7. A 2 B 1 C 1	13. A 0 B 2 C 1	19. A 2 B 1 C 1	25. A 2 B 1 C 2	31. A 1 B 0 C 2	37. A 0 B 2 C 1	43. A 2 B 1 C 0	49. A 2 B 1 C 1
2. A 1 B 2 C 1	8. A 2 B 2 C 1	14. A 2 B 1 C 2	20. A 1 B 2 C 2	26. A 2 B 1 C 1	32. A 0 B 2 C 2	38. A 1 B 1 C 2	44. A 2 B 1 C 1	50. A 2 B 1 C 1
3. A 1 B 0 C 2	9. A 0 B 1 C 2	15. A 1 B 2 C 0	21. A 1 B 1 C 2	27. A 1 B 2 C 0	33. A 1 B 2 C 2	39. A 1 B 2 C 2	45. A 2 B 1 C 1	
4. A 0 B 2 C 1	10. A 0 B 2 C 0	16. A 2 B 1 C 0	22. A 2 B 1 C 2	28. A 2 B 1 C 2	34. A 0 B 1 C 2	40. A 0 B 1 C 2	46. A 2 B 0 C 2	
5. A 1 B 1 C 2	11. A 1 B 2 C 1	17. A 1 B 2 C 1	23. A 2 B 1 C 0	29. A 2 B 1 C 2	35. A 0 B 2 C 1	41. A 2 B 1 C 0	47. A 1 B 1 C 2	
6. A 2 B 2 C 0	12. A 2 B 1 C 1	18. A 1 B 1 C 2	24. A 1 B 1 C 2	30. A 1 B 2 C 2	36. A 2 B 1 C 1	42. A 1 B 2 C 1	48. A 0 B 2 C 1	

GRADE

90 AND OVER

75 - 89

55 - 74

BELOW 54

ASSESSMENT

YOU ARE AN INFORMATION MANAGER.

YOU HAVE POTENTIAL TO BECOME AN INFORMATION MANAGER.

WITH MORE EXPERIENCE, EDUCATION AND ATTITUDE CHANGES
YOU MAY BECOME AN INFORMATION MANAGER.

CHANCES ARE YOU WOULD BE HAPPIER IN SOME PROFESSION
OTHER THAN INFORMATION MANAGEMENT.

THE FABLE OF THE THREE RECORDS CLERKS

Anon.

There were once three school boys who decided it was time to leave school and find employment for themselves. So they wished each other good luck and went their separate ways.

The first school boy came across a job as a Records Clerk. He was very lazy and filed correspondence in the wrong files. The Supervisor noticed this and called, "Records Clerk, Records Clerk, file this correspondence correctly". But the Records clerk answered, "No, no, not by the hair on my chinny chin chin".

The Supervisor drew his breath and said, "Then I'll huff and I'll puff and I'll have you dismissed". Then he went to the Manager and huffed and puffed and the boy was dismissed.

The second school boy, strangely enough, also found a position as a Records Clerk. The office was in a mess, so he set about cleaning it up and rearranging the files. He was sitting at his desk admiring the job he had done, when he noticed the Supervisor walk in. The Supervisor said, "Records Clerk, Records Clerk, put those files back the way they were". But the Records Clerk answered, "No, no, not by the hair on my chinny chin chin".

The Supervisor wiped his lips and said, "Then I'll huff and I'll puff and I'll have you dismissed". He went to the Manager and huffed and puffed and the boy was dismissed.

The third school boy, by coincidence, gained employment as a Records Clerk. He examined the file classification and found it to be in a proper mess. He went through it and cleaned it up so that it could be managed efficiently. The Records Clerk sat at his desk quite proud of the job he had done, when the Supervisor strolled in. He browsed through the classification and said, "Records Clerk, Records Clerk, destroy this classification". But the Records Clerk answered, "No. no, not by the hair on my chinny chin chin". The Supervisor drew himself up to his full height and said, "Then I'll huff and I'll puff and I'll have you dismissed". Then he went to the Manager and huffed and puffed, but he was ignored. The Manager read through the classification and thought it was very good, so the Clerk was retained.

The Manager was not one to accept change and the Supervisor knew it. He was out to make the Clerk introduce changes so that he would be sacked.

The Supervisor sent the Clerk to a micrographics exhibition and he returned with a Microfilm Camera. The Supervisor thought the Clerk would almost certainly be fired for the purchase he had made and sent him to the Manager. The Manager was very annoyed, but when the Clerk explained how much space, time and money it would save, he applauded the Clerk's initiative.

The next day the Clerk did not go to work. This made the Supervisor very happy because he thought this would mean certain dismissal for the Clerk.

The Clerk appeared the next day with a Microfilm Reader/Printer. The Supervisor sent him directly to the Manager. The Manager became very angry, but then the Clerk explained how they could be rid of hardcopy files, because files can be reproduced from microfilm on the reader/printer. The Manager saw the sense in this and was very impressed with the Clerk.

The Supervisor was becoming more and more angry with the Clerk showing him up all the time, and sent him to a Records Management Convention. He was sure the Clerk would do something terribly wrong and be sacked on his return.

The Clerk returned from the convention with a computer. The Supervisor was ecstatic and said, "You've gone too far now, you will surely be sacked. Go and see the Manager". The Clerk went to the Manager's office and sat before him. "O.K. then, how are you going to explain this?" the Manager asked. The Clerk explained, "Sir, the purchase of this computer will mean a paperless office, quick and easy retrieval and we will be able to find statistics on how many documents have been processed for each month, year, department, author etc...Please sir, give me a three month trial and I will prove its efficiency". "Very well then", the Manager replied, "but if you are proved wrong, you will be fired". "Thank you sir", replied the Clerk happily.

Two months later the Manager came into the office and said, "Get me the Personnel file please". The Supervisor replied. "That's easy, sir, the file is at Archives. I will look through the listing and get Archives to send it to you, but it will take a couple of hours". The Manager then said, "That's far too long, I need it right away". "No problem, sir", the Clerk interrupted. "I will have it for you in just a minute".

He logged on to the Computer and found the files location on microfiche. Then he went through the drawer and extracted the appropriate microfiche jacket, turned on the Reader/Printer and reproduced a complete copy of the file, all of which took about five minutes.

The Manager was bewildered, The Supervisor was shocked. "Brilliant work," said the Manager. "Thank you Sir", replied the Clerk.

The Supervisor could not believe his eyes and was quite embarrassed. Later that day the Manager called the Supervisor to his office. "Yes Sir, how can I help you?" asked the Supervisor. "You can't," replied the Manager, "YOU'RE FIRED!"

The Supervisor was never seen again and the Records Clerk worked happily ever after.

THE END

The moral of the story is that ??????????????????????????????

AND HOW DOES MY PAPER WAR FARE?

by Wendy Taylor

Generally, I remained blissfully unaware of the world of records management until I started a job in a small agency of a Government Department. I was in finance, and although my desk nestled next to Registry I could still safely ignore their paradise of manila folders. I knew only that bosses always looked impressive in the shadows of their piles of files.

My boss was no different and, although he sat only a paper clip flick away, all I generally saw of him was a balding pate, shimmering gently under the fluorescent lights, behind his loaded trays. I was content to wrestle with calculations, journal entries and petty cash but, occasionally, a file would land on my desk. It didn't take long to realise if studiously ignored long enough, the files disappeared somewhere.

I returned from holidays and the boss was gone; promoted to another department. I smugly sat and watched the spot where the balding pate used to be disappear behind the ever increasing load of files. I occasionally wandered across and shored up the trays, by poking rulers down the sides, to stop files slipping out.

My big boss finally told me, what with one thing or another, the position couldn't be filled for a while and I was the acting finance boss. It was then that my shoring up works finally collapsed, and the two of us stood and watched files gracefully descend onto the desk like a slow moving mud slide, before cascading onto the floor.

I moved into my new position, and found all the files I'd so efficiently ignored at my old desk had ended up on my new one. I worked hard to diminish the piles. To my disgust, files I threw in my "out" tray were returned to my "in" tray. The discovery that my initials in the right column of the file cover would make it disappear was a major breakthrough. Just as important was the knowledge that someone else's name in the "Referred to" column could make the file disappear for an undetermined time.

I suddenly had an urgent job, and it was necessary to rearrange. I began to feel uneasy a couple of days later when I couldn't locate a file; I had temporarily rested it on top of my waste paper bin to make more room on my desk. The cleaners had taken and disposed of it. I wondered whether I should tell someone, but Registry were scathing enough to those who temporarily lost files, let alone worry about what they did to those who wilfully disposed of them permanently.

Time progressed and so did my understanding of how to handle files. There was no choice; Registry had me classified with everyone else in the office; Total Idiot. File transit slips, bring ups, file requests, cross referencing, and subject indexes were a total bewilderment, and most functions were performed wondering how long before Registry pounced demanding confessions and explanations about the chaos created.

I'm banned from Registry these days. It all started when they mounted a major commando like raid, searching for a very important file needed at top level yesterday. I was way down on the list of suspects and by the time Registry got to me they were rather short tempered. Nothing was sacred, and as they muttered to themselves and went through my work, I slunk away. I'd a feeling I'd taken the file and had left it somewhere I shouldn't have. I finally found it and pondered what to do. If I was caught with it there would be hell to pay, but if it was found in the filing compactus, no one could be blamed. Lacking camouflage, and nearing panic I stuffed the file down my skirt; pulled my jumper over the bulge, and waddled very uncomfortably into Registry. They were still busy tearing my office apart as I innocently disappeared into the compactus.

The papers' fastener by this stage, had firmly entrenched itself into my pantihose and the papers had slipped out of their regimental order and flapped around as I vainly tried to pull it all out.

I was sprung by the Senior Records Manager with one hand up my skirt, the other down it, my jumper around my neck and in the midst of being cut in half by the ever tightening pantihose.

It took considerable time to extricate the file, and some effort to adjust my clothing so I could breathe again.

Now, some time later, files are arriving from Registry again. I'm on life time probation. I know very well, however, every mark I make on the contents, or the cover of a file is scrutinised by them. They're waiting for me to make that one mistake which will safely see me excommunicated for ever from their world, so I'm leaving. There's more to life than Registry inspecting my every move. There aren't many fileless jobs available; but I have found one. No more do I have to worry about being on the receiving end of all this paper warfare; I'm joining the crew who start it all. Next Monday I start as a timber feller for the local paper manufacturer.



"MY FIRST JOB"

by Darren Ryan

THE SCHOOL HAD GIVEN ME THE CHOICE
TO BE EXPELLED OR QUIT
SO QUIT I PROMPTLY DID THAT DAY
BUT LANDED IN THE S__T.

MUM AND DAD YELL "GET A JOB!"
"YOU WILL HAVE TO BE PERSISTENT"
THEN IN "THE SUN", I FIND THE ONE,
BE A RECORDS ASSISTANT.

WORKING IN A RECORD SHOP
I THINK THAT WOULD BE FINE
PLAY MUSIC FROM "BEETHOVEN"
TO THE "OILS" AND "DEVINE".

I WASTE NO TIME, I RING THE PLACE
"HELLO, THE MANAGER PLEASE".
I START TO SHAKE ALL OVER
FROM MY NAVEL TO MY KNEES.

"HELLO THERE, HOW DO YOU DO?
CAN I BE OF SOME ASSISTANCE?".
"YES PLEASE SIR, I WOULD LIKE TO APPLY
FOR THE JOB OF RECORDS ASSISTANT".

"O.K. THEN, THAT WILL BE FINE,
WOULD YOU LIKE AN INTERVIEW?"
"YES PLEASE SIR, THAT WILL BE GREAT"
"TOMORROW THEN AT TWO".

I STUMBLE IN AT FIVE TO TWO
FEELING QUITE CONTENTED,
BUT THEN I TAKE A LOOK AROUND
NOT WHAT I HAD EXPECTED.

FILES HERE AND FILES THERE,
WHERE COULD THE RECORDS BE?
AND THEN MY MIND STARTS THINKING
THIS IS NOT THE JOB FOR ME.

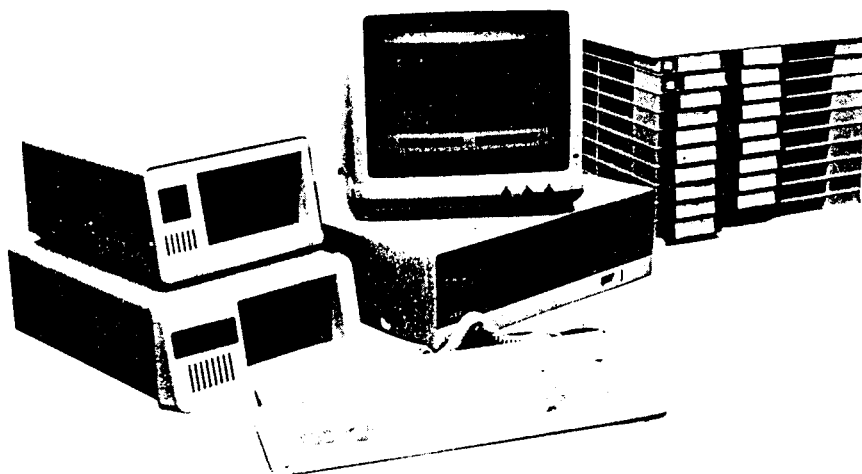
BUT WORK IS WORK, AND PAY IS PAY,
I'LL GIVE IT MY BEST SHOT,
I'D LIKE TO SHOW MY MUM AND DAD
A FAILURE I AM NOT.

MY CONFIDENCE IS BUILDING
AS I KNOCK UPON THE DOOR
BUT NO-ONE SEEMS TO ANSWER
SO KNOCK A FEW TIMES MORE

THEN FROM BEHIND I HEAR A VOICE
I TURN TO SEE WHO'S THERE,
THE MANAGER LOOKING OVER AT ME
POINTING TO A CHAIR.

(cont. P.35)

UNISEARCH®



UNISEARCH MAKES RECORDS INDEXING EASY

Records management can be complicated. Most businesses today maintain several types of filing systems to satisfy their total information needs.

UNISEARCH provides a simple, proven means of creating an index to all your filing systems.

UNISEARCH can save your business money. It eliminates the costly, time consuming problems caused by lost documents, incomplete indexing and inefficient cross referencing.

The UNISEARCH System is more than a records management system. It is designed to be "task-oriented," offering a complete range of modern office technology. This means that UNISEARCH also can serve your business as a word processor, a financial planner, an accounting tool, and a data communications terminal.



**Data
Conversion
Corporation Pty. Limited**
(INCORPORATED IN N.S.W.)

SYDNEY	MELBOURNE	ADELAIDE	CANBERRA	HOBART	PERTH
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C.A.R. (COMPUTER ASSISTED RETRIEVAL) AND RECORDS MANAGEMENT

Record keeping today is more than manila folders and filing cabinets. It involves the capturing and transmission of data, the design of source documents and final reports. It demands that the records specialist be a student of EDP technology as well as record keeping systems.

One of the biggest problems in this "age of information" is what to do with the flood of information being produced. Where to store it? What to store? How to store it? How to retrieve it? How to separate relevant from immaterial? Who better to supply meaningful answers to these questions than the records keeping specialist? Of course this presupposes that the specialist has some understanding of mass-memory and random access devices, display techniques and the many other possible components of an information system. They are all related to modern record keeping systems. Even microfilm takes on a powerful new meaning in record keeping when linked to EDP.

The introduction of Computer Assisted Retrieval systems as a tool for the records management specialist has placed a different emphasis on the reason why microfilm and microfiche is used in a record keeping system. Traditionally this media was considered to be used for archival storage and as a great space saving tool, but most record keeping systems did not use microfilm as an up front media in the system. Paper was the traditional method of keeping the record until such time as it became static or considered ready for archiving.

Computer records were a little different in that they could be magnetically stored and retrieved through VDU's although the vast quantity of reporting for a computer system is still produced on paper causing huge increases in the amount of paper being generated within an organisation. The C.A.R. system is a marriage of computer technology and microfilm which enables both high density storage of active data and almost immediate access to this information. We are looking at ways to work with microfilm to reduce the volume of paper, but it does not necessarily stop at microfilm or microfiche, it can be paper files, optical disk or other media.

UNISEARCH is a revolutionary new approach to C.A.R. systems. It provides an affordable automatic retrieval system for all your office records. The system is fully IBM PC compatible so it can also be used alongside word processing, financial planning, accounting, and telecommunications software. UNISEARCH is designed to be easy to operate, with training time to a new user of less than 30 minutes. It does not require the user to have any computer knowledge, you can configure data base parameters in seconds. To search for a specific subject UNISEARCH will give the location of all records associated with the subject. Locations of documents are listed by storage medium; paper files are by cabinet, draw, and file folder number; microfilm by roll number, and frame; tapes by rack or draw; and books by volume and locations.

UNISEARCH means one search for all records that are associated with the subject you are looking for.

This system is totally modular, from a single IBM compatible PC with a 10 megabyte hard disk and one floppy disk drive up to a large system that could grow to 10 gigabytes, all using the same software.

UNISEARCH is provided as both a C.A.R. software package for IBM PC's and compatibles, and as a turnkey system. UNISEARCH also offers an interface to mainframe computers, so information can be downloaded from the mainframe. UNISEARCH provides many and varied solutions in the record management area, every organisation can benefit by incorporating UNISEARCH into their records management system.

(cont.)

THE MANAGER SAYS "YOU'VE GOT THE JOB
"WHY?" I SOON REPLIED.
"WELL, THE FACT IS SON,
NO-ONE ELSE APPLIED".

I LEAPT UP OFF THAT CHAIR SO FAST
AND JUMPED AROUND WITH JOY,
"STOP THOSE FOOLISH ANTICS,
THAT'S MY WIFE YOU STUPID BOY".

SIX MONTHS DOWN THE TRACK NOW,
I'M HAVING LOTS OF FUN,
ISSUING FILE REFERENCES,
FILING ONE BY ONE.

THEN THAT DAY, IT HAD TO COME,
MY BOSS WAS ON THE PHONE,
SAID HE WAS ILL, HE WON'T BE IN,
OH NO! I'M ON MY OWN.

THEN I THOUGHT, WHAT COULD GO WRONG?
I RAISED A LITTLE SMILE,
THEN AT THE DOOR, THE EGM
HE WANTS THE "EXCISE" FILE.

GOODNESS ME WHERE SHOULD I LOOK
I HAVEN'T GOT A CLUE,
"EXCUSE ME SIR, IF YOU DON'T MIND
CAN I GET BACK TO YOU?"

"VERY WELL THEN, DON'T BE LONG,
I NEED THIS IN A HURRY.
IF YOU DON'T FIND THE EXCISE FILE
THE COMPANY WILL LOSE MONEY".

I SEARCHED THROUGH ROLLS OF MICROFILM
AND THE FILE CLASSIFICATION.
I EVEN LOOK IN RUBBISH BINS,
A SIGN OF DESPERATION.

I LOGGED ON TO THE DATABASE
TO SEE WHAT I COULD FIND
BUT ALL THE EGM WILL GET
IS HIS FOOT UP MY BEHIND.

THE EGM APPEARED
BACK AT MY OFFICE DOOR,
"EXCUSE ME SON, DON'T WORRY
NO NEED TO LOOK NO MORE".

"SORRY SIR, WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
I REALLY THINK I'M ABLE".
I'M SURE YOU ARE, BUT LISTEN SON,
I FOUND IT ON MY TABLE".

MY EYES WENT RED, MY TEMPER GREW,
I WAS REALLY NOT IMPRESSED.
BUT ONE THING GOOD THAT HE NOW KNOWS,
I REALLY TRIED MY BEST.

"THE DREADED BUDGET FILE"

by N. Patterson ARMA

Annual budget time again
and word had got around
that the Chairman and the "top" men
required statistics from all round
 "HIS" secretary was summoned
 and the dreaded budget file was sought
 "this budget file is required -
 or your career is nought".

 As the Chairman's "sec" did seek
 it soon became apparent
 when looking round her desk
 that her files just weren't current
 From yonder calling (the floor above)
 came down a might voice
 "I ring on behalf of the Chairman"
 - it sounded "oh so noice"

 The budget file is needed -
 for annual statistics time
 I'll be down in just five minutes
 was the just and requisite line

 Now the OIC was a good sort
 who got on with his staff
 and came out from his office
 - just as they did have a laugh

The Chairman's "sec" is coming
to collect the budget file
"I want that tome, Brunning
or we'll go a country mile"

 Brunning did the only thing
 any indexer would do
 and looked up all his index cards
 so as not to look a moo

With the file number found
he called to the movements clerk
to see if the file was round about
...or...with Dick...or Mark
 "Put away" it is
 was the call he did receive
 and knowing where to look
 his conscience would believe
Top drawer, third file back
Brunnings fingers at the run
only four minutes in the black -
his job the best bar none

The budget file's not there...
perhaps the drawer below
Brunning still has time,
or was that cheery "hello"?

The sweat begins to pour
from Brunnings furrowed brow
and calls the OIC for more
to seek the file now

Three minutes left to go
the drawer on either side?
still no luck...another row...?
on whose desk could it reside?

The Chairman's "sec" is coming
to collect THE budget file
and someone now remembers running
to collect it from "old Ryall"

Now "old Ryall's" in accounting
hard of hearing and short of sight
but given any figures
can always add up right

"I thought the file was "put away"
- the OIC observed
"in fact the markings for last May
and doesn't seem reserved"

"Brunning check the resubmits
and see if it went out;
last night, or this morning,
or somewhere thereabouts:

Two minutes still remaining
and Brunning's knees did knock
for the Chairman's "sec" was coming
and could really do her block

"Look through inwards mail -
the postal bags as well ...
and even check with the examiner"
the activity was pell mell

Tops of desks and in the bins
the examined files and papers
not put over in the "fins"
...Oh what glorious capers!

Not hidden in a locker room
no time to check the basement
we even looked with a broom
and on the window casement

The sweat did pour from Brunning's brow
the OIC was calm
one minute still to go
and you'll see the file in her palm!

The Chairman's "sec" is coming
to collect THE budget file
the registry is running ...
can you see their style?

A better man than Gungadeen
the OIC that day
as he shuffled through another ream
a shout went up - hooray!

"I've found a budget file"
Brunning was heard to say
the OIC did smile...

'cause it was all about last pay

"The Budget file is in -
with statistics you will find"
the OIC did grin,
he just didn't seem to mind

The staff had sought that wretched file
the "sec" would now report
we'd let her look in every pile
but it would be for naught

The Chairman's "sec" is standing,
at the counter now
But where's the file hiding?
- you should see Brunnings brow!

The counter clerk is quite polite
and takes her to the office
the OIC takes up his chair -
to explain and offer hospice

The Chairman's "sec" is waiting
as the boss clears up some space
his desk all covered in work
as that's the normal place

Under all that mess...
was the dreaded budget file
The OIC gives it over
complete with great big smile

Now the Chairman's "sec" is happy
but Brunnings threatened to kill
anyone who gives him
another case to fill

The OIC's reputation
was definitely enhanced
when the dreaded budget file
was really found by chance!!!

So if this happy story
reminds you of your place...
just remember this...
and keep a smile upon YOUR face.

ED: IT SEEMS EVERYONE LIKES TO BLAME MANAGEMENT!

THE DEMISE OF AN INFORMATION CENTRE -
A CAUTIONARY TALE

by Nancy Houghton

It doesn't take long to destroy the fruits of 7 years hard labour - 26 days, give or take. Not that it would have mattered - it could have been much more - or much less. The end result would only have been a slight variance in the degree of chaos.

The axe fell in January. A nice apologetic little letter:

".... therefore obliged to cut our operating costs as far as we possibly can have decided to disband the Information Centre and decentralise its functions as of March, shall no longer require your services". To be fair, there was a little paragraph at the end thanking us for our "expertise and effort over the past few years" and recognising that "the Information Centre services will be missed by all employees". However - that was it. The end of an era. Having spent the last 3 years vainly attempting to keep this centre in some sort of order - not an easy task when attempting to service anything up to a couple of hundred engineers in the office and about 7 or 8 site and branch offices, I felt a little deflated.

In the prosperous years we had worked a full week - occasionally even managed to get typing and shelving assistance. However, as the industry hit hard times, our hours were whittled away to 30 a week and then, finally, we were put out of our misery. They had their priorities worked out beautifully - we went before the Tea Ladies. Not much before, mind you, but before nonetheless.

The actual death blow was dealt while I was on holidays so I missed much of the initial breast-beating (theirs, not ours!). In fact, nothing actually happened until I got back from holidays in February - well into the sentence. I had been informed by my trusty spies in the office what was afoot - so when I arrived there on my first day back and was confronted with strange looks, averted eyes and general shuffling of feet, I knew it wasn't just my suntan that was upsetting them!

Eventually, the pre-contracts manager (my reporting line within the organisation) shuffled up, asked if I'd had a good holiday, invited me into his office and related the painful saga. Particularly painful from his point of view, having just taken over the Information Centre responsibility a few months previously and having expended much time and effort in listening to my complaints, pleas for action, money, time co-operation etc. We had been discussing increased hours and automation before I went on holiday! The poor man was most upset - and at pains to assure me that he had been totally unaware of the board's fiendish plot until it was sprung upon him. I sympathised, having had fiendish plots concerning the centre sprung upon me numerous times in the previous 3 years. Like the time they moved the entire centre 4 feet to the right, or the time they rotated the shelves through 90° because the managing director didn't like looking at the files but that's another story.

Thus began the great carve-up. The material as with any engineering information centre, was diverse. Journals, trade literature, annual reports, company brochures, tenders, studies, reports, maps, standards, files on everything from growing sugar cane in Bangladesh to mining gold in Papua New Guinea. Plus an enormous backlog of classifying and filing (one of the casualties of the reduced hours). Now, if all they wanted was a relocation of it all, that would have been simple. I could have tossed a coin, pulled names out of a hat, got my revenge on various departments - any number of methods. But no. They wanted documentation, logic (for once) and, above all, workable systems to go with the little parcels of records.

And so began the battle of the memos. There were no less than 26 department heads and 4 branch managers getting copies of my memos. It all started off nicely enough:

"As you may be aware, the centre is to be disbanded and its functions decentralised amongst the various departments.... this is not something which can be postponed".

The reaction was immediate! It quickly became obvious that no-one other than the powers-that-be was aware of the impending demise of their antiquated but cherished Information Centre. The phone rang hot. "What's all this rubbish about?" said the engineering manager. His was one of the more printable comments of the time. Well, I explained. I listened to the expressions of amazement, anger, frustration and I heard some particularly interesting suggestions as to the possible location of the corporate brain, if indeed it existed at all. All very gratifying from my point of view - I'd never felt so needed while I was actually maintaining the centre!

However, as my memos continued apace (some people actually started up a separate file for them) and as they started to require people to actually DO something - and quickly - it became apparent that I had underestimated the nature of the beast. The prevailing opinion appeared to be that if everyone ignored my requests for action, the centre would not actually close down after all but would continue to run in some mystical fashion after I had left.

I decided to sort out the journals first so I could get the subscriptions redirected. I sent a list of the back issues kept in the centre and asked the departments to claim them. I referred squabbles to the heads of the departments. I gave deadline dates for the removal of journals. Not much happened. A few people came and expressed interest in the shelves holding the journals and files. Finally when I had nagged, cajoled, pleaded and bullied without effect until after my deadline date for the removal of the journals, I physically dumped the journal boxes on the desks of the people who had requested them but not collected them, or who otherwise merited them. Redirecting the subscriptions was another matter. People wanted them, but they didn't want the cost to come out of their department's budget. Not my problem, I said. But we still want to see it, they said. Well, I'd better get it sent to your department, I said. But we don't want to pay for it, they said. Not my problem, I said. Some managers stuck resolutely to their guns. My memos requesting new addresses for subscriptions came back with no names, but with suggestions scribbled in the margins: "I think we should establish a practise (sic) of displaying the journals in the Information Centre

for 2 weeks and then sending them direct to the departments which will hold them. NO CIRCULATION IS NECESSARY. We can all look on the centre's display shelf on a regular basis and if anything takes our fancy we can borrow it for an hour when we are ready to read it". I sent this particular gem to my boss with further additional of MY comments: "I was under the impression that there was not going to BE an information centre - no desk, no in-tray, NO DISPLAY RACK. Where will all the centre's mail go?... Who is going to do all this opening, displaying and sending to departments?... The "we can borrow it for an hour" principle DOES NOT WORK, as _____ should know, being one of the main offenders. The journal disappears for months without trace - that was why we had circulation lists in the first place".

The memos continued. Slowly, people began to realise that if they didn't do as I asked, I would bombard them with phone calls and more memos until they couldn't stand it any more and did what I asked just for some peace and quiet! Well some people did - but it became increasingly apparent that the indians around the building (who were, after all, the main users!) were victims of the mushroom syndrome. My next memo started: "It appears that many staff are unaware of the impending closure of the centre and the need to refer to their own department heads for any future requirements. Please would you ensure that your staff are kept informed of events in the areas which affect them". There was a marginal increase in public awareness. The engineering department held a records management meeting. I was not invited to attend, which was a pity because they spent a lot of time making decisions about what they did and didn't want, who would be in charge of various things and so on. Unfortunately, I had already disposed of many of the things they wanted, and allocated most of the others, it being well after my deadline dates of sorting them out! (In fact, I only found out about their momentous decisions because someone who was at the meeting thought it might be an idea to give me a copy of the minutes).

The interstate offices got in on the act - a memo arrived requesting whole shelves of files on selected topics. That was dealt with rather arbitrarily by our marketing manager - he sent me a copy of the memo with OVER MY DEAD BODY! scrawled across it. I then had the task of relaying this message to our Sydney office without severing diplomatic relations between the two offices!

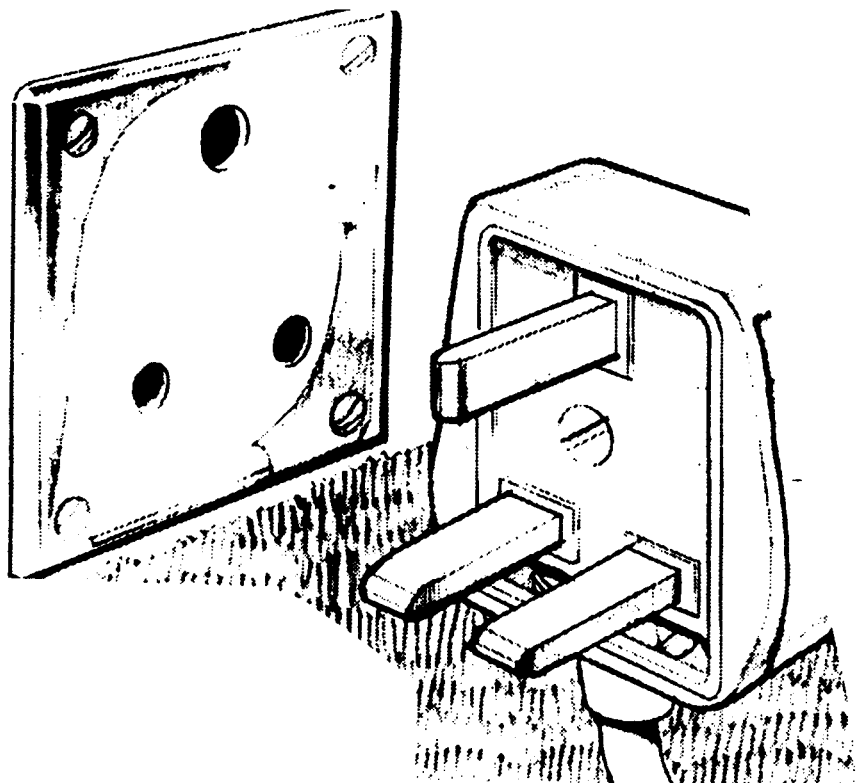
I started to put plaintive little pleas on the bottom of all my memos: "Please note that NO further filing will be undertaken"... "please do not send ANY further material to the centre for inclusion in the existing system". It had no effect. No-one knew what else to do with the stuff. They had always sent it to the centre. The service department was thrown into confusion - they were overworked and under staffed - and any way it wasn't their job to decide who got what. So they kept on sending it to me. In desperation, I moved my in-tray. The stuff kept on appearing - in my pending tray, my out-tray, on top of my typewriter, on my chair! I sent lists of new locations of various files, publications, standards etc. People kept on coming to me for them.

I started to get mean. I appointed people (with or without their consent) to be responsible for the various areas, publications, subject matters etc. I referred all requests to them. I ignored their protests. My memos started to take on a certain edge: "Please note that sending me a list of files required is NOT sufficient. Either you or a representative of your department must come and physically remove the files".

I was asked to keep track of where the files went - get them to sign the loans cards then mark the new location on the catalogue cards so that we would have a central reference. I pointed out that there were nearly 5,000 files and that it would take a rather long time to mark them all up manually with the new locations. I pointed out that it would be quicker to put the whole classification on-line. In the end we decided to transfer the entire index onto computer as this has the added advantage of making the records more accessible. Well that was the theory. The software package which was ideally suitable to the

application had to be purchased - not at all the thing in the increasingly Scrooge-like atmosphere of the place. The computer department looked at it and promised me something just as simple and even better by the next day. Three weeks later on the final day of the information centre's official existence, I had exactly 7 records on line and was attempting to use the 7th or 8th highly complicated alternative version they had come up with.

The final comment on the whole subject has to be the marginal note which I received back on the memo requesting the names of the people to be responsible for each subscription so that I could write to the various publishers and agents and get the subscriptions redirected. Full responsibility for the receipt of the subscriptions would then be transferred to the appropriate departments. My memo came back to me with the note: "This would be ridiculous! Please can we make it one person's job". I went into the writers office and said to him "It was one person's job. It was called an Information Officer and it's leaving!". And I did.



ARE YOU AN INFORMATION MANAGER?

This self-assessment test is divided into four parts. The first three parts consist of 18 questions each. Part 1 deals with how you feel about humans, Part 2 - your attitude toward information, Part 3 - your ideals about technology. The fourth part consists of two conceptual questions as to your beliefs about information management.

The scoring system is designed to help you see if your personality matches that of an information manager. There are no correct answers. A high score is no assurance of success, a low score, no indication of failure. The test deals with probabilities, not possibilities.

1

1. I prefer working
 - a) independently
 - b) as part of a team
 - c) anonymously, like a ghost writer does
2. At a party I prefer
 - a) chatting with old friends
 - b) meeting new people
 - c) having people come over to me to talk.
3. When I find a new recipe that seems outstanding, I prefer
 - a) making and serving it, but not giving out the recipe
 - b) letting someone else try it
 - c) sharing the recipe even if no one asks for it
4. There are times, in a work situation, when I disagree with someone. In such situations I feel it advantageous to
 - a) get in the last word
 - b) let the other person have his or her say
 - c) keep my mouth shut
5. In a controversial issue, I prefer
 - a) someone to try to influence me to change my line of thinking
 - b) to persuade others to change their attitudes to agree with mine
 - c) to believe there are several ways of looking at an idea
6. When a person brings me a personal problem I
 - a) try to advice the person what to do
 - b) let the person air the problem but give no advice
 - c) maintain an impersonal stance and let the person know that home life should be separated from the business world.
7. Occasionally persons outside of my organisation will ask my advice on how best to organise a file of information. I tell them
 - a) the best way I know how
 - b) they should organise it in a way that is convenient for them
 - c) that as a professional I must charge for giving advice
8. When I appraise a person's job performance I base my evaluation on
 - a) evidence that can be supported by citing actual events
 - b) overall opinions that others have of the person
 - c) the individual's personality traits.

9. When I have to give people instructions I prefer
 - a) letting them try to find out how to do it themselves
 - b) preparing written procedures which I distribute to the people
 - c) demonstrating how to do it and then letting them try
10. In the real world of business and government developing a backup person or replacement is
 - a) professional suicide
 - b) a way to allow me to be promoted if such an opportunity occurs
 - c) counterproductive, for a department has only one boss at a time.
11. When I have to make a proposal to my boss for additional staff or facilities I prefer making the proposal
 - a) in writing
 - b) face-to-face with my boss
 - c) over the telephone.
12. I find I work best
 - a) under pressure
 - b) when things are planned and scheduled
 - c) when I'm left alone to develop my own ideas
13. Sometimes I have to ask my subordinates for information. When I do I feel
 - a) embarrassed
 - b) thankful I have a well informed staff
 - c) I must couch the question in a way that will not reveal I don't know the information
14. When it comes to developing a budget with my supervisor I
 - a) feel it is a subject for negotiation
 - b) give my supervisor my wish list and abide by his or her decision
 - c) will ask my supervisor to review the allocation if I feel it is insufficient
15. When I have to give an oral presentation, I
 - a) use visual aids to help me remember my speech
 - b) use visual aids to help the audience understand my speech
 - c) avoid using visual aids because they distract from me as the speaker
16. When I see the need for change in the system I
 - a) take the initiative and proceed in a responsible way
 - b) bring the matter to my supervisor's attention
 - c) feel that in the long run it is best to leave things as they are
17. I think of information as
 - a) a science
 - b) an economic resource
 - c) a way to gain power
18. In handling information I prefer
 - a) posting information
 - b) indexing information
 - c) classifying information
19. The successful manager knows how to
 - a) manage information
 - b) manipulate information
 - c) filter information
20. The thing I enjoy most in dealing with information is
 - a) gathering information
 - b) analysing information
 - c) synthesizing information

21. The most reliable information is that which comes from
- a) a computer
 - b) government records
 - c) interviews
22. I feel that when I give information to a client, I should
- a) filter out what I think is irrelevant information
 - b) give the client all the information I have gathered
 - c) give the minimum amount that is needed for a decision
23. I feel that a person who wants information in an organisation should
- a) pay for the information service
 - b) get the information as part of an overhead expense
 - c) pay only for the amount of information that is found.
24. The type of information I least like to deal with is
- a) marketing data
 - b) scientific and technical information
 - c) personnel records
25. I believe that an organisation should have
- a) one place to go for information
 - b) independant marketing information centres, technical information centres, etc
 - c) centralised acquisition of information but decentralised dissemination
26. Information centres in business and government should be
- a) open to all employees
 - b) available only to professional employees
 - c) restricted to management personnel
27. When people ask for information I feel I should
- a) give them what they ask for
 - b) ask them why they want the information so as to distinguish between what is wanted & needed
 - c) demand a need-to-know before revealing the information
28. I consider information centres in an organisation as
- a) profit centres
 - b) cost centres
 - c) power centres
29. When I don't have access to information a client wants I
- a) refer the person to the location of that information
 - b) tell the client the information is inaccessible
 - c) give the person a name of an individual who works in the field
30. I feel decisions should be based on
- a) information
 - b) information and intuition
 - c) information and experience

31. I have only one reference copy of a report that someone in my organisation has prepared. Two people need the report immediately, one for the management section the other for technical section
- a) I'd lend the report to the person who first asked for it
 - b) I cannot lend the report because reference copies don't circulate
 - c) I'd rip the report apart, lending each requestor the needed sections.
32. I feel that one of the qualities of information is that it is
- a) timeless
 - b) a management resource
 - c) overrated in the computer age
33. If I had my choice, I would prefer information in
- a) books and hard copy records
 - b) microfilm and microfiche
 - c) audio and video cassettes
34. Computers have their place in the information society, but they
- a) cause more errors than they are worth at times
 - b) are best used for scientific and technical information
 - c) are best used to process data
35. Word processing and data processing are not related to information management
- a) I agree with this statement
 - b) I disagree with this statement
 - c) only word processing is related to information management
36. When office equipment fails, I usually first
- a) try to fix it myself
 - b) call someone in the office who is handy to fix it
 - c) call an authorised repair person
37. I feel that typing on a computer terminal to retrieve information is
- a) a clerical job
 - b) a manager's job
 - c) a computer or information specialist's job
38. The reason most companies automate their offices is to
- a) reduce the number of clerk/typists
 - b) show their customers they are modern and up-to-date
 - c) process information more efficiently
39. Information technology has put more demands on managers to
- a) learn how to operate these new machines
 - b) learn how to best use these machines to aid decision making
 - c) safeguard information from competitors
40. I find I get better results when I
- a) retrieve information manually
 - b) retrieve information from a computerised data base
 - c) use both manual and machine methods
41. Facsimile transmission and so-called electronic mailboxes are
- a) good in theory and in practice
 - b) the wave of the future in offices
 - c) showpieces rather than cost beneficial equipment
42. I view the telephone as
- a) an office nuisance
 - b) an office aid
 - c) a necessary office evil

43. When an office copier needs refilling with paper I
- do it myself
 - ask one of the staff members to do it
 - leave the machine and wait for the next person to make the refill
44. When it comes to purchasing equipment for my office, I
- specify exactly what I want
 - tell the purchasing department to make the choice
45. When I am operating an office machine and it begins to make unusual sounds and vibrations the first thing I do is
- pull the plug
 - ask a co-worker for aid
 - try to figure out what has gone wrong
46. I feel that office automation has
- increased productivity
 - demeaned the status of clerical help
 - improved working conditions
47. I believe that the computerised elements of an information centre should come under the supervision of the
- data processing manager
 - word processing manager
 - information manager
48. Video screens and computer terminals
- dehumanise the office
 - motivate me to try to learn how to use them
 - are for the new hires just coming out of college.
49. I feel an information manager deals primarily with
- human beings
 - information
 - technology
50. I feel the best way to describe an information manager is as
- an entrepreneur
 - a specialist in information
 - an administrator



When they said "Allow 28 days for delivery" I didn't realise they meant the answers to the questions.

LETTERS TO EDITOR

The Editor
'Informaa' Quarterly
Records Management Association
of Australia (Victoria)

Dear Sir,

The excellent article by Dale Kreibig (Vol.2 No.2) on "Growth Through Education" contained many good points which should cause all records staff, at every level, to stop and consider the importance of this subject.

Management must be convinced that the time and effort as well as lost production can be overcome and put back into the organisation in the form of improved efficiency. Unfortunately, we are all too familiar with the common problem of refusal requests to attend courses based upon the unfortunate assumption that temporary loss in production will never be recovered.

Records managers and supervisors have the important task of devising training that is relevant and of value to the individual and organisation.

Finally, the list of courses available in Australia did not list two courses in Records Management available in Victoria. Prahran TAFE College has a Certificate of Records Management over 18 months undertaken on a part time basis. Also Melbourne College of Advanced Education has a Graduate Diploma in Archives and Records Management which can be completed over 2 years on a part time basis.

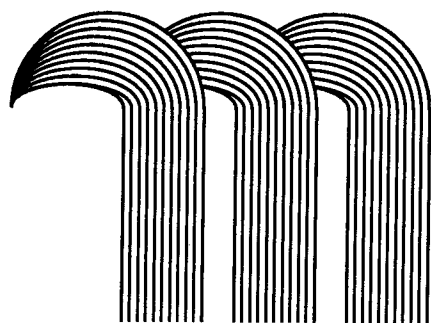
Phillip Taylor
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