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INFORMAA QUARTERLY

vol 19 | issue 2 | may 2003

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Board of Directors met in February to discuss the business of the Association and also to discuss the recommendations from the governance review, which was submitted by the Association Management Institute. I would like to bring to the attention of the members some of the highlights from the governance review.

As the Association is incorporated under the Corporations Law it was recommended that a move to a model whereby the Board functions in a way similar to that of a listed company. The proposed model offers flexibility and the opportunity to incorporate particular expertise.

The Board recommended that members adopt a new constitution, which will replace existing Articles of Association. Professional members will vote on this on 9 May 2003.

Part of the constitution change includes a reduction in the size of the Board from two representatives per branch to one representative per branch and the need for more regular meetings of the Board/Executive.

Another document, which was adopted by the Board, was the 'Rules, Roles, and Responsibilities of Branches'. This document will provide guidance to branches on how to operate in a national association.

As part of the review, the Board identified the need for the Association to move from being seen as an industry association to becoming a professional association. For this to happen all professional members need to join the Association as individual members. (To date professional members could also be a corporate nominee.) A letter was sent to all professional members in April.

The Board also adopted a new fee structure, which was seen as comparative to other professional associations and would allow the Association to employ a full time Executive Officer who would assist the Association to develop far beyond what is currently possible with volunteer directors.

As part of raising the profession's profile, we are once again holding a National Archives and Records Management Week between 26 - 30 May 2003. During this week all branches have been requested to promote the archives and records management

industry through workshops, seminars, open days, etc. Visit our web page www.rmaa.com.au for branch activities. I encourage everyone to get behind this event in your state.

Finally I would like to encourage all members to attend our next International Convention in Melbourne on 14-17 September 2003. The theme this year will be 'Journey into New Dimensions'. This year's convention will be our twentieth convention held since the Association began and our first with New Zealand as a new branch. A number of international speakers will challenge you to think outside of the normal square we live in. I look forward to catching up with everyone at the convention.

Chris Fripp MRMA MAICD AMIM
National President

EDITORIAL

The recent proliferation in records management standards and regulations has added to the records manager's toolbox. These tools provide a consistent and standardised approach to records management, and as such, improve work processes and efficiencies. But have we become obsessed with compliance at the expense of our own organisational business requirements?

When designing and implementing compliant recordkeeping systems, are we also complying with our users' recordkeeping requirements? One cannot adopt a 'best practice' system unless it is best practice for the organisation. There is no such thing as 'one size fits all' in records management.

I suspect there are many organisations out there looking for quick fixes to problems resulting from implementing 'best practice' systems that simply don't meet their operational needs. These problems usually stem from a lack of user acceptance. Even the 'best' systems will fail without proper attention to users' needs. Users will simply not use such recordkeeping systems, preferring instead to continue using or create personal filing systems separate to the official recordkeeping system. Organisations therefore become susceptible to risk in terms of loss of corporate memory.

The recordkeeping profession needs to inject some critical and analytical thought into processes designed 'best practice'. As recordkeepers, it is our responsibility to question why we should adopt certain processes and methodologies. I am not suggesting we rebel against industry standards, or that current best practice is inadequate, but I am proposing that we remind ourselves that best practice is relative to each organisation's needs and should remain dynamic and subject to change.

Stephen Bedford follows this tack and questions the usefulness of the Keyword AAA Thesaurus structure in his feature article in this issue. His February seminar presentation proved a popular topic on the RMAA listserv and provoked lengthy discussions. If you missed out, read Grahame Gould and Liz Dowd's synopsis of the exchange and other leading listserv debates in this issue. This is set to become a regular feature in IQ. Also in this issue, Adrian Cunningham explores the objectives, history, and development of the online resource discovery metadata standard, the AGLS metadata element set.

The publication of the AGLS standard exemplifies how the recordkeeping industry needs to initiate and innovate in order to make records management relevant to users and clients. Let's work together and examine what we do and how we do it to ensure this trend continues.

Virginia Bolger, ARMA
Editor

'We apologise to those vendors whose details were printed incorrectly in the Suppliers List in the February 2003 issue. We have corrected these mistakes and ask that anyone seeking supplier information consult the RMAA Product Directory online at **www.rmaa.com.au**'

Virginia Bolger

SPECIAL FEATURES

CONTENTS

AGLS Metadata Element Set goes national: Enabling online access to information and services

Adrian Cunningham
BA MA

ABSTRACT

In December 2002, Standards Australia published AS 5044 - the AGLS Metadata Element Set, an online resource discovery metadata standard that has been in use in the public sector in Australia since 1998. The publication of AS 5044 confirms the potential applicability of AGLS in all sectors as a means of improving online access to information and services through the creation and deployment of standardised metadata. This article reviews the objectives, history, and development of the AGLS standard; what has been achieved and learnt over the past five years; and considers future issues and directions for the standard.

OBJECTIVES

AGLS is designed to improve the visibility, accessibility, and interoperability of information and services by providing standardised web-based resource descriptions which enable users to locate information or services. Deployment of AGLS metadata enables web-based search engines to do their job more efficiently, presenting users with meaningful and relevant result sets. The development and deployment of AGLS represents government recognition that, while the World Wide Web is a major means of communication and interaction, it is nevertheless a huge and chaotic information space which requires improved means of organisation and user assistance. As such, AGLS is seen as a key enabler which assists individuals and organisations when transacting business electronically with government.

Related public sector projects aimed at making government resources accessible online include: the cross-jurisdictional Internet gateway to Australian government services and information, http://www.gov.au; the articulation of a set of functional requirements for search engines which, when satisfied, will facilitate the efficient exploitation of AGLS metadata[1]; and the development of a range of jurisdiction-specific and other customer-focused web portals to government such as the Federal Government Entry Point (www.fed.gov.au); SA Central (www.sa.gov.au); TasOnline (www.tas.gov.au); the Business Entry Point (www.bep.gov.au); and HealthInsite (www.healthinsite.gov.au).

ORIGINS

The AGLS standard was developed under the auspices of the Government Technology and Telecommunications Committee, a cross-jurisdictional committee of officials who reported to the Online Council of Ministers. The ongoing development of the AGLS relies upon continued cooperation between: the National Archives of Australia (NAA) as lead agency for the initiative; the National Office for the Information Economy (NOIE); Online Council Officials; and, most importantly, those experts who have an interest in promoting online resource discovery and who are represented on the AGLS Working Group.

AGLS AND DUBLIN CORE

AGLS was based on the Dublin Core metadata standard, as it has the simplicity of metadata creation and deployment as a primary objective[2]. It is intended that most Dublin Core metadata can be created at the time of document creation, either manually by the document author or with the automated assistance of metadata authoring software associated with the creation or publication of the document.[3] It was considered vital for any Australian Government metadata standard to be compliant with the world's most commonly accepted and deployed generic resource discovery metadata standard.

The Dublin Core set is just that - a core. It has always been envisaged that particular communities would develop more detailed metadata sets that fulfil their particular requirements and which are based on the Dublin Core. AGLS is itself a core metadata set which is intended to be interoperable with more detailed sector-specific metadata standards such as the geospatial metadata standard, ANZLIC.

The AGLS set adopted the fifteen Dublin Core elements and added four additional elements: function, availability, mandate, and audience.

AGLS ELEMENTS

(Dublin Core plus 4*)

Title	Contributor	Source	
Creator	Date	Language	
Subject	Type	Relation	
Description	Format	Coverage	
Publisher	Identifier	Rights	
Function*	Availability*	Mandate*	Audience*

The 'availability' element was added to encompass resource delivery. Users need to know how information may be obtained or located. This element permits the creation of AGLS locator records for non web-based resources. The 'function' element was considered essential in a government metadata set, as it strengthens the linkages between government online resource provision and government recordkeeping regimes which are increasingly using functional records classification methodologies. The 'mandate' element enables resources to be linked to and identified by the legal or administrative requirements for their existence. Finally, the 'audience' element enables the classification of resources according to the their target audiences.

THESAURI

The Australian Governments Interactive Functions Thesaurus[4] (AGIFT) and individual agency functional thesauri can be sources for descriptor terms for the AGLS function element. AGIFT is a high-level cross-jurisdictional thesaurus embracing all of the functions performed at all levels of government. AGIFT is available for incorporation into government web access facilities such as jurisdictional and topic specific entry points where user-friendly search interfaces can provide seamless natural language retrieval via controlled-language metadata.[5]

Separate functional thesauri are being developed for in-house recordkeeping and resource description purposes by individual agencies. When creating AGLS metadata, agencies may also use suitable subject thesauri in conjunction with the DC Subject element.

AGLS IS SIMPLE, FLEXIBLE, AND DYNAMIC

AGLS's overriding objective is to promote resource discovery metadata regimes that are simple, flexible, and dynamic. Although AGLS consists of 19 elements, only 6 are mandatory. AGLS metadata is designed to be created at the point of document creation. Importantly, however, it can also be added to and improved as documents evolve or become more significant and can be linked to single items or to aggregations of resources.

AGLS metadata can be created automatically, either by customising the self-documenting capabilities of software applications such as records management systems or web content management software or by specially designed metadata generating tools, such as DSTC's 'MetaEdit'[6].

The Australian metadata community is actively exploring how the metadata specified in standardised sets such as AGLS can be cost-effectively created, stored, interrogated by search facilities, and persistently linked to the resources described. Associating metadata with information objects can occur by: embedding the metadata within an HTML document by means of 'metatagging'; by linking objects to separate metadata stores/repositories/databases; or by encapsulating the object with metadata.

AGLS is not a straightjacket. It has been intentionally designed to give organisations freedom of choice in areas where their business needs will vary from case to case. Some choices that agencies will need to make when deploying AGLS include:

- which resources to metadata?
- how much retrofitting needs to be done?
- how much metadata will be created and at what level: item or aggregate or both?
- who will be responsible for metadata creation?
- when will the metadata be created?
- what metadata tools will be used?
- where will the metadata be stored?
- how will the metadata be interrogated by external search facilities?
- how structured will the metadata records be?
- what syntax (e.g. HTML or XML) will be used for writing the metadata?
- which subject thesauri will be used?

AGLS AND RECORDKEEPING METADATA

The prime purpose of assigning AGLS metadata, namely enabling resource discovery and resource retrieval by authorised users, is also one of the requirements of a recordkeeping system. Hence AGLS metadata assigned to records should theoretically be a subset of any standardised metadata set specified for electronic recordkeeping purposes.

So, what is recordkeeping metadata and what does it do? Recordkeeping metadata purposes include:[7]

- unique identification
- authentication of records
- persistence of records content, structure, and context
- administering terms and conditions of access and disposal
- tracking and documenting use history
- enabling discovery, retrieval, and delivery for authorised users
- restricting unauthorised use
- enabling interoperability

There are a number of recordkeeping metadata standard projects of interest here. The University of British Columbia, in conjunction with the US Department of Defense, has developed templates for electronic recordkeeping metadata.[8] The University of Pittsburgh research project on the functional requirements for evidence in electronic recordkeeping has also produced a set of metadata specifications which David Bearman has called his model for Business Acceptable Communications.[9]

Various local initiatives have been pursued with the aim of standardising recordkeeping metadata. In 1999, the NAA published a recordkeeping metadata standard for Commonwealth Government use.[10] One of our aims has been to ensure maximum harmony and interoperability between the two standards, with the intention being that once full deployment is attained the two standards will co-exist within the one seamless, dynamic, and overarching government metadata regime.

Such compatibility should ensure that at document creation, AGLS metadata could be captured as part of the recordkeeping metadata capture process. The AGLS component could then be managed within a recordkeeping system and extracted for migration to a web-accessible environment whenever information objects are to be made visible via the Internet. At this time the recordkeeping metadata could be supplemented by value-added resource discovery metadata (such as subject terms), such is the dynamic and flexible nature of AGLS.[11]

DEVELOPMENTS SINCE 1998

Since the AGLS standard was first issued in 1998 it has proved very popular and successful. Quickly endorsed by the peak Ministerial body, the Online Council, the standard has been mandated by most jurisdictions for use by public sector agencies. To support the Commonwealth implementation of AGLS, the National Archives has developed an AGLS Commonwealth Implementation Manual, which incorporates service description guidelines.[12]

New Zealand has developed an NZGLS metadata standard, which is heavily based on AGLS, and which is an integral part of that country's e-government strategy.[13] Similarly, AGLS is highly visible within the international Dublin Core metadata community and plays a leading role in the Dublin Core Metadata Initiative (DCMI).

CURRENT STATUS OF THE AGLS STANDARD

The AGLS standard, as codified on the NAA website, is now up to its fourth iteration. The standard has constantly evolved in order to maintain consistency with the international Dublin Core metadata standard. The latest version has been genericised for application in both the public and private sectors.

At the time of writing, the content of the standard's web version is identical to the printed version. It is, however, anticipated that the web version will be revised and updated more frequently than will be possible with AS 5044. In any case, we now feel confident that AGLS is a mature and well-tested standard. As such, its rate of evolution has slowed and should continue to slow further into the foreseeable future.

IS IT WORTH IT?

So, is AGLS really worth the effort?

If it is worth publishing something on the web, then it is worth linking it to some metadata to ensure people can find it. An issue which has the potential to make or break AGLS is the cost of metadata creation. It is self-evident that as long as metadata has to be created manually by human beings, not much of it will ever be created. A major challenge therefore is the development and deployment of automated metadata generating capabilities in web publishing software, recordkeeping systems, and other document management systems. As much metadata as possible needs to be

generated and re-used for multiple purposes by integrated self-documenting systems, rather than by human beings.

Other issues that require ongoing attention include: improving the metadata capabilities of commercially available search engines; strategies for organisation-based quality assurance and self-assessment, because bad metadata is worse than no metadata; the sharing of business case and return on investment information from AGLS implementations; and the need for continued experimentation to learn more about the most efficient mechanisms for harvesting AGLS metadata.[1] It is recommended that the AGLS schema be implemented in a decentralised manner and that organisations will assign metadata at aggregate and item/object level, manage and quality assure that metadata centrally, and make it available to metadata-enabled web-based search engines for retrieval.

THE AUTHOR

Adrian Cunningham is Director, Recordkeeping Standards and Policy at the National Archives of Australia. In this capacity, Adrian has policy and R&D oversight of the NAA's work on metadata standards and related initiatives. Adrian is Chair of the AGLS Working Group, Secretary of the International Council on Archives Committee on Descriptive Standards, and Convenor of the Australian Society of Archivists' Descriptive Standards Committee. Before joining the NAA in 1998, he worked for many years as a private records archivist at the National Library of Australia, the Pacific Manuscripts Bureau, and the State Library of New South Wales. Adrian was President of the Australian Society of Archivists between 1998 and 2000.

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FOOTNOTES

1 'Functional Requirements for a Whole-of-Australian-Government Search Architecture: a Report by the Search Engine Working Group (SEWG), December 1997', available at http://www.nla.gov.au/oz/gov/sewg/

2 W.E. Moen and C.R. McClure. 'An Evaluation of the Federal Government's Implementation of the Government Information Locator Service (GILS) Final Report, June 30 1997' at http://www.unt.edu/slis/research/gilseval/gilsdoc.htm

3 See the OCLC site for more information on the Dublin Core and Warwick framework: http://purl.oclc.org/metadata/dublin_core/

4 Standards Australia, Australian Standard: Records Management, AS 4390, Homebush NSW, 1996.

5 http://www.naa.gov.au/recordkeeping/gov_online/agift/summary.html

6 D. Robert and M. Hoy. 'Understanding Government Bureauspeak: Natural Language Searching and Government Thesauri', National Archives of Australia website: http://www.naa.gov.au/recordkeeping/gov_online/agift/gov_term/intro.html

7 Information on MetaEdit: http://www.dstc.edu.au/Products/metaSuite/

8 S. McKemmish, A. Cunningham, and D. Parer, 'Metadata Mania', presented at the 1998 Annual Conference of the Australian Society of Archivists, Fremantle, August 1998: http://www.sims.monash.edu.au/rcrg/

9 University of British Columbia's research project 'The Preservation of the Integrity of Electronic Records' at http://www.slais.ubc.ca/users/duranti/

10 Pittsburgh Project's 'Functional Requirements for Evidence in Recordkeeping' at www.archimuse.com/papers/nhprc/

11 National Archives of Australia, Recordkeeping Metadata Standard for Commonwealth Agencies, Version 1.0, 1999. http://www.naa.gov.au/recordkeeping/control/rkms/summary.htm

12 Monash University SPIRT Project: http://www.sims.monash.edu.au/research/rcrg/research/spirt/index.html

13 Monash University together with the National Archives of Australia, New South Wales State Records, and the Australian Society of Archivists have been awarded a three-year (2003-2005) Australian Research Council Linkage Research grant for a research a project titled 'Create once, use many Times - The clever use of Metadata in eGovernment and eBusiness Recordkeeping Processes in Networked Environments'.

14 National Archives of Australia, Commonwealth Implementation Manual: AGLS Metadata, version 1.1, December 2002, at http://www.naa.gov.au/recordkeeping/gov_online/agls/cim_manual.html

15 NZGLS home page: http://www.egovernment.govt.nz/nzgls/standard/index.asp

16 The Federal Government entry point requires agencies to publish XML-based Harvest Control Lists to facilitate metadata harvesting. Another harvesting option is the Open Archives Initiative (OAI) protocol, see: Clifford Lynch, 'Metadata Harvesting and the Open Archives Initiative', ARL Bimonthly report 217, August 2001, http://www.clir.org/pubs/abstract/pub100abst.html

The Thesaurus is Dead

Stephen Bedford

ABSTRACT

Since Keyword AAA was released in 1995, its structure has been recognised as best practice for records classification. This structure, based on the ISO 2788 Thesaurus Standard combined with the Function - Activity - Transaction approach of AS/ISO 15489 the Australian/International Standard on Records Management, contains some grammatical flaws. These flaws, alternative solutions, and the work of the Australian Standards records classification sub-committee will be discussed in this paper.

DEFINITIONS

In the field of records management there are many different interpretations of words like 'thesaurus' and 'classification' (which is mildly amusing, if you think about it). I will use the following definitions:

Alphabetical Thesaurus - An alphabetical representation of an hierarchical records classification scheme. The thesaurus acts as a guide to allocating classification terms to individual records.

Records Classification Scheme - An hierarchical classification scheme based on the business activities which generate records. Also called 'file plan', 'hierarchical thesaurus', and 'business or business activity classification scheme' (see below). Used to allocate classification terms to individual records.

Business Classification Scheme - A conceptual model of what an organisation does and how it does it. It identifies and documents each business function, activity, transaction; and documents the flow of business processes and the transactions which comprise them. Used to design and implement recordkeeping systems, but not used to actually allocate classification terms to individual records. Not dealt with in this article.

AIMS OF CLASSIFICATION

The benefits of a functional classification scheme are identified as:

a providing linkages between individual records which cumulate to provide a continuous record of activity;

b ensuring records are named in a consistent manner over time;

c assisting in the retrieval of all records relating to a particular activity;

d determining security protection and access appropriate for sets of records;

e allocating user permissions for access to or action on particular groups of records;

f distributing responsibility for management of particular sets of records; and

g distributing records for action;

h determining appropriate retention periods and disposal actions for records.[1]'

Despite this statement from AS/ISO 15489.1, not many organisations have actually designed their records systems to meet aims (d) to (h), especially those using an alphabetical thesaurus. Software developers have been frustrated in their attempt to meet this aim, and for good reason - there is a structural flaw in the

construction of alphabetical records management thesauruses.

STRUCTURAL FLAW

This structural flaw is based on the way the international standard for the construction of (mainly subject based) thesauruses (mainly for library use), ISO 2788, has been implemented to reflect organisations' functions and activities.

Relationships between terms in records management alphabetical thesauruses work by stringing together a number of concepts to describe the exact concept required.

While ISO 2788 does briefly deal with these sorts of relationships, it is mostly concerned with relationships designed to direct the user to a single classification term at the correct level, e.g. 'cats is too general, I need domestic cats'. As well, records management alphabetical thesauruses often use the same narrower term under more than one broader term. This is much less common in subject library thesauruses (though it is allowed , see ISO 2788, 8.3.7).

Records classification schemes are arranged hierarchically. In this hierarchical arrangement, the only way for a user to classify material is to work from the top of the hierarchy down. Users often find this difficult, as it requires them to start with a very broad, and sometimes theoretical and arbitrary concept of a function, through to the specific concept that they are trying to classify.

Records management thesauruses address this issue by their alphabetic arrangement, which allows a user to enter at any level of the hierarchy. Although the terms are arranged alphabetically, the position in the hierarchy is represented using the conventions of ISO 2788. These conventions work by indicating relationships to the term higher in the hierarchy (broader tem), and lower in the hierarchy (narrower term).

The structural weakness in this approach is caused by a combination of two factors:

- relationships in an alphabetical thesaurus are only drawn to one level in either direction, and
- narrower terms often appear under more than one broader term.

This means that a term at the second level of the hierarchy can have many broader terms, and many narrower terms, but not all these broader terms make sense when put together with the narrower terms. Records management consultant, Barbara Reed has named this the 'loss of context' problem.

FLEET MANAGEMENT — GOAT MANAGEMENT

LICENSING

LICENSE PLATES   GOAT TAGS

For example, a local council is responsible for managing their fleet of vehicles, covered by the 'Fleet Management' function. The Council is also responsible for controlling the local goat population under the Dog and Goat Act of 1898 (now, sadly repealed). Hence they are involved in the function of 'Goat Management'. They apply for licenses for their cars, and the cars have license plates. They grant licenses to goat owners, and give the owners tags to affix to their goats.

The alphabetical thesaurus entry for 'licensing' (the second level term or activity descriptor under both functions) would look like this:

LICENSING
Broader Term

FLEET MANAGEMENT
GOAT MANAGEMENT

Narrower Term   Goat tags
Licence plates

This entry would allow the following classification strings:

- FLEET MANAGEMENT - LICENSING - Licence Plates
- GOAT MANAGEMENT - LICENSING - Goat Tags
- FLEET MANAGEMENT - LICENSING - Goat Tags
- GOAT MANAGEMENT - LICENSING - License plates

Clearly it would be impossible to have a default workflow, security, or disposal sentence for 'Fleet Management - Licensing - Goat Tags', as this concept is nonsensical.

RECORDS CLASSIFICATION SCHEME

A records classification scheme spells out the hierarchy of terms in their allowable combinations only, and preserves the context of the terms by presenting the entire classification string from broadest to narrowest term. The issue remains of how users can enter the hierarchy at any level, rather than navigating down from the top of the hierarchy. The answer is simple - load the records classification scheme on to a searchable database. A search for a term would present the full string of all allowable instances of that term. Preferred term functionality could also be easily built in to the database version.

FUNCTION - ACTIVITY - TRANSACTION?

AS/ISO 15489 strongly hints that records classification tools should be arranged according to the Function - Activity - Transaction format. *Keyword AAA* is the most popular thesaurus based on this

model. Each classification string can only have one function term, and one activity term (more than one subject can be used if required)[2].

This is quite logical and internally consistent, but does lead to some practical difficulties. For example classifying a recruitment policy poses problems, as both 'policy' and 'recruitment' are activity descriptors. You could just classify it 'recruitment' and put 'policy' in the free text (or vice versa), but then you would lose all the benefits of classification in the first place.

How has this come about? I think that there are two types of activity descriptors - sub functions and modifiers. Sub functions are lower functions under a top function, e.g. 'Recruitment' is a sub function of 'Personnel'. Modifiers are processes (usually abstract or vague) that could typically be applied to almost any keywords (e.g. 'Evaluation', 'Policy', 'Reporting', etc.).

How strictly should we adhere to the Function - Activity -Transaction model? *AS/ISO 15 489.2* offers some clues:

'The structure of a classification system is *usually* hierarchical and reflects the analytical process as follows:

a The first level *usually* reflects the business function

b The second level is based on the activities constituting the function

c The third and subsequent levels are further refinements of the activities or groups of transactions that take place within each activity'.

The degree of refinement of a classification system is at the discretion of the organisation and reflects the complexity of the function undertaken within the organisation.' (4.2.2.2) (my emphasis).

Personally, I tend not to think in the black and white terms of function - activity - transaction, but more like: function, smaller function than that, smaller function than

that, etc., with the level of decomposition determined by recordkeeping requirements such as security, ease of use, and maybe a modifier at the end to round things out.

ABSTRACT CONCEPTS

In a traditional Keyword AAA based alphabetical thesaurus, users have to combine a number of concepts, some or all of them abstract to come up with a concrete classification. For example, 'Productivity', 'Evaluation', and 'Technology & Telecommunications'. These vague, abstract concepts are combined together to make a more specific concept - evaluating how productive the technology infrastructure is in the organisation. Most users do not have the time, the inclination, and/or the ability to carry out such an exercise.

However, if you use a records classification scheme, the scope notes can change depending on the context for terms that appear under more than one broader term. For example, 'Productivity' can be defined in the scope note as 'measuring the productivity of the technology infrastructure' when it appears under 'Technology & Telecommunications - Evaluation', and defined as 'planning for the effect of staff productivity increases on positions in the organisation' when it appears under 'Establishment - Planning - Productivity'.

We, as writers of the classification scheme, do the abstract thinking for our users. Every effort possible must be made to make classification schemes easy to use. Organisations are complex - any attempt to describe their operations in a classification scheme will also be complex, and yet they need to be designed to be understood by pretty close to the lowest common denominator.

FUNCTION 'BAG' FILES

One of the major criticisms of the subject approach to records classification schemes is that it can result in 'bag' files. What many

people don't realise is that you can also have 'function' bag files as well. This is obviously problematic for retrieval, but there is also a more insidious danger... destroying 'recordness' in some cases.

Remember this particular aim of classification described in AS/ISO 15489 - 'providing linkages between individual records which accumulate to provide a continuous record of activity'. In other words, classification links information about various transactions together to tell a story. Sometimes that might be best done by linking the same type of transactions together. But sometimes (probably more often in the eyes of our users) it can be best done by linking together different types of transactions relating to the same case.

Think of a motor vehicle. Most users would want everything to do with the one car to be on the same file. They can then see information about where it was purchased, what maintenance was done, etc. - the story of the car. However, there are many instances where the story may best be told by linking the same type of transaction together through classification. A balancing act between the two approaches is necessary.

This article's message is 'don't stick too closely to ideologically fixed methodology'. As Records Managers our role is to make classification as easy as possible for our users while still meeting the requirement of a good records management classification scheme - giving context to search hits, links to workflow, disposal, and security.

AUSTRALIAN STANDARDS

An Australian Standards Subcommittee T 21-09 has been established to examine this issue. The scope of the subcommittee is available at https://committees.standards. com .au /COMMITTEES/IT-021-09/

A discussion paper will be released shortly, to stimulate debate and elicit the views of the records management community. I am

a member of the subcommittee, but the views expressed in this article are not necessarily the views of the committee.

THE AUTHOR

Stephen Bedford worked for 10 years at the Archives Authority of NSW. He then decided to become a regulatee, rather than a regulator, and changed profession to records management. He has since worked at the Reserve Bank, the NSW Department of Education and Training, the State Library of NSW, and currently works at the Australian Broadcasting Authority.

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FOOTNOTES

[1] AS/ISO 15489.1 International Standard on Information and Documentation: Records Management, Part 1 - General, 2001.

[2] Keyword AAA, 1998 edition, 3.2.1-3.2.3

Comment From State Records NSW

Catherine Robinson

In response to Stephen Bedford's thought provoking article, State Records would like to stress our commitment to the functional approach, supported by AS/ISO 15489 and our commitment to tools that manage and control language.

The discussion focusing on the 'one to many' relationships in Keyword AAA and the need to be more contextually specific is something we will examine when we next review Keyword AAA. We are encouraged that thesaurus software vendors are responding to this challenge and are researching ways to allow this in their tools. The ability of thesauri to manage more than one activity descriptor in a title presents perhaps a greater challenge. One of the big questions is how a record with multiple activities will link to disposal, as easy sentencing is one of the main benefits of a controlled language.

Sometimes implementation issues are confused with the abilities of Keyword AAA. Keyword AAA has always been a generic administrative thesaurus and it is likely to remain so. Each organisation that purchases Keyword AAA is responsible for adapting it to their recordkeeping requirements and business environment. If they choose to present controlled language in a Record Classification Scheme instead, there is the flexibility to do that. If they choose to have a case file on each car in their fleet, they can do that. It's not a case of 'one size fits all'.

We are open to comments and suggestions about Keyword AAA and approaches to keyword classification. We are planning to review Keyword AAA in 2004 and reconsider approaches which we have taken in building our thesaurus products. Like Stephen, we are also participating on the Standards Australia Classification Committee IT 21-09 and are involved in changes in thinking regarding thesaurus products.

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AUSTRALASIAN & INTERNATIONAL

CONTENTS

PD 0025:
Britain's best selling guide to ISO 15489

Bob Maclean

Alan Shipman

Well, a great deal of effort has been expended, lots of discussions have taken place, many air miles of travel have been undertaken by experts from around the globe, and now finally ISO 15489: 2001 Information and Documentation - Records Management has been published. Hooray! So now what?

Will anyone actually use it? Might anyone realise that implementing this standard could bring real benefit to public and private sector organisations by helping them to work more effectively?

There is a general feeling that 'implementing standards costs money', which is, of course, mostly true. In many cases, implementation of standards is mandatory, in order to be able to market goods. However, in the case of standards like ISO 15489, which deals with procedures and office practices, why should an organisation bear the cost of implementation?

In the UK, ISO 15489 has been implemented and reproduced verbatim as BS/ISO 15489 with great enthusiasm. Banner headlines in the records management press have kept the British Standards Institution (BSI) printing presses busy for some time. BSI is now running training workshops, designed for people with direct or management responsibility for documents or records and those with responsibility for risk management procedures in relation to documents and records.

THE RIGHT TIME?

Now is a good time to design and implement effective records management procedures. There have been numerous cases in the international press recently about companies that have suffered considerably, or have gone out of business, due mainly to poor records management policies and implementations.

So, the Records Manager now has an internationally accepted tool that will help do the job well. The challenge is now one of helping the Records Manager (if the organisation has one - which is rare in some industry sectors in the UK) put together a business case for implementing the standard.

This challenge has now been addressed by the Records Management Committee of the BSI. Earlier this year, the committee responsible for the UK input into ISO 15489 commissioned one of the UK's top records management consultants to put pen to paper on the subject.

The resultant publication has received an enthusiastic response. It has been published as Part 1 of a series entitled 'Effective Records Management', with a sub-title of 'A Management Guide to the Value of BS/ISO 15489-1'. It is published as BSI-DISC PD0025-1:2002. More about Parts 2 and 3 later.

VALUE OF THE INTERNATIONAL STANDARD

So, will this publication help me in justifying the implementation of ISO 15489?

As a scene setter, the publication starts with a small section on the relevance of records management within an organisation. One of the points addressed by this section is that, in a modern organisation, records management should not be the 'basement' department that it is in many businesses. By effective use of the principles encompassed in ISO 15489, businesses can be safeguarded against the loss or corruption of vital records. Furthermore, the implementation of appropriate records management procedures within the organisation can improve its overall administrative efficiency.

The publication argues that, by using a common approach, the need for training staff to implement known procedures is easier, and thus cheaper. And, by implementing a 'best practice' approach, there is less need to 're-invent the wheel'.

Another section of the publication deals with the relationships between records management and knowledge management. The concept of knowledge management is now being applied to records, in a bid to improve organisations' awareness of their customers' needs.

One of the most widely used examples of knowledge management is that practised by national supermarket chains. What does a particular customer purchase? How often does he shop, and at what time of the day? Which brands does he prefer? All this information is available on the till receipt. How can this information be used to ensure that the customer finds what he needs when he next visits the store? Are there any products that he does not buy from the supermarket? Why not? Can he be offered any incentives to ensure that he does not go to other supermarkets for some items that he needs?

Analysing information captured in records for one purpose - the purchasing transaction - and recycling it to provide profitable insights into customer behaviour can feed into marketing and customer relationship initiatives. A direct contribution to profits!

Is there anything to be learned from the above example of knowledge management? Can it be used in our organisation to enable us to work 'smarter'? The BSI publication looks at the requirement for good records management before effective knowledge management can be achieved.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

The issue of 'corporate governance' is tackled next. Can one achieve good corporate governance without the implementation of good practice in records management?

The publication looks at the dangers in not implementing appropriate control procedures. Issues relevant to the size of the organisation and the burden of regulation are discussed. There are also key sections on the need for traceability, compliance demonstration, accountability to shareholders, integrity of records, and availability even in the event of a disaster.

Finally, the publication looks at how to develop a records management strategy by giving examples from a utility company, a financial services organisation, and a museum.

Transparent, good corporate governance saves money by averting the loss of stakeholder confidence, including that of consumers and shareholders, which has been the hallmark of recent headline cases.

The second of the BSI publications in the 'Effective Records Management' series is entitled 'Practical implementation of BS ISO 15489-1'. It has been published as BSI-DISC PD 0025-2:2002. Part 2 explores the nature of records and recordkeeping systems and how they can be implemented in practice. There is also a useful bibliography for further reading.

After a section describing the main characteristics of record systems, Part 2 looks at what is involved in good recordkeeping systems. The importance of including all the stages in the document life cycle from capture, through use and storage to final disposal is discussed. Also included in this section are notes on the value of metadata associated with specific records.

DIRKS METHODOLOGY

A well-practised and documented eight-step methodology is introduced by the BSI publication. This methodology is based on the Design and Implementation of Record Keeping Systems (DIRKS) principles developed by the National Archives of Australia and the NSW State Records Office.

Details of an initial assessment questionnaire are given, as well as some suggestions on how DIRKS can be used in typical situations.

Then follows a detailed step-by-step guide to the implementation of the DIRKS methodology, from the initial survey to the post implementation review.

The author has produced a very helpful flow chart of activities and major outputs for each step in the methodology. These can be applied to any sector and any size or type of organisation. As the vast majority of businesses will have many recordkeeping systems already in place, the steps can be used as an audit tool for existing systems. Where gaps are found or requirements are not fully met, remedial actions can be taken. Strategies for developing appropriate solutions are also discussed.

There is also a section in the BSI publication on various tools that can be used when implementing good records management practice. The use of classification and retention/disposal schedules are discussed, as well as the use of thesauri and other lists of authorised terms.

An annex to the publication contains an extensive checklist that can be used as a roadmap throughout the implementation of the records management systems.

The BSI is now working on the third publication in the series, to be entitled 'Performance measurement'. Having gained support for the implementing ISO 15489 and then investing valuable resources in applying it to parts or even all the organisation, how can real benefits be demonstrated? Ways of measuring, monitoring, and auditing the hard and soft benefits will be discussed. Improvements can then be shown to be directly attributable to changes made by applying the principles of the standard in support of business objectives. This document is expected to be available early 2003.

CONCLUSION

The UK's British Standards Institution has now produced additional guidance to assist organisations reap the full benefit of effective records management through the implementation of ISO 15489. These documents have been well received by those who have used their content in practical situations. For more details of the publication, please look at the following URL: www.bsi-global.com/DISC/Wor king +W ithyou/pd0025-1-2.pdf

THE AUTHORS

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Alan Shipman is Managing Director of Group 5 Training Limited, a British consultancy and training service in information and records management. He has been involved with information management for over 30 years, most recently with Group 5 Training Limited, see www.g5t.co.uk. Alan is a member of the BSI committee that represents the UK position on BS/ISO 15489.

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To Be or Not to Be (A Professional Member)? That is the Question

Christopher Colwell
ARMA

ABSTRACT

During October and November 2002, the RMAA undertook a survey to gain an understanding of members' attitudes towards upgrading membership status. The survey was carried out in response to Federal Board concerns that professional Association members were declining.[1] The survey found that 13% of respondents who had not upgraded their membership status were not even aware they could, 12% of all respondents saw no benefit at all in upgrading, and 41.5% thought the current advancement of professional status guidelines were not easy to follow. These results suggest that the RMAA has a way to go before it can achieve its desired target of increasing professional members to 20% of the membership[2].

INTRODUCTION

The survey first asked respondents to identify their membership type **(see Table 1)**. For comparison, also included in Table 1 are the number of members in the RMAA by membership category and the percentage of the membership it constitutes. [3]

UNDERSTANDING MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

When asked if they understood the different membership categories, 64% of respondents indicated that they did, 34% did not, and the remaining 2% did not answer the question. Respondents were also asked if they were aware that, as a Corporate Nominee, they may apply for Associate status. In answering this question, 49.5% of respondents answered that they

Membership Type	No. of respondents	% of respondents	No. of RMAA members	% of RMAA membership
Affiliate	13	8.8%	460	19.7%
Corporate Nominee	66	44.9%	1592	68.25%
Associate	48	32.7%	266	11.4%
Member	6	4.1%	15	0.65%
Not Stated	4	2.7%		
Unsure[4]	10	6.8%		
TOTAL	**147**	**100%**	**2,333**	**100%**

TABLE 1: RESPONDENTS' MEMBERSHIP TYPE

were not aware of this, 47.5% were aware, and 3% did not provide an answer. This lack of awareness among respondents about membership categories and membership options is of some concern.

HAVE YOU UPGRADED - IF NOT WHY?

When asked if they had upgraded their membership status since joining the RMAA, 73.5% of respondents answered 'No' and 26% of respondents answered 'Yes'. Only 1 respondent (0.5%) did not answer the question. In an effort to further understand why respondents had not upgraded their membership status, those who answered 'No' were asked to supply a reason for this. The most common reasons for not upgrading are listed in **Table 2**.

Reason	% of 'No' respondents
Not aware you could	13%
No time	13%
Don't meet criteria	12%
Not necessary	11%
New to the Association	10.5%
Process too difficult	8.5%
See no value	7%
Not aware of benefits	6%
Didn't know how	5%

TABLE 2: REASONS FOR NOT UPGRADING

Again, there is a high percentage of respondents who indicated they were unaware they could upgrade, did not know how to, or were unaware of the benefits. These results mean that if the Association is to increase its number of professional members, it will have to be more proactive and effective in delivering its message to members.

Many respondents also felt that they had no time to prepare the required documents or felt that the upgrade process was too difficult. 41.5% of respondents made negative comments about the status guidelines (this is explored further later). Until such time as the guidelines are clearer, assistance with undertaking the application process is needed. Indeed, one respondent commented that RMAA Branches should hold regular, or at least annual, workshops for status upgrades.[5]

Also highlighted is the percentage of respondents who felt they did not meet the criteria. While 40% of respondents in this category indicated they did not meet the criteria due to their number of years' experience, 30% just simply thought they didn't. This result suggests that some members may be excluding themselves from applying for upgrade simply because they do not have a clear understanding of what the advancement criteria actually mean.

It is interesting to note that 18% of respondents felt upgrading of status was 'not necessary' or of 'no value'. While 21% of respondents in this category gave the reason that their position was part-time, or that records management was not their sole responsibility, they did believe it would be of benefit to full-time records managers. Comments from other respondents in this category mainly related to the recognition of professional status (or lack of it) by employers and the wider community. This theme emerged again in subsequent questions and is addressed in more detail later in the article.

BENEFITS OF UPGRADING MEMBERSHIP STATUS

Respondents were next asked to identify any benefits to upgrading their membership status **(see Table 3)**. The benefits as listed on the survey were:

- positions in records management and related industries are now more likely to require professional status and qualifications
- professional membership may give you the edge over competitors for senior/management positions
- advancement within your current organisation/justification of regrading
- professional/peer recognition
- use of post-nominals
- other (please specify)

Membership Type	Prof / quals more likely	Give you the edge....	Advancm't / regrading	Prof. / peer recognition	Post-nominals
Affiliate	10	8	6	9	3
Corporate Nominee	46	40	21	43	9
Associate	34	30	13	33	10
Member	4	1	1	6	4
Unknown	10	10	6	9	4
TOTAL	104	89	47	100	30
(%)	71%	61%	32%	68%	20%

TABLE 3: PERCEIVED BENEFITS OF UPGRADING

The high responses to the professional status and qualifications and professional / peer recognition is consistent with an earlier survey of RMAA members in which 64% of members indicated that the granting of professional recognition/status was an important RMAA service[6]. However, only 32% of respondents felt that professional status of the RMAA would assist them in advancing within their current organisation or reclassification of their job. This reinforces the perceived lack of employer and community recognition of records management as a profession.

While 78% of respondents identified that there was at least one benefit to upgrading membership status, 12% of respondents indicated there were 'No benefits at all'.

WOULD A SCHOLARSHIP TOWARDS FURTHER STUDY PROVIDE AN INCENTIVE?

In order to determine what incentives would encourage members to undertake further study and upgrade, participants were asked, 'would a scholarship towards further study or some other award/assistance provide an incentive for you to upgrade your membership?'. 56% of respondents answered 'Yes', 35.5% answered 'No', 8% did not answer. 1 respondent (who added and ticked their own box) answered 'Maybe'. From this result it seems like the introduction of State/National scholarships or other awards would act as an incentive for members to undertake further study.

WHAT OF THE CURRENT ADVANCEMENT OF STATUS GUIDELINES?

When asked if they found the current Advancement of Professional Status Guidelines easy to follow 34% of respondents answered 'Yes', 41.5% indicated 'No', and 24.5% did not answer the question. Of those that did not provide an answer, 31% indicated it was because they were not aware of what the guidelines were. A further 8% said from what they remembered the guidelines were overly complex. The message from this survey on this question is clear - revise and simplify the guidelines and/or provide additional support and guidance in the form of workshops, etc. to prospective applicants.

FURTHER COMMENTS

Additional comments from respondents concerned qualifications, employer/community recognition of professional status, upgrading from Associate to Member, as well as requests for information on membership categories and status guidelines[7].

Some respondents felt that their qualifications were superior to attaining professional status until such time as RMAA accreditation became mandatory. Similarly, others felt the RMAA should promote professional status as a way of proving records management qualifications and that some levels of professional status should have qualifications as a prerequisite.

In terms of employer/broader recognition of professional status, many felt that professional status would have some meaning when it became a desirable criteria in most job advertisements, while some speculated on the almost non-existent knowledge of employers about what the different levels of membership meant (particularly the differences in professional levels).

These additional comments made by respondents have only been briefly discussed, as they are chiefly all alluding to the same point - what constitutes a qualified records management professional[8] and how do we gain acceptance of records management as a profession in the business and wider community?

CONCLUSION

Ultimately, records management's claim to being considered a profession largely 'depends on community recognition of its importance'[9]. Convincing employers of the value of professional records managers is surely the first step to wider community recognition of the profession. However, if our own members see no value in professional status or do not understand it, how can we begin to expect employers to place value on it or even accept that it means something?

This survey suggests that if the RMAA is serious about increasing the number of its professional members and promoting the value of professional records management, it should consider the following:

- ensure professional status provides potential benefits to members
- provide clearer information on the membership categories and the benefits of professional membership
- actively promote the benefits of professional membership to both the members and employers
- provide assistance in/run workshops on the status upgrade process
- revisit the categories of membership
- revise and simplify the Advancement of Professional Status Guidelines
- consider the introduction of scholarships or other incentives towards further study.[10]

THE AUTHOR

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FOOTNOTES

1 RMAA (2002, 2003). Federal Membership Status Report, September 2002 & February 2003

2 RMAA. (2002, 2003) Op. Cit.

3 These figures were taken from the RMAA Membership Database as at 29 November 2002. They exclude subscription only memberships and Fellows (Fellows represent 0.002% of the membership).

4 Some members were unsure of their membership category. I have included in this category respondents who, for example, ticked 'Member' but whose later answers to other questions clearly showed they were not professional members of the Association.

5 The NSW and ACT Branches are organising status upgrade workshops as part of ARM Week.

6 MAP Research (1992). Membership survey. INFORMAA Quarterly 8(1), 3-5

7 Information on upgrading of Membership status can be found on the RMAA website http://www.rmaa.com.au or you can contact Federal Office on 1800 242 611.

8 This will be the topic of discussion at the NSW Branch July Lunchtime Meeting.

9 G. Smith (1993). 'What role is the Records Management Association of Australia undertaking in dealing with the emergence of records management as a profession?' INFORMAA Quarterly, (9) 3, 21-25

10 NSW Branch decided at its March meeting to introduce a scholarship towards further study. It will be known as the Peter A. Smith Scholarship.

More Knockdowns But Then Success For The WA State Records Campaign

Laurie Varendorff
ARMA

INTRODUCTION

It took years of hard work, intrigue, lobbying, trials, tribulation, compromise, and, finally, launch on 6 March 2002 of the Western Australia State Records Act. In the last issue, February 2003, the author told of the first rounds in the painful battle to overwhelm entrenched political opposition. Now in this the second and final installment the pace of the long action picks up. The lobbyists have suffered two gut-wrenching set-backs and face more knock-downs, but go on to eventual triumph as the forces of opposition fade away before their indefatigable determination for archives and records management good practice overseen by a independent State Records Authority.

This article, based on the records and recollections of the author, was written specially for Informaa Quarterly. It expresses the author's opinions only and is not an official RMAA document.

THIRD KNOCK-DOWN: AUTUMN 2000

The Leader of the Opposition Labor Party, the Hon. **Geoff Gallop**, had reshuffled his Shadow Ministry and appointed the Hon. **Tom Stephens**, MLC, as the Shadow Minister for Culture and the Arts. We now had another person to convince.

So, in October 1999, we started again. A meeting was arranged between representatives from the RMAA sub committee and the new Shadow Minister, Tom Stephens, my fellow committeeman, Perth consultant **Neil Granland** and I went with Sheila McHale. The meeting ended without the new Shadow Minister being made fully aware of the RMAA's position on the legislation.

On 25 November, the Minister for Culture and the Arts, the Hon. **Peter Foss**, QC, MLC, advised the Legislative Council of changes to the Bill. Members of an independent State Records Commission would include the State Ombudsman, the Information Commissioner (FOI) and the Auditor General, and a fourth member of the Commission would be appointed with recordkeeping experience from outside government.

The Government had also incorporated a number of amendments proposed by our champion, the Hon. **Phillip Pendal**, MLC, including electronic scanning of documents, community input before an archive was destroyed, standards on outsourcing recordkeeping functions, and requirements for the Director of State Records to report any breach or suspected breach to the State Records Commission.

It wasn't perfect, but we appeared to be on the road to finalisation and once again, our hopes were high. We achieved some further wins with the inclusion of some of the amendments that Peter Pendal filed on 8 December, but we were unable to address the issue of removing the exemption given to the three agencies, the Water Corporation, Alinta Gas, and Western Power.

In March 2000, we wrote to all interested parties, in particular the Labor Opposition, Independents, Australian Democrats, and the WA Greens; these latter two parties holding the balance of power in the Legislative Council. We advised them of the

RMAA's support, with reservations, for the revised legislation.

But then, the Premier, the Hon. **Richard Court**, had a Ministerial reshuffle and we had a new Minister for Culture and the Arts, the Hon. **Michael Board**, JP, MLA. The RMAA sub committee was again plunged into despair. Was there ever to be a State Records Act?

FOURTH KNOCK-DOWN: SEPTEMBER 2000

Things were not as down as they seemed at first. We discovered that Phillip Pendal, and our lobbyist, **Barry MacKinnon**, himself a seasoned politician, were both friends of the new Minister. Back in their Liberal Party days, they had both worked to get Michael Board elected. We calculated that we were in a better position to interact with the new Minister than previously, or so we envisaged!

The Director of the Public Records Office, **Chris Coggin**, Edith Cowan University lecturer **Vicky Wilson**, Barry MacKinnon, and I met with the Michael Board on 8 March. It was obvious that the Minister had a long way to go in his understanding of the State Records Office, the legislation, and the issues at hand. He questioned Western Australia's need for new records management legislation. The FOI legislation had everyone fearful of doing the wrong thing or of not documenting what possibly should have been, he thought.

Phillip Pendal came to the rescue, again. Through his relationship with the new Minister, Michael Board appeared to warm to the legislation. The process of influencing Government, ministers, and senior executives continued with the RMAA Branch conducting a one-day seminar in June entitled 'e-Commerce or e-Chaos? Managing Records in the New Millennium'. One hundred and thirty six people attended and Phillip Pendal sat next to the Minister keeping him up to speed on the papers.

Again, we entered a time of waiting when nothing moved, or so it appeared. Phillip Pendal made several attempts to get the Bill before the Legislative Assembly. But there was no time in the Parliamentary schedule for it. The Government would not allow time wasted in debating something they perceived would be opposed by the Opposition. A bidding war then arose but Mr Pendal and the Leader of the Legislative Assembly struck a deal for not more than two hours' debate and the hare was up and running again.

The legislation was discussed in the Legislative Assembly on 12 September. Sheila McHale and Phillip Pendal made excellent speeches[1].

One of the changes between the 1998 and the 1999 Bills was an extension of the period government departments had to comply with the Act from two years to five, based on lobbying by the SES. The Minister, in response to a question from Sheila McHale, agreed to return to the two year period. The SES people must have seen red. The Minister had abandoned their hard-fought amendment without a fight.

The State Records Bill 1999 received passage in the Legislative Assembly with one or two minor amendments on 12 September 2000. It was champagne all around at the news.

But then the wheels came off again! The Premier called an election and suddenly all interest in getting the Bill through the Parliament went out the window. The hatches went up. Somewhere it was decreed that nothing controversial was to be progressed or discussed in either House that might damage the government's chances for re-election. The shadow of Barry MacKinnon's three principles came savagely into their own and back to bite us where it hurt most.

FIFTH KNOCK-DOWN: LATE 2000

There was more work to do. I contacted my local member, the Hon. **Derrick Tomlinson**, and explained the situation to him. Phillip Pendal sent a memo to all members of the

Legislative Council urging them to bring on the legislation prior to the adjournment of Parliament and before the election.

A letter from the RMAA was sent to all members of the Legislative Council, in synchronisation with Mr Pendal's memo, supporting the passage of the legislation. The letter advised members that the legislation now had bipartisan support, wording that was decided on earlier to be pushed at all cost, even if it may have been slightly untrue. It worked. In addition, we urged that the Bill, due to its critical importance to the State, be placed on the notice paper before Parliament adjourned, and definitely before the election.

Unexpectedly, we received a telephone call from the Office of the Leader of the Legislative Council, the Hon. **Norman Moore**, on the morning of 15 November advising that the State Records Bill 1999 was on the notice paper for debate later that day.

Readers of the Hansard transcript could be forgiven for not knowing that a deal had been done and that there was bipartisan support for the legislation. The members appeared to be tearing each other to shreds but the Bill did get support and was passed in the Legislative Council. It was not how I had envisaged it. But, who cares how the politicians play games? The RMAA and the people of Western Australia finally had their legislation. In a discussion with Barry MacKinnon, he hit me with a sobering statement and the realisation dawned that another hurdle remained. Yes, the legislation had now passed both Houses of Parliament but was still not law. Barry said it would not be the first time that Parliament had passed legislation only to have it sit for years and in some cases forever, without receiving Royal Assent and passing into law.

SIXTH KNOCK-DOWN: 2001

Back to the keyboard to send a letter to the Minister asking when the legislation would receive Royal Assent. We received no reply. But, finally, the legislation was proclaimed in the new Parliamentary Session under the new Labor Government on 27 November 2001, more than one year after the passage of the legislation in the Legislative Council. The legislation received Royal Assent in December 2000.

The RMAA and others went into party mode. We now had the legislation we had been working towards since the late 1980's. The general feeling was that the Liberal/National Coalition would be returned at the election. But, to everyone's surprise, the Labor Party with Dr **Geoff Gallop**, MLA, as leader was elected to govern the state for the next term.

Where did this leave the State Records Act 2000? Would it be implemented? Would the Labor Party now in power wish to alter the legislation to incorporate those areas on which they argued in favour for a number of years? If changes to the legislation were in the offing, the implementation of the State Records Act 2000 could be delayed for years!

SEVENTH TIME LUCKY!

The RMAA sent a letter of congratulations to the new Minister for Culture and the Arts, Sheila McHale, in which we also requested a meeting with her at her earliest convenience. A meeting was convened for 30 May and attended by Chris Coggin, Neil Granland, and myself at Parliament House; two months later, the Minister outlined the legislation at the Annual General Meeting of the RMAA WA Branch.

She said that a fourth State Records Commissioner had been selected and would be announced shortly. She announced the

separation of the State Records Office from the Library and Information Service of WA (LISWA) a decision greeted with shouts of joy and applause from the 120-strong audience. She said that the State Records Office would report directly to the Director of the Ministry for Culture and the Arts, the same reporting link as LISWA.

The official launch of the Recordkeeping Principles and Standards and the State Records Office website came on 6 March 2002, and a week later the Minister advised the Legislative Assembly: 'I am pleased to inform the House that the State Records Commission published its first set of state records principles and standards in the Government Gazette on 5 March 2002.'

THE FINALE

In many statements, speeches, and announcements over a number of years, by politicians, government executives, and senior public servants of the principle of seeking professional input from a wide ranging constituent including professional organisations such as the RMAA, ASA, and others has been expounded as a being the holy grail and that this process would be followed.

But, to my knowledge, since the passage of the State Records Bill in November 2000, not once have the RMAA or other professionals associated with records management in this State or elsewhere (with the possible exception of internal government employees) been invited to comment on the strategy for the management of records in the public sector of Western Australia.

Professional organisations and individual professionals await the day that, in the interest of best records management practice for the State of Western Australia, their experience and expertise is tapped to maximise and utilise available resources of this critical professions that has such potential to contribute to improved efficiency and accountability.

The State Records Act 2000 and the separation of the State Records Office from LISWA have been excellent advances towards best practice. It will take further time for the benefits of the new legislation and support structure to find a way into the day-to-day work practices at agency level. But, it will be a pleasure to carry out an audit of an agency in the not too distant future and find that best practice records management is the rule rather than the exception.

THE AUTHOR

After several stints in records management in Australia and at the British Mission to the United Nations in New York, Laurie Varendorff 28 years ago started his own business, Perth Copy Mart. In 1990 digital document scanning was added to the bureau facilities. Today, he specialises in electronic records management consultancy services, functional thesaurus and file plan construction, general disposal authority schedules and records management installation audits, plus training workshops.

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FOOTNOTES

1   The Western Australian Parliament web site has details online of Hansard page 1052/5 and 1056/1 September 12, 2000 with details available at:
http://www.parliament.wa.gov.au/parliament/home.ns f/(FrameNames)/Hansard

BOOK REVIEWS

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Elizabeth Shepherd and Geoffrey Yeo

Managing Records: a handbook of principles and practices

Facet Publishing, London 2003

Records management has undergone rapid changes in recent years, moving beyond its traditional boundaries of managing large quantities of paper records to a much more visible and proactive role in organisational management supporting accountability and corporate governance.

AS/ISO 15489 has provided a framework for best practice and today's records manager has a new sense of direction providing records management programs, which are vital in sustaining business operations. This book describes and discusses the principles of records management following the best practice approach and provides guidelines for their practical implementation in developing and maintaining a records management program in an organisation.

The reader is first introduced to core records management concepts, including a discussion of the 'lifecycle' and 'continuum' approaches. Records in the broader information management environment are also examined, together with relationships between records management and related disciplines such as document management, information management, and knowledge management. A useful summary of the key elements for introducing a records management program is provided, emphasising the need for a strategic focus and building systems, defining responsibilities, and adopting standards against which compliance can be measured. This sets the tone and direction for the rest of the book - it calls into question

the long-standing distinction between current and non-current records management processes and supports the growing acceptance of the records continuum approach.

Shepherd and Yeo examine various analytical techniques that records managers can use to develop a wider organisational view and design an effective records management program. The chapters in turn explore records classification, organisational needs for creating and capturing records, application of essential metadata, appraisal, retention, and disposition approaches, and access and preservation issues.

The book concludes with a wealth of practical advice on how to develop and implement a records management program from developing policies and defining responsibilities to following the 8 stage approach recommended in AS/ISO 15489. While readers are referred to the Australian DIRKS manual, and the shorter guidelines published by the British Standards Institution, PD 0025-2:2002, Effective records management practices: practical implementation of BS ISO 15489-, for detailed advice on implementing a recordkeeping system, the emphasis is on practical implementation issues. Useful advice is also provided on maintaining the change impetus, with particular emphasis on placing and retaining records management strategically within the broader management framework of an organisation.

If there is a criticism of this book, it's that it tries to cover too much territory, often resulting in brief coverage of complex issues. However, each chapter ends with a good list of references and three appendices provide an excellent starting point for the practitioner to seek further information. Elizabeth Shepherd and Geoffrey Yeo have produced a book that will be of practical value to both the experienced records manager as well as a newcomer to the field. There is a wide coverage of records management concepts and practices, it is well organised and the messages the book presents are all relevant for today's practitioner seeking to implement a best practice approach in their organisation.

THE REVIEWER

Colleen McEwen is the Director, Information Management with the National Archives of Australia. As a professional archivist for more than 20 years, she has been employed in a wide range of positions covering all aspects of archival management.

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Archives and the public good:
Accountability and records in modern society
Edited by Richard J Cox and David A Wallace
Quorum Books Westport, Connecticut - London 2002

Archives and records have been used to right wrongs and to conceal wrongdoing. This collection of case studies demonstrates the part played by records and archives (for good or ill) in society. Both editors are involved in teaching, writing, and research in archives and records management; Richard Cox at the University of Pittsburgh and David Wallace at the University of Michigan.

Cox and Wallace present an international representation of cases tied together with a common thread, that is, 'a broad accountability binding individuals with each other and with governments, organizations, and society across space and time'[1].

The case studies illustrate and are arranged according to four broad themes: explanation, secrecy, memory, and trust. This arrangement is, to my mind, somewhat arbitrary as most of the case studies illustrate more than one of these broad themes. For example, the case of the Martin Luther King, Jr. papers, a case with overtones worthy of Solomon, is assigned to the 'explanation' category since it required James M. O'Toole to interpret archival theory and practice for the lawyers of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s widow, Coretta Scott King. It could have equally well served as an example of 'memory', since the papers in question documented the life and turbulent times of a remarkable man who spearheaded social change. It also chronicles O'Toole's wrestling with ethical and professional issues - when is an archivist justified in criticising poor archival practices and, by extension, other archivists?

'Secrecy', 'Trust', and 'Memory' are also inextricably intertwined, as witnessed in the case of the Iran-Contra Affair document cover up, the failure of the US Internal Revenue Service to make and keep records or the shameful affair of the Tuskegee Syphilis Study - described as 'the longest non-therapeutic experiment on human beings in medical history'[2], which predates similar medical research scandals in our part of the world.

Two of the cases stand out for me: Greg Bradsher's detailed study of the US National Archives and Records Administration's (NARA) work on identifying holocaust-era assets and Verne Harris's gripping exposé of the destruction of public records in the last years of apartheid in South Africa. The first case demonstrates what can be done to bring justice to the victims of war through identifying records, describing them, and making them available to researchers; all activities central to archival practice. The second case traces the purposeful destruction of public records scheduled for preservation, by agents of the state, as a deliberate and 'systematic sanitization of official memory resources in anticipation of the nation's transition to democracy'[3], surely the antithesis of the work we do as archivists.

The case studies are uniformly well written and compelling reflections on the meaning and purpose of records and archives in the modern world. Several, including Chris Hurley's penetrating analysis of the Heiner affair, also go to the heart of professional responsibility. Recordkeepers, whether they manage active records or archival collections, also live in society. What happens when their duty to the organisations they work for and their duty as moral and ethical citizens of the wider society collide? And what of the recordkeeper's responsibility to the records themselves?

THE REVIEWER

Deirdre T. Wogan is an independent consultant in based in Wellington, New Zealand. She has worked in the fields of records management and archives for a quarter of a century, in public sector agencies, as a consultant in private practice, as a tutor for the Open Polytechnic, and as a researcher.

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FOOTNOTES

1 Cox, Richard J. and Wallace, David A. ibid, p. 2.

2 Jones, James. 'Bad Blood: The Tuskegee Syphilis Study', Archives and the public good: Accountability and records in modern society, Quorum Books, Westport: Connecticut - London, 2002, p. 166.

3 Verne Harris, '"They Should have Destroyed More" : The Destruction of Public Records by the South African State in the Final Years of Apartheid, 1990-1994', Archives and the public good: Accountability and records in modern society, Quorum Books, Westport: Connecticut - London, 2002, p. 220.

20th International RMAA
CONFERENCE
14TH-17TH SEPTEMBER 2003
Crown Entertainment Complex Melbourne

Your Invitation◄◄

Join the Records Management Association of Australasia in Melbourne this September for the 20th International Conference, the region's most strategic event for Records and Information Management professionals.

►► *Challenged* by unprecedented requirements to capture, manage and share increasingly complex information from diverse sources, organisations also face new regulatory environments and emerging technologies with thier competing claims.

RMAA's 'Journey Into New Dimensions' faces the climate of change head-on providing you with an opportunity to:

PARTICIPATE in 3 days of informative presentations by local and international experts.

UNDERSTAND the major issues facing records and information managers across a broad range of government and business organisations.

LISTEN to case studies which illustrate best practice in the evolving knowledge workplace.

IDENTIFY trends and opportunities with the potential to impact your ROI.

NETWORK with your peers during the conference sessions and the social program.

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FOR FURTHER DETAILS

2003 RMAA CONFERENCE SECRETARIAT

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RMAA NEWS

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RMAA NEWS

RMAA LISTSERV-ING

Edited by Liz Dowd and Grahame Gould

If you're not yet a member of the RMAA listserv or you simply need to catch up with recent debates and discussions, read on and see what you've missed!

LIZ DOWD

FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

A posting for Stephen Bedford's recent seminar, 'The Thesaurus is Dead?' heralded a lengthy discussion on functional classification. Bedford, however, clarified that his talk would 'not be leading a revolt against function-based classification schemes!'

Glenn Sanders stated that 'users ... do not understand functional classification ... my approach is now very much towards using a very simple file plan (derived from a classification), encouraging users to throw in unstructured key words, and relying on full text indexing in the EDMS.'

Jude Burger explained that, 'for electronic documents we have rejected the idea of function/activity entirely ... we have a simple plan as well. We are implementing a free-text naming conventions scheme. A wizard will pop up which prompts users to save a more detailed document name than many currently do.'

Barbara Reed defended functional classification: 'we need to think about why we do functional classification. As Seymour pointed out, it's not about information retrieval. There are heaps of really nifty things that do information retrieval better than functional classification - multiple taxonomies, free text searching, etc. Functional classification (enables) us to implement records processes - Seymour talked about disposal, but it's not the only one - we can string access, permissions, security, responsibility, authenticity, linking, movement, storage, migration, etc. all in addition to disposal directly. Can't do that with subject! We can't just demolish our functional requirements for records processes based on some less-than-innovative implementations available to us in the software on the market at present. Lobby the software designers. Get up in arms. But don't throw the good process reasons for doing it out with the less than wonderful implementation options!'

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

Knowledge management became topical with Glenn Sanders posting the link to http://informationr.net/ir/8-1/paper144.html - a paper entitled, 'The Nonsense of Knowledge Management' by (UK) Emeritus Professor Tom Wilson. It concludes 'that

"knowledge management" is an umbrella term for a variety of organizational (sic) activities, none of which are concerned with the management of knowledge.'

Much debate ensued, with Sanders observing 'there is always confusion about knowledge (and) info ... Bill Gates ... uses the terms as synonyms ... Somehow I disagree!'

Tanya Whitmarsh said 'I am getting the impression that ... (he) is perhaps a little too cynically dismissive of KM ... I am a member of the Steering Committee of the NSW All of Government KM Reference Group ... The model we are proposing as the basic premise for NSW Government is: Data + context = information: Information + experience = knowledge.'

Gerry, University of Newcastle, UK, 'Never regarded knowledge as a "thing" (which "information" is) more of a process that has to take place in a specific place - the head. I cannot see anything in the world that Knowledge Managers have to manage that information managers ... are not already managing.'

GRAHAME GOULD

Grahame Gould suggested that 'KM and IM are the same thing' since 'KM doesn't (can't) exist. An organisation (or anyone but the person) can't manage what happens in someone's head.'

DIGITAL ARCHIVING

Lorraine Lovett posed the question 'what is everyone else doing with regards to the very tricky subject of digital archiving? or is everyone jumping on the XML, PDF band wagon?'

Sally Algate explained that, 'migration across to new platforms is probably the best way to go but ensuring that the records retain their "context, structure, and content" can be difficult so consideration of the XML, PDF thing will need to take place'.

Neil Mackenzie: 'as a Commonwealth agency, we'll mostly be directed by National Archives' lead, which seems to be heading in the XML direction.'

Lorraine Lovett added 'a second point ... e-mail. Does anyone ... have a capturing system in place to ensure that all business related docs/messages are captured into the ERMS?'

Rowena Loo replied, regarding e-mail, 'I have not seen an approach that can improve on human decision making'. She recommends training the users to identify records for entry into the ERMS.

MaryAnn Rosenthal objected to the 'jumping on the XML, PDF band wagon' phrase. 'This seems to imply that the strategy for retaining electronic documents in PDF and the electronic record structure in XML is (a) passing fad. The VERS report recommended this approach based on extensive scientific research... based on the idea that the long term format for electronic records should be non proprietary and freely available. They should also be widely available so that (should) another format become available it would be in the best interest of the proprietor to provide free migration tools.' She pointed out that migration (the other option) is more expensive and less viable.

THE PAPERLESS OFFICE

At around the same time as the digital archiving discussion started, Grahame Gould posted 'An Invective against the Paperless Office' in which he stated his opinion that 'the (completely) paperless office is an unrealistic dream'.

Andrea McCandlish observed that 'computers are used to generate more paper documents ... users ... print everything they think is important'.

Kim Boulton reminded us that 'in the Mid 1980's, suppliers (were) suggesting within 5 years no more paper'.

Monique Nielsen proposed that 'the paperless office is about as likely as the paperless toilet', but thought that 'we will one day see the paperless office'. Culture change was one factor, people 'ready to view ... documents on screen' instead of printing. Training and well considered implementation is also helpful. And generational change will assist.

Gould said that we should not 'push people past where the technology currently lies', questioned if 'we really want to trust our permanent records to the digital format'.

Ken Ridley agreed with Monique and suggested that we, as a profession, are ahead of our time, 'but technology, people, and business are not with us'.

TO SUBSCRIBE

To subscribe to the RMAA listserv visit http://listserver.cowan.edu.au/mailman/listinfo/rmaa or send an e-mail with 'help' in the subject line or message body to rmaa-request@listserver.cowan.edu.au

FATHER OF NATIONAL ARCHIVES, IAN MACLEAN, DIES

The father of Australia's national archives, Ian Maclean, died last February in his retirement hometown, Brisbane, aged 83. Ian Maclean is regarded as Australia's first professional archivist, working in the field throughout most of his life. Less well known are his contributions to records management, which equally deserve celebrating.

Starting in 1949, Ian and his staff in the Commonwealth Archives Division, working with the Public

IAN MACLEAN

Service Board, undertook the first wholesale survey of records across Government. This was also the start of disposal scheduling in Australia, resulting in the development of hundreds of disposal schedules in the 1950s.

The Public Service Board also started Australia's first major intermediate records repositories, providing cheap centralised storage for semi-current records. It was pretty basic at first. In the early 1950s, the archives were kept in the morgue and laundry of the old hospital at Acton.

Even more far-sighted was the establishment, again in co-operation with the Public Service Board, of a network of 'departmental registrars' for the first time. Each department had a designated officer, with clearly defined responsibilities, in charge of its records management. A training scheme for the registrars was launched in 1957: Australia's first systematic scheme for providing technical training for records managers. It is sad that the promise of this scheme was not, for the most part, fulfilled. In the 1960s, the scheme faltered and most registrars lost their influence and status, requiring a whole new effort by records managers in succeeding decades to assert their professional role.

Much of Ian's work in the later parts of his career had a purely archival focus. Even so, as Principal Archivist in New South Wales in the late 1970s at the end of his formal career, he oversaw the development of the Records Management Office and its early successes.

Ian was one of the earliest Australian contributors to the international literature of archives and records management. His writings reveal, among other things, an intimate theoretical and practical knowledge of the nature of records and recordkeeping processes, classification methods, registry and other records systems, and other subjects.

He understood, perhaps earlier than anyone in Australia, the close relationship between records and archives management. He regarded records managers and archivists as belonging to the same profession and his writings contain the earliest Australian articulations of what we now know as the

recordkeeping 'continuum'. As we have seen, this was reflected in the work of the institution that he founded and led for a quarter of a century. It is no accident that the CRS system was designed from the start to document records in departments as much as in archives.

Ian was my uncle and it was through this family connection that his example and encouragement started my own career in archives and records management. We have only started in the last few years to celebrate the contributions of our heroes in Australian records management. I am grateful to be able to share with you some of what we owe to Ian Maclean.

by his nephew, David Roberts
Director, NSW State Records

THESOLUTIONFINDER.COM

The International Solutions Evaluation Group (ISEG Pty Ltd) and the Records Management Association of Australasia have inked an accord which will promote the recently launched website **www.TheSolutionFinder.com** and promote awareness of RMAA's activities and membership in Australia, New Zealand, and the rest of the world.

www.TheSolutionFinder.com is a fully searchable Information and Communications Technology (ICT) industries website with over 300 product and service categories and includes categories for records management, document lifecycle management, knowledge management, file storage and backup, plus imaging and scanning technologies. In addition, users will be able to search for consultants and project managers with relevant industry experience.

Launched in Sydney by the Hon. Michael Egan MLC, NSW Minister for State Development at the end of January 2003, the website is already attracting over 3,000 visitors per week and holds information on over 350 vendors, their products, and services.

ISEG is pleased to announce a strategic partnership with RMAA, an alliance which will benefit both organisations by targeted exposure to each other's customers and clients. ISEG's Technology Advisor for Records Management and associated solutions, Mr. Geoff Quinn said, 'When users of TheSolutionFinder.com search for these solutions, RMAA receive exposure through their logo appearing on the results page. In addition RMAA's full profile and contact details will be in the "Associations" category where the Association will also list and promote its Chapters and Special Interest Groups'.

The RMAA have added TheSolutionFinder logo to their website and will promote it through its publications, Branch meetings, and National events. Chris Fripp, RMAA's National President said, 'The relationship we have established with ISEG and TheSolutionFinder will assist in realising our goals of increasing awareness and membership of RMAA in Australia, New Zealand, and Asia, strengthening strategic alliances with like Associations, and promoting our professional development programs'.

Unique to The Solution Finder is the ability for end-users to search for products and services that fit their own functional and technical requirements and perform comparisons between different offerings. Search filters include by industry segment, 'origin' (e.g. Australian), State and Region, (e.g. Western Sydney, Gold Coast), and 'endorsed supplier' to Governments.

TheSolutionFinder was launched in Asia and Europe in April 2003.

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INDUSTRY NEWS

ADI LANDS $MILLION STATE GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS

DataWorks EDMS developer Advanced Data Integration (ADI) has pushed into the State Government sector signing system contracts worth almost AU$1million with the Victoria Department of Human Services (DHS), the Queensland Ombudsman, and the Information Commissioner.

Victoria's DHS, the state's largest Government department, wanted DataWorks for all its 12,000 department users to manage ministerial and executive correspondence and briefings. It was expected to be operational in early April 2003.

The Queensland Ombudsman and the Information Commissioner replaced an existing system and started live operations in December 2002. Queensland Minister for Innovation and Information Economy, **Paul Lucas**, congratulated Advanced Data Integration on its achievements, saying: 'It is great to see ADI, a Queensland company, playing a central role in advancing the technology industry and further driving the Smart State forward.'

Chris Gorry, Chief Executive Officer, Advanced Data Integration, said that ADI was looking to continue its expansion into other markets such as state government utilities, education, and health sectors. He said: 'DataWorks is now being seen as the umbrella system that centralises and manages data and automatically organises the work flow across organisations.'

The company is firmly established in local government with DataWorks installed at some 110 councils in Australia and New Zealand and a greater than 30% marketshare of the largest local government authorities in Australia.

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Chris Gorry, Chief Executive Officer of Advanced Data Integration (left) with **Paul Lucas**, Queensland Minister for Innovation & Information Economy.

ROSS GIBBS NEW HEAD OF NAA

A new Director-General of the National Archives of Australia has been appointed after a vacancy of more than two-and-a-half years. He is Ross Gibbs, the Keeper of Public Records for Victoria, who was awarded an Australian Public Service Medal (PSM) for services to archives and records management on Australia Day (January 26) this year.

Mr Gibbs has held the Victorian post since 1991. He took up the new position on 7 April 2003 for a period of five years. Since the retirement of former Director-General, **George Nichols**, the National Archives has been lead in an acting role by **Anne-Marie Schwirtlich** who, in February, was appointed State Librarian for Victoria.

Mr Gibbs is a member of the RMAA. His appointment was announced in February and welcomed by National Archives' Assistant Director-General, Steve Stuckey, who commented on the Aus-Archivists listserver: 'I would like to congratulate him on his appointment. It will be good to continue to have as DG a professional member of ASA (Australian Society of Archivists) with such broad experience in the archives and cultural areas.'

Ross Gibbs will write about his hopes and plans for the NAA in the upcoming August Issue of IQ.

PRIZE PRO CONTRACT FOR OBJECTIVE

Objective Corporation has won a prestigious contract to supply an enterprise-wide electronic records management system to Britain's Public Record Office (PRO), the archiving authority for public records of UK Central Government and law courts.

The new system will become part of the PRO's pivotal role in meeting the Blair government's Modernising Government programme that requires all records to be managed electronically by 2004. PRO will use Objective throughout the enterprise to manage its business records. It will be used by all 600 staff.

Mr Tony Walls, Executive Chairman of Objective Corporation, said 'the PRO names 12 electronic records management systems on its list approved for use by UK government agencies - each of which has been subject to stringent evaluation and testing. To be chosen from this elite group for the PRO's own records management requirements is a testament to not only the quality, robustness and rich functionality of our software but our experience, expertise, and capability in delivering business outcomes, not simply technology.'

In Australia, Objective has won a AUS1 million deal for an integrated document management system for the NSW Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP). The deal is the first contract to be awarded under the NSW Government's new panel for records and information management systems.

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RMAA REPORTS

C O N T E N T S

BRANCH REPORTS

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The Western Australian CPD sub-committee has been very active hosting the monthly focus group meetings and organising functions. The focus group is an informal gathering of practitioners and students who get together to talk about current issues in records management. Discussions include safe mail handling, procedures and policy; classification using keyword; and Commonwealth recordkeeping including DIRKS, e-Permanence.

The VERS team made the trip west to provide a workshop so RMAA and IIM took the opportunity to invite Rachel U'Ren and Kathy Sinclair to update participants on Victoria's progress implementing electronic records management. It was another successful joint breakfast.

A milestone in Western Australian recordkeeping regulation was passed in March when the State Records Principles and Standards had their first anniversary. To mark the event an interesting group spoke about implementation of the standards. Des Pearson, Chair of the State Records Commission, reflected on progress with recordkeeping plans; Gaynor Deal from Water Corporation spoke about the impact of the standards on contractors' recordkeeping; Gail Murphy from Information Enterprises gave an insight into the experiences of a consultant writing recordkeeping plans; and Kye O'Donnell launched the Recordkeeping Plan Model for Local Governments. Some innovative work is being produced as a result of this new legislation.

The Western Australian branch membership continues to grow with more than 360 local members. We continue to receive enquiries about how to upgrade so the focus group will hold a 'How to Upgrade' meeting where Branch Council will assist members complete their upgrade applications. Western Australia has many members eligible for professional membership so our goal is to increase professional members to 20% percent.

ARM week events should be well underway by now and we hope this year's events capture a wide audience and bring archives and records management to the attention of the community.

I would like to record our appreciation of the work done by CPD sub-committee and their helpers for their great ideas and making all the arrangements and hosting networking opportunities and events during the year.

Lesley Ferguson ARMA
President, WA Branch

The first RMAA Tasmania Branch members' meeting for 2003 was held at Hydro Tasmania on 25 February and was attended by about 30 people.

The guest speaker was John Behrens, Information Management Manager for Hydro Tasmania who spoke about the Hydro's Electronic Mail Archiving Strategy. Along with support staff, John demonstrated the software involved in the strategy and the achieved benefits.

The key features of the Exchange Archive solution product include its:

- ability to substantially reduce the size of any Microsoft Exchange database
- capacity to archive electronic messages and attachments
- flexibility in the application of rules
- ability to acknowledge all e-mail information other than content of company's Private folder
- ability to provide a fast and easy to use, full text search of messages and attached documents.

The product implemented by the Hydro does not replace, but enhances, a records management or document management system. The Hydro continues to promote best recordkeeping practices and encourages all staff to capture e-mail into established recordkeeping systems, as appropriate. Important information that hasn't yet been captured is also safeguarded through automatic archival after a 14 day period. Once the archive activates after the 14 days nothing can be deleted.

In recognising the value of e-mail, Hydro Tasmania wanted to provide a system that would not only allow individuals to easily search their accounts more successfully but also allow the company to capture these communications and associated attachments and if necessary recover them at a later date as a business record. A specific area in the system is tolerated for private e-mail and these are not archived.

RMAA (Tasmanian Branch) Study Award

Calling all records management students! Nominations are being called for the Records Management Association of Australasia's Tasmanian Branch annual study award.

If you would like to nominate someone, please contact:

Lynne Welling ARMA
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Membership Update

The January 2003 membership report puts the total Tasmanian membership at 113. Tasmania has one Member status, 32 on Associate status, with the remainder as either Affiliate or Corporate members. If you know of anyone that would like to become a member, please let a committee member know and they will follow it up.

We would like to welcome a new member, Mr Andrew Reynolds who joins us from the Retirement Benefits Fund.

Kate Walker, MRMA AMIM
President, TAS Branch

'Mentoring' was the topic of our Breakfast Seminar held on 3 April at the Radisson Playford. The speaker, Elisa Colak, covered issues such as:

- What is mentoring?
- Why mentor? - Benefits for the mentor and mentee
- What is involved in a mentoring scheme/program?
- Responsibilties of the mentor and mentee
- Types of mentor/mentee relationships and finding the 'right' mentor.

The breakfast was well received by all who attended. During May, the SA Branch is holding a Status Upgrade Workshop to assist members who wish to apply for Associate status. We will also be holding a half day VERS Strategy Workshop during ARM Week.

Kristen Keley. ARMA
President, SA Branch

n s w

Lunchtime Seminars

Our first lunchtime seminar for the year, 'Is the thesaurus dead?' was held on 4 February. The topic proved to be quite popular with over 100 people registering prior to the event. Sufficiently popular that we needed to say 'no' to some people who wanted to come.

The second lunchtime seminar for 2003 was held on 1 April in the Aquatorium at Sydney Water Corporation. Well over 90 people attended as Denis Comber discussed the records system implementation he was involved with during his time at NSW Police. His paper is available on the RMAA webpage.

The March seminar was held in Grafton with an average of 43 delegates attending each day. The next local government seminar is scheduled for 29 May at Lithgow Council.

Membership Update

We were (finally) able to recognise Glenn Sanders' upgrade to Member status. We also had the chance to finally present the certificate of professional membership to Chris Colwell. Congratulations.

Archives and Records Management Week 2003

Work is continuing on planning for 'Archives and Records Management Week 2003'. The RMAA, ASA, and State Records NSW coordination committee is developing a diverse and interesting range of events. The committee would like to establish a national coordinating committee between relevant interested parties. Perhaps a meeting at either the RMAA or ASA conferences? We are looking for ideas to help develop Archives and Records Management week. If you are interested in participating, feel free to contact me.

In late February I had the opportunity to speak at an electronic document and records management conference in Melbourne. There have also been discussions with another conference organiser about a similar conference in Sydney in June.

NSW Treasurer, Michael Egan, launched TheSolutionFinder.com in January. TheSolutionFinder.com is a website devoted to finding and ranking solution providers in the communications and technology fields. They are very keen on developing a relationship with our association. I suggest you check their site at www.thesolutionfinder.com

Geoff Smith, ARMA
President, NSW Branch

a c t

The ACT Branch is concentrating on a recruitment drive for professional memberships. Early next month a Professional Breakfast will be held to promote the benefits of obtaining a professional level in the Association. As well as this we are encouraging more qualifications and accreditation in the industry.

The Seminar Coordinators are hard at work planning the Records and Archives Week to be held in the last week of May. This is a national week and a chance to concentrate on activities pertaining to both spectrums of the industry. Some of the activities planned are a dinner, a thesaurus workshop, various site visits, and some half day sessions focusing on the needs of operational people in records management.

The ACT is also already very busy planning for the 2004 National Convention to be held in Canberra. A committee has been formed and plans are well underway.

Veronica Pumpa ARMA
President, ACT Branch

The Branch has been busy planning activities for Archives and Records Management Week in May. During the week, the Branch will be conducting several site visits, a breakfast meeting, and a workshop. The Branch conducted a professional membership upgrade workshop during April. Most members of the Branch are busy preparing for the implementation of the Information Act on 1 July this year. Northern Territory Government agencies will then need to comply with the freedom of information, privacy, and records management requirements covered by the legislation.

Linda Bell, ARMA
President, NT Branch

Professional Development Seminars

The 2003 Professional Development Seminar program has commenced. The March seminar addressed the issue of Managing E-Mail, the April seminar focused on Sentencing Records, and May will tackle Classification Systems.

Records Management Week (26-31 May 2003)

It looks like there will be a range of activities during Records Management Week this year. Final arrangements are being made to have a breakfast meeting, seminar, and trade expo. The RMAA will be collaborating with our colleagues from ASA and IIM to provide an interesting and varied program. Watch the RMAA events web page for further details.

Local Government Chapter

The Local Government Chapter has been active with a members' meeting held in Toowoomba early March involving 34 delegates with videoconferencing links to other members in Thuringowa and Rockhampton. Topics discussed included implementing best practice recordkeeping in local government. Planning is also well underway for the Northern Queensland State Conference to be held in July in Cairns. This is a great venue for anyone travelling up north for some warmth to espace the southern winter.

State Government Chapter

The State Government Chapter recently met to discuss the Queensland Government's new shared services initiative and its impact on records management services.

New Associate Members

The following members had applications for advancement to Associate status recently approved:

Shelley Arnold
Virginia Bolger
Jennifer Curley

Congratulations to these members. The Branch will be running additional membership workshops to help members through the process.

Philip Taylor MRMA
President, QLD Branch

nz

New Zealand branch laid more firm foundations with the formation in March of the Auckland Chapter, the first extension since the branch was formed in November 2002. North Shore City Property Records Supervisor, David Pryde, ARMA, was elected President. David is a Queenslander who came over to New Zealand from Brisbane with his family in 2000. Auckland Filecorp Holdings consultant Vera Giles, ARMA, was elected Secretary and Bruce Symondson, Archivist at Waitakere City, a north-western region of the Auckland metropolitan area, was elected acting Treasurer, subject to his application for professional status being accepted.

Twenty-plus Auckland recordkeepers and vendors met in the Council Chamber at the Auckland Town Hall to approve the Chapter launch and elect officers. NZ Branch Vice-President Michael Steemson, ARMA, addressed the meeting explaining the Association's professional status project and development plans, and the NZ Branch events programme and other projects.

The Chapter executive will now start putting in place a programme for members, a recruiting drive and a campaign to raise members to professional status. David told the meeting he is especially keen to join the Branch's programme of education development and to work for extension of RMAA influence to other cities in the Auckland Province and the rest of the country.

National Executive Secretary Kate Walker, MRMA, e-mailed the new Chapter saying: 'On behalf of the RMAA, I would like to extend my congratulations in the formation of the Auckland Chapter of the NZ Branch. I trust you will prosper and spread the RM principles and assist RM professionals in your area, through your unending amounts of energy and dedication to the profession.'

The Chapter launch came on day one of the Branch's Archives and Records week that was moderately successful with events in the four main centres of the country. The week was timed to coincide with Archives New Zealand's Wellington launch of its important Government Recordkeeping programme and guidelines that it has called 'Continuum'. The Auckland City Council, a corporate Association member, carried a special A & R Week intranet display for the whole staff. The Branch is already planning a bigger and much better event for next year.

Another milestone event was the appointment of the branch's first MRMA. Wellington City Archivist, Joanna Newman, was approved as Member at the National Board meeting in February and was due to receive her certificate at a presentation during the branch's April members meeting.

Trish O'Kane
President, NZ Branch

20th International RMAA
CONFERENCE
14TH-17TH SEPTEMBER 2003
Crown Entertainment Complex Melbourne

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SPEAKER HIGHLIGHTS
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Eminent Speaker from Microsoft

Kenneth Ledbetter, NASA, USA

Randall Straw, Multimedia Victoria

Dr Anne Thurston, International Records Management Trust, UK

Steve Bittinger, Gartner Australasia

Speakers from across Australia, New Zealand and the region make the RMAA International Conference a regular chance to update their information on records and information management, including new applications such as electronic document management, knowledge management, data mining/warehousing, web and intranet/portal content management plus ecommerce and emerging development platforms such as .Net and mobile access methodologies.

Who should attend *Journey into New Dimensions*
will be of specific interest to:
Chief Executive- CEO, President, CIO, CKO, Principal, Owner, GM,
Directors & Senior Managers- Records/Information Management,
Human Resources, Knowledge IT Managers- CTO, Director/Manager,
Web/Content/Electronic Document Managers
Professionals- Web/Intranet/Application Developers, DBAs,
Data/Library Managers, Project Managers

FOR FURTHER DETAILS
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Program at a Glance ◀◀

SUNDAY 14TH
REGISTRATION
WELCOME DINNER RECCEPTION

MONDAY 15TH
CONCEPTS
OFFICIAL DINNER

TUESDAY 16TH
TECHNOLOGY
LINTON AWARDS & RMAA AGM

WEDNESDAY 17TH
PEOPLE
FAREWELL COCKTAIL PARTY
▶▶

FOR FURTHER DETAILS
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