



Australia's  
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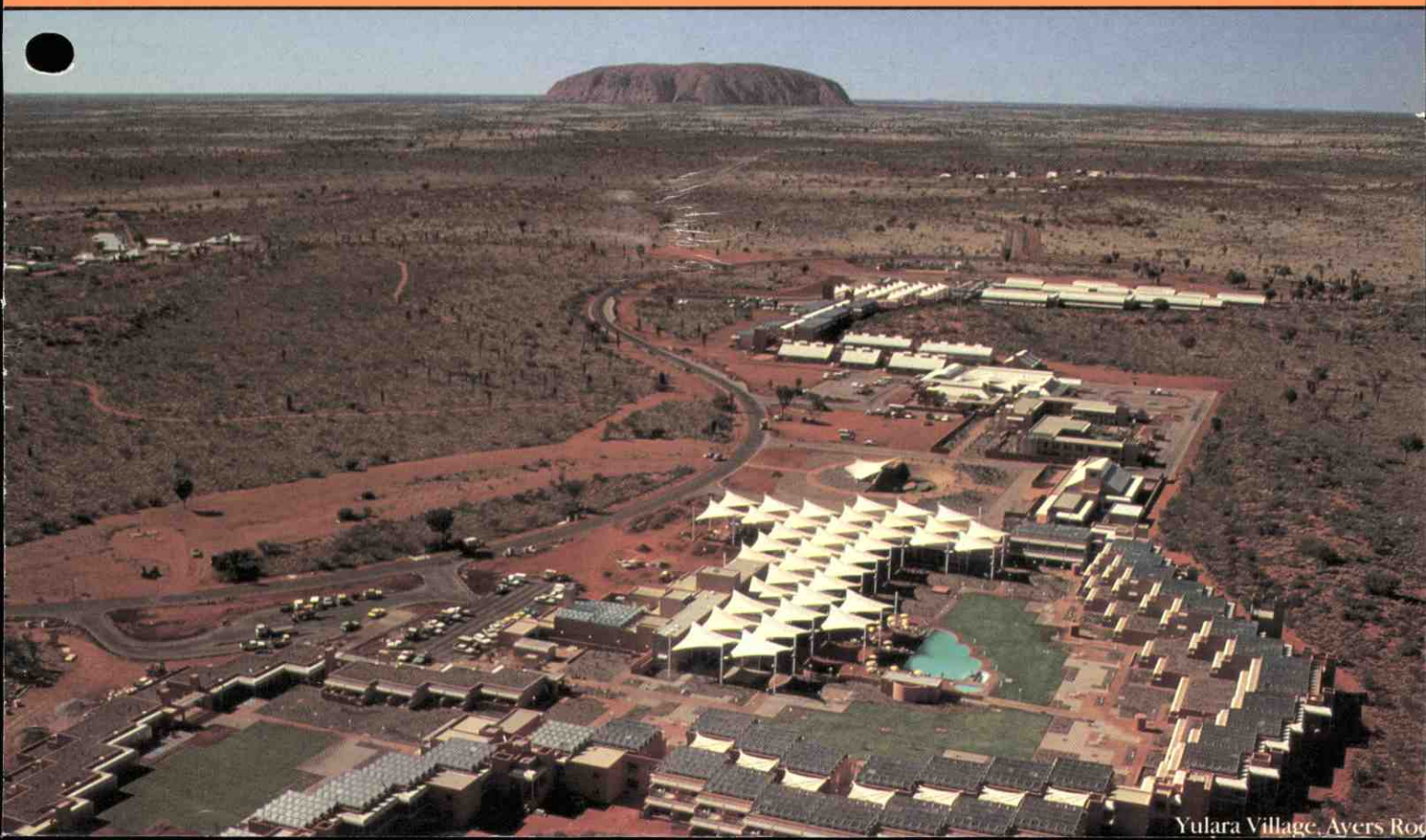


# INFORMAA QUARTERLY

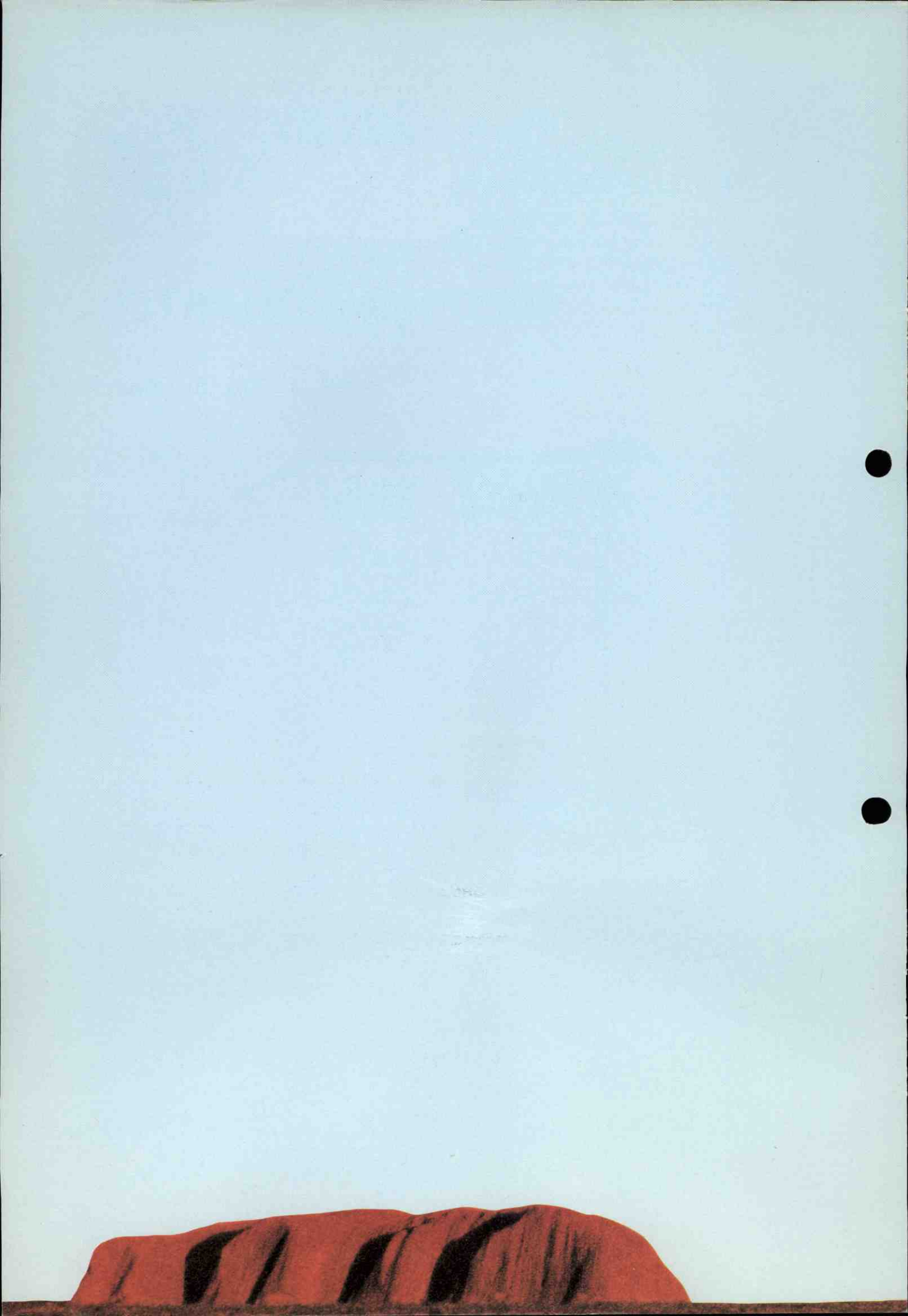
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## EDITORIAL NOTES

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Future issues:	February 1986 — ACT Branch
	May 1986 — Qld. Branch
	August 1986 — NSW Branch

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## **Ansett.**

## THE FEDERAL PRESIDENT REPORTS.....

The elements which form an essential basis for the Association to flourish and prosper are its "visibility", its "professionalism" and its ability to "communicate".

Since the first National Convention in Queensland in 1984 we have moved towards achieving this goal.

The Second National Convention in Sydney, this year, saw the Association "come of age" with some 260 people attending.

People were able to mingle and talk to one another on common ground.

The speakers and the organisation were of a high professional standard which proved beyond doubt that the Association has the ability to produce the goods.

In 1986 South Australia will, I am sure, provide the same standard of excellence.

Their committee has been planning and organising for this convention at "The Alice" with a great deal of enthusiasm and I am confident it will be second to none.

The Association's "visibility" nationally and internationally is important to us if we expect to be recognised as a leader in the field of Information and Records Management.

This coupled with the ability to "communicate" the appropriate information that has a bearing on change in technology or change in direction.

Information and communication will enhance our chances of overcoming apathy and will also create confidence in the approach to the future and what it has to offer.

Peter A. Smith, M.R.M.A.

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## INTRODUCING THE CONVENTION COMMITTEE.....

Organising a convention is not easy, in fact it's a lot of hard work. It takes long hours and a lot of effort from a "special team" of people to achieve a successful convention.

I am proud to introduce one such team. They are motivated, dedicated and determined and have already spent many long hours towards achieving a successful 3rd National Convention in Alice Springs in 1986.

Maurice Andrews (Brambles Records Management) (08) 3710222

Brigitte Kleinig (Australian Archives ) (08) 269 3977

Spiros Sarris (Office of Public Record) (08) 223 8792

Jan Seamen (Seymour College)

Matt Selfridge (DC of Noarlunga) (08) 382 1022

Sharon Setton (Aust Bureau of Stats) (08) 228 9277

Please feel free to contact if you have any queries about the convention. Me ? Oh, I just make the coffee....

Helen Francis

(Dept of Aviation) (08) 218 0461

# LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Informaa Quarterly

Dear Editor,

While supporting Marita Hoo's point made in her letter to The Editor, p2, Informaa Quarterly, vol 1 (4), August 1985, that consultants should get a firm commitment from clients before commencing implementation that the system will be properly maintained by dedicated staff, might I express a little concern that the program of the recent Sydney Convention did not include a seminar on the people aspects of records management. Most Australian records managers have been denied adequate resources and authority to do their job yet they are expected to produce the goods. In consequence many records managers suffer health problems. The overwhelming technology and systems orientation of the Convention might lead many to conclude effective records management depends solely on installing the right proprietary system or technological innovation. People are more important!

Marita emphasised that if the system fails the consultant's reputation will suffer. A good point! My main objective in writing the article "The Records Management Feasibility Study and The Role of The Records Management Consultant" that prompted Marita's comments was to educate management and the new wave of records management consultants (of which she is one) in the importance of a thorough and professional feasibility study. The study is necessary to ensure there will be a strong commitment from the chief executive to provide adequate resources and staff. Such a commitment is needed to preserve the health and welfare of the records management staff. If in so doing the records management consultant's own reputation is preserved that's an extra benefit.

Unless responsibility and authority for records management are "co-equal, co-terminous and defined" (Urwick) the system will fail. The consultant's responsibilities include educating the client and ensuring he/she understands the role of the records manager in achieving an effective system, and knows what staff and other resources are needed to do the job. The consultant should ensure the records manager is properly placed in the organisation hierarchy to enable him/her to carry out the responsibilities. The records managers position description should be agreed to before commencing implementation. Only then can the consultant be satisfied the client is committed. But that's not enough. Consultant's should ensure the records management jobs are jobs for people.

Tom Lovett M.B.A., M.R.M.A.  
Lovett Vickery and Associates

Note for the Editor If you want to make mention of my paper "Job Enrichment in Records Management" you might include an Editor's Note at this point along these lines:

Editor's Comment: The paper "Job Enrichment in Records Management" by Tom Lovett, which offers some advice on making records management jobs for people, is included in this issue of Informaa Quarterly.



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Over the past couple of years I have attended the first and second RMAA National Conventions, in Coolangatta and Sydney respectively. There was much to be gained from personal contact with fellow professionals and people "in the trade". However on both occasions, on the whole, I was disappointed in the papers presented.

Most of the papers were pitched more for those beginning in the field of records management or for those who had limited experience. I do acknowledge that there are many such people in those positions but I would like to see future convention organising committees adopting an approach similar to that used at ARMA conventions.

ARMA (American Records Management Assoc.) flags the papers listed in the convention programme as to whether they are at Beginner, Intermediate or Advanced level. The Beginner level is for individuals recently entering records management, the Intermediate level is for records managers with several years experience and the Advanced level is for those records managers with a number of years experience and who are responsible for long term planning and information management programmes. Peer sessions are also run for those attending at an Advanced level where managers with like interests hold round table get togethers.

In Australia distances are long and airfares are expensive and for senior records managers to continue their attendance on an annual basis more consideration should now be given to their needs and expectations.

Marita D. Hoo,  
RMAA WA Branch.



" TO ENSURE YOUR UNDIVIDED  
ATTENTION I'LL ANNOUNCE  
AT THE END OF THE MEETING..  
WHO'LL WRITE THE MINUTES !"

THE MANAGEMENT OF SECURITY FOR OFF-SITE STORAGE AND DESTRUCTION  
OF RECORDS

(A paper presented to the 1984 Seminar of the Security Institute of South Australia by Mervin C. Reed - Past President RMAA S)

This seminar has as its theme - Security Now. My presentation deals with the Security issues of Offsite Storage and Destruction, a contemporary issue canvassing a part of the Information revolution we now experience.

Alvin Toffler in the "Third Wave" noted that we are in the midst of a major structural change to society and that this change is information based. I plan today to introduce two of the three component parts of the security model, physical security and document security and connect both factors to this change in society, linking these in turn to Secondary Storage and Destruction.

But why is offsite storage and destruction, a security issue? Security is the process of protection of value or values. From this simple definition let us reflect upon Alvin Toffler and information. The information revolution is changing the structure of society according to Toffler. Information is becoming more valuable. I believe you will all have ideas of your own as to the value of information, or otherwise why bother to secure it.

Security of information within the Information Cycle of the organisation is primarily driven from the retention factor. You will notice how retention is a major component of the decision process.

Information within the cycle having been interpreted, modified re-arranged, has value once disseminated.

It is this fact, that information is a resource, a commodity in its own right, able to be created, manipulated, bought, sold and used, that provides the motivation for secure retention and destruction. Just as you will lock up gold, cash and other valuables so you need to secure information.

Once an organisation, small business or even Government has decided upon the price of such a commodity and declared a value to that resource, they inevitably retain it. It may be a simple sales record, a list of products, or product literature, all with some inherent value specific to the person or organisation who decides to retain. This is the start of the information management cycle.

Your organisation should have an information management plan. It should be a well defined, strategic plan for all of the information systems. This objective for integrated information should support the Corporate Plan of your organisation and its overall philosophy in its endeavours. Simply it should help you find out where you want to go, and assist in planning the strategy of how you are going to get there.

The critical factor in information planning is to determine what information you need where, and for how long. This will enable you to plan for the location and duration of the records. I would now like to turn to security for both active and inactive storage.

Prime location storage is feasible only if your organisation is



fully aware of and prepared to support the cost penalty. Offsite storage is a cost effective viable option and at this stage I wish to refer to some graphics to illustrate a simple cost benefit analysis of Capital City CBD costs, to secondary space Australia-wide.

CURRENT MARKET RENTALS - OFFICE ACCOMMODATION - 1984

CITY	PRIME SPACE \$M2 PA	SECONDARY SPACE \$M2 PA
SYDNEY	280-400	195-280
MELBOURNE	160-300	100-160
BRISBANE	150-250	125-170
ADELAIDE	110-125	95-110
PERTH	165-185	100-130
HOBART	100-110	90-110
DARWIN	120-140	90-125
CANBERRA	170-225	115-245

NOTE: RENTS ARE EXPRESSED AS GROSS RATES, EXCLUDING CLEANING CHARGES, BASED ON WHOLE FLOOR LETTING

From this schematic you can see that the average cost of onsite storage in Adelaide is \$110 per sq metre per annum to \$125 with offsite storage being at least 20-25% cheaper. Obviously with non-office - factory style accommodation the cost drop by up to 50% or around \$29-\$50 per sq metre.

Therefore the economic facts of offsite storage even considering the fit out expense of security is an average 5 times cheaper than equivalent on-site storage.

To illustrate this on a bigger scale and to identify more precisely the security issues I will review what Government does in particular the Federal Government.

The Federal Government through the agency of its National Archives, the Australian Archives, is probably the foremost example of the value of offsite storage to an organisation. The Archives through its purpose built repositories provides storage for some 250.000 metres of short term records, thus saving millions of dollars in onsite storage costs each year. This is best illustrated by the fact that the guidelines for Federal Office accommodation allow less than 5% of the total floor area of leased or owned accommodation to be utilised for onsite storage.

This extensive offsite storage includes the following high technology records ie machine readable or audio visual materials such as computer tape and film.

Security is maintained by a systematic and thorough approach to the threats that have been assessed by Government security advisers.

Thus the security component of offsite storage is precisely facilitated in a series of buildings that produce massive cost savings in security. If the building is designed to reduce to near elimination stage any potential threat, and given the economies of scale to the Government, the end cost to the

Taxpayer is reduced.

Reflecting upon the non-government environment I would assess that most Australian organisations have little awareness of corporate information planning, and generally can be considered to be information poor. Primarily the reason you are information poor is due to the lack of management awareness that information is a commodity, and therefore needs to be planned for, managed and utilised. It is akin to unused plant and equipment laying idle as if someone had forgotten to start it up. A similar situation exists with security and information particularly in relation to your office. The office is universally the most insecure area of your company, with access by workmen, cleaners and other non-agency personnel taken for granted. You will lock up your petty cash and computers but leave the files and VDU's within easy access of the unwanted visitor. This is easily illustrated by reference to components of the security model I introduced earlier.

Off-site storage of non-current material can save lots of dollars, increase your security by removing a large chunk of non-active information from a potential threat situation, as well as providing absolute control.

You might say - well I need the information on hand ! Quite a valid statement you may think !

WRONG!

The direct information needs of the manager and his staff are determined by many factors which I call the INDEX OF UNJUSTIFIED NEED :

People will say that they need the information next to their desks because :

1. They don't feel comfortable without it.
2. They might get a phone call re last years results.
3. What happens if !
4. Why should they have to wait ?
5. Its a favourite source.
6. The Manager said they needed it here !

Most Australian organisations carry excessive temporary records and hence are easy targets for Industrial espionage, theft, pilfering and leaks. All of the examples in the Index of unjustified need are why offsite storage is a viable security option.

Well how does an organisation design security for an offsite option ?

I reflect here on my earlier statement that information (even if only of a limited 6-10 year life) is a commodity with a value. If your information has value and its costing too much to retain in your office - offsite storage is the decision you make.

The security profile of repositories for offsite storage must be of a good standard incorporating building mechanical services, fire protection and physical protection. You should select quality buildings and not cheap low quality efforts that are ultra expensive to secure.

If you are contemplating offsite storage to reduce overheads but maintain a valuable resource, plan long term and consider as

basic requirements some of these concentration factors:-

- a) A properly developed first stage security perimeter with man-proof type fencing, gates and lighting.
- b) A second stage security perimeter of the external walls, doors, roof and floors of the building itself. Secure physically accordingly.
- c) Quality door locks of the pickproof type that will reject the amateur, and hinder, if not deter the professional. Select lock pcompanies that have key security.
- d) Intrusion alarm systems of the latest type that are fully monitored and maintained on a 24 hour basis by a reputable company.
- e) Secure rooms for valuable material or sensitive information.
- f) Full time armed guards or intermittent but frequent patrol sevices.
- g) A well designed and serious staff training (security) program

Offsite storage is economic, human resource effective and convenient but it has its security needs. Think of your information as a commodity that is valuable to your competitor and manage accordingly.

I would now like to return to the destruction of information and security.

Destruction for the purpose of this paper is that process by where a record or informational unit has been valued by your organisation as being worthless and should therefore be destroyed. But how can you achieve secure destruction ? First a brief look at what information is made of, what are the technologies ?

Information comes in many technologies to name a few -

cellulose acetate	-	paper
cellulose triacetate	-	safety base film
mylor	-	magnetic tape
aluminium & mylor	-	computer discs
silicon & various oxides	-	computer disc packs
cellulose biacetate &		
silver halide	-	medical xrays

The destruction of these technologies poses major problems to most organisations - let me sort out a few myths:-

- a. Shredding: paper  
Most shredders are not secure. Only vertical and crosscut shredders that produce confetti are reasonably secure.
- b. Microforms  
Most microforms ie film, fiche and jackets are difficult to destroy by mechanical means. They are easily photocopied, transportable and duplicated (DIAZIO Process). Shredding is acceptable is dust is the output. Most shredders produce insecure results.
- c. Burning  
Very insecure, however acceptable if under controlled conditions. Generally slow and labour intensive. Produces

pollution.

d. Pulping

If available, a secure and cost effective non polluting alternative with a large capacity for through put.

The destruction issue is one that is difficult for most managers to enforce, but is the key to ensuring the security model is maintained.

To conclude:-

-Security of Information in an offsite storage environment pays dividends. It guarantees the reduction of potential threats to a minimum level and reduces costs.

-Effective Disposal of Information is an important part of the Security Management of your organisation. It reduces the potential security threat, but must at all times be given management attention to ensure your disposal process does not itself produce a security failure.

Lastly the priority given to Information Security by managers in the development of cost saving offsite storage coupled with an effective destruction programme, will determine largely whether or not your organisation is capable of being information efficient.

\* \* \* \* \*

MOTIVATION

Malcolm J. Nairn  
Vice President, SA Branch

The importance of knowing how to manage people properly and efficiently - how to manipulate them - has long been recognised by business and industrial leaders.

Basically the supervisor must oversee the performance of duties, ensure the workload is performed in the allocated time and that work is executed with some priority, but perhaps the ultimate objective of any supervisor is the ability to manage people. No one is born with the ability, it has to be acquired. This is why the search for executive talent is so costly and some companies even think nothing of outright piracy to achieve it.

Good management, and I use this term loosely because management and supervision tend to go hand in hand, has been defined as "showing average people how to do the work of superior people". What does it take to manage people effectively ? One of course is patience.

The trouble with business is its full of people. A machine won't go off and sulk - people will. A machine won't make a mistake - people will. A machine won't arrive late for work, take time off, leave early, disappear or argue with the supervisor - people will.

Alfred P. Sloan from General Motors in the United States says "The most important thing I have learnt about management is that an executive must arouse the individual initiative of the people working under him."

A supervisor must trust, inspire and lead. A successful general

is one under whose leadership staff and rank and file will work and die with enthusiasm.

The ability to influence people is a major requirement for any supervisor. I believe the main development tool in influencing people is MOTIVATION !

This can conjure wide thoughts but simply its the secret of getting others to do what you want them to do and this lies in the ability to penetrate and understand the hidden world that each of us carries around with ourselves.

By virtue of the fact that we are all basically similar, we are able to penetrate each other's egocentric or hidden world and understand what makes each other tick, so we can help make them tick "louder" at times or at least more effectively. To accomplish this takes two things.

A willingness and ability to put ourselves in other people's shoes and try to see things through their eyes, to understand their needs, wants, strivings and secondly :-

The skill in harnessing these needs and desires to departmental and company goals so they will act as levers to raise performance to a higher level. In other words MOTIVATION by an appeal to people's self interest to become better and more efficient workers.

But why all this bother to treat employees so nicely ? They're paid to do jobs allocated to them when all is said and done ! Certainly they are, but they'll do them better more quickly, more accurately, more willingly, when they feel they have a personal interest in what they are doing.

I have found the easiest way to motivate employees is to involve them in decision making processes. Even if the decision has already been made in your own mind, seek responses from those who actually do the task - who knows, your preconceived ideas may be changed.

Motivating employees by appealing to their own self interests is nothing more than commonsense.

How do we then as supervisors go about the task of motivation ? I think there are three basic ways:-

1. Recognition
2. Feeling important
3. Human Relations

Let me briefly discuss each of them.

#### RECOGNITION

We all feel bitter or empty if we fail to receive recognition when we think we deserve it. The American psychologist William James said "The deepest principal of human nature is the craving to be appreciated."

Even when we ask for criticism, what we are really looking for is praise and recognition.

Recognition, encouragement and praise are as necessary to morale as sunshine is to flowers.

To be effective however it should be directed at the performance and not the employee.

### FEELING IMPORTANT

According to some schools of psychiatry the craving for prestige is our most fundamental want.

Money isn't the most important thing in life - although it may be ahead of a lot of things.

Money is certainly one of the vital necessities of life, but it's not money we really want - rather the things money can bring to us by the way of luxuries - things that will enhance our status.

We want to be somebody, we want to be important, to stand out.

Here is another powerful urge to action that the motivating supervisor will seek to tap in his job. He will try to give their work an added sense of significance or importance in their eyes.

You can go a long way toward making people feel more important by taking a serious personal interest in their work and letting them know that the measure of their success is also the measure of success of their company, department or section.

### HUMAN RELATIONS

As well as taking an interest in their work, taking an interest in your people as individuals will create that human touch.

Employees will naturally do better work for a boss whom they respect than for one whom they do not respect; they will do still better work for one whom they respect and like than for one whom they respect and either fear or resent.

Taking an interest in your people as people is nothing more than treating them with the courtesy, thoughtfulness and consideration that one human deserves from another.

Speak to people - say good morning - use their names. There is nothing more sweet to a person's ears than the sound of their own name.

If you're asked "how are you" - a pretty standard question, following a "good morning" greeting, always respond "well thank you" no matter how rotten you feel. Remember, that no one wants to know your troubles.

Learn something about their hobbies, special interest, background and families so you can chat informally when circumstances warrant.

Hand out a compliment now and then even though there may be no particular need to do so. It's a tonic for everyone's spirits. Avoid the common habit of fault finding to the exclusion of "good finding." If you want to criticise, make it constructive criticism. If you feel something won't work, a system, a procedure, have an alternative method to discuss.

Use criticism only as a teaching device, never for scolding or fault finding. Used as a weapon of destruction instead of construction it undermines status and forfeits the respect of subordinates.

A simple working formula for constructive criticism is the so called sandwich method. Slip the meat of your criticism between two layers of praise or recognition, honestly expressed.

I have suggested three ways supervisors can use to motivate people. Of course there are others.

One is listening. Listening attentively and sympathetically is one of the most important attributes of a good supervisor.

Can your subordinates say "I like my boss : I can talk to him, he

listens to me."

One of the hardest things in life is to listen to others without constantly interrupting - just tune into a parliamentary debate. If you can let others have their say without interrupting, you learn quickly what's on their mind and can help them solve their problems - sometimes by just letting them talk themselves into a solution. Above all you give a person a chance to calm down or cool off, if he is obviously upset.

One of the chief benefits therefore of being willing to listen is that it not only removes the emotional blocks from an employee's mind and enables him to get with it again, but it solves problems more effectively by allowing a person to reach the solution himself.

Financial incentives are naturally one of the strongest methods of motivation. I mentioned earlier that money was not the all important factor, because "man does not live by bread alone" and I don't detract from that which I have said. However the "money drive" after all is the main reason why we all go to work in the first place.

Financial rewards are one of the most concrete ways there are to praise a person and show him you "mean" what you say.

Money, of course, talks "pretty loudly", but what we must not lose sight of is the feeling of status engendered in an employee by a supervisor that actively solicits his advice in the running of the company's operations. To know that your company respects your judgement and expertise enough to pay extra for it, makes an employee feel he is more than just a number on the payroll. Every supervisor must give orders. Strategy in this is perhaps just as important as strategy in criticising.

The wise supervisor of people must be aware of hidden talents in human conduct and must do his best to capitalise on them to his own advantage and that of the company.

Phrase orders as requests or suggestions, so as to seem to allow compliance, rather than demand them.

What then is the goal of the supervisor ? What is his purpose ? I believe that you will agree that it is not to dominate but to inspire; not to give his people cause to fear him, but reasons to like and respect him; not to get his way by fighting, but by winning the support and goodwill of his people so that they will want to get behind his plans and carry them to a successful completion.

The best way he can do this is to assume the role of a leader, not a boss or driver.

By this I don't mean to become "soft" on human relations - to adopt the keep happy role at whatever cost. By increasing their interest in their work and trying to make it a more satisfying experience; by making their jobs a greater challenge - one that will result in a marked increase in effort and cooperation in whatever they undertake, is the goal of the supervisor.

Let me conclude with a little quote I came across recently, "Eli Lilly, founder of a large pharmaceutical company in the United States once informed his foreman:

"The days of the dictatorial, blustering boss are numbered: and that is a blessing. You modern supervisors serve as a coordinator an encourager, a smoother-outer of difficulties. Above all, he



sees to it that all persons get a fair deal and that all questions from those working with him are viewed from a sympathetic stand point. The first responsibilities of our supervisors are to build men and women, then medicine."

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### WHO CONTROLS THE INFORMATION ?

by Peter J. Crush RMAA SA Branch  
Comtec Seminar - 21.8.1984

"What information ? I control some, and generally know who to ask if I want to know anything else. Tell me what you want to know and I will see if I can't put you right."

I would suggest that this is a fairly typical reaction to the question asked. It indicates how we take information so much for granted that we have to strip back the layers until we get closer to the specifics that we seek.

Having been involved in information work in a fairly self conscious way with particular emphasis on archives since the mid 1960's "information" is in my experience synonymous with "records".

A useful definition of records which covers all types and forms of information used in both the public and private sectors states that a record is any item capable of containing and transmitting information of any kind, which is received or created and retained by an organisation in the process of achieving its objectives.

Let us adopt that definition as we endeavour to answer the question "Who controls the information ?"

Another thing to keep in mind is that each of us uses information almost every waking minute of our lives, and we each bring our own education and experience to what we collect, how we arrange it, and how we interpret it. If we should be responsible for arranging that information for subsequent retrieval then it will be our unique experience and education which shapes the system we devise. The significance of this point becomes clear as soon as any one of us has to pass information on to another person in a remote way, or quickly; then the system we have created to control our information must be amenable to use by another person simply and quickly.

It is interesting to note that the application of EDP to information storage and manipulation demands such a consistency and lack of ambiguity that, as we embrace it, we find we cannot take the whole business so much for granted. We have to think processes through step by step and we have to take more care with the meaning of words and processes.

From these few introductory remarks I hope you can see that every one of us, in any situation, has about us a certain amount of information which we control. Much of it may never be committed to writing, in which case the individual if in a work environment becomes part of an organisation's information resource. But if the information remains in the form of personal unrecorded information it cannot be controlled.

It follows that, within an organisation, there will be stratas or levels of information. One level will consist of that very specific information used and controlled by the individual, another the information used by a number of people within a work group controlled by one or all of them, and another level consisting of information, potentially having the widest dissemination, which is controlled by the people responsible for the organisation's records in a broad sense.

Once information is to be used by more than one person it must be arranged within a system or series of systems which take into account the individual needs of the various users. In this way information moves from the province of the individual to that of the organisation as a whole, while still meeting individual needs.

The need to consider multiple users and encourage them to retain their individual and collective sense of responsibility for the integrity, order and completeness of recorded information, can be extremely difficult and is frequently overlooked.

To summarise: information is for the use of the organisation as a whole, to enable it to achieve its objectives. Therefore it must be communicable with relative ease. Knowledge of the existence of organisational information and the means to retrieve it must not be personal but must itself be recorded and presented as a clearly and readily identifiable part of an organisation's vital resources.

This necessitates that the control and use of information be systematised and that every member of the organisation become an active participant in using and supporting the system.

The diversification of functions, involving an increasing range of professions and technologies as organisations get larger, suggests that a number of discrete sub-systems will require the participation of fewer people.

A picture of the dynamics of information within an organisation becomes clearer as we ponder these points:

Information - for and by the individual  
                   - for and by the group  
                   - for and by the whole organisation

Communication

Systems

Diversification - subsystems

I think we are now able to make some fairly sound generalisations which might be expressed graphically as follows:-

1. INDIVIDUAL	creates & retrieves	Information	Personal activity Personal system
2. INDIVIDUAL	creates & retrieves	Information	Multiple activity Personal systems Time wasting Confusion
ASSISTANT	creates & retrieves	Information	
PARTNER	creates & retrieves	Information	

### 3. INDIVIDUAL

INFO. WORKER	creates & retrieves & controls	Information	Multiple Activity Centralised and system controlled & operated by one
PARTNER			

### 4. INDIVIDUAL

		PARTNER	Complex activity Centralised systems for generalised policy, integrating and management info. & subsystems for specialised info needs
SPECIALISATIONS INFO. creates & receives & controls	INFO. WORKER  INFO.	SPECIALISATIONS INFO. creates & receives & controls	

This dynamic, in one or more of its stages, can be seen in relatively small operations or sections of larger organisations, particularly where sections are concerned with complex matters. The fundamental generalisations are:-

1. Control of generalised, routine, not immediately current information quickly passes from functional operators to people who specialise in the control of it, and depending on volume, these recipients become full or parttime information workers.
2. Specialisation of function results in workers other than information workers' controlling this specialised information.
3. As an organisation grows in size so information fragments and its control becomes increasingly difficult. There is also a tendency for specialised areas to jealously guard their information on the expressed basis that "it would not mean anything to you anyway."

4. No matter what stage the information dynamic has reached in an organisation all staff should recognise that information is an organisation resource and should thus be sufficiently well systematised to be capable of retrieval by a new set of workers into that area.

5. There will be a central core of information in all organisations which includes details on policy, administrative support, co-ordination, decision making, publicity, statistics, management and technical knowledge. This core is important because it is the key to management of the whole organisation. Each specialised area will have its own core different from the central core but equally essential to its operation.

Having established a model to provide a basis for further discussion, let us turn to the question of WHO CONTROLS THE INFORMATION ?

To date I have used the term "information worker". Who is this individual ?

In stage 1 of the model it is the functional operative who does not generally identify him or herself as an information worker because the prime emphasis is not on information but on producing goods or services.

In stage 2 a number of functional operatives have access to the pool of information with very little or no system being applied.

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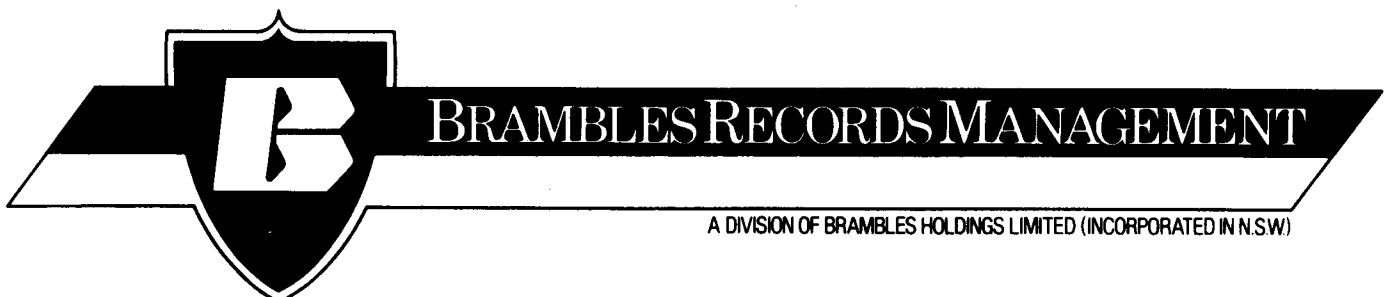
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# Introducing Your Federal Directors

## **FEDERAL PRESIDENT:**

*Peter A. Smith, M.R.M.A.*

Manager of Records of The Shortland County Council, Newcastle N.S.W. and has worked in Local Government for thirty-three years. He is the lecturer in Records Management at Newcastle T.A.F.E.; Past President of R.M.A.A. (N.S.W. Branch) 1978-81; Foundation President of the N.S.W. Branch's Local Government Chapter 1976-78; Previous Federal Treasurer 1980-82; Federal Secretary 1982-85.



## **FEDERAL TREASURER:**

*F. J. (Jim) Shepherd A.R.M.A.*

Jim is the Chief Clerk of the Administration Division of the Brisbane City Council — Australia's largest Local Authority. He co-designed and successfully installed in 1972 the Council's well renowned records system and was extensively involved with external programming consultants on the computerisation of the system which went on line in August, 1980.

A Records Management Association of Australia Foundation Member since 1969, he convened the Queensland Pilot Committee meeting in 1975 and served as Inaugural President of the State Branch until 1978. His Branch Committee was successful in negotiations with the Queensland Education Department for the establishment in 1976 of a Records Management Course at Kangaroo Point College of T.A.F.E. Jim was one of the first course graduates and now assists as a part time lecturer. He has also served as Federal President of R.M.A.A. 1978-1981; Australian Delegate to the International Records Management Federation 1978-1981; Queensland Delegate to the Federal Council of R.M.A.A. since 1975. He is a member of the Royal Australian Institute of Public Administration.

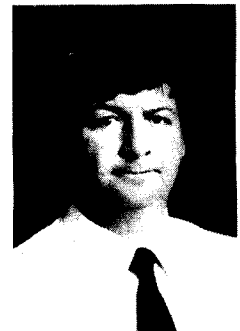


## **FEDERAL VICE PRESIDENT:**

*Graham V. Dudley A.R.M.A.*

Mr. Graham V. Dudley is currently the Head, Admission and Discharge Co-ordination Department of the Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital in Perth, Western Australia. He is the Federal Vice President of the Records Management Association of Australia and President and Treasurer of the (WA) Branch RMAA. He is also the RMAA's delegate to the International Records Management Council.

He is currently studying for a diploma in Hospital Administration and lectures in Records Management for TAFE in Perth, WA. He was a member of the Science and Information Technology Council Working Party asked to formulate an Information Technology Strategy for the WA Government. This strategy is for release in the next few months; by the Government.



***Helen J. Francis A.R.M.A.***

Helen has worked in the Records Section with the Department of Aviation for the last 10 years. She has been on Branch Council since 1982; State Secretary 1983 +; Federal Director 1984 +. Helen is also Co-ordinator for the 3rd National Convention to be held in Alice Springs in 1986.



***Harry E. Haxton, B.Econ, A.R.M.A., A.A.I.M.***

Managing Director, Haxton Pty. Ltd. Harry is a Foundation member of RMAA Qld., Vice President 1975-80; Federal Secretary 1975-81; Federal Vice President 1981-82; Delegate IRMC 1982-83; Qld. President 1982-84; Federal President 1983-84. Harry has lectured and written the Records Management course at Kangaroo Point TAFE and written the Qld. Technical Correspondence RM course.



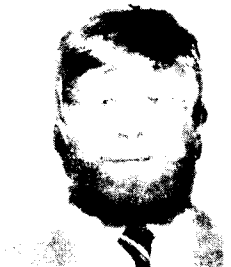
***Brigitte Kleinig A.R.M.A.***

Brigitte Kleinig, ARMA is the Assistant Director, Disposal with the Australian Archives, SA Regional Office. She is past secretary and current treasurer/registrar of the SA Branch of RMAA and has recently been elected as a Federal Director. Brigitte is a member of the 1986 3rd National RMAA Convention Committee.



***Philip Taylor ARMA***

Philip has been a Branch Councillor with Victoria since 1976. He was Branch President 1983-85 and a Federal Director since 1984. He has extensive experience in records management with several State Government Departments. Currently he is responsible for Administrative Services in a Division of the Health Department of Victoria.



***Ross Thompson ARMA***

Ross is the Association's Public Officer, ACT Branch Vice President and Informaa Editor. He is employed as Records Manager with the Department of Aviation in Canberra and has 19 years experience in records and related areas. He is married, has two sons and his other interests include music and rugby league football.



***Terence Michael Tolhurst A.R.M.A.***

Terry is currently Executive Officer, Machines Office Systems and Forms Design Unit, Department of Primary Industry in Canberra.

Over the past twenty years he has been involved in the records management areas of the Departments of Repatriation, Territories, Health, Primary Industry and Aviation. He has been involved with RMAA since 1978 and has served as Secretary and currently President of the ACT Branch. He has been a Federal Councillor since 1980 and was elected Federal Secretary at the Federal Director's meeting in Sydney in September this year.

Amongst his many interests Terry is a regular squash player and also enjoys an occasional game of snooker. He is currently the Area Co-ordinator for the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme in the suburb of Rivett where he has lived with his wife Rita for the past fifteen years. They have two children, Catherine and Louise.



*Continued next issue . . .*



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## WHO CONTROLS THE INFORMATION? . . . continued

This is the confusing situation which usually instigates a division of labour and brings about the birth of the information worker.

In stage 3 the first pure information worker appears although this may only be one aspect of his or her job. This person is generally either a Secretary, a Clerk, a Personal Assistant, or a functional operative whose duties include the control of records. Note that at this stage records and information have evolved and the controllers do not necessarily have any special skills or training. Also note that the complexity of the information arrangements at this stage can vary widely.

Stage 4 is the one which the volume of specialised information or records work reaches such dimensions that the information specialist is required.

The dynamic I have described, plus the lack of an identifiable profession from whom information specialists might be recruited combine to provide an explanation for the diversity of people who work in the more generalised areas of information work. These factors also make it extremely difficult to generalise about who controls the information.

The situation which generally exists today finds the following categories of jobs being identified as information workers and specialists:-

Secretaries - meeting the informational needs of a limited number of functional operatives generally using very personalised systems.

Clerks - usually servicing a small specialised group via a number of systems and subsystems evolved by the group.

Records Officers - specialists working solely on the control and retrieval of large quantities of records usually involving a wide span of information requiring complex systems and procedures

Specialised Records Administrators - who have evolved to apply records management expertise to a specialised area. Medical Records Administrators provide a good example.

Records Managers - are the specialists who have concern for records and information right across a whole organisation. They bring management level co-ordination and control to the organisation's information activity.

Librarians - are specialists in the control of published material in all forms and have increasingly become a recruiting pool for information workers.

Archivists - are specialists in the identification, preservation and control of records selected as worthy of permanent preservation. This activity draws them into the practices surrounding the disposal of non-current records.

Systems Analysts - are specialists in the analysis of procedures and the devising of systems in a very structured sense, frequently aimed at the introduction of electronic data processing.

Methods Study Officer - are specialists in reviewing methods with the view to improving them, thus maximising productivity. They are frequently involved in assessing the tools of information workers, such as micrographics, forms and photocopying. This work brings them into touch with information systems.

EDP Operators - the specialists who operate computers and convert data into machine readable form. The advent of micro-computers is converting office workers at all levels into EDP Operators.

Programmers - the specialists who create the instructions which enable computers to manipulate information and produce specialised products on demand.

But are these people the controllers of our information ? In the sense of working with, and facilitating the use of information, we must agree yes.

But in his recent paper "Australia as an Information Society: Who Calls the Shots?", Don Lamberton suggests no. He considers that "the shots...are called by ... the successful, whose perceptions of their environment were shaped by conditions that have now changed". (1)

Alvin Toffler expresses these changes in the work environment most succinctly in his latest book Previews and Promises: (2)

"...If you look at employment you find a relentless decline in manual labour and a parallel rise in white-collar work. The system has become so complex and diversified and the informational demands so high, that they have begun to reach a crisis point. It requires so much paper work, so many meetings and decisions, so much information exchange to get anything done, that we literally face the risk of grinding to a halt."

And the implication of these changes is that if we do not seek out more information and embrace newest technology (3) then we will, as a nation, fall behind in the productivity sense and suffer consequential declines in living standards.

So the question of who controls our information concerns two major sectors of an organisation's staff, firstly the managers who determine the importance to the organisation of the collection, maintenance and use of information: and secondly, the specialists who actually carry out records and information work.

The substantial growth in the formation and development of professional and commercial associations concerned with information such as those comprising COMTEC over the past decade, provides evidence of the increasing awareness possessed by Information Specialists of the need for organisations to improve information control. Similarly, courses of training have been established or extended to provide the increasing numbers of specialised information workers needed to meet the demands of the new information society.

The demands from private and public sector leaders for information specialists seems to find most numerous expression in such places as the "Computer Section" of The Australian paper. But all of this activity does not seem to give much cohesion to the question, rather it fragments the information scene into more and more specialisations. The profession of records managers believes it has the answers but so few of those who "call the shots" seem to be prepared to hand control of this increasingly diverse and important sector of their organisations over to a new profession which many perceive as unproven. Records and information management is a responsibility which in some instances is being assumed by existing managers or is being undertaken by controllers who are 'grown' within the

organisation to meet its special needs.

Mr Lamberton warns us that :

"The biggest danger is that we continue to fail to recognise the importance of information resources (and that) the quick fix ...has no prospect if the real problem for the long term is organisational obsolescence. (the situation)...will change only when new items are put on the agenda : new occupations, new technologies, new markets, new people - above all, new organisations."

The evidence presented provides our question with multiple answers which can, I believe, be reduced to a statement of need, namely - those who "call the shots" must address the changes that are upon us all and, as part of their reorganisation to meet those changes, must (1) co-ordinate their information resources (2) establish integrated control, and (3) ensure that systems will deliver effective responses.

The Records manager and the Archivist are trained to view records /information wholistically, the latter being concerned to know what is created in order to determine what should be preserved; the former concerned with current administrative need.

These professionals can assist management to gain a comprehensive overview of an organisation's information resource; but it is the trained and experienced Records Manager as part of the management team who can work with a team of information specialists to implement programs for information co-ordination, systems integration and effective retrieval.

The task is by no means a simple one but seeking answers to the question "Who Controls the Information ?" is a most useful and illuminating starting point.

#### References

1. Lamberton Don. "Australia as an Information Society: Who Calls the Shots?" in Search Vol.15, No.3-4, April/May 1984.

ANZAAS. pp. 101-103

2. Toffler, Alvin. Previews and Promises . London, Pan Books, 1984, p.108.

3. The following is a useful definition of technology taken from Discussion Draft of a National Technology Strategy available from the Department of Science and Technology, published in April 1984.

"Technology is a perishable resource comprising knowledge, skills and the means of using and controlling factors of production for the purpose of producing, delivering to users, and maintaining goods and services for which there is an economic and/or social demand."

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VITAL RECORDS  
By George R. Smith ARMA RMAA SA

Vital records - what are they and how can we ensure they will be available when we need them.

In this session I propose to examine vital records, define them and discuss the management action required to ensure that they will be available when we need them. By this process I will look at the justification of a vital records programme in the light of potential natural and manmade disasters. I will discuss some of the physical aspects of disaster recovery and look at intellectual control aspects. Lastly I will demonstrate how the vital records programme fits into the corporate records management profile of action. As all this will be accomplished in about 25 minutes you will appreciate that I am painting with a pretty broad brush.

All successful organisations recognise the value of their records as a corporate asset. An asset acquired over a period of time at some cost to the organisation. An asset which is capable of continued processing, reprocessing and manipulation to provide a reliable base for corporate decision making. The way in which an organisation collects, organises, stores, retrieves and disseminates information is often a determining factor in its overall success. A small proportion of corporate records ( a part of which continuously changes) may be identified as vital records. This 2 or 3% of your records are absolutely essential to the continued operation of your organisation. You will certainly be able to identify them if your organisation suffers a catastrophic loss of records. A programme to identify and safeguard vital records is an essential part of successful management. The first step in this management process is to ensure that we are all clear on the difference between information and evidence. The basic complication here is that both are contained in or on records of some sort. The records management association defines "a record as a document in writing, anything whatsoever on which is marked any words, figures, letters or symbols which are capable of carrying a definite meaning to person conversant with them".

The Commonwealth of Australia defines it as: "A document or object that is, or has been, kept by reason of any information object

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or matter that it contains or can be obtained from it".

The Victorian State Government says "a record should be understood to include information whether on paper, film, magnetic tape or disc or any other medium".

Information means informing or telling. It is often perceived in the context of intelligence. Ed Johnson discusses it in these terms "intelligence is the level of information that serves to inform. It is perceived by the recipient by means of sensory communication - sight, sound, touch etc. The cathode ray tube is a good example of a device for conveying intelligence: so is the telephone". However, evidence has a much narrower meaning: information given personally or drawn from documents tending to establish a fact, evidence is proof of action admissible as testimony in court. It is usually the original instrument of a transaction. If I tell you that my father was born in Adelaide

in 1900 that is providing information. If I show you his birth certificate that is producing evidence. Note however, that both come from a storage medium. I am saying that a record has two faces. Firstly, it is a reliable information source for internal use and secondly, it may be substantial evidence for external use. Vital records are defined in slightly different terms by different people or organisations. Gerard Kain said: Vital records are:

1. Records considered absolutely essential to the continued operation of any agency or business, commensurate with its emergency responsibility.
2. Records required to protect the rights of individuals and the government and
3. Records that are absolutely essential to reconstruction.

Richard Donaldson defines vital business records as:

Records which must be presented as evidence to owners, creditors, debtors and agencies of our government.

The vital records of Australian State and Federal Governments also fit fairly comfortably into these frameworks, but some emphasis is also placed upon the cultural aspects.

Let us now examine this a little more closely so that we may justify a vital records programme. As I said earlier very few records are truly vital. However, if those few are not identified and protected, you may not be able to continue to operate your business should your records be destroyed by fire or disrupted in some other disaster. Before we can justify a vital records programme we must be aware of the broad role and function of our organisation, its aims and objectives, in short we must know what it is and why it is there before we can determine which records are necessary for its continued existence. Like records management, a vital records protection programme is something with which senior management must be closely involved. As a prerequisite to planning a vital records protection programme the vital functions of the organisation must be delineated. The importance of each section's operations should then be determined and priorities established. This determination must come from the top management level, supported by recommendations from knowledgeable personnel at divisional, departmental or group levels, depending on the organisational structure. "The important part of management input to a vital records programme is the indication of which records need to be protected not how they must be protected."

The beneficiaries of a vital records preservation programme can only benefit after a calamity or disaster strikes. The officers and managers benefit because their interests in the business (ie their jobs) are protected. The owners of the organisation benefit because their livelihood and welfare are ensured. The clients or customers enjoy the knowledge that their contracted needs will be met with only a slight delay. The general public who depend upon the corporation both as a profit source and as a contributor to the community by its goods or services are beneficiaries when a business is merely stunned by a disaster and not forced to quit. The interdependence of all the people who are remotely touched by each business is so great that they all lose if any firm is lost. In summary a vital records programme can be justified on the

basis of the cost of compiling the records and the cost if they are lost. It can be justified on the basis of legal use and legal requirement for certain vital records (eg the deeds of ownership to land or the deed of partnership in a firm respectively). A vital records programme is a form of insurance against loss of revenue if it protects current debtor and creditor records.

Lastly a vital records programme is essential to meet financial and social accountability and to protect the interests of the organisation, employees, and the wider community.

Catastrophies are generally fairly easily described. They may be natural catastrophies such as those caused by earthquake or flood. Fires are the most familiar disasters liable to befall a business organisation. The damage cause is usually exacerbated by the fireman and his hose or the extinguisher sprinkler system.

Manmade catastrophies take the form of arson, sabotage and mechanical failure (and this is becoming increasingly important as we move into the intergrated office where a power loss may wipe out our current data base). We should mention political unrest as a potential man made catastrophe, as well.

Having identified vital records and discussed what we are trying to protect them from we can now go on and look at some of the physical aspects of vital records protection. In doing this we need to consider both the record as an information housing (ie its physical makeup) and its information content. Obviously if only an original paper document is acceptable as evidence for external use then the original paper document must be preserved as the vital record. If on the other hand we are looking at such bulky information as current invoices and debit notes ion the form of machine readable records then it will be quite acceptable for the preservation copy to be a duplicate disk or com printout. Another aspect of the operational copy and the vital record copy. No purpose is served if you are trying to protect a record from fire if both the operational copy and the vital record copy are stored in the same building. This raises the question of commercial storage or the construction of an off site secondary storage area. Either way both need to meet certain basic requirements in relation to security, fire protection and to a greater or lesser degree ease of retrieval. If the record to be protected is not paper based further aspects need to be considered. For instance if we are to protect audio visual or machine readable records we need to consider in addition the provision of atmosphere controlled storage, duplication of software and fully documented procedures. We may also need to consider the advisability of duplicating the hardware. It is obviously to no ones advantage if we build a secure atmosphere controlled repository to store computer discs for a particular set of hardware or for that matter for a peculiar set of software if, following a disaster we do not have access to appropriate hardware or the capacity to run the records for want of documentation or appropriate software packages.

It is a trueism to say that all records are just a heap of old rubbish unless we can retrieve the particular piece of information we require when we need it. This leads us into a discussion of some of the elements of intellectual control in our vital records programme. This topic will be discussed in some

detail tomorrow under the heading "The survey as a management tool". However, we can summarise today by saying that you need to know what information is recorded, in what format, where it is located, what you need to retrieve it and finally its shelf life. Most vital records management plans provide this information by way of a structured hierarchical system of description. Each hierarchy is linked to the next lowest by an inventory of its contents. In jargon terms we refer to record creating agencies, record series, and record items. Agencies create series of records to document their functions. These series are made up of individual case files each dealing with a particular transaction. Most of our vital records will be identified at this single transaction level. (Eg the legal document or individual debtor/creditor summary) in many cases because of the small quantity of vital records not identified as accounting records, it is usual to store them with long term or permanent shelf life records. Where vital records are more bulky and have a relatively short shelf life it is usual to duplicate them periodically and store the result in easily defined discrete locations so that they may be quickly identified and disposed of when their shelf life expires.

Records management is about systematic control over the creation, maintenance, retention and preservation of records. Selective preservation of records is an integral part of sound records management. Retirement of records because they become noncurrent is inevitable. The only alternative is between unplanned chaotic retirement on one hand and considered systematic retirement on the other in which retirement decisions are made on the basis of record values. This planned disposal is by way of the disposal schedule. The schedule identifies in a concise and easily understood format which categories of record classes or items are required to be retained permanently or determines their shelf life if they are to be destroyed. A disposal schedule is a management tool which makes filing and finding easier, faster and better. It saves space, time equipment and records.

The identification of vital records in a disposal schedule is an economical proposition from many points of view. The sooner that a vital record is identified the sooner it can be protected. When we are speaking of isolated documentation and transfer of vital administratively convenient to identify and transfer a vital record to secondary storage during a routine application of a disposal schedule. The identification, duplication and transfer of vital records to secondary storage must become a routine administrative function for the vital records programme to be effective.

Information security is the protection of information regardless of form or medium of storage from unauthorised disclosure, modification or destruction. Vital records are those parts of the corporate memory necessary to be retained for official reference to protect the organisation, to give consistence and continuity to its action and include vital operating records. Vital records have administrative uses for recovery from disaster situations. A vital information protection programme cannot be successful without senior management input. It must form part of a records management plan which includes at least retention and



classification action. Why ? Because to protect adequately the information it must be easily identified and well organised. In the field of records management, history continues to repeat itself. If the history of records keeping tells us anything it is that we are capable of protecting the legal, financial and ethical interests of organisations by establishing vital records protection as a policy. If the history of this planet tells us anything, it is that Murphy's Law applies.

\*\*\*\*\*  
3RD NATIONAL CONVENTION 1986

The South Australian Branch will host the 3rd National Convention in Alice Springs, 13-15 September, 1986.  
The Convention Committee is proud to be able to provide the following details:

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FEES: Approximate Registration Fee - \$320 - plus travel and accommodation, at cost. Further details will be published when available.  
  
ACCOMMODATION: The Northern Territory Tourist Bureau will be handling all accommodation bookings.

Pre convention brochures will shortly be available to Branches for distribution.

The Convention Committee extends thanks to Branches for the exceptional support and encouragement given towards holding this, the 3rd National Convention of RMAA, in Alice Springs.

\*\*\*\*\*

Quote of the Year: "It gives me great pleasure....."

**JOB ENRICHMENT IN RECORDS MANAGEMENT**  
**Improving Records Management Job Meaningfulness**  
**and Satisfaction**

**By Tom Lovett M.B.A., M.R.M.A., Records Management Consultant**  
**Lovett Vickery and Associates, Sydney**

Common registry personnel problems can be overcome by applying Hackman and Oldham's five Job Enrichment implementing concepts. Examining traditional Australian registry (1) practices from the viewpoint of job meaningfulness and satisfaction, this article, by means of a model, demonstrates how to apply Job Enrichment principles in traditional registries. The model was developed from clients' assignments and students' case studies during twenty years' records management consulting and teaching experience, and from the author's studies in management. The article also describes Information Resource Management concepts and explains how these concepts embody the functions of records management and fulfill the five Job Enrichment 'implementing concepts'.

This article, condensed from a more detailed unpublished paper (8), argues that Information Resource Management achieves the objectives of records management while creating substantially more meaningful and satisfying jobs and improved working conditions for records management operatives. The results of applying Job Enrichment principles to the records management area are lower turnover and absenteeism rates, and improved morale and performance. The model is a benchmark against which records management practitioners may measure the probable levels of meaningfulness and satisfaction their own staff enjoy in their jobs.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

A job design strategy pioneered by Herzberg, Hackman and Oldham and others in the 1960's and 1970's, Job Enrichment theory states people work best when "turned on" to their work. For employees to be turned on the work must be meaningful to them. They must experience responsibility for the outcomes of their efforts, obtain regularly a knowledge of the results of their efforts and whether or not the results are satisfactory.

The predominate job design strategy in Australian registries is job specialisation (methods) pioneered by Taylor in the 1920's. Where this job design strategy still exists in registries it will be accompanied by low morale, poor performance, low image and low remuneration of registry staff, poor conditions and department-wide low regard for registry work. The result is reduced records management performance and hence reduced organisational performance.

Worth reflecting upon is the fact that the first editorial published under the name of the Records Management Association, in the first newsletter issued by the N.S.W. pilot committee, in December 1968, states "...the pilot committees aim only to lift the professional standard and knowledge of all those who become members"(2).

Australian public service attitudes toward records management itself and toward the records manager also have been a major stumbling block to the achievement of effective records management in government departments.

Registry morale and performance problems can be overcome by applying the principles of Job Enrichment. The result will be not only more effective records management but also improved organisational performance. This article argues that there is need for substantial improvements in the image and status of records management in the public service and of the jobs of records management operatives in traditional registries. The concept of Information Resource Management is suggested as a means of achieving improvements in image and status of records management while Job Enrichment is suggested as the best means for improving records management operatives jobs.

### 2. THE THEORY OF JOB ENRICHMENT

Hackman and Oldham (3) identified five "core" characteristics of jobs that bring about the desired psychological states of experienced meaningfulness, responsibility and knowledge of results. The job is more likely to "turn on" the employee if it; 1. Challenges his/her skills and abilities; 2. Is a "whole and identifiable piece of work with a visible outcome; 3. Has substantial and perceivable impact on the lives of other people; 4. Increases the employee's responsibility through freedom, independence and discretion in scheduling work and the manner in which it will be carried out; 5. And provides feedback and knowledge of results of his/her efforts. Given these job characteristics, people have greater opportunity to become motivated in their work. Unless an employee has undergone severe depressing work experience for years, he or she will probably respond favourably and in many cases enthusiastically to enriched jobs as did the records management operatives of the case reported in this article which describes the application of Job Enrichment theory in the records management area.

Motivation theory has progressed and we have seen the rise and fall of several new theories but Job Enrichment has gradually increased in favour and lays a foundation for new techniques for making work more meaningful and for improving production, such as Quality Circles which have been used in the records management area with excellent results. The present study provides records management practitioners with some insights into the application of Job Enrichment principles in records management and a benchmark against which their operations may be compared. Before describing by means of the model the application of Job Enrichment theory to records management it will be helpful to review the origins of Australian registry practice.

### 3. AUSTRALIAN REGISTRY PRACTICE

Australian public services and large companies have traditionally operated British-style registries which are responsible for:

- receiving mail;
- registering (summarising inwards and outwards correspondence in registers);
- classifying (coding correspondence to identify filing locations);
- indexing (entering date & file codes on name/subject cross ref. cards);
- storing the records (placing them on files and putting files away);
- locating and distributing files required by action officers and ensuring the eventual return of borrowed files to store.

While emphasising careful recording and safekeeping of records comparatively little emphasis was given to organising the records to maximise service to users, i.e. usefulness for decision making and accessibility. This is historically evident and probably due to the fact that in the early days there were comparatively few current records. Most action officers were aware of the contents of relevant records when decisions were being made and did not need rapid access to them. Or because of the small number of records individual items could be found with reasonable speed in spite of the lack of refined systems. Later on top management often retained decision support and policy records which were functionally organised by secretaries separately to the mainstream records classified by subject systems derived from Colonial practices and therefore did not perceive the problems developing in the registries.

Traditional Registry Workflow: While the operations of many registries have been enhanced mechanically, by computers and/or micrographics and some have been automated, the concepts upon which they are structured have been relatively unchanged. The work is usually divided up by the job specialisation technique and each part of the work is allocated to one section or individual. The patterns of workflow is repetitive, cyclical and rigidly controlled.

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Traditional Registry Staff Duties: The usual allocation of duties within the registry is specialised. Specialisation of records management tasks is shown in the recommended registry workflows for inwards and outwards mail published by the Australian Public Service in the mid seventies (4). Obviously operatives were not expected to show interest in the job and initiative. Though some job rotation occurs through training schemes or due to staff shortages or absences, it is more by accident than design and few, if any, operatives see or are able to comprehend the overall picture, procedures, scope and objectives of the registry - or the ones that do get shifted out into the divisions. The Australian Public Service Board's "ideal" registry layout in 1962 (5) was conducive to specialisation and inhibitive toward enriched, meaningful and satisfying jobs. How many of those layouts still exist in the Australian Public Service is unknown.

#### 4. THE CASE

The case combines before and after organisational features of a number of clients' registries and of mature students' working situations. The improvements reported are based on actual results achieved by the changes described.

##### .1 Registry Organisation

In a medium size government department duties of the thirteen registry staff were allocated as follows: (The number of staff was considered by management to be adequate for the volume of work).

2 Messengers: collect mail, deliver mail to the post office, collect files from users, deliver files to users, provide organisation courier service; 2 Juniors; open mail (under supervisions of OIC or 2IC), rough sort mail before it is classified, fine sort mail after it is classified, register mail; 3 File Chasers; retrieve files for attachment of new correspondence, retrieve files required by action officers, record charge outs, enter resubmits, chase up missing files; 2 Classifiers; examine and classify mail, nominate cross references required, direct mail to action officers, maintain classification system, senior classifier is 2IC of registry; 2 Indexes; enter cross reference index cards, maintain cross reference indexes; 2 Attachers; attach papers to files, enter folio numbers on papers in files, create new files when needed, repair files, enter action officers' initials on file cover.

##### .2 Personnel Problems in the Registry

Long term personnel problems in the registry recently became severe, frequently causing serious operational problems for the divisions:

a) Staff turnover and quality: Average length of service apart from the senior classifier and OIC registry was seven months. Good staff quickly transferred. The OIC was left with the staff the divisions did not want.

b) Low quality service: Divisional users complained of low quality service from the registry. Too often they could not get files they needed or it took too long to get them. Papers were sometimes missing from files, or attached to the wrong files and files were often in poor condition.

c) Staff motivation and turnover: The records staff had very low morale, which could be seen by their attitude to their work, absenteeism and general demeanor. It was obvious that they did not enjoy their work.

d) The volume of private files: Because of retrieval and access problems action officers were keeping copies of records they used in rapidly expanding private filing systems in their own offices.

e) Management Succession: The OIC-registry was nearing retirement. As he was the mainstay to the system management was concerned the department would be in greater difficulties if the problems were not solved before his retirement.

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### **.3     A Solution is Found**

Registries in other departments were investigated to determine if they too had similar problems and whether any departments had found solutions. Several departments reported their registries had been "broken up" and new principles applied and, as a result, there were fewer morale problems. Management studied these principles which are known as Information Resource Management concepts (5) and decided to apply the concepts to the department. The manual of one of the departments investigated introduced the concepts as follows:

### **5.     INFORMATION RESOURCE MANAGEMENT CONCEPTS**

"Traditionally information in such forms as files, books, reports, journals, periodicals, microforms, films, audio tapes, computer tapes, etc. is processed and stored by various information handling areas as well as in the operating divisions. Although these units perform related information management activities co-ordination between them is not good resulting in officers having to enquire in a number of different areas for references. Even after such an exercise, there is no guarantee that all information on a particular subject available within the department will be obtained".

"The Information Resource Management concept recognises the need for a co-ordinated approach to the management of information....by establishing a user orientated, integrated information management system...operated through a series of decentralised information stations, linked to an information centre and outside information networks. Information stations become co-ordinating points between divisional offices for all classes of information. They provide a repository for common user material and a processing, storage and retrieval service"(5).

Each information station controls the information resources for a group of related sections or a division. An officer enquiring at any one point can obtain all the references available and can be advised of relevant material held at other stations if required. The series of information stations is seen as a more efficient method of providing the service to users than a centrally located and controlled service for the following main reasons:

"a) It is proper that information should be located with the user, i.e. in the division and not in a central position. b) A decentralised operation enables the staff operating the service to become more familiar with the functions of the group they serve. c) Officers usually require access to information held in their own divisions, therefore movement of material outside divisions is not great. d) Service to users would be slower from a centralised system due to concentrated demands on individuals"(5).

### **6.     MODEL OF JOB ENRICHMENT IN RECORDS MANAGEMENT**

The results of applying the Information Resource Management concept in client government and business organisations are similar to those reported in this case. The objectives of records management (6) and Hackman and Oldham's Job Enrichment implementing concepts are achieved:

1. Forming Natural Work Units: The centralised registry was broken down into four information stations which were strategically located in divisions near users, each staffed by two information operators. the mail room and microfilming operations were centralised.

2. Establishing Client Relationship: Being located within divisions increased communication and understanding between users and information station operatives who quickly came to be regarded as part of the divisional teams but linked through the network with the other information stations and reporting to the information manager. Operatives received immediate feedback from their clients on the value of their service.

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3. Recombining Tasks: Now each station contains a smaller, specialised collection of records plus library material, tapes, slides, films, and other information previously poorly organised in divisional office. Previously performing only one specialised job of classifier, indexer, file chaser, messenger, or junior, each operative now performs the entire range of activities.

4. Vertical Loading: All operations from receiving mail through classifying, indexing, attaching, charging out, distributing, collecting, filing, disposal scheduling, and new current awareness services, are provided by the two staff in each station who may interchange their duties at will although one is senior.

5. Opening Feedback Channels: Operatives are responsible to maintain a high quality information service to all the members of the division/s within their "information zone". The records/information manager is responsible for the overall performance and development of the system, including staff selection and training which is carried out in close consultation with user divisions. When placing an operative in a divisional area consideration is given to whether that persons "fits" in terms of interests and background. Users are encouraged to communicate with operatives about their information needs.

### **7. BENEFITS OF ENRICHING RECORDS MANAGEMENT JOBS**

#### **.1 Benefits to the Users and the Organisation**

Relief staff are available to fill gaps caused by operatives going on leave or attending training courses. Improved morale, reduced absenteeism and relief staff eliminate staff shortages and crises, prevalent under the old structure, and improves quality of service to users. Other information work previously carried out by divisions has been taken over giving divisional staff more time for their productive work. Familiarity with users' needs and their proximity to the information stations encourages communication between users and operatives which increases effectiveness of information work.

Computerised indexing and tracking have been introduced along with a central microfilming operation with readers in the stations, permitting on-line searching and a greater volume of current material to be accessible at the station (divisional) level, with links to the internal and outside networks.

#### **.2 Benefits to the Records Management Staff and Motivations Tapped:**

Changing its view of records management from the "Colonial Office" registry concept to that of Information Resource Management management adopted a series of specific objectives worked out after analysing the information needs of and decisions being made by the action officers at all levels. From the new concept, logically new organisational arrangements were needed. Keeping in mind the needs of the staff, these arrangements were made so as to maximise their intrinsic motivational effects. At the same time, extrinsic measures were taken to reinforce the new status of records management staff in their own and their action officers' minds and prevent the new intrinsic motivational forces being undermined.

Intrinsic Motivations Tapped: The intrinsic motivators are a sense of achievement, satisfaction with the work itself, a feeling of responsibility, recognition, and knowledge that growth and advancement in the work is possible. Added responsibility, after suitable training, wider scope of work, increased variety of work, and direct contact with clients gave operatives a greater sense of achievement, greater satisfaction with the work itself and increased their real and perceived responsibilities. Department wide recognition of the importance of records and information management and individual recognition by increased responsibilities, improved conditions and remuneration increased records management operatives' awareness of the value of their work and improved their self esteem. Advancement to a higher position become a definite possibility for every operative. Four information stations immediately provided four senior positions. New technology created the need for more training and position upgrading. The

network set-up provided further promotion prospects. Expanded services and new technology clearly showed that growth existed in all the existing jobs.

Extrinsic Motivations Tapped: The new structure reduced supervision and gave operatives freedom to decide what work they would do hour by hour and day by day, within fairly loose constraints. Operatives work as a team and have high involvement with helping users with their problems and needs. Small stations, quality office accommodation with more privacy substantially improved the working conditions for operatives. After training, positions were upgraded and salaries increased, yet costs to the department were less through lower staff turnover and absenteeism, fewer casual relief operators hired and improved departmental work output. Operatives personal lives were not directly affected except for income but were indirectly effected by other changes bringing more enjoyment on the job. Relationships of the manager, supervisors and subordinates improved considerably due to the team attitude developed in the information stations and throughout the network. Training, position upgrading, salary increases, better accommodation, department wide emphasis on the new information management concept, upgraded the status of the records manager and operatives. (It would have been inhumane to allow the old registry attitudes to continue much longer).

The new system and reallocation of duties improved job security at the same time as it improved organisational effectiveness and therefore further increased job security for the individuals.

### 8. CONCLUSION

The case described in this article typifies the problems encountered in traditional Australian registries where job specialisation introduced many years ago, still exists. Specialisation led to the lack of intrinsic motivations and consequent low morale, low quality and poor performance of the registry staff, which in turn led to low image, poor conditions and low remuneration. Over the years registry staff and, indeed, all the staff of the department developed a very low regard for registry work.

Performance problems motivated management to take action. Realising that the "essence of records management is information" (7) and that the major obstacle to achieving efficient information was low registry personnel morale, management chose Information Resource Management with its built-in Job Enrichment emphasis, rather than a technological or system panacea. Registry clerks previously performed only a small part of the routine of providing services to action officers and did not relate to their clients nor see themselves as providing a useful service. This was reversed by creating a series of information stations giving teams of two complete responsibility to provide all services to their clients, except mail room operations and microfilming which are carried out in the centre.

Under the traditional registry system when errors were made, individual registry staff responsible usually could not be pinpointed readily nor steps be taken to prevent their recurrence. Each staff member was responsible only for a small part of the work. The new system reversed this situation and errors can be easily pinpointed and corrected. Low performance is easily judged as is high performance, by the divisional users as well as the records/information manager.

Job Enrichment has a vital part to play in records management. While other jobs are being enriched there is a very real possibility that the records management jobs are being overlooked or due to computerisation or other technological innovations are even becoming more highly specialised, hence less meaningful and satisfying for the operatives than before. In public organisations the improvement of the records management system might be stalemated by finance or management refractoriness and be given a low priority much to the frustration and



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annoyance of the records manager and his/her staff. They must continue to provide an effective service with inadequate resources and an inherited ineffective system. Job Enrichment may provide a new opportunity to upgrade records management in the organisation by selling management on the need for action on humane grounds. As can be seen by the model presented here, the application of Job Enrichment concepts to records management can contribute significantly to the creation of an effective Information Resource Management system and to the improvement of overall organisational performance.

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### References and Notes

1. The Australian Public Service Board, in Introduction To Registry - A Workbook for Registry Officers, AGPS, 1978, defines the Registry as follows:  
"All government departments have a Registry. Its basic functions are to:  
.receive, record and distribute all incoming mail  
.build up and control the files on which action officers depend for decisions-making information  
.be aware of the location of any officially registered file in its care  
.provide storage and reference services for all officially registered documents  
"To carry out the service functions of controlling, channelling and storing information in a systematic manner a Registry undertakes a number of activities-..."
2. Records Management Association of Australia (N.S.W. Pilot Committee), Records Management Newsletter vol 1 (1) December 1968 p2
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p2. See also Operating of the Registry, No. 3 Public Service Board, Canberra 1962 p7
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7. Lovett TR Local Government Records Management Manual, Infoman Press, Sydney 1979, pp27-33
8. Penn IA "Understanding the Life Cycle Concept of Records Management", Records Management Quarterly vol 17 (3) July 1983 p5
9. A copy of the author's bibliography of Job Enrichment literature and a Checklist for evaluating job meaningfulness and satisfaction, "How Does Your Own Workplace Rate?" produced by the Productivity Promotion Council of Australia, are available on request to Tom Lovett, P.O. Box 62, Springwood, N.S.W. 2777, Australia, Tel: (047) 51 3206. Space prohibited their publication in this journal. A copy of the original paper is available from The Records Management Association of Australia, South Australian Branch, G.P.O. Box 969 Adelaide S.A. 5001 Australia.

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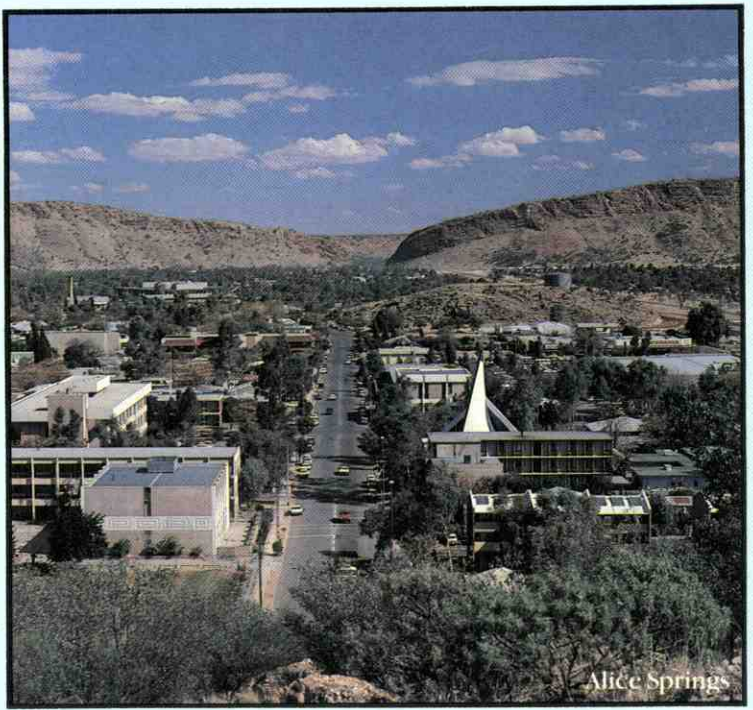
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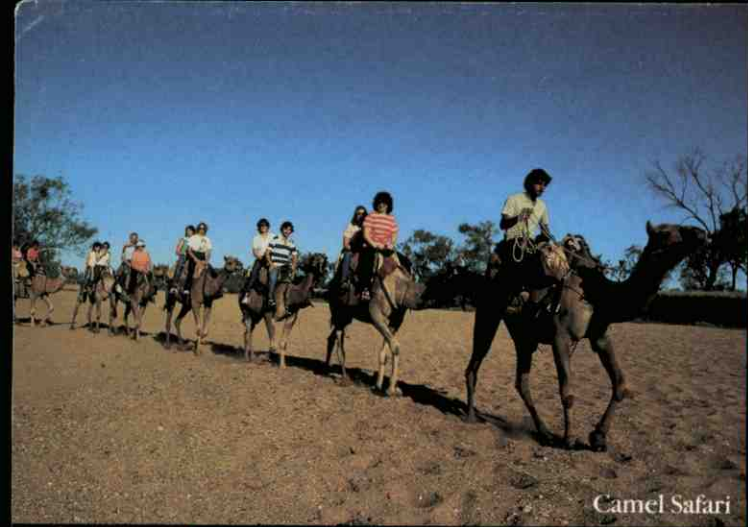
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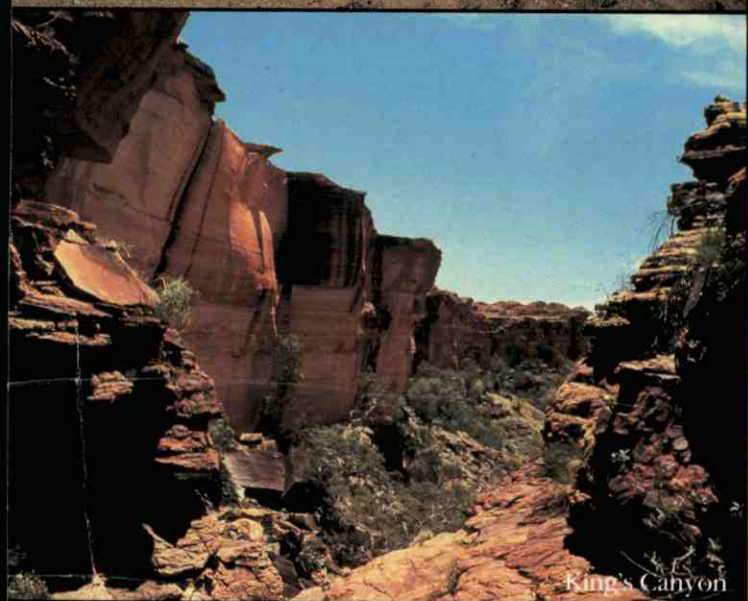
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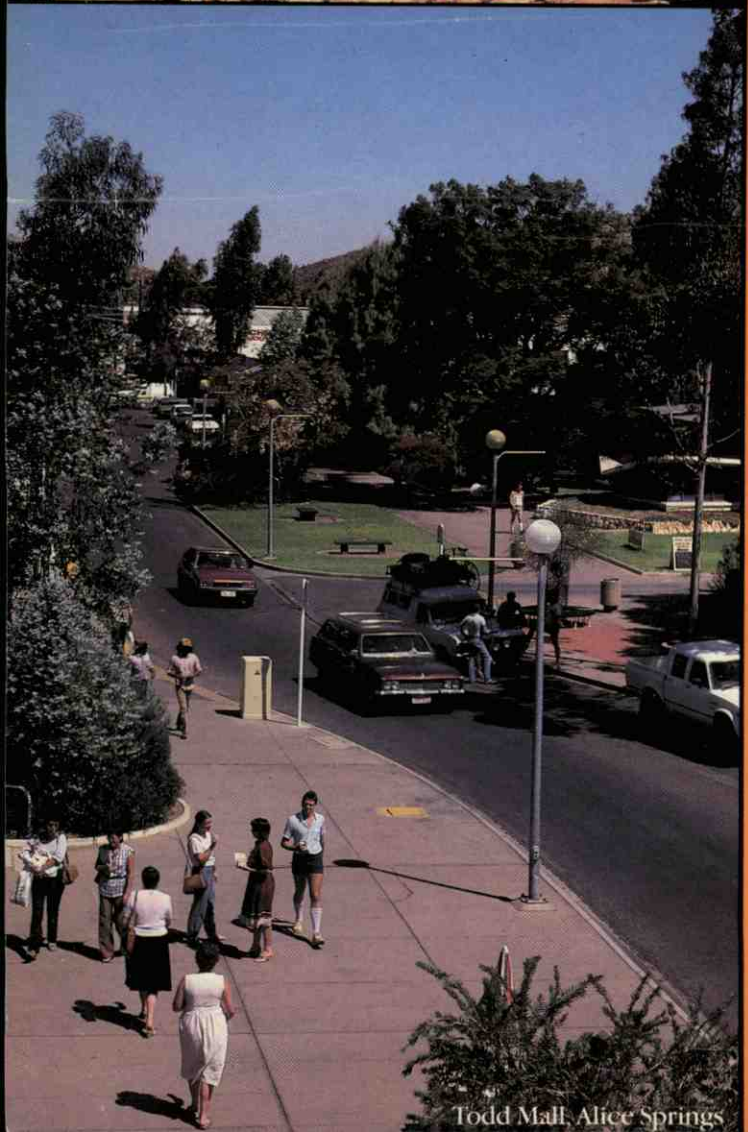




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