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President's Message



During the past few months there has been a reasonable amount of conjecture as to what member services the Records Management Association of Australia has or has not been delivering or providing for its members.

The information has been relayed to me in a variety of ways via Branch Councils and meeting and talking to people during the most recent National Convention in Perth in September 1997.

Some time ago the Association through the services of MAP (Marketing Advisers for Professionals) surveyed the membership regarding their needs. Like most other surveys, people were reluctant to respond.

I would like to extend an open invitation to all members of the RMAA and indeed your colleagues to write to me personally with your professional development needs and/or other suggestions that can assist the Association (Nationally) in better planning its activities for 1998/99.

Your letters can be addressed to me at either one of the two addresses listed below:

C/- PO Box 97
BOONDALL HEIGHTS QLD 4034
or
C/- RMAA
NT Branch
PO Box 43226
CASUARINA NT 0811

I look forward to hearing from you in the not too distant future.

Yours sincerely

Ray Holswich
ARMA
Federal President

CALL FOR PAPERS

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

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

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

Send articles to :
Ken Ridley, National Coordinator
Quarterly Editorial Committee,
PO Box 8213
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PERTH WA 6849

26th March 1998
Deadline for the
May 1998 issue

Editorial



The Australian Law Reform Commission has released a review of the Commonwealth Archives Act 1983 including a number of draft recommendations. The Commission is seeking public comment and will make its final report to the Federal Government later this year. I urge you to visit their home page at <http://uniserve.edu.au/alrc/>.

In this edition we feature an article by the Archives Authority of New South Wales to support the integrity of their *Keyword AAA* thesaurus. The response sets some clear boundaries and gives us an insight into the rationale underlying their classification system. I look forward to publishing further debate on this complex but important issue.

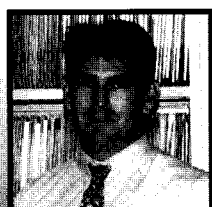
Helen Onopko has written an interesting article on the auditing of records systems. Many practitioners have been forced to focus on the implementation of new systems

(which can often take some time) without being able to set in place a proper audit regime. This article will, I believe, be of great assistance in this regard.

The release of the National Records and Archives Competency Standards late in 1997 marked an important milestone for the activities of the RMAA. They provide tangible evidence of a service that has been provided to our members (and others in the wider community) by a tireless group of volunteers headed by our Federal President, Ray Holswich. Congratulations to all concerned.

Ken Ridley ARMA
National Coordinator
Informaa Quarterly

NEW FACES



Safeguard welcomes new sales team.

The Brisbane Office of Safeguard Filing Systems (a Division of McDonald Printing Group), has a new sales team consisting of Gavin Fitness (above) and Barry Jolley (below).

Gavin Fitness is a current member of the Qld XXXX Bull's Cricket team and a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Sport Cricket Academy. Gavin spent four years as a bank officer before joining Safeguard.

Barry Jolley is a former Records Manager with ACT Electricity and Water. Also, previously with Australian Archives, Barry has a wealth of experience in conversion and general records management.

Safeguard Filing Systems provide a wide range of filing systems from cabinets through to printed file covers, file wallets, colour coding and filing accessories. They have offices and agents throughout Australia.

For friendly and helpful advice on all your filing needs, call Gavin or Barry on (07) 3392 1200.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor

In the November issue (vol. 13, no. 4) an item appeared on page 38 entitled 'Policy Statement - Electronic Records Management'. We understand that this statement was adopted by the Association's board at its September meeting, but that it was not intended to be the final version. The Executive Secretary, Michael Hangan, has since sought our respective organisations' permission to make reference to our Governments' electronic records policies in this statement. At the time of writing we are both preparing responses which we hope will help the Association adopt a useful and appropriate policy position about electronic records.

Nonetheless, the statement in its present form has been published in the national records management journal

and our two organisations are specifically mentioned in it. In these circumstances, we feel that we should set the record straight about one aspect of the statement that particularly concerns us.

Readers might interpret the statement as suggesting that the policies on electronic recordkeeping, developed by the Australian Archives and the Archives Authority for application in our respective public sectors, do not take relevant legislation into account. This is not the case. Each of our respective policy documents makes strong and clear reference to the need to comply with legislation affecting agencies' recordkeeping practices in the electronic environment.

The policies (in the case of New South Wales are still draft policies at the time of writing) are available from our organisations' Web sites

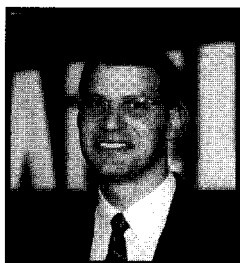
(<http://www.aa.gov.au> and <http://www.records.nsw.gov.au>) or in hard copy. We encourage readers to take a look at them.

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Time-Saver Terrence appointed by Datafile

This quarter saw Datafile's Managing Director, Mr Phil Evans announce the appointment of Mr Terrence Buncombe.

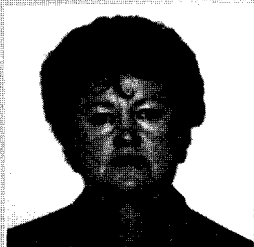
Mr Buncombe is the new representative for Datafile's colour-coded lateral filing system which saves time by displaying records to people using them rather than concealing them in drawers. This system is used nationally and internationally by such companies as AMP and Telstra.

Terrence holds qualifications in electrical and electronic technology and experience in hard copy records management and stationery products.

Mr Buncombe will serve clients involved in banking, financial, hospitality, insurance, legal, medical, service industries and Government in the Sydney and North Sydney CBD districts.

For more information, please call Mr Phil Evans, Datafile ph (02) 94 364 000, freecall 01800 636 304 or fax (02) 94 364 111, for your local representative.

Suggested Framework for a Recordkeeping Audit Program



Author
Helen Onopko

Helen Onopko is a Records Management Consultant in Adelaide, and the Principal of 'Records & Archive Services.' Helen has consulted to State and Local Government, and to private enterprise. She completed a Masters Degree in Records & Archives at Monash University in 1996, and has lectured at TAFE and University in South Australia.

Introduction

In the American Spring of 1997, a working meeting of international researchers and practitioners in the recordkeeping community, including representatives from Australia, was organised in Pittsburgh by Archives and Museum Informatics. The purpose of the meeting was to define a set of questions to progress their research into electronic record creation and capture, which is closely followed by records and archives professionals. These issues are shared by all those who have become dependent upon technological systems to support their business processes. One of those issues is that if much of responsibility for the creation and

retention of records is shifted to the desktop of individuals, how do we maintain the quality of records?

One practical methodology is quality assurance. Quality assurance can be conducted on a daily basis, with the objective of authorising and checking the data as it is entered into the recordkeeping system. An example might include descriptive terms requiring arbitration if they do not yet appear in the company thesaurus.

In tandem with the quality assurance program is the recordkeeping audit, which takes a longer-term and macro assessment of the recordkeeping system. Like an accounting audit, the recordkeeping audit reports upon the degree to which the recordkeeping system can support the documenting of business activity through recordkeeping, and demonstrate compliance with the regulatory environment.

The Australian Standard AS4390 – Records Management, provides a checklist for performance testing of records management systems. This serves as a foundation to formulate an audit program for any organisation, and was used by the author to devise an auditing manual for a State Government Department in South Australia.

The Department of Mines & Energy in South Australia during 1996 developed a conceptual design for a decentralised recordkeeping program in which the people who do the business, and who therefore best

know the business, are the managers of the evidence of their business activities. The records management staff would become the consultants, the trainers, the systems developers and administrators, the quality assurers, the auditors.

The Manual at this stage remains a suggested framework within which some auditing at a micro level might occur. It is important to note that it has not yet been tested, and the Department cannot yet endorse or comment upon the Manual. Available space allows a very abridged version offered below as a suggested framework for audit programs.

Comments and suggestions should be sent to the author via the Editor, IQ.

RECORDKEEPING COMPLIANCE AUDIT MANUAL Mines & Energy Resources SA

1. Introduction

The recordkeeping compliance audit is a management control designed to examine and evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the record keeping system and operations in workgroups across the Department.

The Department of Mines & Energy SA controls and manages mining and petroleum exploration and development data in South Australia. It is necessary to regard the issues of data management and risk management, as dependencies for the requirements of accountability and compliance. The Department took steps in 1996

to mitigate these risks and establish recordkeeping systems that are compliant and compatible with Whole-of-Government requirements and the Australian Records Management Standard AS4390.

The requirements of corporate accountability will best be met by a systematic and implemented auditing program. The auditing program is documented to provide evidence of compliance with policies, procedures and standards, set by the Department, and evidence of compliance with the regulatory environment.

Compliance will be monitored on a regular basis within agreed intervals of time. Monitoring will include:

- reviewing operations
- inspecting records of evidence
- reporting on non-compliance
- recommending corrective action

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of conducting regular records audits is to assure that all records within an organisation are authorised, complete and accurate, that they retain their integrity during processing, and that the systems which keep them are reliable and evidential.

The purposes of this *Audit Programme* are:

- to establish recordkeeping audit standards in the Department; and
- to provide a guide for the conduct of record audits across the Department twice-yearly.

The Audit Programme is comprised of two parts:

1. The Audit Plan – which describes the expected scope and conduct of record audits; and
2. The Audit Report – which documents the results.

1.2 Scope

The recordkeeping compliance audit at the Department is directed towards the examination and evaluation of internal recordkeeping systems, procedures and operations, including the evaluation of the means used to identify, capture, control, manage and preserve documentary evidence of the business of all Divisions at all locations. The specific responsibilities of the auditor/s are:

- to review the recordkeeping systems and related controls
- to assess compliance with the regulatory environment
- to report on the degree of compliance; and
- to recommend improvements.

In addition to the audit, the records management Policy provides for quality assurance officers to perform continuing data checks which fall outside the scope of the audit.

1.3 Reporting Structure

The outcome expected from the Auditor is a report to the Records Manager on any matters that in the opinion of the Auditor, ought be reported.

1.4 Responsibility

The establishment of adequate recordkeeping systems which capture full and accurate records, and the related internal controls is the responsibility of management and demands continuing attention. Audit work is to be assigned to independent personnel who have the degree of technical training required for the circumstances.

The Auditor should have sufficient knowledge of the recordkeeping system and its operations to carry out the auditing tasks.

The Auditor and the Records Manager will meet before the Audit is conducted, and again after each audit is completed. The work will be

directed and reviewed by the Records Manager to provide reasonable assurance that the work performed meets appropriate standards of quality. Direction of the auditing programme will involve the Records Manager in the following functions:

- monitoring the progress of the audit to consider whether the auditor has the necessary skills and competence to carry out the assigned tasks
- ensuring that the auditor understands the audit directions
- ensuring that the work is being carried out in accordance with the audit plan
- resolving any differences of professional judgment between personnel
- ensuring that the work performed and the results are adequately documented
- pursuing all significant audit matters reflected in audit conclusions.

2. Definitions

Audit evidence - The information obtained by the auditor in arriving at the conclusions on which the audit opinion is based. Audit evidence will comprise source documents and other records underlying the recordkeeping report, and corroborating information from other sources.

Audit plan - A description of the expected scope and conduct of the audit with sufficient detail to guide the development of the audit programme.

Audit programme - The audit programme sets out the nature, timing, and extent of planned audit procedures required to implement the overall audit plan. The audit programme serves as a set of instructions to assistants involved in the audit, and as a means to control and record the proper execution of the work.

Audit report - The audit report is issued by the auditor, and expresses a

high level of assurance about an accountability matter that is capable of evaluation against an identified framework.

Audit risk - The risk that an auditor gives an inappropriate audit opinion. Audit risk has three components – inherent risk, control risk and detection risk.

Audit sampling - The application of audit procedures to less than 100% of the items within a population, to obtain audit evidence used to form a conclusion about a particular characteristic.

Auditor - The person with final responsibility for the audit or audit related service. The Term 'auditor' is used throughout the Australian Auditing Standards. The term is used to indicate that the work is required to be performed by persons who have adequate training and competence in recordkeeping compliance auditing.

Control procedure - Those policies and procedures in addition to the control environment that management has established to ensure, as far as possible, that specific MESA objectives will be achieved.

Inspection - An audit evidence gathering technique which consists of examining documents, records, or other evidence.

Internal auditing - An appraisal activity established within MESA as a service to MESA. It is independent within MESA and its functions include, amongst other things, examining, evaluating and monitoring the adequacy and effectiveness of the internal control structure, and specifically for the purposes of this programme, the recordkeeping controls.

Observation - An audit evidence gathering technique that consists of looking at a process or procedure

being performed by others. For example, the auditor may observe the counting of inventories by MESA personnel or the performance of control procedures that leave no audit trail.

Opinion - An audit opinion is a positive written expression within a specified framework indicating the auditor's overall conclusion based upon audit evidence obtained that provides a high level of assurance:

- to enhance the credibility of an assertion about an accountability matter
- or
- about the subject matter for which the accountable party is responsible.

The audit may result in any of the following types of opinions being issued:

- Unqualified opinion - indicates the auditor is satisfied with all specified parts of the scope of the audit
- Qualified opinion - indicates the auditor is not satisfied in all respects.

The qualified opinion may be expressed as 'except for' - specifying which parts of the audit are not satisfactory, or inability to form an opinion - where insufficient evidence can be obtained.

Population - In relation to sampling, the entire set of data from which a sample is selected and about which the auditor wishes to draw conclusions.

Scope of an audit - The audit procedures deemed necessary in the circumstances to achieve the objective of an audit.

3. References

The audit programme, plan and reporting method are based upon best practice as espoused in the

Auditing 1996 Handbook - Volume 2 of the Accounting and Auditing Handbook 1996. This volume incorporates all the auditing standards as stated at 1st November, 1995. The Handbook is issued by the Australian Society of Certified Practising Accountants, and the Institute of Chartered Accountants.

4. Conduct of the Audit Process

4.1 Audit Objective

The auditor's objectives are to:

- offer an opinion to the Records Manager on the levels of compliance of various components of the recordkeeping system; and
- report on the findings of each audit, including any remedial action required.

4.2 The Control Environment

4.2.1 Department Audit Policy

The Policy relating to recordkeeping audits is as follows⁴:

"Recordkeeping systems will comply with business application requirements, regulatory requirements and functional recordkeeping requirements, and will be audited to identify evidence supporting audit assertions."

Evidence of satisfaction of audit assertions will include:

- full and accurate records are captured into recordkeeping systems
- procedures are in place to track change to accountability requirements
- integrated support for recordkeeping evident in policies, business rules, standard operating procedures and design of work processes
- all recordkeeping systems are performance-tested on a regular basis

Compliance audits should take place on a regular basis within agreed intervals of time, and the results of the audits and reviews will be documented."

4.2.2 Auditing the Functional and Business Requirements

The functional requirements for recordkeeping define Departmental corporate requirements and have been based on AS4390.3 - Strategies. These comprise of a checklist, which provides functional, business and regulatory measures against which the records and the recordkeeping system will be tested. The audit procedures will be based upon the following:

4.2.3 Internal Control in the Computer System

Controls managed by other data management or information technology personnel to assure data management principles are in place will include:

Access controls - Procedures designed to restrict access to programs and data. The procedures are designed to prevent or detect:

- unauthorised access to terminals, programs and data
- entry of unauthorised transactions
- unauthorised changes to data files
- use of the recordkeeping system by unauthorised personnel
- use of unauthorised programs

System development and maintenance controls - additional procedures to ensure that controls essential to on-line applications such as passwords, access controls and recovery procedures, are included in the system during its development and maintenance.

Programming controls - procedures designed to prevent or detect improper changes to computer programs which are accessed through on-line terminals. It is important for on-line changes to programs to be adequately documented.

Transaction logs - reports which are designed to create an audit trail for each on-line transaction. Such

reports often document the source of a transaction (terminal, time and user) as well as the transactions details.

4.3 Audit Evidence

Evidence will be provided in some cases by a sample test of data, and in other cases by 100% testing. Functional requirements will generally be sample tested, to give sufficient indication to form an opinion that the requirements are generally satisfied. Business requirements will include some sample testing, and some complete testing. The regulatory environment will usually require complete testing. The checklist is to be found at Appendix 3.

Suggestions for auditing functional recordkeeping, include:

- auditing change to the classification scheme 100%
- auditing change to the thesaurus 100%
- auditing modifications to record metadata 100%
- auditing the capture of records sample

A description of the tests are outlined in the Procedures for auditing, at Appendix 1.

4.4 Restrictions

Auditing will require the cooperation of the workgroups across the Department. Because the audit process could sometimes be interpreted as invasive, audit agreements must be completed between the Records Manager and the Work group Managers. These agreements will accept and give authority to the Records Manager and to the Auditor to access offices, to interview staff, and to view records which may have security restrictions.

4.5 Documentation

Documentation resulting from each audit will include the following:

- signed access agreements
- completed checklist
- audit report

Individual commentary will be made about each location audited, and this will be attached to the Audit Report. The comments, checklist and report will be documented during the audit process, and delivered to the Records Manager on completion.

The Records Manager will compile a summary of the Audit Report for the Chief Executive Officer, highlighting those areas where further guidance or authority is needed, or where non-compliance indicates risk to the Department.

4.5.1 The Audit Report

The audit report, the final step in the audit process, is the Auditor's product and is delivered to the Records Manager. A suggested proforma for the composition of the Audit Report is at Appendix 2.

4.6 Audit Process and Sequence

Whilst Quality Assurance checking will be conducted on a frequent and on-going basis, full records management audits will be conducted twice yearly, timed to coordinate with budget reviews, Corporate Plans, Divisional plans and available resources. The optimum time for these to occur is currently May and November each year.

The audit will follow a set sequence, and the following is suggested:

[insert the sequence for the pertinent Branches or Sections]

4.7 Follow Up

If full compliance is not evident during the Audit process, corrective action will be recommended by the Auditor, and a follow-up visit to ensure this has been undertaken, will be arranged and diarised. Corrective

action and non-compliance will be documented directly to the checklists, and these instances considered in compiling the audit report.

Feedback to the non-complying workgroup must be given as soon as practicable after the audit, to confirm the areas where non-compliance was found. The date for the follow-up visit must also be notified at that stage.

Fair and reasonable time must be allowed for workgroups to take such corrective action. If it is carried out, and compliance is evident on the follow-up visit, then the audit opinion should reflect that full compliance is evident, without comment that a follow-up was necessary to achieve that.

If follow-ups are repeatedly necessary, then this must be commented upon in the audit report.

5. Operative Date

This statement is operative in relation to the first audit period commencing on or after [date].

Updates for changes since the date of the last audit:

Appendix 1. Procedures

- 1 Auditing the capture of records
- 2 Auditing change to the software
Set up and Maintenance modules
- 3 Auditing the location of records and containers
- 4 Auditing access to records
- 5 Auditing modifications to record metadata
- 6 Auditing the disposal of records
- 7 Completing the audit checklist
- 8 Preparing non-conformance audit reports

Appendix 2. Forms

- 1 Audit report template - Standard unqualified audit report
- 2 Non-compliance feedback report
- 3 Access agreement

Appendix 2.1 Audit Report Template *see below*

Appendix 3. Audit Checklist - Regulatory Compliance

3.1 Introduction

The auditing checklist comprises literary warrant for recordkeeping, and provides the opportunity to demonstrate compliance with policies, procedures and standards, set by MESA and the rest of the world. Emphasis is upon compliance with the regulatory environment, and this is classified into four major groupings:

2.1 Audit report template Standard unqualified audit report

TITLE: AUDITOR'S REPORT

ADDRESS: To the Records Manager,
Mines & Energy Resources, SA

SCOPE: I have audited the corporate recordkeeping systems of MESA for the 6 month period, ended [.....date.....]. The Records Management Policy of MESA, requires that all users in all workgroups across MESA be responsible for the integrity and reliability of the recordkeeping systems, and for the completeness and accuracy of the records kept therein. MESA auditing therefore addresses all workgroups of MESA. This audit has reviewed the following Divisions and their workgroups:

DIVISION
.....
.....
.....

I have conducted an independent audit of the recordkeeping systems in order to express an opinion on them to the Records Manager.

The audit has been conducted in accordance with the Recordkeeping Compliance Audit Manual, 1997 which embraces relevant best practices and standards of the Australian Auditing Handbook. The procedures include examination on a test basis, of evidence supporting the functional recordkeeping requirements, the business recordkeeping requirements and the regulatory requirements.

These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion as to whether these requirements are adequately satisfied in accordance with the MESA Recordkeeping Compliance Audit Manual, 1997 and the MESA Records Management Policy. The audit opinion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

OPINION: In my opinion, the recordkeeping operations adequately satisfy the recordkeeping requirements of MESA as at [.....date.....] and the results of its operations for the period then ended, are in accordance with the MESA Recordkeeping Compliance Audit Manual, 1997 and the MESA Records Management Policy.

SIGNATURE: [.....NAME.....]
Quality Assurance Officer

DATE: (date audit field work is completed)

Instrument	Requirements and who is responsible	Compliance Y/N	up-to-date	Corrective action	follow-up
Legislation					
Standards					
MESA Public Statements					
Mission & Strategy Plans					

3.2 The Checklist

Legislation, Standards, MESA Mission & Strategy Plans, and MESA Public Statements. This should remain a 'live' document, and be updated as the regulatory environment changes. Record retention rules which reference the documented law, regulation or statement of best practice, will link to active records in the recordkeeping system. Procedure 7 relates to the completion of the checklist.

3.2 The Checklist

see previous page

Bibliography

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Australian Standard - AS4390 - Records Management, SAA, 1996.

Bearman, D & Trant, J:
Electronic Records Research Working Meeting, May 28 - 30, 1997. A report from the Archives community. D-Lib Magazine, July/August, 1997.

¹Bearman & Trant, 1997.

²Australian Standard - Records Management, Part 3: Strategies, Appendix C.

³The Department has since merge with Primary Industries SA in a restructure of the government. The merged Department is now known as Primary Industries & Resources, SA. If the Manual becomes operational, it will necessarily be modified to reflect the new structure.

⁴This is correct at the time of writing, but may be subject to change with Departmental mergers.

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Contemporary Recordkeeping The Records Management Thesaurus Response

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Abstract

At the Records Management Association of Australia's National Convention 1997, Dr Maggie Exon, Senior Lecturer, Department of Information Studies at Curtin University, delivered a paper called 'Contemporary Recordkeeping: The Records Management Thesaurus.' This paper extensively criticised the Keyword AAA thesaurus produced and marketed by the Archives Authority of New South Wales. In addition to appearing in the convention proceedings, her paper was published in the November 1997 edition of *Informaa Quarterly*.

This paper is the Archives Authority's public response to that criticism. The authors discuss the origins of Keyword AAA and, in particular, its departure from the tradition of subject-based records management thesauri. They then discuss Dr Exon's concerns about Keyword AAA's relationship with the International Standard ISO 2788, *Documentation - Guidelines for the establishment and development of monolingual thesauri*, and describe the impact of the Australian Standard AS 4390, *Records Management*, on the theory and practice of records management thesaurus development.

The authors describe the application of functional analysis to the development of business classification schemes, as advocated in the Australian Standard, how these schemes provide the basis for controlled language and the relationship of thesauri with other tools in a comprehensive and coherent regime for managing government records.

Finally the authors place *Keyword AAA* in the context of efforts, in which the Authority is playing an active role, in New South Wales and elsewhere to provide better access to government records and other forms of information.

At the Association's National Convention in Perth in September 1997, Dr Maggie Exon presented a paper on the contemporary records management thesaurus which contained extensive criticism of the *Keyword AAA* thesaurus.¹ As we were given no opportunity at the Convention to respond to Dr Exon's paper in a considered way, the editor of *Informaa Quarterly* agreed to publish this response. This article deals with the technical issues raised in Dr Exon's paper and is also an opportunity to place *Keyword AAA* within the context of modern recordkeeping theory and practice.

What is Keyword AAA ?

*Keyword AAA*² is a thesaurus of general terms designed for use in classifying, titling and indexing all types of records in any technological environment. It covers terminology common to business functions and activities in most organisations and is normally used in conjunction with a thesaurus of functional terms, relating to the organisation's specific or core business functions, to provide comprehensive controlled vocabulary coverage.

Keyword AAA is a logical progression in thesaurus products developed by the Archives Authority of New South Wales, through its Record Management

Office, over the last 20 years. *The Thesaurus of General Administrative Terms*, or the 'GADM' as it has been better known, was released in 1978 (not 1991, as Dr Exon states). The *GADM Thesaurus* became Australia's most popular and successful government records management thesaurus and in 1995 was being used by more than 140 public sector organisations at all three levels of government around Australia. The *GADM Thesaurus* was regularly revised and *Keyword AAA*, released in November 1995, is the product of the major 1994/1995 revision. The different name reflects the fact that our revision had involved a fundamental rethinking and had resulted in a new product, rather than just a new version of the old product.

Like its predecessor, *Keyword AAA* was designed specifically for the New South Wales Government. Because of the similarity in general administrative terminology used in other jurisdictions, it has been adopted as the standard general records management thesaurus in Western Australia, South Australia and Tasmania and is used extensively by Commonwealth Government agencies. It is currently being implemented and used by 125 organisations in Australia and Canada. It is also used extensively by educators in the recordkeeping discipline to help teach students around Australia about controlled language principles and tools. Curtin University of Technology has an educator's licence specifically for this purpose.

Keyword AAA is marketed on an organisation-wide licensing basis, enabling licensees to provide it to users in hard copy, on computer networks and Intranets and to incorporate it in records and document management software. It is an important source of revenue for the Authority's Government Recordkeeping program, helping to fund its research and development

work in relation to records management standards and the management of electronic records.

While we must carefully protect our commercial interest in the intellectual property in *Keyword AAA*, we have not hidden its foundations from the records management community. We believe it is a significant contribution to records management practice and we have discussed this in the professional literature³ and in professional forums⁴.

How does *Keyword AAA* work?

For readers unfamiliar with *Keyword AAA*, it will be helpful to describe how it is structured and works. Unlike *GADM*, which was subject based, *Keyword AAA* is constructed to reflect an organisation's business functions and activities as they are documented by records. *Keyword AAA* uses three levels of terms to do this:

- *keywords*, which represent business functions of an agency
- *activity descriptors*, which describe the more specific activities taking place, and
- *subject descriptors*, which describe the more specific subjects or topics relating to the matter to be documented.

Thus, when used with structured file titling (this is a common, but not the sole, way of using *Keyword AAA*), we recommend assigning a keyword, an activity descriptor and a subject descriptor, in that order. We also provide guidance about using the names and organisations as part of this third level of description. Naturally it is at this level that most flexibility is required.

It is fundamentally important to have an understanding of *Keyword AAA* and other modern records management thesauri to recognise that the act of assigning keywords and *descriptors* is not merely concerned with attaching 'labels' to records to aid their retrieval. It is an act of *classification*.

By assigning a structured title to a file, we classify the file. By attaching individual records to the file, we classify those records. We will return to the crucial role of classification in records management later.

The *GADM* worked in quite a different way from *Keyword AAA*. It had only two levels, *keywords* and *descriptors*. The rule was that one keyword should be assigned in a file title (the *GADM* was designed specifically for file-based recordkeeping systems), followed by as many descriptors as were required to describe the matter to be documented by the file (this was termed the *index depth or degree of specificity*).⁵ The descriptors in the thesaurus were all of equal value and most descriptors could be used after many keywords. The keyword POLICY was an exception to the basic rule: it could be used with another keyword.

In its final stages the *GADM* was, like Elvis, bloated and cumbersome, as our users made very clear to us. It contained a vast array of descriptors (one of our favourites was *Argentine ants*) and forbidden terms, the majority of which our users indicated were never used. By 1994, at the very least, the *GADM* required a thorough spring clean.

The two levels and the relative lack of hierarchy, moreover, severely limited the *GADM's* value as a tool for classification. This was compounded by the fact that the descriptor level did not distinguish between activity-oriented terms and topic-oriented ones. To produce a thesaurus useful for classification, we had to separate the two and impose a stricter hierarchy than the *GADM* allowed. These were key factors in the design of what became *Keyword AAA*.

• Technical issues

In her paper, Dr Exon raised several technical issues and touched on their

broader implications. We will now deal with the technical issues, following which we will address the broader implications raised by her paper, notably regarding the application of functional analysis and the relationship between tools for records management and information retrieval.

For the purposes of this part of our paper in particular, we refer in the text to Dr Exon's paper, as published in the Perth convention proceedings, in the form (Exon, p. x) and to *Keyword AAA* in the form (*Keyword AAA*, Introduction, p. x). We deal with other references as endnotes.

Compliance with the ISO Standard 2788

A major issue which Dr Exon raises is the extent to which *Keyword AAA* is consistent with the International Standard ISO 2788, *Documentation - Guidelines for the establishment and development of monolingual thesauri*.⁶ Her criticism of *Keyword AAA* and its relationship to ISO 2788 focuses on three main areas:

- *Keyword AAA*'s use of codings
- pre-coordinate indexing, and
- hierarchical relationships between terms.

There is an implication in several places in Dr Exon's paper that *Keyword AAA* claims to comply with ISO 2788 to a greater extent than it does in fact. It is therefore important first of all to make clear to what extent and in what ways *Keyword AAA* complies with ISO 2788.

The introduction to *Keyword AAA* (*Keyword AAA*, Introduction, p.2 and p.5) makes it clear that it conforms to the *conventions* of the International Standard and that we have revised the rules and brought *structure* and *codings* into line with ISO 2788. Finally, the *Codes* section of the introduction indicates that we have used the codes in ISO 2788 (BT, NT etc.), noting that they are not abbreviated in

Keyword AAA (*Keyword AAA*, Introduction, p. 12). This is the full extent of our claim to compliance with ISO 2788. Of more importance to us is *Keyword AAA*'s compliance with the Australian Standard AS4390, *Records Management*, to which we will return later.

We note, however, that ISO 2788 is intended to be applied flexibly, as suggested in the Scope and *field of application* section of the standard. This states that:

*'...the recommendations set out in this International Standard are intended to ensure consistent practice...they should not be regarded, however, as mandatory instructions...the choice of procedure will vary from one indexing agency to another, depending on management decisions that fall outside the scope of this International Standard...'*⁷

A key example of the flexibility required when applying the standard to a function-based thesaurus is in the hierarchical relationship of terms, which Dr Exon discusses at length (Exon, pp. 101-102). We address this issue specifically later in this paper.

Another example is our spelling out of 'Broader Term', 'Narrower Term' and 'Related Term' instead of their abbreviated codes (BT, NT and RT) prescribed in the standard. Dr Exon refers to this in passing (Exon, p. 100) without indicating whether or not she approves. It is, however, an important point. Thesauri envisaged by ISO 2788 are designed primarily for use by librarians and other information professionals. With the devolution of many operational tasks, especially in the electronic environment, a records management thesaurus is as likely to be used by an action officer as by a records manager. Ease of use for all types of users, not just those familiar with other thesauri, was a priority in the design of *Keyword AAA*. Complying with the letter of the

standard would not have helped here.

Dr Exon argues that 'the change to a format based on ISO 2788-1986(E)...has artificially disguised the fact that keyword file titling has a very different purpose from post-coordinate indexing'. (Exon, p. 103) We used the structure, layout and coding conventions because we believe that a records management thesaurus should comply with national and international standards to the fullest extent that they can be applied. ISO 2788 is highly applicable to *Keyword AAA* in terms of the structure, codings and layout that it advocates. *Keyword AAA* really would have '...cut itself off from the approaches used by other sectors of the information industry...' if we had decided, as she suggests, to '...structure [indexing languages] in ways which are clearly distinguished.' (Exon, p. 103) *Keyword AAA* is, after all, a monolingual thesaurus.

In one respect, *Keyword AAA* cannot, and was never intended to, comply with ISO 2788. *Keyword AAA* is a function-based thesaurus and ISO 2788 is concerned with subject-based thesauri. Function-based thesauri are a phenomenon of records management, not of library science, which is the tradition in which ISO 2788 was developed.

We do not accept that anyone will take the use of the structure, coding and layout conventions in ISO 2788 to imply that *Keyword AAA* complies with the standard in ways that it clearly cannot and should not. This is an important issue, not just for *Keyword AAA*, but for any records management thesaurus using function-based terms, which means any records management thesaurus seeking to comply with AS 4390.

- **Pre-coordinate and post-coordinate indexing**
An important part of Dr Exon's

arguments about the relationship of *Keyword AAA* with ISO 2788 centre around her assertion that *Keyword AAA* is a pre-coordinate system. She states: 'The ISO standard definitely states that it is a standard for the construction of post-coordinate indexing languages.' (Exon, p. 100) To coin a phrase, there is a real mystery here. Clause 1.2 of ISO 2788 states that the techniques described '...are *not* limited to a particular method of indexing, whether post-coordinate or pre-coordinate.' (our emphasis)

To support her argument Dr Exon presents an extract from the introduction to ISO 2788 which discusses *a posteriori* relationships ('...relationships between the terms which together summarise the subject of a document..[but]...are not normally associated according to common frames of reference...') and *a priori* relationships ('...thesaural relationships between terms assigned to documents and other terms which, because they form part of common and shared frames of reference, are present by implication'). (Exon, p. 106) She asserts that the standard is '...in no way concerned with the problems of citation order in pre-coordinate languages.' (Exon, p. 100) Unfortunately for you, dear reader, this requires closer examination.

The crux of Dr Exon's argument seems to be that *Keyword AAA* is a pre-coordinate language (it relies on citation order) with *a posteriori* relationships between its terms, while the codings BT, NT etc. concern thesaural or *a priori* relationships. Therefore, *Keyword AAA* should not use these codings to describe the relationship between terms at its different levels.

Keyword AAA is actually by this description both pre-coordinate and *a priori* (Dr Exon seems to believe that the two are mutually exclusive).

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Keyword AAA does prescribe the relationship between terms, but it does so in a hierarchical fashion with terms that form part of a common and shared frame of reference. The introduction to ISO 2788 notes: 'The International Standard is especially concerned with those priori relationships which can be displayed in a thesaurus, where they then, in effect, add a second dimension to an indexing language'.⁸ This is exactly what *Keyword AAA* achieves with the application of keywords and activities to a file or document titles.

A close reading of other parts of the Standard also reveals that it can cover more than post-coordinate *a priori* relationships. For example, Section 3.3 of ISO 2788 defines a thesaurus as *a priori*, but does not state that it has to be post-coordinate and Section 6.3.1 discusses the role of pre-coordinate methods in the choice of singular and plural terminology. It states that '...terms selected from a thesaurus are organised into index entries in such a way that the entry as a whole expresses a subject in summary form. Relationships between terms may be conveyed in various ways, for example by word order and/or by the choice of special typography and punctuation.'

The use of pre-coordinate indexing in *Keyword AAA* instead of post-coordinate indexing was deliberately adopted so that the file title would represent the business classification scheme. The first term is always a keyword (function), the second an activity descriptor (activity) and at the third level subject descriptors or free text which can be added to represent subjects (for further explanation on the use of hierarchies within *Keyword AAA* see below). Therefore, all titles move from the broad business function to the specific topic/subject. By retaining this order, the classification scheme can be used for other recordkeeping

management activities such as the appraisal of records. If terms were able to be mixed and matched in a post-coordinate way the classification scheme would no longer be visible, and the benefits for other recordkeeping activities nullified. *Keyword AAA* would no longer be valuable for use with directory structures for electronic records either, one of its current advantages.

The disadvantages of pre-coordinate indexing for retrieval in comparison to post-coordinate models are largely overcome with modern records management software. Records management software packages index all terms used within record titles, so that records users are able to search on any of the terms to retrieve the required document and record. Therefore, it *does not matter* that the title's order is specified. This is also the situation with document management software, where increasingly full text retrieval mechanisms, such as ISYS, are being used for the retrieval of documents regardless of classification schemes.

Hierarchies

Dr Exon criticises our description of *Keyword AAA* as having a hierarchical relationship between keywords and activity descriptors. In one place she claims it is 'misleading' to describe the relationship between a keyword and an activity descriptor (the example she uses is **Travel** and **Procedures**) as hierarchical. (Exon, p. 102)

Dr Exon starts by noting that '...Hierarchies lie at the heart of the guidelines embodied in the International Standards Organisation (ISO) standard referred to in *Keyword AAA*...so these two statements [i.e. bringing the structure and codings in *Keyword AAA* in line with ISO 2788 and *Keyword AAA* having a hierarchical relationship] are linked in meaning and import.' (Exon, p. 100)

This connection is misconceived. We do not claim that the hierarchy in *Keyword AAA* derives from ISO 2788. On the contrary, the introduction to *Keyword AAA* states that 'Classification schemes are normally hierarchical in nature, with a tree like structure moving from the broadest to the narrowest aspect. This is the essence of the principle of hierarchy.' (*Keyword AAA*, Introduction, p. 3) The hierarchy in *Keyword AAA* is based on the concept of the business classification scheme, as described in Part 4 of the Australian Standard.

There is hierarchy from the broad to the specific in *Keyword AAA*. The Collins Dictionary simply defines a hierarchy as 'a system of persons or things arranged in a graded order.'

In records management, a given activity can be identified as a part of a function: they are clearly not on the same level in the business classification scheme. If we turn to Schellenberg's⁹ model, we see that a function normally is comprised of a number of activities. An activity, in turn, is comprised of a number of types of recurring transactions relating to different topics, people or things. We describe the business classification scheme as hierarchical and the relationship between the terms in a records management thesaurus reflecting that scheme as equally hierarchical.

In many cases, this relationship is 'one-to-many'. In such cases, for example, a function has a number of activities, but an activity belongs to only one function. For example the activity descriptor ACCOUNTING is linked only to the function of FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT, but FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT has a number of activities. This corresponds most closely to the 'whole-part' form of hierarchical relationship described in ISO 2788.¹⁰

In some cases, however, the relationship is necessarily a 'many-to-many' one. Policy development, for example, is an activity involved in many broader functions. In *Keyword AAA* this is reflected in a many-to-many relationship between the terms: POLICY as an activity descriptor is not limited to one keyword. Here the relationship reflects that described in another part of ISO 2788. These more complex hierarchies present in *Keyword AAA* reflect the realities of business activity and the records produced in the process. We believe it is more important to reflect these realities than to impose limitations simply in order to conform to ISO 2788. We discuss the business classification scheme further in the following section.

It is clear that a fundamental cause of difference between us is the use of functional analysis to produce a business classification scheme. This colours the argument about hierarchies in *Keyword AAA*. To return to the example that Dr Exon describes as misleading: the *a priori* indexer in Dr Exon says '...procedures are neither a kind of travel nor a part of travel...'; the records classifier in us says 'Travel is a business function and the activity of developing procedures for travel is apart of that function.' We will now examine why this perspective is so important in records management.

Functional analysis

Dr Exon was correct to note that *Keyword AAA* is different to the GADM Thesaurus. It has a very different basis. *Keyword AAA* is based on a classification scheme which reflects a hierarchy of business functions, activities and transactions. This allows records, through the recordkeeping system, to be linked directly to the business functions and activities which resulted in those records. The GADM, as we have noted, was a subject-based thesaurus. Its terminology, at the keyword as well as descriptor

level, described subjects or 'things' rather than representing concepts of functions and activities undertaken within government agencies. It was not based on a classification scheme, nor did it have a close relationship to business functions and activities.

How did this fundamental difference between the GADM and *Keyword AAA* come about? The GADM Thesaurus had been regularly revised since it was first published in 1978. The revision undertaken in 1994/1995, however, was influenced by developments taking place in recordkeeping theory and practice, notably the use of functional analysis, the development of the Australian Standard on records management and a fundamental rethinking of how recordkeeping systems are designed and implemented.

Australian recordkeeping professionals, that is, both records managers and archivists, have been strongly influenced in recent years by our colleagues in North America, who have been examining recordkeeping systems and articulating the use of functional analysis for the appraisal of records, and specifically the management of electronic records. A leading commentator noted in 1993 that the 'advent of electronic records which are not susceptible to ready examination...has led archivists to seek alternative approaches to appraisal. It was soon realized that if archivists could make such decisions on the basis of analysis of the business functions and the need for evidence of these functions, they could avoid trying to assess records themselves.'¹² At the same time, at the University of Pittsburgh, a project established in 1991 to study 'recordkeeping functional requirements for electronic information systems' clearly identified the nexus between recordkeeping systems and the business functions of an organisation and articulated a methodology for

identifying business functions.¹³

Business classification schemes

In Australia, early discussion of functional analysis related particularly to its use in the appraisal and descriptive control of records.¹⁴ The cumulative experience of recordkeeping professionals in its use found expression in the Australian Standard on records management¹⁵, released in 1996, representing current best practice in records management. The standard uses functional analysis methodologies, in particular in Part 3: *Strategies*, Part 4: *Control* and Part 5: *Appraisal and Disposal*. In Part 3, Clause 6.2 outlines a methodology for designing and implementing recordkeeping systems. It uses an analysis of business functions and activities to ensure that the records captured and maintained by the recordkeeping system are 'linked to the activities that they [the records] document.'¹⁶ The standard recommends that the first three steps undertaken in this methodology can be used to 'serve a range of records management purposes' including the development of business classification schemes.¹⁷

The standard provides further guidance on the development of business classification schemes in Part 4: *Control*. It recommends that classification schemes used to manage records should not be based on the organisational structure, but rather on an analysis of business functions and activities.¹⁸ The standard notes that functions and activities are more stable than organisational structures. An example of this type of classification scheme is that developed by the Roads and Traffic Authority of NSW to control its records. The Authority has built a business classification scheme on functional analysis undertaken for corporate planning, using the 76 activities identified for its activity-based management system.¹⁹

The Australian Standard also recommends that the business classification scheme should be hierarchical, with the top level representing broad business functions, lower levels representing the activities undertaken to accomplish those functions, and ending with the bottom level to represent the recurring transactions that take place within these activities. This is nothing novel. It was described with admirable clarity by T.R. Schellenberg forty years ago.²⁰ Schellenberg represents the classification scheme thus:

How do business classification schemes relate to records management thesauri? As the Australian Standard notes, the '...business classification scheme reflects the terminology used to describe functions, activities and transactions in use within the specific organisation. This terminology can be applied to the naming of records within the organisation.'²¹ Thus, a records management thesaurus is a *product of* a classification scheme, rather than a *basis for* a classification scheme. As part of the development cycle for *Keyword AAA*, we devised a generic classification scheme of general administrative

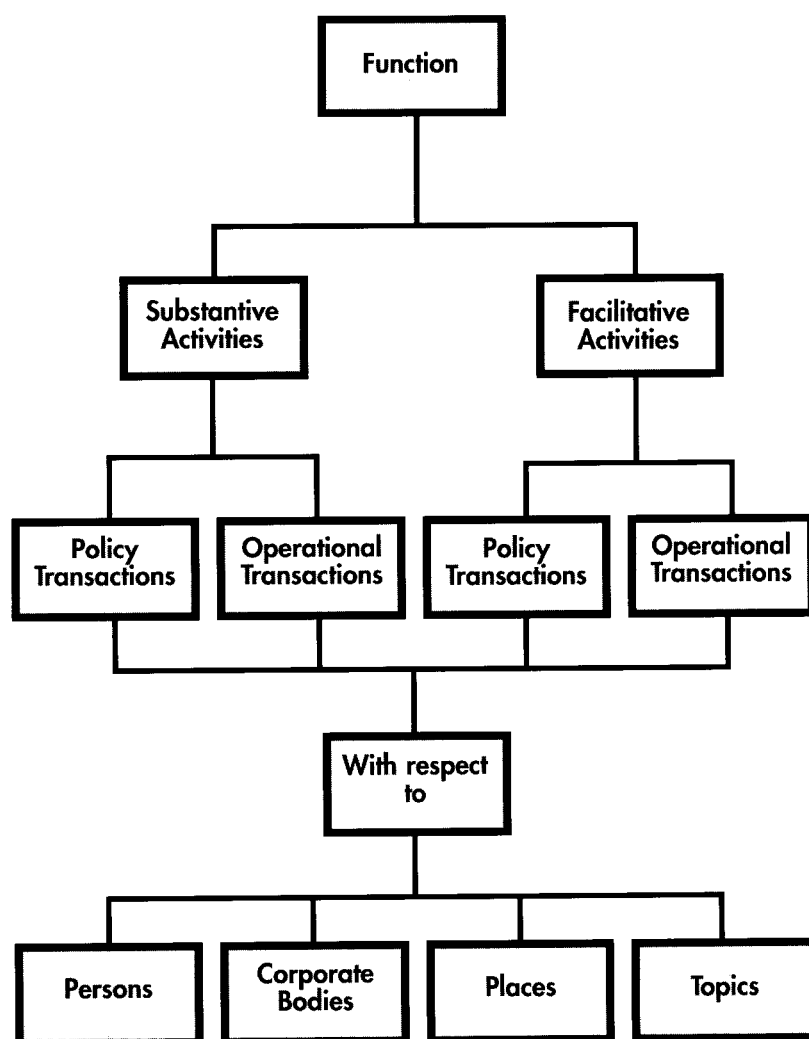
functions, activities and recurring transactions that are common across the NSW Government.

Part of Dr Exon's concern about function-based thesauri is that they are difficult to merge with subject-based thesauri. To pursue this argument she notes that '...any organisation wishing to use this thesaurus [*Keyword AAA*] for records management must add to it terms to cover the functional aspects of the organisation. It might be considered that such terms could be derived from a published thesaurus in the relevant area...' (Exon, p. 102) As students in our keyword training courses learn very early, a functional thesaurus is derived first and foremost from a business classification scheme, as described in the Australian Standard and developed through an analysis of business activity. A functional thesaurus developed using the methods described in Part 4 of the Australian Standard is easily merged with *Keyword AAA*.

It is, of course, possible to add terms from a subject-based thesaurus, but only after the completion of the analysis of the organisation's functions. Terms taken from published subject-based thesauri will generally be useful at the subject/topic level of the functional thesaurus. This reflects Schellenberg's notion that this level of classification relates to persons, corporate bodies, places and topics - facts, events, ideas.²²

Retrieval using functional analysis
Dr Exon argues that 'the current emphasis on functional analysis has been to the detriment of efficient retrieval'. (Exon, p. 103) Chris Hurley, on the other hand, has observed that retrieval via function could assist records users far more than retrieval using provenance, as functions appear to users to be more subject oriented than administrative structures as context.²³ We reserve

**Schellenberg
Classification scheme**



judgement on this issue, as we believe that there is as yet too little evidence to form a conclusion. Clearly we need empirical evidence, making this a topic to add to the recordkeeping community's research agenda.

It may also be that views about the impact of functional analysis on information retrieval come from a limited perspective on the ways in which functional language is being used by recordkeeping professionals to describe records. To help put the discussion into perspective, it is worth noting some of this work.

There are many notable examples of functional analysis being used for the contextual control of records. These include:

- the Australian Archives' thesaurus of functional terms, used to develop a functional index for retrieval in its databases of record holdings²⁴.

- the PIVOT project at the National Archives of the Netherlands²⁵.

- functional description in the control systems of the Public Record Office of Victoria.²⁶

- the incorporation of functions and activities by Mark Stevens into the series system of control at the Sydney City Council.²⁷

At the Archives Authority of New South Wales we have embarked on a major context project to document functions across the NSW Government.²⁸ The project uses a three level model of functions:

- *government functions*, reflecting the most ambient of functions such as law and order, health, and education.
- *agency functions*, reflecting how those high level functions are broken down and pursued as large organisational functions, for example,

the *government function* of law and order is carried out through the *agency functions* of corrective services, law enforcement, courts administration etc.

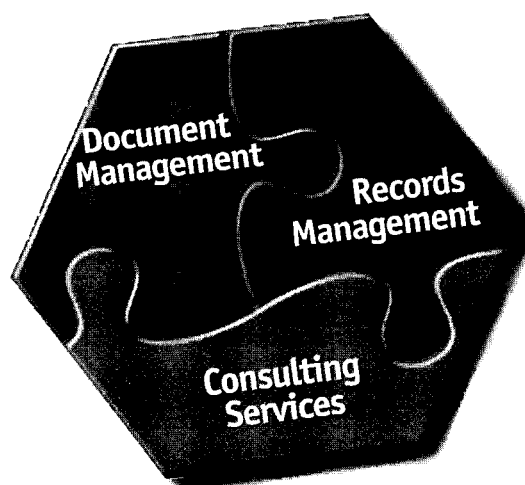
- *business functions*, conducted within agencies in the pursuit of the goals and strategies of the organisation and its agency functions.

These business functions represent the top level functions identified by agencies when developing their business classification scheme using the methods described in the Australian Standard. As we have already noted, these kinds of functions are reflected in *Keyword AAA* and agencies' functional thesauri. This model provides, for the first time, the opportunity to combine a government-wide business classification scheme with those developed within individual agencies, permitting, in theory at least, searching for records using functional terms across the entire documentary output of a government.²⁹

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Recordkeeping professionals need to examine how we manage records across time with the necessary information relating to their context, particularly in the electronic environment. There are obvious benefits to be drawn from linking records directly to functions. Functions are regarded as more stable than organisational structures. Hurley notes that 'when functions are treated as units of description to establish relationships they operate more like provenance statements than indexable headings'.³⁰ Thus, if records are encapsulated with metadata (information about records) relating to business functions through the application of particular titling regimes, then this encapsulation process would result in greater contextual control of records now and into the future.³¹ As Hurley notes, understanding records now and in the future (and as electronic records) requires contextual control and knowledge, that is, to understand a record, we need to ensure that it has the appropriate contextual control.³²

Managing records using functional analysis

The Australian Standard on records management³³ makes clear what records managers already know: that functional analysis provides an invaluable foundation for a wide range of records management functions. Dr Exon recognises this. (Exon, p. 103) Where we differ is in how important this is and in the extent to which records management and information retrieval needs are mutually exclusive. We do not believe that they are.

In our case the use of functional analysis extends to the management of records across government, in addition to agencies using it for the management of their own records. The functional structure in *Keyword AAA* has been used in the most recent

edition of the Authority's *General Records Disposal Schedule – Administrative Records*, issued in June 1996, which applies to all agencies governed by our current legislation.³⁴

In addition, the identification of government-wide functions will enable us to take more of a strategic approach to appraisal across our jurisdiction.³⁵ The end result of our functional analysis work will be better management, as well as better understanding and control, of records across the NSW Government.

Activity descriptors

Dr Exon was critical of the second level descriptor used in *Keyword AAA*, '...as it places in an important position in the file title terms which are often not helpful for retrieval purposes and which add very little to the total effective meaning of the file title as a description of the content of the file.' (Exon, p. 104) This second ('activity') level is important in the classification scheme and consequently in the thesaurus. To remove the activity level within the classification scheme would mean removing a critical part of the hierarchy of business functions, activities and transactions. If this level is removed, not only will the hierarchy no longer be representative of the functions and activities taking place in an organisation, but there also is no clear understanding of what activity was being accomplished within the function. Thus, trying to understand records within the context of business functions and activities is made more difficult.

In our experience the activity descriptor is useful for retrieval purposes, as users will often remember the business activity that they have been involved in documenting and will retrieve records on this basis. We also find that the use of the activity descriptor in file titles lessens the tendency towards 'bag files'.

We disagree with Dr Exon that '...concrete terms which are likely to be sought are relegated to a lesser role at the end of the file title.' (Exon, p. 104) The subject descriptor does not play a lesser role in the *Keyword AAA* model, merely a different one. Dr Exon's problem with printouts of file titles in alphabetical order is a problem with this kind of report for any structured titling system. It is solved by producing KWOC indexes.

Appropriate tools for managing records

Dr Exon contends that '...records managers may find themselves on such a different track from other information professionals in the tools which they use for indexing that their ability to respond to increasingly integrated information handling will be reduced.' (Exon, p. 96) Later she notes that, 'We live in a converging world...There needs to be increasing cooperation between different types of information professionals.' (Exon, p. 103)

The sub-text here is the relationship of records management and information management. Here and elsewhere in her paper, Dr Exon seems in danger of taking what Sue McKemmish has termed the *unitary* (as opposed to pluralist) view of information management.³⁶

Briefly, the unitary view of information is based on definitions of recorded information directly relating to format, with the distinction between records and other forms of information limited to whether they have been published or not. Crudely, records are seen as just another kind of 'non-book material'. The pluralist viewpoint, on the other hand, perceives records as the by-product of business activity, as opposed to 'consciously authored materials'.³⁷ Within this view there are separate and meaningful roles to be played by both the information

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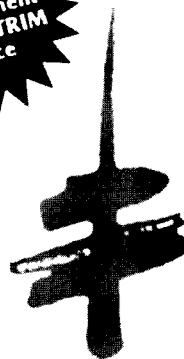
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community in general and the recordkeeping community in particular in ensuring that all forms of recorded information, and records specifically, are managed and made accessible in their respective, and overlapping, regimes.³⁸ These perspectives colour much of the discussion about the relationship of records management and information management.

The Archives Authority supports a pluralist view of information management. We recognise that there are unique and differing roles to be played within information management by librarians, recordkeeping professionals, data administrators and IT professionals. These unique and differing roles are necessary within information management because of the requirement to manage different types of information. At the same time, we fully support calls such as Dr Exon's for people playing these distinct but complementary roles to work together. Convergence means collaboration.

Crucial to the unitary/pluralist debate as it affects records management, is an understanding of what records are and do. In essence, the unitary view sees records merely as an information resource. The pluralist view sees them also as evidence, in the broad sense of the term, of business activities.

The definition provided in the Australian Standard on records management recognises this evidential quality of records. Records are 'recorded information, in any form, including data in the computer systems, created or received and maintained by an organization or person in the transaction of business or the conduct of affairs and kept as evidence of such activity.'³⁹ Equally, the Australian Standard emphasizes the information role of records, viewing a key function of records management as being '...Managing records as an asset and information resource...'⁴⁰

This understanding of the dual role of records has an impact not only on how we retrieve records, but on why. As David Roberts noted in a recent review of proposals for an information management framework in the Commonwealth Government, '...the recommendations arguing for information retrieval tools providing integrated, seamless access to information resources, including records, deserve the strongest support. But when it is records, capable of functioning effectively as evidence, that people need, they must be able to retrieve records.'⁴¹ We need a new model for records retrieval recognising the duality of records as evidence and information. Among leading commentators, Sue McKemmish of Monash University, in particular, has started the necessary dialogue.⁴²

Records are more than an information resource. They support business activities within the 'business domain', they 'are an indispensable ingredient in organisational accountability', and are a resource available to society to account for collective behaviour within the 'cultural domain'.⁴³

Thus any management regime for records needs to recognise that there are specific requirements for managing evidence of business activities over time to ensure that it is useable, reliable, authentic and accessible. For this reason we need to ensure that the tools we employ to manage records allow us to ensure that records retain their 'recordness' and integrity over time. A functional approach to classification schemes and thesauri is an important tool to help manage records as evidence, not just as information resources.

A continuum approach

Dr Exon discusses *Keyword AAA* in the context of titling records within a filing system for active records. While *Keyword AAA* is used for titling active records, it is designed to be used to

assist in the management of records across the records continuum. Thus, for example, by assigning a record to a classification, it is possible to make decisions about how the record should be handled and stored throughout their existence and who should have access to them. This kind of tool helps us manage records better and manage them, where necessary, as archives better.

We need to view records management and archives management as an integrated recordkeeping process, thus activities undertaken within records management will and do have an impact upon management strategies for records through the rest of their existence. Thus, using the *Keyword AAA* thesaurus to title records, regardless of format or technological environment, establishes a regime of classification and control which will assist in the management of those records as they are organised and pluralised through the records continuum. By establishing such a regime of classification and control from the design of recordkeeping systems, we can ensure that the metadata required to understand records can be migrated with the records.

Metadata

Dr Exon criticises *Keyword AAA* for taking a different approach to indexing compared with the rest of the information community. We believe that tools like *Keyword AAA* can be married to the subject-based approaches taken by the rest of the information community to produce useful metadata for records and other kinds of information. An example is the Dublin Core metadata set, featuring thirteen metadata elements designed to assist in retrieving document-like objects in networked environments, particularly the Internet.⁴⁴

The Dublin Core metadata set is designed primarily for authored

materials, but it is possible for particular elements within the set to be used for function-based retrieval of records. For example, free text or keywords may be used with the Subject/Keyword Element and it is possible 'to flag that you are using authorised subject terms or codes from a particular scheme...' For records, this can be terms from a function-based thesaurus.

If a common thesaurus across government is used to identify government business functions and activities, not only are records pluralised and accessible within the collective memory along with other types of recorded information, but, also, the metadata required for contextual control of the record is also present.

We see the incorporation of function-based searching into government information locators and similar tools, using these approaches to defining metadata, as one of the most exciting and substantial benefits of functional analysis. The Commonwealth Government has already identified the need for a common core thesaurus to form '...part of the infrastructure ensuring quality metadata supporting the proposed AusGILS development...' and has identified *Keyword AAA* as the likely source.⁴⁶

Working together

In state and federal government jurisdictions around Australia, collaboration between government records authorities and central agencies concerned with government information management as a whole is increasingly important. In the NSW Government, the Archives Authority is committed to collaborative efforts with the NSW Office of Information Technology so that better use of all government information, including records, is achieved. Among other things, this includes active involvement in the

Office's Information Management Working Party, significant efforts to align the Archives Authority's government-wide records management policies, standards and guidelines with the Office's information management policies and guidelines, and promoting a regular and fruitful dialogue between government records and information technology managers.

We see this as a tangible example of working in a pluralist view of information management: we are working with others in the information community and ensuring that recordkeeping requirements are addressed and that recordkeeping tools such as *Keyword AAA* are linked to government-wide endeavours to provide better access to government information.

Conclusion

Dr Exon's paper raised many issues and we have welcomed the opportunity to discuss some of them, despite the manner in which that opportunity arose. The technical issues can be complex and difficult to grasp. We hope, however, that we have demonstrated that, from the perspective of records management theory and practice, Dr Exon's criticisms of *Keyword AAA* are without substance. At the same time, we hope that we have shed more light on why *Keyword AAA* developed as it did and how it fits into our broader strategies for improving government recordkeeping and contributing to better management and use of government information of all kinds. Finally we hope that we have shown that, far from cutting ourselves off from the rest of the information community, we have a vision for collaboration which recognises the nature and purpose of records as evidence and information and makes the best use of our diverse strengths and skills.

¹ Maggie Exon, 'Contemporary Recordkeeping: The Records

Management Thesaurus', *Preserving Yesterday, Managing Today, Challenging Tomorrow: Conference Papers, Records Management Association of Australia, 14th National Convention*, RMAA, Perth, 1997, pp. 95-107.

² Archives Authority of New South Wales, *Keyword AAA: A Thesaurus of General Terms*, Sydney, 1995.

³ 'RMO Releases New Thesaurus', *Informaa Quarterly*, Volume 11, Number 4, November 1995, pp. 40-41.

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⁴ Catherine Robinson, 'Records Control and Disposal Using Functional Analysis', *Archives and Reform - Preparing for a Better Tomorrow*, 1997 National Conference and AGM, Adelaide, 24-26 July, Australian Society of Archivists Inc. (available at <http://www.records.nsw.gov.au>) Forthcoming paper in *Archives and Manuscripts*.

⁵ *Principles of Keyword Classification* (Publications on Records Management Number 4), Records Management Office, March 1978, p. 10.

⁶ International Standard ISO 2788 - 1986, *Documentation - Guidelines for the Establishment and Development of Monolingual Thesauri*.

⁷ *ibid.*, pp. 1-2.

⁸ *ibid.*, p. 1.

⁹ T.R. Schellenberg, *Modern Archives: Principles and Techniques*, University of Chicago Press, 1956, p. 55.

¹⁰ ISO 2788, *op.cit.*, Clause 8.3.5.

¹¹ *ibid.*, Clause 8.3.7.

¹² David Bearman, 'Recordkeeping Systems', in *Electronic Evidence: Strategies for Managing Records in Contemporary Organizations*, Archives & Museum Informatics, Pittsburgh, 1994, p.36.

¹³ David H. Thomas, 'Business Functions: Toward a Methodology', in *University of Pittsburgh Recordkeeping Functional Requirements Project: Reports and Working Papers*. Volume One. Compiled by Richard Cox. Pittsburgh, PA: School of Library & Information Science, University of Pittsburgh, September 1994. Unpublished Papers: Organisational Culture and Other Dimensions. Paper No. 7. (Also available at <http://www.lis.pitt.edu/~nhprc/Pub7.html>) p.7, 19-20.

¹⁴ See, for example, Barbara Reed, 'Appraisal and Disposal', in Judith Ellis (ed.) *Keeping Archives*, Second Edition, Thorpe in association with The Australian Society of Archivists Inc., Melbourne, 1993, pp. 157-206; Chris Hurley, 'What, If Anything, Is a Function?', *Archives and Manuscripts*, Vol. 21, No. 2, November 1993, pp. 208-220.

¹⁵ Australian Standard AS 4390, *Records Management*, 1996.

¹⁶ *ibid.*, Part 3, *Strategies*, Clause 6.2.1.

¹⁷ *ibid.*, Clause 6.2.

¹⁸ *ibid.*, Part 4, *Control*, Clause 7.2.

¹⁹ Described by Anne Picot in a paper, 'Functional and Activity Analysis: The RTA's Experience', *Archives and Reform - Preparing for a Better Tomorrow*, 1997 National Conference and AGM, Adelaide, 24-26 July, Australian Society of Archivists Inc.

²⁰ Schellenberg, *op.cit.*, p.53-55.

²¹ AS 4390, *op.cit.*, Part 4, *Control*, Clause 7.3.2.

²² Schellenberg, *op.cit.*, p. 54.

²³ Hurley, *op.cit.*, p. 218.

²⁴ See <http://www.aa.gov.au/IndexFunAlpha.html> for instructions on using the Functions Index. It is regarded as especially valuable when the provenance of the records is unknown to the enquirer.

²⁵ Described by Drs Roelf Hol and Bert de Vries at a seminar, *Understanding Functional Analysis*, held in Sydney on 9 April 1997 and at other events on their Australian tour. The focus of the PIVOT project is on appraisal, but it has resulted in extensive function-based finding aids.

²⁶ Described briefly in Hurley, *op.cit.*, pp. 218-219 and in his 'The Australian ('Series') System: an Exposition', in Sue McKemmish and Michael Piggott, eds., *The Records Continuum: Ian McLean and Australian Archives First Fifty Years*, Ancora Press in association with Australian Archives, 1994, at pp. 168-169.

²⁷ Described by David Roberts in a presentation at the seminar, *Understanding Functional Analysis*, held in Sydney on 9 April 1997. The overheads from this presentation are available on the Archives Authority's World Wide Web site at <http://www.records.nsw.gov.au>. Roberts also describes the use of functions and activities as data entities in the new *Tabularium* database for series system control, which, in this respect, is based on the Council's practice.

²⁸ Described in a forthcoming paper by Richard Gore and Lyn Milton. The paper will be available on the Authority's World Wide Web site.

²⁹ Catherine Robinson, *op.cit.*

³⁰ Hurley, *op.cit.*, p. 212.

³¹ Business functions identified within the NSW Government can be dovetailed to agency functions, and then to 'ambient' government functions in order to achieve the contextual control referred to in the Hurley article cited below.

³² Chris Hurley, 'Ambient Functions - Abandoned Children to Zoos', *Archivaria*, 40, Fall 1995, pp. 23.

³³ AS 4390 *op.cit.*, Part 3, *Strategies*, Clause 6.2.2.

³⁴ Archives Authority of New South Wales, *General Records Disposal Schedule: Administrative Records*, Sydney, 1996.

³⁵ See David Roberts, 'Establishing the Continuum: Building a Recordkeeping Regime Across Government', *Preserving Yesterday, Managing Today, Challenging Tomorrow: Conference Papers, Records Management Association of Australia, 14th National Convention*, RMAA, Perth, 1997, pp. 47-48.

³⁶ Sue McKemmish, 'Core Knowledge and Skills for Information Professionals - Converging or Diverging: The Implications of Diverse World Views', *Information Professionals, A Focus on Synergy: Conference Papers, Records Management Association of Australia, 9th National Convention*, RMAA, Sydney, 1992, p.106.

³⁷ *ibid.*, p. 139.

³⁸ Frank Upward and Sue McKemmish, 'Somewhere Beyond Custody', *Archives and Manuscripts*, Vol. 22, No. 1, May 1994, p. 139.

³⁹ AS 4390, op.cit., Part 1, General, Clause 4, Definitions.

⁴⁰ *ibid.*, Part 1, General, Foreward.

⁴¹ David Roberts, 'Proposing a Commonwealth Information Management Framework', *Archives and Manuscripts*, Vol. 25, No. 1, May 1997, pp. 81-82.

⁴² Professor McKemmish explored this theme in her presentation 'Improving Efficiency of Access to Information through Recordkeeping Best Practice' at an IIR conference, *Electronic Document and Records Management*, on 4-5 February 1997.

⁴³ Australian Council of Archives, *Corporate Memory in the Electronic Age: Statement of a Common Position*, May 1996, pp. 5-6.

⁴⁴ Information Management Steering Committee, *Architecture for Access to*

Government Information: Report of the IMSC Technical Group, Part B - Main Report, July 1996.

<http://www.adfa.oz.au/DOD/imsc/imscgtg/imscgtg1b.htm>

⁴⁵ W. Cathro, 'Metadata: An Overview', *Standards Australia Seminar: Matching Discovery and Recovery*, August 1997.

<http://www.nla.gov.au/nla/staffpaper/cathro3.html>

⁴⁶ Information Management Steering Committee, *Management of Government Information as a National Strategic Resource: Report of the Information Management Steering Committee on Information Management in the Commonwealth Government*, Office of Government Information Technology, August 1997. <http://www.ogit.gov.au/committees/imsc/chapter6.html>

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TRIM TopDrawer is unique to each user of TRIM. TopDrawer manages:

- Documents being prepared for eventual cataloguing in TRIM.
 - Documents booked out from TRIM for editing that will be returned to TRIM.
 - Documents stored in TopDrawer for any other purpose, eg on-going working documents.
- TopDrawer becomes the base of operation for any desktop activity.

Why Use TopDrawer?

Below are some of the reasons why the innovations of TRIM TopDrawer reduce the TCO (Total Cost of Ownership) of your hardware and software investments:

- TRIM TopDrawer utilises a common interface between all desktop applications and the electronic recordkeeping system.
- It is easy to use – 'push a button'.
- It is easy to install and easy to administer.
- It is very light on system resources.
- It doesn't require an expensive connection to a database to be used.
- Is independent to network communication failure.

How Does TopDrawer Work?

TopDrawer can store any type of document or disk file. Draft and booked out documents within the TopDrawer are stored in a separate and secure holding area for each user. When a document is booked into TRIM it is removed from the holding area and placed into the main document store. The main store normally exists on a network file server, FTP server or 3rd party object store (eg IBM's VisualInfo, CVSI's Optegra, etc.).

TRIM TopDrawer uses the TRIM API (Application Program Interface) to integrate any desktop application with TRIM. This means that TRIM TopDrawer operates in a non-invasive manner within any desktop application.

Launching TopDrawer

TopDrawer replaces your desktop applications File Open and File Save menu options. When File Open is

selected, you immediately see a list of documents in your 'holding area', your TopDrawer (TopDrawer can also be launched as a stand-alone application).

What TopDrawer Looks Like

The interface of TopDrawer is very practical. It lists for you:

- the file extension of the document (so that you know what application was used to create the document).
- the current status of the file, eg whether it has been booked out of TRIM or whether it is yet to be booked into TRIM, etc.
- the document title (which can become the record title if it is later placed in TRIM).

The various buttons on the TopDrawer dialog allow you to:

- automatically OPEN the application relevant to the highlighted document, eg Microsoft Excel.
- REMOVE a document from the working list.
- FIND a document from within TRIM using over 50 search criteria that many be combined using boolean operators.
- SORT the working documents in the order that suits you.
- the LOCAL button allows you to access your local files and drives directly.
- the BOOK OUT, BOOK IN and DOCK buttons allow you to connect automatically with TRIM to perform the once drawn out and arduous tasks of corporate recordkeeping directly from your desktop, simply and efficiently.

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As many records today are created by PC software, it has become more efficient to store or 'file' these records electronically at the creation stage. TRIM TopDrawer is a powerful and easy-to-use management tool that assists users with the direct lodgement of records and also accommodates the remote PC user.

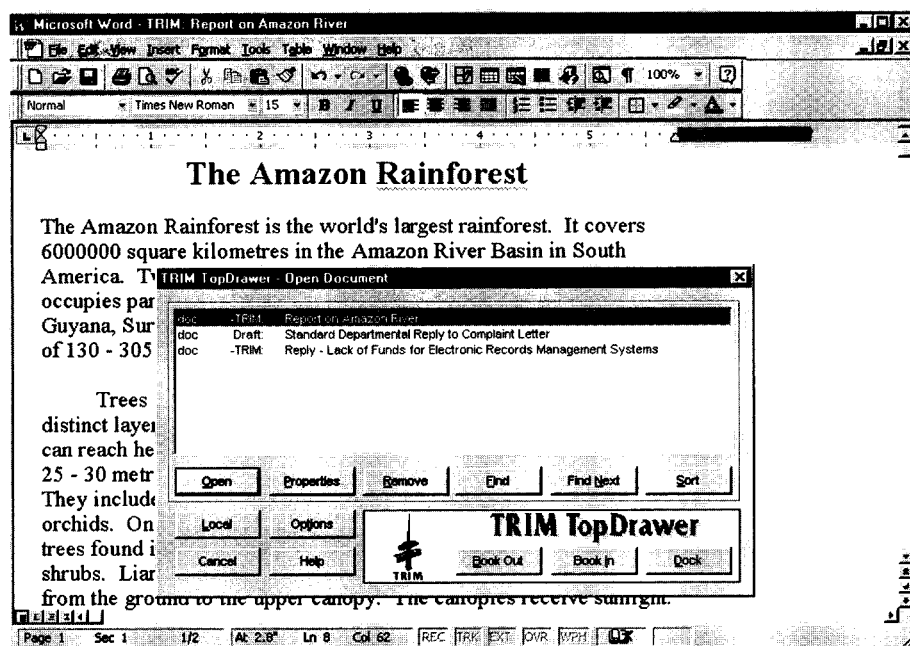
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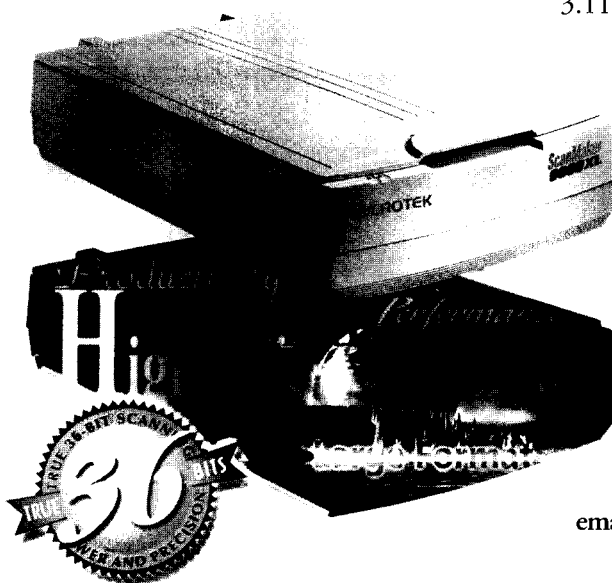
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Case Study CompuTechnics

CompuTechnics Delivers Documents and Drawings Faster for Clyde Engineering

Designing and manufacturing new railway vehicles is a complex task requiring thousands of drawing plans that must be precise in terms of design accuracy and compliance with industry standards.

For Clyde Engineering, one of Australia's leading rail vehicle manufacturers, the management of rail vehicle production is further complicated by the need to quickly and efficiently transfer drawing plans between its Sydney headquarters and regional and interstate manufacturing operations.

To address its complex document management and transfer requirements, Clyde Engineering has implemented CompuTechnics' Objective Enterprise Document Management Solution.

According to Clyde Engineering, Objective has already played a pivotal role in the management of Clyde Engineering's major contract to design and produce 30 locomotives for WestRail in Western Australia.

Since implementing Objective, Clyde Engineering has realised substantial benefits through its ability to electronically deliver vehicle drawing plans to plants in Melbourne, Perth and Bathurst, rather than waiting around for days to receive hard copy drawings by mail.

"Objective has allowed us to make released drawings available almost immediately over our network," said

Clyde Engineering's Quality and Information Technology Executive Manager, Bob Cantwell. "This has eliminated the queues for the reproduction and dispatch of the drawings which often led to delays of up to a week."

"Now the drawings can be forwarded quickly to our manufacturing plants enabling them to purchase the necessary supplies and start the job of manufacturing. A drawing is now available in Perth within a few hours of its release in Sydney, compared to the four hours to five days it once took."

Objective has also enabled the installation of a smaller and safer drawing reproduction system.

"We have replaced our old reproduction process which has cut costs and eliminated the health and safety hazard it presented due to its use of ammonia based technology."

Also eliminated by the implementation of Objective is the need to maintain libraries of drawing prints in each plant.

"All current and past drawings can now be easily accessed on the network. Objective has eliminated the confusion relating to how current the drawing is, as well as the need to file or keep track of each drawing," said Mr Cantwell. "In addition the database is backed up every day reducing the risk of disaster."

Mr Cantwell said Objective was cost justified on the basis of a 1.8 year payback period.

"Our financial rules are such that investments should return funds within three years through recurring savings. Objective is well within the scale of cost justification," he said.

Rail vehicle designers at Clyde Engineering use high powered PCs which are connected by a wide area network to the plants enabling electronic data transfer. CompuTechnics enhanced this solution by writing an interface with the image display product, Slick!

By writing an interface between Objective and Slick! CompuTechnics delivered Clyde Engineering a powerful and cost effective solution to transfer and display images.

Slick! is a low cost image viewer which allows drawings to be viewed on a screen with zoom capabilities.

"CAD software is complex software which requires a skill set to be able to use it. Slick! on the other hand is Windows based software which is easy to use," he commented.

Objective retrieves drawings from the database and launches Slick! which displays the drawing. Drawings on the database are compressed, taking up less space and reducing the transmission time to remote PCs.

Using Slick!, drawings can be enlarged to enable the small detail of a plan to be viewed more closely.

Objective itself allows draftsmen and production engineers to make notations on the design without changing the original drawing. These notations and the image can be electronically transferred back and forth between the plant and engineers enabling queries to be answered about any aspect of the design.

Mr Cantwell explained: "The plant can make a query by using an electronic notion on a plan, which is mailed back to the engineer or chief draftsman for a response."

"CompuTechnics customised Objective so that any notations are superimposed on the drawing. Previously, to sort out a design query might have taken three or four days using fax or the overnight mailbag."

"As people become more familiar with this form of electronic communication, plant and headquarters personnel interface on a much more regular basis - producing a better final product."

When considering its options in relation to information management and electronic data distribution, Clyde Engineering selected CompuTechnics Objective solution not only because of its capabilities, but also because CompuTechnics is an Australian organisation.

"Keeping in mind our future technology and electronic data distribution requirements, we felt very comfortable with CompuTechnics because it is a local company," said Mr Cantwell. "The other products we looked at were imported. This meant we would be talking to a distributor who would then have to talk to the principal and that can become very tedious."

CompuTechnics Background Information

Founded in 1987, CompuTechnics is a leading software development and systems integration company specialising in information management, workflow and imaging solutions. CompuTechnics is based in Sydney, Australia with offices in Melbourne and Canberra.

CompuTechnics Objective customers include Transfield, BHP Information Technology, Royal Australian Navy, Public Transport Corporation of Victoria, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Commission, Honeywell, P&O Ports, Clyde Engineering and Northparkes Mine.

With over 20% of staff focused on R&D and product improvement, CompuTechnics continuously improves its information management solutions, maintaining its position as a world class information management solution.

CompuTechnics' flagship product is Objective. Built from the ground up in Australia, Objective provides one solution to the three challenges of information management; electronic document management, physical records and workflow.

Objective securely stores and manages information within a user friendly information management system. Using Objective, users can organise, route, track and share all corporate information quickly and efficiently.

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Branch Reports

SA Branch

In 1997 the SA Branch of the RMAA approved the formation of the SA State Government Chapter, the first State Government focused Chapter in Australia.

In addition to the normal goals of the RMAA, the Chapter has the following objectives:

- to discuss and provide feedback on SA Government records management issues and problems;
- to provide advice on SA Government records management user requirements and development of records management policies, procedures, systems and tools;
- to identify opportunities for improving SA Government records management practices;
- to provide advice on SA Government records management training, documentation and ongoing support needs;
- to act as a common voice for future SA Government records management policy, practice and systems directions;
- to provide advice and develop recommendations on future SA Government records management strategies and directions;
- to ensure that records management contacts in SA Government agencies are represented and kept informed of records management issues, problems and solutions discussed by the Council;
- to liaise with relevant parties on SA Government records management matters.

Activities and Events

The Chapter spent its first few months of existence preparing terms of reference on similar administrative tasks. However, we have been working on several issues of importance to those working in records and information management in the SA Government:

November 1997 – March 1998: The Chapter has formed a Reference Group to assist State Records with the review of the State Government General Disposal Schedule (GDS). The Reference Group's first meeting with State Records was held on the 8th December. We discussed a variety of options for the review of the GDS with a view to enabling easier linking to Keyword AAA, easier use of the automatic sentencing capabilities of records management software and broadening the scope of the GDS to

include categories of records which are not present in the current version.

March 11 1998: The Chapter's first official seminar will focus on providing information about the formation and objectives of the Chapter and asking for feedback from members about the nature and priority of issues to be addressed by the Chapter. In addition we will have speakers addressing the following topics:

- The Records Management Policy and Procedures Manual (template currently being developed by the chapter)
- *The State Records Act 1997* focusing on the implications for agencies.

The Whole-of-Government Mandate

The South Australian Government has mandated RecFind records management software for use by all government agencies. In general, this chapter deals with broader issues than those relating specifically to the use of RecFind. There is, however, a group established to deal with RecFind issues. The SA RecFind User Group can be contacted via the gmb website at, <http://www.gmb.com.au> or by contacting the Chair of the SA RecFind User Group organising committee, Ms Jelena Comelli, on phone (08) 8343 2900.

Chapter Council

The 1997/98 Chapter Office Bearers are:

President	Bernadette Bean	Ph (08) 8343 2036 Fax (08) 8343 2768
D. President	Liza Reinberger	Ph (08) 8226 7278 Fax (08) 8226 7296
Secretary	Steve Childs	Ph (08) 8226 3152 Fax (08) 8226 3448
Treasurer	Greg Hart	Ph (08) 8343 2305 Fax (08) 8343 2768

An additional nine people serve on the Chapter Council.

The Chapter Council welcomes feedback from members, especially regarding issues you think the Council ought to address. Please contact us at the above numbers or at GPO Box 696, Adelaide, 5000.

Bernadette Bean
President SA State Government Chapter

WA Branch

Apres Convention

Committee members have now recovered from the gruelling preparation which extended over the last few years. Much of the activity in the West in the past few months since the National Convention has been behind the scenes, with Councillors getting back to the basics of their 'real' job and their families. Yes! Contrary to popular opinion, there is life after a conference!

Education Committee

Gail Murphy is the new Chair of the Education Committee. Members new to the Committee are Professor Ross Harvey from Curtin University, Graeme Merton from the Department of Minerals and Energy, Andrea Vinicullo from TAFE, Gaynor Deal, and Carol Fletcher. Focus in the new year will be on mentoring and the development of a chapter or special interest group for those who work in private enterprise. Another technology expo is also planned to build on the great success of the last one.

Course Recognition

Outcomes of the pilot course recognition process are not yet available, but these are expected in the very near future.

New Public Records Legislation

The new Public Records Legislation was not tabled in the Spring Session of Parliament as previously indicated. A small delegation of committee members have been visiting with politicians in an effort to determine their views on the issues of the public record, record keeping, accountability and the new legislation.

Membership Upgrade

Congratulations to Trevor Yardley of TiWest on his upgrade to Associate membership.

RMAA Prize

The Branch presents an award at the annual Curtin University, Department of Information Studies' Prize giving. The award is for the best piece of written work by a records management student. The 1997 award was made to Loreen Shepherd. Loreen was presented with her award by the Branch President Ken Ridley at The Curtin Club.

Christmas Function

A most enjoyable end-of-year social function for members was held at the South Perth Cricket Club. A small, but enthusiastic group celebrated the end of another successful year with good food and good company. The WA Branch wishes all members a safe and happy holiday season and we hope to see you back again in 1998 full of enthusiasm for the challenges ahead.

Margaret Pember

ARMA

Branch Member Council

Branch Reports

ACT Branch

The ACT Branch has been busy over the past few months and has provided three seminars for the membership.

In October, we held a seminar featuring Jim Stokes from the Law Reform Commission who spoke on the Archives Act Review.

In November, we held a joint seminar with Australian Archives on Keyword AAA and its use by Commonwealth Agencies. Janet Knight from the Records Management Office of NSW gave a presentation on the philosophy, development and review Keyword AAA.

In December, we held our end of year Christmas function which was kindly sponsored by Tower Software and featured a demonstration of TRIM Redback for the Net. Brand Hoff, Managing Director demonstrated the latest

TRIM technologies for accessing records through the Intranet/Internet.

The ACT Branch plans to hold a two day conference on "OUTSOURCING" in March 1998 and planning is already underway. We will be advertising the conference through Branch newsletters so keep an eye out for more information.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all Branch council members for their tireless contributions to Branch activities over the past year and to wish you all a very prosperous 1998.

Julie Lenson ARMA
Act Branch President

NT Branch

Prior to writing this report, the most recent Branch event has been the Christmas Party which was held at the Darwin Sailing Club. Over forty members attended and a great night was had by all. Branch Council resolved that the event was so successful because the profile of records management is definitely rising in the Territory, but also because we provided a booze bus!

Council has been particularly encouraged during 1997 with the support for training sessions, seminars and Branch events being at the highest level in our eleven year history. We will be endeavouring to provide a series of training sessions in 1998 to cater for the evident needs of our members.

The 1999 national convention of the Association is scheduled to be held in Darwin 29 August – 1 September

at the Beaufort Hotel and the Darwin Performing Arts Centre. The organising committee has now been appointed: Ray Holswich is to be the Convenor and will also be responsible for sponsorship; Barry Garside and Gloria Corliss are to co-ordinate the speakers program; Pauline Hollier is to be Treasurer; Merci Betts will co-ordinate social events and publicity; and Greg Coleman will co-ordinate the trade exhibition. The process of selecting a convention secretariat company will be concluded by the time this edition goes to print.

Greg Coleman ARMA
Branch President

B O O K

Business Resumption Planning:

A Records Management – Knowledge Enhancement Guide

By Peter W. McDonald ED FRMA

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Records are evidence of business. The business may be conducted by a large or small organisation, government or private, profit or non-profit. In any context, some of these records are critical to the ongoing operation of the organisation, due to the uniqueness, value and use of the information they contain.

Regardless of an organisation's size, context or location, these business critical records must be identified, protected, backed up and made available for use, following a disaster. These are the essential components of a Disaster Recovery Plan, not just the "recovery" aspects.

This Guide provides the steps to enable the full process of records identification, protection and recovery. The document is an easy to read, comprehensive and practical guide to the key steps of risk reduction, readiness, reaction and recovery - as identified by the section titles.

Why wait until the disaster hits before you worry about how to

reconstruct your payroll liability, or to assess your contractual obligations? In terms of disaster, the virus in the customer information system could be as equally debilitating for an organisation as the engineering drawings falling off the back of a truck.

This Guide places considerable emphasis on preparedness, risk analysis, risk minimisation, prevention and planning. These simple steps can reduce or even eliminate the need for major records restoration or reconstruction action after a disaster strikes.

Whether or not the organisation has a Records Manager, the Guide provides sufficient detailed instruction to enable the organisation to develop its own tailored Disaster Recovery Plan and Vital Records Plan for the records of the business. This can be coordinated by any senior administrator. Do not rely on specialists to define a program, but certainly use them where available, and where necessary during the Plan activation phases. The key message is prevention and risk reduction through best practice record keeping and protection.

If the organisation faces the situation of a full disaster, then the knowledge of, and access to expert sources of assistance are critical. Again this Guide outlines the nature of those resources required for dealing with the problem and recovery action. A resource bank for a multitude of services and products is required for these steps and also for that frequently forgotten "preparedness" phase. The Business Resumption Planning: Records Management Knowledge Enhancement Guide is the first of those resources to have at your fingertips.

**Judith Ellis, BA(Hons), MA,
MRMA, AIMM, MAICD
Managing Director
Archival Systems**

Business Resumption Planning

By Peter W. McDonald ED FRMA

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Education Report

Records and Archives Competency Standards - A World First

Friday, 12 December 1997, saw the National launch of the Records and Archives Competency Standards.

The launch was officially opened by Mr John Burge, Chairman of the National Finance ITAB (formerly the FAITAB) and the guest speaker was Dr John Patterson AO, Secretary of the Victorian Department of Infrastructure.

After what appeared to be an eternity, close on four years of planning, consultation with the appropriate authorities and regular meetings (sometimes heated) everything seemed to come to a halt at the launch, but not so!

During a meeting of the National Steering Committee prior to the launch, it was formally agreed to pursue work associated with the development of national training packages early in 1998 to supplement the existing competency standards and dialogue has already commenced with the appropriate authorities.

For some, the development of competency standards have been seen as a contentious issue, for what particular reason I'm not really sure. However, as competency based training is accepted and indeed being endorsed by most industries, I believe that is all the more reason why the RMAA and our colleagues from ASA, ACA, HIMAA and IIM should be partners in the further review of the standards and the development and introduction of training packages during 1998/99.

When we first commenced the exchange of dialogue regarding the development of the competency standards during the latter part of 1994, the enormity of the exercise certainly wasn't realised by many.

The industry contribution to the project was enormous both in personal unpaid time and Associations financial contributions as well. I have previously mentioned through the pages of the INFORMAA Quarterly that without that contribution the development of competency standards would not have happened.

There are many other facts, figures and statistics that are indicative of the overall industry contribution as well, far too many for me to mention. However, I would like to publicly acknowledge those wonderful people from all

States and Territories who contributed to and participated in the focus group meetings as well as the editing of the voluminous draft standards. A very BIG thank you.

One very important aspect of the like industry associations participation in the project was that we had to work together as a cohesive group and we did. Added to that some very close alliances and friendships were formed and I am confident they will be maintained for a long time to come.

To the following members of the National Records Competency Standards Steering Committee, namely:

Peter Smith RMAA
Neil Granland RMAA
Julie Lenson RMAA
Dennis Wheeler RMAA
Sue McKemmish ASA
Barbara Reed ASA
Peter Crush ACA
Ann Picot ACA
Michael Piggott ACA
Michael Jessop AIIM
Mary Duggan AIIM
Anne Irwin HIMAA
Mary Ellen Vidgen HIMAA
Caroline Pryor ASU
Colleen Atkinson CPSU
Jan Wright FSU
Loretta Winstanley NFITAB
Lesley Tweedly NFITAB
Cedric McIntyre NFITAB and
Susan Henry Project Officer

I extend to you all my gratitude and thanks for a wonderful effort.

Ray Holswich ARMA
Chair, NRCSSC

Footnote: Copies of the Competency Standards are available from:

**The National Finance Industry Training Advisory
Body**
Level 6, 11 Queens Road
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For more information, contact:

Maureen Henninger

Tel: 02 9385-3589 Fax: 02 9385-3430

Email: M.Henninger@unsw.edu.au

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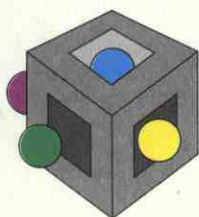
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