

# INFORMAA QUARTERLY

VOLUME ELEVEN NUMBER 3 AUGUST 1995  
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# INFORMAA QUARTERLY

VOLUME ELEVEN NUMBER 3 AUGUST 1995

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Submissions may be also 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.

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# INFORMAA QUARTERLY

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# Federal President's Report

By the time this Report is read it will be nearly time for our National Convention in Melbourne. The planning for this event has gradually turned into a well integrated and coordinated piece of work. As always, there are a number of individuals who freely give of their time to attend meetings, plan activities and generally assist with a myriad of tasks which are too numerous to mention.

Having recently viewed the Melbourne preparations first hand with our Federal Executive, I am convinced that the Association as always, can produce individuals who are able to demonstrate a firm commitment to the ideals of the Association. I would therefore like to thank on behalf of the Federal Executive, the many behind the scenes workers for their time and commitment. Once again, it is through their efforts, that our National Conventions continue to thrive.

In June 1995, the Federal Executive met for the last time prior to the National Convention, to discuss the numerous items of business which affect the policy making and future direction of the Association. Some of the many items we looked at were:

- Review of the Memorandum of Articles.
- Review of the Regulations.
- Policy matters affecting the role of the Public Officer.
- Budget and Accounting procedures

- Review of the Australian Standards for Records Management.

Of significant interest are the last two items. Firstly, the Association has managed to introduce reforms which have enabled us to systematically coordinate the financial management of the Association. Our Federal Treasurer, Alan Kavanagh has worked tirelessly to ensure that improved procedures are introduced. This will permit all States to effectively manage their finances and improve the quality of the Federal management of funds, through the streamlining of procedures and

implementation of sound business practices.

Secondly, the Federal Executive spent a considerable period of time examining the content of the draft Australian Standards for Records Management. The formulation of a National Standard is obviously necessary.

However, for it to be truly representative of the needs of the Association, the Federal Executive considered that all Branch Councils and any other interested parties, were given the opportunity to properly appraise the document.

As a leading authority on records management the Association must ensure that we can and will, stand up for the rights of all members. One way of facilitating this process has been to ensure that the Standards are properly representative of the various disciplines in records management.

By the time this article is printed, all Branches will have the opportunity

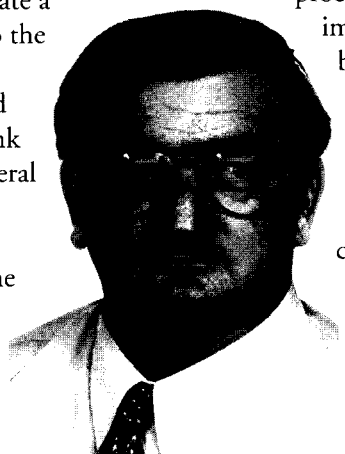
to submit their views through our Federal Secretary, to Standards Australia. It is expected that our collective comments will be looked at in the spirit in which they were written and that as a result, the Association will have had an impact on the final document.

The year has been one of reform. Consequently, a number of key issues have been dealt with by Federal Council, which will impact on future policies and procedures. It is anticipated that our reforms will resolve a number of long standing anomalies, particularly in relation to issues of accountability, goal setting and strategic direction.

So where do we go to next? I believe the Association now has the perfect opportunity for effectively exploiting the reforms that have taken place since September 1994. Because we possess the necessary skills and experience from within the Association, we should be able to provide the necessary leadership and guidance in the profession of Records Management. This means that we should be encouraging the pursuit of tertiary qualifications, developing and implementing standards of best practice and ensuring that we can raise the consciousness of members through the Informaa Quarterly, seminars and conventions.

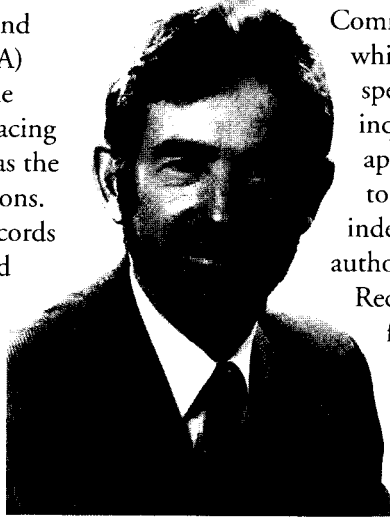
Lastly, as the outgoing Federal President I would like to thank all Federal Directors for their support throughout the year. I believe that the current Directors have been responsible for the development of a sound range of initiatives and policies which the incoming Federal Council can use to good effect in 1995/1996.

**Denis Comber ARMA**  
**Federal President**



# Editorial

In an exclusive interview for the Journal: Managing Office Technology held in September 1994, Tyrone G Butler, the president of the Association of Records Managers and Administrators (USA) noted that one of the greatest challenges facing records managers was the issue of public relations. Butler, a certified records manager (CRM) and certified archivist (CA) and consultant, expressed concern that the public knew little about records managers and the important role they played in society. He was of the opinion that his Association needed to market its capabilities more effectively not only to government and corporations but also to small business and others, indeed anywhere records are kept as evidence of business and societal activity.



Identical challenges apply in the Australian context. I recently had a personal experience of the difficulties involved in discussions with the Western Australian Commission on Government which has as one of its specified matters of inquiry: the terms appropriate for legislation to establish a separate and independent archives authority for the state.

Records abound in every facet of our society, yet there is little public awareness about their proper creation, management and disposal. The draft Australian standard referred to by the federal president in his report will certainly add a great deal of credibility to our activities but more needs to be done. At the next federal council meeting of the RMAA to be held in Melbourne, in September 1995, issues of marketing and public relations will be discussed and a strategic plan formulated.

In this edition we feature a paper from the Playing for Keeps Conference held last year in Canberra. John McDonald from the National Archives of Canada clearly highlights his concern that managing records in the modern office is not just an archives issue nor is it restricted to Canada. We have included the second parts of Information Collection, Data matching and Privacy; and Ethics and the records manager which follow on from previous editions.

Finally, Susan Myburgh from the University of South Australia has provided a brief article on LISTSERV groups on the Internet. With the literal explosion of this avenue of communication at work and in the wider community we hope to feature similar articles in forthcoming issues - perhaps cyberspace and the World Wide Web may help the RMAA reach a wider audience!

**Ken Ridley ARMA**  
Chair Informaa Quarterly  
Editorial Committee

## Redefining Records Management

Redefining Records Management is the theme of this years National Convention. It will focus on the changing environments in which we as practitioners work.

In the last few years, Information practitioners have seen a change in the direction of records management. More and more we are seeing a shift away from the sole management of paper based records towards the

management of the information content regardless of format.

Some of the topics which will be covered will include: The Changing Nature Of The Australian Organisation, Organisational Accountability, Standards and Implications, Diversification of Records Management, Records as Part of a Re-engineered World, Remote Computing, Modern Office Appraisal & Disposal, Managing

Change.

Recent changes in the industry such as the Federal Evidence Act, Quality Assurance Standards, Organisational re-engineering, changes in legislation and advances in technologies force us to redefine our own concepts of records management. This Convention will provide food for thought in the development of new theories and practices, making it one not to be missed.



Traditionally Conventions provide the opportunity for learning via two avenues, formal papers, and social interaction, and this year is no exception. A plethora of social activities and surprises have been incorporated in this years program. Not only do the social activities provide fun and relaxation, they are also an essential element in the process of building your personal networks and contacts within the industry. More than one of us has learnt a great deal from our industry colleagues in this relaxed social atmosphere. Many believe that the social interaction is as equally important as the formal papers and workshops in the learning process.

The Victorian Branch has taken a unique approach to this years Trade Exhibition. The Exhibition boasts a range of new products and suppliers never before seen at a Records Management Convention. These

coupled with our traditional supporters guarantees a wide array of products and services not to be missed.

For the first time the Trade Exhibition will be open to general business in Melbourne. This is hoped to have a two fold effect, one of which is to increase exposure of the Association, the other is to provide our audience with a more balanced view of products and services available to Organisations in terms of information management solutions.

The Victorian Branch takes this opportunity to invite all members to Melbourne for this event in September at the world class, World Congress Centre. Further details are contained in the brochure inserted in this issue of Informaa Quarterly.

**Rosemary Kaczynski MRMA**  
Co-Convenor  
1995 National Convention

## INFORMAA Quarterly CALL FOR PAPERS

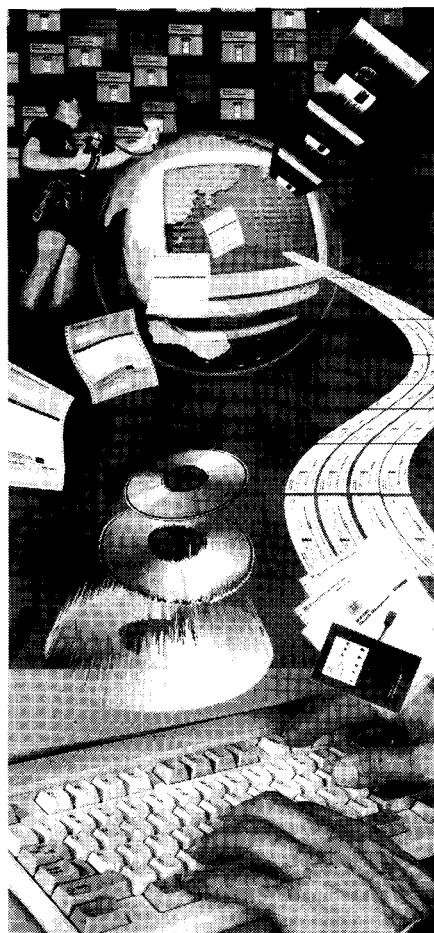
Readers are invited to submit articles for publication. They may be in the form of case studies, conference papers, book reviews, surveys or any report which may be of national interest.

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.

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Closing dates for material:  
NOV 1995 Edition 24/09/95



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# Electronic Records: Terra incognita in the Modern Office?

The age of the 'information superhighway' has created great opportunities in communications and learning, electronically linking people around the globe and letting them access data banks anywhere in the world from their own homes or offices. Never before in human history has there been so much information so readily available.

In most spheres of government and business, professionals are now regularly creating their own electronic records, and are increasingly dependent on accessing those records. This vast array of electronic information, however, has created unique challenges for those who have to create viable, permanent and accessible records and archives.

Information is the basis of government accountability, and in many countries demands are increasing for governments to be accountable and the information they hold, accessible. If electronic records management problems are not addressed adequately, valuable information will be lost in its own vast quantity, and government actions, decisions and transactions could fall beyond the scope of public scrutiny.

For three days in November 1994, professionals from all over the world converged on Canberra to grapple with the problems associated with managing electronic records, to assess the current situation and chart

the course ahead. It was the first international conference held in Australia on the management of electronic records.

The most fundamental issue the conference raised was that electronic records are here now - they are not a far distant possibility to be deferred because their implications are distasteful to the traditionalist. For example, in the USA the Clinton administration is pressuring federal

agencies to transfer all their business to electronic commerce. Several speakers at the conference raised the issue of cultural lag within organisations, or how thinking is still behind technological development, but the

large attendance at the conference is an indication that many people are already facing records issues and problems on the 'electronic interface'.

Steve Stuckey, the Assistant Director-General of Records Standards and Access at the Australian Archives, argued that archivists need to make rigorous disposal decisions with electronic records and not to keep vast quantities of records in the first place.

'Admittedly,' he said, 'there are certain types of records where retention is a much more attractive prospect because of the electronic environment. But how much of this is the stuff of a government archives and how much might be retained because it can be retained? We need to be careful that we do not overwhelm our future researchers by

an outburst of unabashed collecting.

'A further issue that is causing the Australian Archives to rethink some of our principles is the responsibility of advising what records should actually be created by agencies of government. This is central to our role as the protectors of the long-term government corporate memory, and beyond the shorter-term needs of the agency that created the record. Some archival traditionalist see this as threatening, and opening us up to the criticism of 'making history'. If we are conscious, however, of our primary role as an archives for the national government and ensuring that its rights and obligations and those of the people are protected, then we need to be ready to argue against this criticism.'

Margaret Hedstrom, Director of the Center for Electronic Records at the New York State Archives and Records Administration, suggested that archivists have a broad role to help guide society toward the 'big picture' of what records must be kept.

'And we have done so at the grave expense of not being sure that all of the records that society needs will be kept. Just some examples: the location of nuclear waste sites, and records that document the rights and obligations of citizens. Think about preserving DNA maps that will contain in them for generations to come the clues to genetic diseases.

'To deliver, we have to shift our mentality from paper-defined issues to a new electronic recordkeeping culture. So what would the shift really involve? First, it is a recognition and an acceptance that

THE PLAYING  
FOR KEEPS  
CONFERENCE  
CANBERRA, AUSTRALIA

in more and more settings records are electronic and paper is ephemeral. We have to recognise that it will be too expensive to keep paper records, even if it were possible. And because of that alone, organisations will stop doing it. We have to look at electronic records not as a problem, but as an opportunity to do what we have been trying to do in the paper world much more effectively. And in doing this we have to rediscover some basic principles. We need to

*'Above all, the public needs to see the evidence of its past. If not, legal security, equality before the law, and eventually democracy, will be in severe danger.'*

*Hans Hofman,  
Conference delegate.*

focus on the value of functions, not just records; the relationship of records to transactions in business processes; and the critical role that archives play in ensuring both continuity and accountability.'

Accountability was an issue addressed by many speakers. Lack of accountability can raise questions of corruption or mismanagement. The rights of individuals need protection and breaches of rights need to be justly and equitably examined in accordance with the law. Hans Hofman, Director of the Electronic Records Project at the General State Archives of The Netherlands, stressed the crucial

need for societies to have evidence of their past readily available.

'If not,' he argued, 'legal security, equality before the law, and eventually democracy, will be in severe danger. Implementation of a new infrastructure for archives demands much more time and effort, and will be achieved only one step at a time.'

'If archivists do not succeed in this mission, they will lose their jobs, or merely become keepers of old paper. Information technology brings a major challenge, but also the danger of loss of valuable information that gives evidence about government actions, decisions and transactions. If the archives (together with the responsible authorities in government agencies) fail to solve it, then society will return to the dark ages.'

'There is much to do to arrive at the desired destination. Politicians have to be convinced; resources, knowledge and expertise have to be acquired, archivists have to be made aware of the impact of information technology on their jobs and need to be educated.'

'The archivist stand on the threshold of a new world. The landscape is new and unknown. It looks like a jungle, but it could turn out to be a desert. Furthermore, what is beyond the horizon of time is terra incognita. The archivist has become an explorer instead of the owner of the same hotel for many years.'

Among the international speakers were:

- Margaret Hedstrom, Director, Center for Electronic Records, New York State Archives and Records Administration, USA;
- Hans Hofman, Director, Electronic Records Project, General State Archives, The Netherlands;

- David Bearman, President, Archives and Museum Informatics, USA;
- John McDonald, Director-General, Government Records Branch, National Archives of Canada; and
- Kenneth Thibodeau, Director, Center for Electronic Records, National Archives and Records Administration, USA.

The Australian context was placed firmly on the agenda with speakers such as Steve Stuckey and Stephen Ellis from the Australian Archives and Maggie Jones from the Council of Library and Information Services.

The Playing for Keeps Conference Proceedings are available from Public Programs, The Australian Archives, PO Box 34, Dickson, ACT. Cost is \$24.95 including postage.



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# Managing Electronic Records in the Modern Office

*John McDonald  
Director General  
Government Records Branch  
National Archives of Canada*

*While with the National Archives John has served in a number of capacities related to the archival management of electronic records. During this time he also served on the Treasury Board Task Force responsible for the implementation of the Access to Information and Privacy legislation. Recently he assumed responsibility for a program that assists institutions in the management of their records, regardless of their physical form. A particular area of interest is the management of information in office systems. He received a BA in History and Geography and an MA in Geography from Carleton University, Ottawa.*

## THE EXPERIENCE OF THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF CANADA<sup>1</sup>

Early Land settlement was carried out in a variety of ways in countries around the world. For some the process was very orderly. The government developed rules and regulations and managed the movement of people, the granting of land and the establishment of cities, towns and transportation networks. For others, the experience was a little more chaotic. The land was there, the opportunities were great, and the people simply moved in. In the absence of rules and regulations, people made up their own but only if they needed them and only if they suited their own purposes. The law

was nearly non-existent and individual freedom and autonomy reigned supreme.

In many ways the modern office is not unlike the wild frontier. Our organisations have provided us with horses and wagons (computers and software) and told us to charge off into the great unexplored plains (cyberspace) supposedly so that we can do our work more effectively. We can send e-mail messages to whomever we want regardless of their level in the organisation. We make no distinction between the substantive message and the 'lets do lunch' message - they all go through the same electronic pipe. We use our own sometimes bizarre approaches to describing and classifying our documents (e.g. this paper is called *austria.ppr* which to someone else might have referred to a recent document that I prepared on the Australian approach to permanent paper). And when our directories get too full we simply get rid of the stuff that we don't think we need any more (if we can ever remember what the old stuff was in the first place). And often we do all of this without remembering that in the hardcopy world we would have thought twice about having a memo prepared and forwarded without following some rules about who should review it, approve it, and so on. In the hardcopy experience, a file number would have been added, the 'yellow' copy would have been sent to file, another copy to the originator and still another to the chron file. In some cases a manual or even automated logging and tracking process would have been

used to guide the document to the appropriate officials.

Such corporately established rules of the road and mechanisms have yet to be established in the electronic world. The wild frontier is more the norm than the exception. In the modern office, it is the office worker, not the technical specialist who has been given the technologies. It is the office worker, not the organisation, who decides what will be created, transmitted and stored using the technologies. It is more often than not the office worker, not the organisation who makes up the rules (if at all). The individual rules supreme!

In recent years, however, the growing sophistication with which office workers are using the technologies coupled with the growing concern about keeping track of the 'stuff' generated and received in this environment, is beginning to spawn a number of questions. Is e-mail a record? If it is a record what should I be doing about it? Should what I am doing be documented? Are there any rules that I should be following concerning what should be kept and where it should be filed? Should I be printing everything to paper? What are my responsibilities? Who can I turn to for help? How can responsibilities for good documentation and record keeping be carried out in a way that does not become a burden or prevent me from getting my job done?

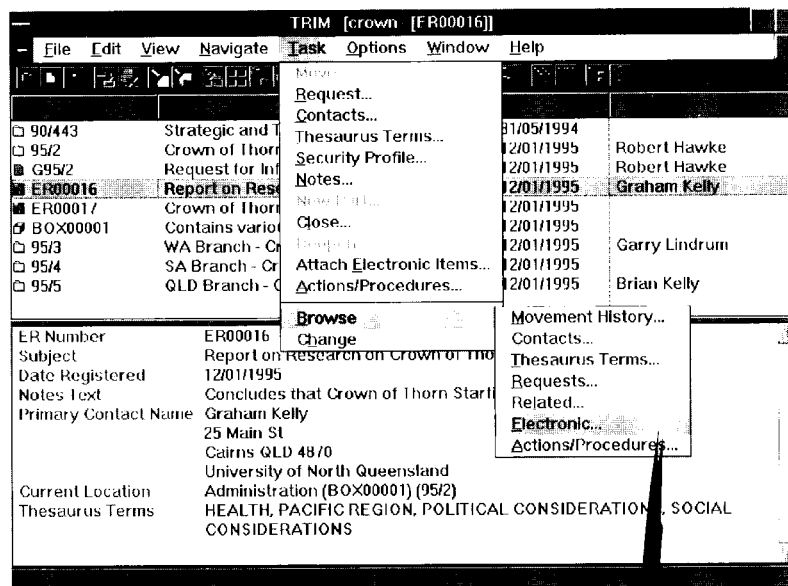
The purpose of this paper is to try to address these questions based on what we have learned from our own

experiences at the National Archives as informed by those in other organisations who are facing the same challenges. This is not just an archives issue. Nor is it restricted to Canada. The growing concern that organisations are in danger of suffering from corporate amnesia has generated a rapid increase in the number and kinds of projects that are attempting to deal with this issue. Examples include the excellent work of colleagues in the Netherlands, Australia, at the United Nations, the World Bank, the New York State Archives and Records Administration, the National Archives and Records Administration, and at the University of Pittsburgh where David Bearman and Richard Cox are leading an initiative to develop and test functional requirements for record keeping systems.

Our experience was based on a project called IMOSA, or Information Management and Office Systems Advancement.<sup>2</sup> This was the working title given to a National Archives' led partnership project that comprised representatives from the public, private and academic sectors, all of whom shared a common concern about the corporate management of information in the so-called 'automated office'. Its first objective was to permit the participants to learn. We needed to understand the impact of office technologies on the workplace. What were these technologies being used for? What were the impacts on record keeping? What opportunities did the technologies provide to enable institutions to keep records? Were existing records management tools and techniques applicable in this environment? The second objective was to develop functional requirements and management guidance that could be used by organisations to procure technical

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solutions for keeping both hard copy and electronic records generated in the office.

Both objectives were addressed through the testing of prototype software in the Government Records Branch of the National Archives where users were creating and exchanging electronic documents using the software (e.g. word processing, spreadsheet, e-mail, etc.) available on the local area network (LAN). The prototype application, which was located on a file server on the LAN, was available to users through a list of menu options. It permitted users to file, browse, search and retrieve documents while also providing the records manager with functions to control and manage both electronic and hard copy holdings. Much of the departmental automated subject classification system was downloaded to the file server to ensure that consistency could be maintained between the hard copy and electronic holdings. A document could not be altered or deleted once it had been filed. Version control, file management, security, retention and disposition standards and strategies, and even a space in the file profile for reflecting archival value (i.e. all documents in the designated file would be destined for the archives) were among the important features designed into the prototype.

The prototype application was assessed by a small user group that comprised project officers and managers from the site as well as records management staff. The results of the assessments together with work undertaken by other partners led to a host of products, including a final report and a draft set of functional requirements that are gradually being used by an increasing number of vendors of automated records management systems and text retrieval software.

Among the other products were; the results of a survey of those North American software products that were beginning to reflect the requirements; an excellent report by a researcher at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (one of the partners) who assessed a subsequent pilot site established at Revenue Canada; and a report on the role of thesaurus (by another partner, the University of Laval) which has since spawned a National Archives-led government-wide initiative to identify and adopt functional thesauri standards and develop the requirements for government information locator systems and services.

One of the most important products of IMOSA, however, was the understanding that we gained of the evolutionary path that we seem to be on with respect to our use of office technologies. In the years since the introduction of office networks we have seen a rapid evolution in the sophistication of the tools that we are using but a very slow evolution in the application of these tools to the business processes of the organisation. In many respects we are still in the wild frontier. We are still living in a world where creation, transmission, use and retention of electronic records is under the control of the individual user. In going out of our way to support the needs of individual users we seem to have neglected (or have yet to understand) the application of these technologies within the context of the business activities and processes of the organisation.

Our location in the early stages of the evolutionary curve of technology application has influenced the kinds of products that we are currently developing. One of these products is a very basic guideline<sup>3</sup> designed to help government institutions understand how to answer some of

the questions that I mentioned earlier: Is my e-mail, or any electronic communications for that matter, a record (probably!)? What am I supposed to do with it? Am I supposed to keep it all? and, Who can I turn to for help?

Based on the direction set by the IMOSA project, and in keeping with the stage we are at where the electronic world revolves around the individual user, we developed a guide to the management of information in user directories.<sup>4</sup> In order to promote consistency among users and thus set the stage for greater user acceptance of common filing systems in the future, the guide suggests that the classification scheme be based on the functions and activities of the user - a scheme that should (ideally) be already reflected in the function-activity based classification scheme used by the records management program. In addition to advising on establishing directory structures and naming conventions, the guide also suggests approaches for systematising retention and deletion.

In recognition that the use of information technologies in some organisations is evolving to the stage where they are being used to support 'work group' activities, we are in the process of developing and testing a guide on the management of group space.

Similar to the computer directory guide for individual users, this guide will help work groups structure their file directories, establish naming conventions, develop retention and offloading procedures and assess options concerning who should look after the group space and to what extent and under what circumstances it could be used to hold those records of the group that need to be retained for the corporate memory of the organisation. The guide will also present various



strategies concerning how users in the group can interact with the group space (e.g. filing and retrieving documents, etc.) in a manner that minimises burden while maximising its value to the group. A draft of the guide is being tested in sites that are already supporting 'group space' based on software such as Lotus Notes, PC Docs and Microsoft Office.

So where does that leave the functional requirements generated as a result of the IMOSA project? Recognising that we are still in the world of the utility (e.g. word processing, spreadsheet, e-mail) and yet recognising that users do not want to print onto paper those records that they believe should be in the corporate filing system, a number of organisations have expressed an interest in getting together to upgrade their existing automated records management applications to address the management of electronic records. Over the past few months we have been working with the Treasury Board's Office of Information Management, Systems and Technology (led by the Chief Informatics Officer, Andy Macdonald), to establish a management board and user group to review and confirm the requirements. Once endorsed, the requirements will be built into a shared procurement strategy that will result in the selection of the one or two automated records management systems that will be used by most government departments for the management of their electronic and hard copy records.

A management guide is also being developed to assist in the introduction of the systems and to facilitate their use by workers in the organisation. This management guide will be very important because in many instances users will be

required to electronically file their own documents, an activity that they may perceive to be as more of a burden than a benefit. Even the introduction of a 'cc to corporate files' option in e-mail will, for many, seem like an imposition. The guide will help organisations introduce such applications in a way that minimises the burden while trying to maximise the benefit.

This brings me to the dilemma that we are facing with respect to the solutions that we are developing today. The products that I have described may seem adequate in terms of where we are today, but from the perspective of those in the future, they will probably be seen as primitive and, from a record keeping perspective, totally inadequate. Why? Because the introduction of guides on the management of user directories, group space and even enterprise-wide automated records management systems are being done outside of the context of how people normally work. What we are doing is providing people with utilities, such as filing systems, to help them manage documents that are produced through the use of other utilities such as word processing and spreadsheet software. In the absence of automated business applications that automate entire work processes, and in the absence of rules and procedures that guide office workers in carrying out their responsibilities for keeping records in the context of these applications, all we can do is provide them with repositories in which they can file documents or 'records' that they feel best documents what they have done. The identification or selection of the 'record' and its storage somewhere is addressed as an after thought and not as a natural result of the transactions associated with the work activity. In the absence of defined and bounded applications, it becomes extremely difficult to make

the record keeping rules, practices and technologies transparent to the user - that is, buried on the other side of the screen.

This is why if we accept that we are clearly on a path that will carry us from the utility bound world of today to the business applications of tomorrow then it is essential, as we build current day interim solutions, that we not neglect the development of strategies (perhaps more relevant strategies) that will meet the requirements of tomorrow. On a positive note, I believe that the office systems technologies of the future will enable us, finally, to situate the issue of record keeping in its proper context - not as a separate application or function but as something that is interwoven into the normal conduct of the business functions and activities of a given organisation.

What will this future look like. Right now my screen is full of icons that represent the 'toolbox' of utilities (e.g. word processing, spreadsheet, e-mail, database, etc.) that I need to do my work. In the future, and as a program manager, I want a screen that contains icons that reflect my business. In my own environment at the National Archives, I would like the icons to be based on the Operational Plan Framework (or OPF) of my department, the National Archives. Every government department is required to have an OPF that describes its functions and activities. It is extremely important because it is used as the basis for the management of resources, reporting to parliament and performance measurement. An OPF is much more stable than an organisation chart because it is based on functions and activities that tend to remain constant over time. For instance, the OPF of the National Archives has been in place since 1990 and has survived and indeed



facilitated the reorganisations that we have experienced over the past few years.

All of the activities and sub-activities of the National Archives are related to its four functions: Services, Awareness and Assistance; Management of Government Information; Holdings Management, and; Administration. My own Division, which advises government departments on the application of standards and practices to the management of records, is responsible for nine activities that support three of these functions. All of the division's resources, its initiatives, everything that it does and for which I am accountable, are managed and reported on in accordance with the following activities; 'development' of standards and practices, 'advice', 'professional development', 'evaluation', 'program support-Canadian', 'program support-international', 'related operational' activities, 'planning' activities and 'administration'. These are the icons that I want on my screen.

An example might help to illustrate what I mean and how this is relevant directly to record keeping. When I click on 'development', for instance, I want to be provided with options that permit me to establish a project (e.g. on a guide on essential records), monitor a project, write a memo on the project, or organise a meeting about the project. But rather than have to develop a project proposal, or a project control sheet or even a memo from scratch, I would like to see the project proposal form already set up (through the development of style sheets and macros based on the use of the word processing or project management software) in a way that reflects the format and rules that my division has decided upon for developing project proposals. When I click on the routing list for my

proposal, rather than having to select from all of the names of the staff in the National Archives, I want to see the names of those people who normally receive 'development' project proposals. I also want to know, as the proposal is sent, that the record keeping rules that were designed into the applications for documenting and otherwise supporting the tasks associated with the management of development projects are respected. Above all, just as I recognise my accountability for finance and personnel, I would like to think that I was able to carry out my responsibility for applying the record keeping rules of the organisation in a manner that supported, directly, the accountability and business requirements of my program. Naturally, I would also like to think that I could count on a facilitator (the records manager?) to help me meet my responsibilities.

Similarly, if I need to send a draft of the annual report of the ICA Electronic Records Committee to the committee members, I would click on 'Program Support - International' and be presented with a suite of pre-designed and inter-connected utilities that would permit me to develop a covering letter, attach the report and send the package to the members (via the mail or internet) and to the people to whom I automatically carbon copy all Committee business. Again, all of the record keeping (tagging, storing, etc.) would happen automatically based on rules and criteria that were developed by the 'records manager', in consultation with myself and my managers within the context of the organisation's need to avoid corporate amnesia. There would be no 'filing' icon. The rules for defining and establishing how the content, context, and structure of

the records of the actions and transactions of my division's business activities are to be kept would have been set beforehand and designed into the applications -that is, behind the screen.

If I or any of my staff wanted to retrieve records then they could click on the 'information locator' icon which would serve as a corporate 'gopher' (again pre-designed) that would search for records, information, and data regardless of where they were located. The mechanics involved in enabling this to happen would be designed into the navigation utilities located behind the screen. The need for a central repository of electronic and even hard copy records would diminish with the increase in the sophistication of the tools that I could employ to access and retrieve not only records but any information that we needed to support our work. I would not care if I was dipping into the records office or the library nor would I want to. All I want to know is that I received or gained access to the information that I wanted and that it appeared before me in a way that was available, understandable and useable. Again I would like to think that I could count on a facilitator (the librarian?) to help me respond to my own access and retrieval needs, preferably by working with technical people and the records manager (i.e. the person who understands context) to develop and integrate the appropriate tools and place them behind the screen.

This is not a distant dream. It is beginning to happen now. And it is happening because vendors such as Microsoft, Lotus, Wordperfect, and others are recognising that their future depends on the extent to which their products are truly supportive of the work of organisations. We are already witnessing the integration of word



processing, database and spreadsheet utilities with e-mail and automated routing software. We are already witnessing the advent of work group computing where these integrated tools are being used to support the automation of work processes. While we may be living in a multi-media environment of microfilm, paper, etc., the defacto record of the business of our government will be electronic. In fact, even now, the term 'multi-media' is not being used to refer to paper or other physical carriers of information. It is being used to refer to various types of electronic information such as graphics, text, voice, and so on.

In the Canadian federal government, the Chief Informatics Officer has already announced that as much as possible government business will be done electronically.

He sees the innovative use of information technology and information by government

institutions as key enablers in the government's current efforts to down size and restructure itself, to establish a steering rather than rowing approach to the delivery of its programs, to automate streamlined and re-engineered work processes, to build closer relations with the private sector (through partnerships and joint ventures, for instance) as well as with other levels of government. Above all he sees the use of technology, together with the removal of bureaucratic barriers and red tape, as the enabler to help public servants do their work more effectively. <sup>5</sup> Although he knows that his vision of paperless business processes may not be achieved by the year 2000, he has put government institutions on notice that this is the direction that they must take.

The evolution that is taking place in both the automation of business processes and the significance of

electronic information generated or received by these processes is causing officials at all levels, including deputy ministers to recognise that they are facing a 'record keeping' issue - not because of the concern of archivists or of records managers but because they know it is an essential element in the effective application of technology to the automation of their work activities and processes. In line with this recognition, however, is the growing concern that the records manager is no longer positioned to provide the answers. If record keeping utilities are to move behind the screen and the office worker is to become a record keeper, then institutions will need 'renaissance' records managers who understand what a record is <sup>6</sup> know what it means to keep records, are able to set the rules for record keeping (on behalf of and with the approval of the organisation), and are facilitators that help users carry

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out their responsibilities for record keeping.

Finally, institutions will need records managers who can express record keeping requirements in the context of these terms and who can and do work with technical specialists to ensure that these requirements are reflected in the design of automated business applications.<sup>7</sup>

Unfortunately, many of the government's existing records managers lack the knowledge and abilities required to assume this role.

The library community faces the same challenge. If the vision of an information locator is to be realised then institutions will need 'renaissance' librarians who are skilled in information access and retrieval techniques, who understand the business activities of the institution and their associated information requirements, who know how to provide an active service designed to respond too and even anticipate the information requirements of clients within the context of their work, who make no distinction between unpublished and published (but understand the difference between record, information and data) and who can express information access and retrieval requirements and work with technical specialists and records managers to incorporate them into the design of systems including those that reach out into cyberspace. Again, and similar to their records management counterparts, many federal librarians lack the knowledge and abilities to assume this role.<sup>8</sup>

In order to address this issue from a record keeping perspective, we recently developed a document called 'Record Keeping in the Canadian Federal Government - A Vision Statement'<sup>9</sup> It provides a high level view of the kind of world that I described earlier, an overview of the implications that this world

holds for records management in the federal government, and proposals concerning the strategic direction that the government should take in addressing record keeping in the future but, most importantly, within a context that supports the need by users to access and retrieve information regardless of its form or location.

This document (i.e. setting direction for the future) together with the guides that I described earlier (i.e. providing solutions for today), are being reviewed extensively by officials across government including senior officials who are concerned about addressing short term issues within a strategic context.

In closing and by way of summary, I believe that it is important that as we develop solutions to the electronic records challenges faced by modern organisations, we understand the evolution that is occurring in the use of office systems technologies. Those solutions that revolve around the development of guidance on the management of personal and group space and the acquisition of automated records management systems that address the management of both electronic and hard copy records may be entirely appropriate given where we are on the evolutionary path that I described earlier.

At the same time, we need to develop strategies that lead to solutions designed for that point along the evolutionary path where we have turned utilities into business applications and where record keeping can be addressed not as a separate application but as an integral component of the applications themselves. Ultimately we need to recognise that this evolution will result in a transformation of the communities that will be responsible for making all of this happen. This is why we also need to recognise that the

'record keeping' issue is but one part of a broader 'information management' issue which can only be addressed successfully if the information disciplines are prepared to make the cultural changes that are required.

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6. As well as understanding what a record is, they should also be able to understand and communicate the distinctions between 'function', 'activity', 'program', 'process', 'task', 'transaction' and 'action'.
7. Many of the ideas concerning the future of records management were stimulated by: Bearman, David and Hedstrom, Margaret, 'Reinventing Archives for Electronic Records: Alternative Service Delivery Options', in Archives and Museums

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8. The lack of skills to deal with this new world became such a critical issue in one government department that a senior manager established parallel units of expertise to deal with the records and information access/retrieval issues because he could not rely on his own records management and library staff. He also commented on the tremendous opportunities that could have been gained if only the records and library communities in his organisation would rediscover their principles, update, and adapt their role and techniques and blend them together into a complementary whole that, he thought, would have resulted in benefits to his organisation that would have been far greater than what is being accomplished today. He felt that if

librarians would concentrate on developing flexible and relevant access and retrieval strategies across all domains (records, information, data) the records management staff could extend their knowledge of what it means to keep records (i.e. to provide context) to help other communities (e.g. librarians, data managers, etc.) ensure that when information is provided to users, that it can be understood and authenticated in terms of activities and circumstances (i.e. context) that gave rise to its existence.

9. At the national level efforts are underway to give expression to a vision of the future for librarians, records managers, and archivists; a draft report Information Resources Sector - Consultation Draft was prepared by Price Waterhouse Inc. on behalf of the Alliance of Librarians, Archivists, and Records Managers (ALARM).

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# Information Collection, Data Matching and Privacy

By Vicki Wilkinson Lecturer &  
Patricia Looker Lecturer

In Part 1 of this article, the balance between the competing interests of the individual to retain complete control over personal information and the Government to collect large amounts of information on citizens to provide an increasing range of services was explored. In Part 2 the response of the Government to the threats posed by the increasing use of IT for the collection of this information will be examined.

The *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)* and the *Data-matching Program (Assistance and Tax) Act 1990 (Cth)* represent Federal responses to the issue of data protection: but to what extent does this legislation meet the threat posed by advances in IT.

The *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)* and the *Data-matching Program (Assistance and Tax) Act 1990 (Cth)* are limited in the extent to which they truly protect individual privacy because they have failed to provide a comprehensive and effective statutory basis for the protection of privacy of individuals.<sup>1</sup>

And furthermore, that even where data protection principles exist that

Data systems are operating in public and private sectors without reference to established data protection principles and new technologies are being applied without adequate examination of their impact on privacy.<sup>2</sup>



The 1992 ICAC Report noted that "a massive illicit trade in government information existed<sup>3</sup> ...[i]nformation from a variety of State and Commonwealth government sources and the private sector, had been freely and regularly sold and exchanged for many years"<sup>4</sup>, and that this practice had continued unhindered by the introduction of Commonwealth legislation.

Privacy legislation is also criticised on grounds that it has limited application. It applies only to Commonwealth public sector and not to State Government agencies nor to the private sector. In fact, the ICAC Report identified that the principal participants in the illicit trade in information included Commonwealth and State public servants, financial institutions and private inquiry and commercial agents. It further noted the lack of uniformity in government policies regarding the release and use of information, and

the role this played in facilitating the illicit trade in information.

What then are the limitations in the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)* ("Privacy Act") and the *Data-Matching Program (Assistance and Tax) Act 1990 (Cth)* ("Data-Matching Act")?

## PRIVACY ACT 1988 (CTH)

The Privacy Act was enacted "pursuant to the Commonwealth's external affairs power and implements Australia's obligations under Article 17 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the OECD Guidelines"<sup>5</sup>.

The Privacy Act as amended by the Privacy Amendment Act 1990 establishes 11 Information Privacy Principles ("IPPs") and covers interferences with privacy deemed to occur when an act or practice breaches:

- an IPP
- tax file number guidelines
- data-matching guidelines
- credit reporting guidelines

The Privacy Act covers federal agencies and departments, users and recipients of the tax file number and the credit reporting industry. Accordingly the thrust of the Act is to regulate the federal public sector with some sectoral extensions in the private industry.<sup>6</sup>

## GENERAL LIMITATIONS

One limitation of the Privacy Act arises because of the assumptions on which it was based:

1. that data are collected with a predefined consistent purpose;
2. that there is a direct relationship between an individual and the information collected on her; and
3. that there is for any given database an identifiable and responsible recordkeeper.<sup>7</sup>

While these assumptions may be valid 'in relation to simple, conventional database systems which store explicit facts referring directly to the information subject they are extremely limited in relation to newer, more complex database systems storing only 'implicit' or 'latent' information'.<sup>8</sup>

A second and arguably the most serious limitation is the omission of regulation of the private sector. This omission undermines any claims that the Act provides comprehensive privacy protection<sup>9</sup> and that it is contrary to OECD guidelines and to the ALRC recommendations.

This omission was remedied to a limited extent with the passing of the *Privacy Amendment Act 1990*. This Act amended the Privacy Act 1988 to include regulation of the 'practices of credit reporting agencies and credit providers in relation to personal credit information'.<sup>10</sup> Beyond this amendment, however, the Privacy Act fails to comprehensively embrace the private sector. The ICAC Report reveals that the threats to individual privacy posed by the activities of private organisations extend beyond credit reporting.

## SOME SPECIFIC LIMITATIONS

A third limitation of the Privacy Act arises because the open-ended nature of the IPPs enables government agencies either to avoid the provisions or to conform with the Act merely in a perfunctory, largely symbolic way.<sup>11</sup>

An example of this limitation can be seen by an analysis of IPP 10 and 11.

## PRINCIPLES 10 & 11

### *10. Limits on use of personal information*

### *11. Limits on disclosure of personal information*

*Principles 10 & 11* in effect provide exemptions to the preceding IPPs.

While Principle 10 restricts information to the purpose for which the information was obtained, "obviously the limitations placed on government agencies by Principle 10 may be easily diluted, especially since there is no rule that information can only be collected for one particular purpose. And as agencies are not required to state their functions or activities in advance, it should be relatively easy for them to show that the purpose(s) for which they collect information is(are) lawful and directly related to at least one of their 'functions' or 'activities', terms which are open to broad interpretation by agencies."<sup>12</sup>

The Privacy Commissioner, Kevin O'Connor has also expressed concern with the impact of these two principles on the privacy of individuals. He considers that s10(1)(d) "the disclosure is required or authorised by or under law" and s11(1)(e) "the disclosure is reasonably necessary for the enforcement of the criminal law or of a law imposing a pecuniary penalty, or for the protection of the public revenue" pose the greatest threat to the individual's expectation of the privacy of information given to the Federal government.<sup>13</sup>

The potential threat posed by the exception in s11(1)(e) is highlighted in the ICAC Report, where the establishment of uncontrolled databases was fuelled not only by the illicit trade in government information but also by the activities of agencies investigating crime who have had access to confidential information held by public authorities. This practice when

combined with lax security arrangements often resulted in an informal exchange of information which led to "an uncontrolled system of exchange of information ... in which access to information depended on the unofficial private contacts a person had".<sup>14</sup>

## WHAT IS THE EFFECT FOR THE PRIVACY ACT IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE DATA-MATCHING ACT?

The Privacy Act 1988 was drafted as cognate legislation to the Taxation Laws Amendment (Tax File Numbers) Act 1988 and contains guidelines relating to tax file number information.

In introducing the TFN system, the Government promised that this system would be limited to tax administration. Eighteen months later, the Data-Matching Act was introduced to provide "legal authority for an extended matching program, aspects of which would otherwise be illegal under the TFN and the Privacy Act"<sup>15</sup>. The effect of the Data-Matching Act was to expand the use of TFNs into welfare and assistance areas of government.

In introducing the Data-Matching Act, the Government sought to allay public fears of further erosion of privacy by regulating data matching "as between the Department of Community Services and Health, the Department of Employment, Education and Training, the Department of Social Security and the Department of Veterans' Affairs by imposing steps to be followed in 'data-matching cycles'".<sup>16</sup>

However, the potential threat posed by the ability to easily link massive amounts of data about individuals remains of major concern. The scale of data-matching activities is considerable in a cycle quoted by the Privacy Commissioner in July 1992<sup>17</sup> the "matching agency examined approximately 11.5

million Social Security records; 1.3 million Employment, Education and Training records; 130,000 Health, Housing and Community Services records and 700,000 Veterans Affairs records. Of the records examined, the matching agency forwarded a combined total of approximately 3.2 million records onto the Tax Office for matching against tax data.'

The Privacy Commissioner<sup>18</sup> has clearly expressed his concerns about the threats to privacy posed by data-matching:

(i) information collected for one purpose is often matched with other information for a new purpose without the consent or knowledge of the individual;

(ii) mass handling of information relating to large numbers of people can introduce a variety of errors leading to poor quality data and bad decisions;

(iii) the technique often involves separate files of information about a number of aspects of an individual's life being co-located and provides the opportunity for a dossier to be compiled, in particular by the matching body;

(iv) the use of the technique for investigative purposes is usually not triggered by any actual or suspected transgression of the law but instead whole classes of people have their personal information searched on a speculative basis to isolate possible discrepancies or transgressions of the law;

(v) individuals may suffer significant disadvantage, if selected for close investigation as a result of a match, as significant data integrity problems can arise in ensuring that 'matched' information does relate to the same individual and that any apparent discrepancies are founded on truly comparable data."

## HOW WELL DOES DATA MATCHING ACT ADDRESS THESE CONCERNS?

*(i) information used for purpose other than for which collected without knowledge of individual concerned*

This issue is not addressed in the Data-Matching Act, nor is it addressed satisfactorily in the Privacy Act.

In the Data-Matching Guidelines issued by the Privacy Commissioner under s27(1)(e) in July 1992 this issue is addressed to a limited extent. In s8.1 External Notice, agencies involved in a data-matching program covered by the guidelines are required to ensure that "a reasonable form of public notice of the proposed program is given ... unless that is considered to be contrary to the public interest."<sup>19</sup> These guidelines are not legally binding however.

*(ii) errors in data and data integrity problems*

The Data-Matching Act seeks to reduce the incidence of errors in matching by including TFN validity checks in step 1 of the data-matching cycle. Where the TFN is invalid, the agency then checks that data using any personal identity data given to it by the Australian Electoral Office or the Health Insurance Commission.

If the Agency involved in the program intends to amend benefits or tax assessments based on outcome of matching, it must give the affected individual 21 days' notice, thus allowing the individual to respond and presumably question incorrect data.

IPPs 6, 7, 8 & 9 also govern accuracy of data and the right of the individual to have inaccuracies corrected.

*(iii) compilation of dossier*

s10 of the Data-Matching Act limits the period for which information obtained through data-matching

may be retained by the 'source agencies' before destruction if a decision has not been made to commence an investigation (90 days). It also limits the period in which investigations may commence against an individual (12 months).

*(iv) speculative investigation*

This issue has not been addressed by the ACT, and it remains a major concern.

While the Data-Matching Act in combination with the Privacy Act addresses each of these concerns to some extent, perhaps the issue that should be of most concern is the speed and ease with which the Government extended the application of the TFNs. The threat of uncontrolled 'function creep', the extension of the use of the TFN, remains.

On the one hand this legislation brings a welcome degree of control and accountability, but on the other hand, there is no logical boundary to further expanding this legislation to bring other agencies into the matching scheme.<sup>20</sup>

In the final analysis, while privacy legislation represents the first stage in the protection of individual privacy from the encroachments of both public and private sector - this legislation establishes a framework within which comprehensive regulation of privacy may be developed. As it presently stands however, it is limited. It lacks comprehensive application to the private and public sectors, it lacks national uniformity and it does not reflect the potential threats posed by advancements in information technology.

(For full citation see Informaa Quarterly Volume 11 Number 2)

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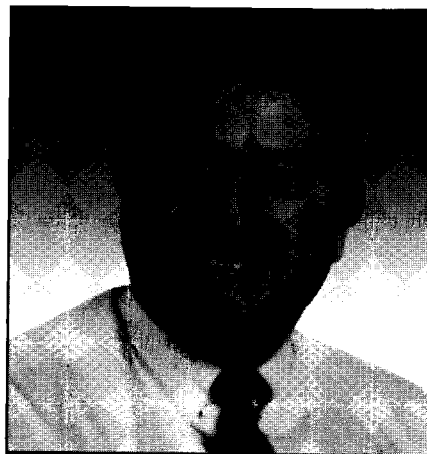
# The Three "W's" of Competency Standards

WHAT ARE THEY? WHERE DO THEY FIT? AND WHY HAVE THEM?

**W**hilst some considerable time has lapsed since I last reported on Competency Standards, the activities of the now National Steering Committee stepped up a gear during 1995, as a result there will be two parts to this report, one being briefly the activities/achievements of the Committee, the other being a more detailed explanation as to the three "W's" of Competency Standards. I will hasten to add that by general agreement, reference to "records management" includes archives.

Through continued hard work and consultation with other interested parties the members of the National Steering Committee have been able to achieve the following so far this year -

- successful in finding a CSB to extend their coverage to include records management, namely NOSFAB (National Office Skills Foundation Advisory Body Ltd). I believe it worth reporting at this point that of the fifty plus CSB's (Competency Standards Board) NOSFAB was the only one to give us a hearing, at one stage we were beginning to believe that records management was akin to a dreaded illness in that no one wanted to know us or indeed acknowledge our existence and profession;
- successful in obtaining the recognition of the National Training Board;
- we were able to place a submission before ANTA (Australian National Training



Authority) for a financial grant towards the development of national competency standards.

At the time of writing this article the outcome of our submission was not known because of the administrative re-arrangement of existing CSB's, I am hopeful of being able to make a statement during the Associations National Convention in Melbourne during September 1995. However, in terms of time we are on schedule in accord with the expectations of the Committee as expressed at the November 1994 meeting.

To assist members in gaining a better understanding of Competency Standards an explanation of the three "W's" are as follows.

## 1. WHAT ARE THEY?

Competency Standards define the required

- Application of knowledge and skills in the workplace.
- Standards of performance.

They also incorporate the following to reflect the ability to transfer skills, knowledge and abilities within the occupational area, organising and planning work and coping with non-routine activities.

**PROBLEM SOLVING** - the process of defining the most appropriate course of action in circumstances where alternative actions are possible.

**APPLICATION OF KNOWLEDGE** - the level of understanding of, and ability to use, relevant knowledge in the work process.

**JUDGEMENT** - the ability to make sound decisions, recognising the consequences and outcomes of decisions or actions taken.

**INDEPENDENCE** - the ability to produce effective outputs within a given degree of supervision and job autonomy.

**COMMUNICATION** - the ability to understand and convey ideas and information.

**RESOURCE MANAGEMENT** - the ability to effectively and efficiently apply resources (people, information, time, finance and equipment).

**ADAPTABILITY** - the ability to deal effectively with change with the demands of the

## 2. WHERE DO THEY FIT?

Very simply, competency can be applied to every professional and paraprofessional in vocational education

training systems, private enterprise and so on. On a lighter note, it may even surprise some to know that competency standards have been developed for the pig industry, not that we fit into that category or at least I hope not.

### 3. WHY DO WE HAVE THEM?

There are obvious benefits derived from having competency standards, and/or competency based training, both of which have a very simple concept involving -

- being clear about what people need to be able to do;
- basing training on those identified outcomes; and
- certifying who can actually do that which has been identified as needed.

Benefits have also been identified for enterprises, industry and for Australia, they include -

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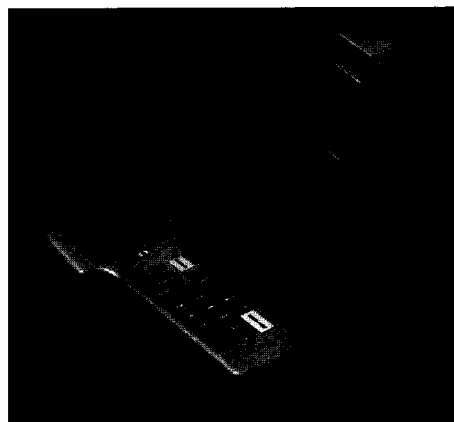
- Accurate mapping of required and existing competencies of their workforce.
- Improved recruitment effectiveness through matching competency requirements of jobs with those offered by people seeking employment.
- Focused training directed at skill gaps and specific enterprise requirements.
- Access to cost efficient training based on industry needs from a range of providers, with the ability to identify and select the parts of the training offered that are most relevant.
- Greater confidence in what people can actually do as a result of training.
- Assessment of both prior learning and outcomes of training

will be more reliable and consistent.

- Greater capacity for individuals to transfer their skills to new situations as a result of the development of broad competency, rather than their capacity being restricted to particular sets of tasks.
- Clear communications of employer expectations of employee skills and knowledge.
- Better perception by employees of the relevance of their prior learning, the transferability of their skills, the value of recognised qualifications and the potential of career progression.
- Facilitation of change through identifying the competency requirements of and for the people when changes to work organisation and work structures are made or evolve.
- Facilitation of the operation of quality improvement programs

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through identification and development of the full dimensions of competency.

- Provision of an incentive for individuals to seek and accept training through access to national certification based on standards.

## FOR INDUSTRY

- Better identification and meeting of overall skill needs for the industry.
- Greater access to public sector training provision that is relevant to the industry.
- Maximum benefits for industries from limited public resources.
- Provision of a basis for common and clear understanding of course outcomes across the industry through certification of achievement of individuals in terms of competencies.
- Greater confidence that industry needs are being met as a result of assessment based on standards.
- Provision for the basis of a national system of qualifications relevant to industry.
- Greater efficiency in delivery can be achieved and duplication of training effort reduced.
- Enhanced accountability of education and training providers for outcomes.
- Encouragement of skill development that is broad and

relevant to the future.

- Provision of a basis for improved operation or deregulation of occupational licensing.

## FOR AUSTRALIA

- Enhanced skill formation to compete internationally.
- Encouragement of new international investment in industries where a major requirement for them to exist is a skilled workforce.
- More cost efficient, relevant and accountable vocational education and training provision.
- Access by individuals to industry recognised and relevant competencies that are portable within and across industries.
- Consistent assessment against relevant industry standards possible nationally.
- Enhancement of equity and access of individuals by clear expression of requirements of industry and through Recognition of Prior Learning against standards.

In all probability members, their staff and their employers will ponder the question "how do all of these benefits and definitions affect me?" The answer to that question is very simple and I suggest it may be something like this -

- There is an absolute need for good records management practices in industry and the public and private sectors;
- There is an absolute need to have well trained people in records management positions;
- There is an absolute need for employers to recognise the value of both the above and to develop career paths accordingly and
- **There is an absolute need to develop competency standards for the records management professionals, paraprofessionals and technicians alike.**

That is clearly the Charter of the Records Competency Standards National Steering Committee. Hopefully, we can get on with the job ahead as soon as we hear the good news from the Australian National Training Authority.

**Ray Holswich ARMA**  
Chairperson.



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EDUCATION & TRAINING

# Practical Ethics and the Records Manager

*Stephen Yorke,  
Custody and Preservation Program  
Australian Archives*

## INTRODUCTION

Readers may recall the article, 'Ethics and the Records Manager; is there any relationship?' which appeared in the February 1995 Informaa Quarterly. The article discussed the role of ethics in records management and the potential for ethical problems to arise in the workplace. Included in the article was a case study for consideration by readers. Readers were requested to send in any comments that they had on the study. I would like to thank those who took the trouble to write to me with their views. The following article deals with some of the responses from readers. It also discusses various views of the practical outcomes of the application of an ethical approach to workplace situations.

## THE CASE STUDY

For ease of reference, the case study in the February 1995 issue of Informaa Quarterly is reproduced:

Mr Schwartz is the Records Manager for the Gelber Corporation and has been employed by it for some twenty years. He is probably its longest standing employee and has never worked for any other employer.

When Schwartz joined Gelber Engineering, it was a company based in the suburbs with about 200 employees at any given time. Next door to the factory was the site of

Acme Products which was one of Australia's largest manufacturers of products containing asbestos. Acme was at the time a part-owner of Gelber.

The now Gelber Corporation is a public company which is listed on the stock exchange. Over the years, Gelber has changed from being a manufacturing company to one primarily devoted to property development and related activities.

Gelber is no longer involved in manufacturing but still owns the original factory. Ownership or control of Gelber has changed several times and has usually involved a takeover battle. Recently, the company has been significantly down-sizing. Its personnel practices are poor: dismissal has been known to take the form of summary removal from the premises.

Several years previously the records management section was moved from the suburbs to occupy vacant space in an unsuccessful CBD development of Gelber. Most of the inactive records including personnel records were left behind in secure storage.

Records have never been a priority with Gelber. Usually, Schwartz does not have sufficient staff to perform properly all the duties required. But (for the most part) the records have been sentenced in accordance with a records disposal schedule. The schedule took into account all legal retention requirements. However, very little destruction of scheduled records has occurred. The reasons for this situation are complex but they are basically due to a lack of

resources, no storage space problems, and a personal disinclination to do so on the part of Mr Schwartz. The records represent Schwartz's entire working life.

The current problems of Gelber Corporation have been extensively covered in the financial press: it is believed there is a significant cash-flow problem, a shareholder group is accusing management of improper or illegal activities and is taking the matter to Court, and the Australian Securities Commission is rumoured also to be taking an interest in the activities of the Corporation.

Schwartz is aware of such matters but does not know the details: most of the people he knew in management have long gone. He has also read in the newspaper reports of contamination on the Acme site and of health problems of various ex-employees of Acme who claim they are linked to the asbestos.

One day, completely unexpectedly, Mr White the Services Manager came to see Schwartz. White is Schwartz's supervisor. He has not been with the Corporation for very long and it is not entirely clear just what are his responsibilities.

Schwartz had only met White a few times and it had been rumoured that he is not to be trusted. White asked to see the records storage area and was shown around by Schwartz. The corporate records were all properly stored on shelving or in filing cabinets which had belonged to departed employees. He expressed surprise at the size of the holdings. After the inspection they returned to Schwartz's office and

White closed the door.

'I want you to get rid of them' said White.

'Get rid of them?'

'The records. All those filing cabinets. All of them.'

'But we have to keep them. For company reasons and legal purposes. They protect the assets of the Corporation.'

Schwartz tried to explain why a company is required to keep records but White was not interested; he just looked out of the window. White eventually cut in on Schwartz and stated that the Corporation was facing problems but would not say what these are. He would not discuss the matter any further.

Schwartz in desperation said: 'But if there are these problems, then wouldn't just getting rid of everything look suspicious.'

What if the lawyers found out? I mean what would they make of it?

'Your're right' responded White nodding. 'There are such requirements such as legal obligations. You know, this is prime office space and we should be trying harder to rent it out. Get rid of everything that we are not legally obliged to keep on the basis of what we know now. All the rest, and I'll check it personally, had better be out of here by Friday. I'll let you know where to send them. In fact, I want this entire floor cleared by Friday.'

'But ...'

'Just do as I tell you. Don't worry about the money.'

White walked to the door, then paused. He turned and asked: 'We don't have the records stored anywhere else?'

'No.'

## COMMENTS ON THE CASE STUDY

Most respondents did not request anonymity. However, after collectively considering the various comments which were made, I have decided against identifying individuals. The reason for this approach is that I believe it will make it easier to concentrate on just *what* is being said rather than *who* is saying it.

But first some general observations on ethics in the practical or applied sense. Almost by definition, there are no easy answers to ethical issues. The basic problems commence in identifying the real issues which are involved in a given situation. The problem here is very much that how you see a particular situation depends very much on where you stand - your degree of self-interest, amount of direct involvement, and so forth.

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A particular ethical situation could perhaps be assessed and acted on along the following lines:

1. What you could do (i.e. all the possible courses of action);
2. What you should do (i.e. the 'right' or 'proper' courses of action);
3. What you can do (i.e. the options in point 2 that we feel that realistically we can undertake. For example, protesting to relevant authority, resignation in protest, etc.); and
4. What (in fact) you do (i.e. the final outcome. This, of course, includes doing nothing at all.)

While this may be nice as a model, in a practical sense it relies on a developed sense of self-awareness: just how good are we at actually well understanding complex situations - or even adequately? In the final analysis, ethical problems are for most of us quite *subjective* in nature. By definition, we are then in a poor position to be objective about situations in which we are to some extent directly involved.

I suggest that when confronted by such a difficult situation you seek advice from someone whose judgement you trust. They may not prove to be of any direct assistance. But discussing it may better guarantee that you are in fact trying to deal with what is the real problem, or have correctly identified just what are the issues involved in the situation. While such knowledge is no solution, you are in a better position to be more confident about where a solution might lie or what approach to adopt.

But to return to the case study. My own comments on the case study as presented are as follows. These views were formed prior to reading the respondents' letters.

The situation Schwartz finds himself

in is a difficult one and it is doubtful whether he can be objective about it for the reasons mentioned above. While he may understand all the issues, and the potential value of the records, he has always avoided taking action or undertaking all of the duties expected of a records manager. For instance, many of the records which should have been destroyed under terms of a disposal schedule still exist. If they did not exist - for example - the volume may not have drawn the attention of White to the records of the Corporation generally. In other words, his problems are to an extent of his own making.

In such a situation of 'normalcy', the problems Schwartz has with Gelber Corporation are purely practical: is his job going to go the same way as have those of many others. If so, then his own self-interest would properly prevail - and there would be no problem with regards to ethics. This is because the proper disposal action for the records was taken at the right time how ever many years ago. And records management is to an extent about risk-management.

I will now take up in detail three of the responses received. These set out in detail some of the problems and possible approaches to them by Schwartz. The responses have been edited slightly.

## Writer A

*After 20 years employment in the one work unit Mr Schwartz has an obvious loyalty to the company. He faces the dilemma of acting contrary to his employers and against the company for which he has been employed. However, he has no loyalty to the new management whereas past and present employees may have been exposed to asbestos. Where do workplace loyalties lie?*

*Should Mr Schwartz tell Mr White*

*that there are non-current records stored off-site? Does White have authority and responsibility in this area? Should Mr Schwartz 'tip-off' the union, shareholders, and the ASC or is this disloyal?*

*Non-current records have been sentenced but not destroyed partly because Mr Schwartz has a 'personal disinclination' to do so. Isn't an integral part of Mr Schwartz's position the effective management of non-current records, the effective implementation of disposal schedules as instruments for records disposition? If the records should have been destroyed in accordance with the disposal schedule and sentencing, then what is the harm in destroying them now? However, knowing that there are potential legal actions, particularly those involving the rights and obligations of employees, wouldn't it be better to retain all records for impending investigations rather than implementing any sentencing?*

*Shouldn't Mr Schwartz's primary focus be evidence, accountability and the protection of the record? Even if he will lose his job and have to sue for unfair dismissal with the help of the union (after he has helped the Union win the asbestos claim). Shouldn't he resist pressure to destroy or assist in the destruction of evidence?*

This, in my view, is a reasonable summary of some of the major questions involved in the scenario as presented. The second writer looks at the situation much more closely from the perspective of what could be called Schwartz's self-interest:

## Writer B

*The problem that Schwartz faces are not only ethical. The problems he faces are principally legal. He runs the very real risk of going to gaol if he does not approach the situation very, very carefully. He has a very potent list of pros and cons to ruminate over in the week he has been given. He has*

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indeed got obligations to his family and to his own career prospects. But what he also has is an overwhelming social responsibility to records that can be used to secure some rights and obligations. The people he also needs to think about are those such as shareholders who may stand to lose a lot in a court case, as well as those who may in the past have been exposed to the dangers inherent in an asbestos site.

Schwartz can, however, take some solace in the fact that White has said to him 'Get rid of everything that we are not legally obliged to keep [my emphasis] on the basis of what we know now.' Schwartz should write that down at the earliest opportunity. Something that as a good records manager he will know is that it is against the law to destroy material that can be used in evidence. This requirement overrides any authority a disposal schedule has, and to destroy such material causes one to be faced with a charge of contempt. He is therefore legally obliged to keep what **MIGHT** be evidence.

Whatever happens, someone is going to get a sniff of the destruction of these records, especially if it is done in a hurry (is Schwartz going to do it all personally, or will he need assistance. If he needs assistance, how is he or the company going to ensure the silence of those assisting?). Schwartz needs to think about the fact that he is likely to be used as a scapegoat by company management; if a court case arises then he as records manager is going to be a witness and he would have to commit perjury about when the records were destroyed. And to the fact that he did not know that there were records which contained material relating to asbestos.

Does Schwartz lose his job? Almost certainly; if the Corporation is going down the tubes he'll lose it anyway. As a whistleblower he is in a difficult position. But if he is as good a records manager as he seems to be, he will get

another job. There are employers out there who are ethical, you know.

That response I feel sets out some of the direct problems that Schwartz could face personally in the situation - if he chooses to follow the directions given to him by White. In particular, the possible legal consequences and how the Corporation could leave him to shoulder any blame resulting from destruction of the records.

But what could he do in practical terms to resolve the issue of following orders but without going against his conscience? The third writer takes up the point.

## Writer C

*It is not beyond the realms of possibility for Schwartz to resolve the predicament he faces by convincing himself the end justifies the means. 'Take a bold risk management decision, kiddo' he tells himself. 'After all it is in a good cause; our first loyalty is to the records.' Imagine then a scene in which the records manager leads White to believe that he has obeyed the verbal instruction to clear the entire floor by Friday. But in fact what he has done is to draw on twenty years of networking and gladhanding colleagues on Friday nights at the local Yacht Club 'Bilge Bar' - he calls in a couple of favours and secretes the records elsewhere. 'The company lawyers will thank me some day', rationalises Schwartz.*

*The key to this approach is to inform White by E-mail that he has obeyed the verbal instruction about the records. The main features of the message are (a) its length - Schwartz goes on and on and (b) its ambiguity. It is worded so that it can be read several ways. But it begins by referring White to the earlier conversation and leads him to expect that Schwartz has obeyed. And he has, sort of: the space is clear; it's just that he hasn't got rid of anything permanently.*

*More generally, ethical dilemmas involving the creation and content of records arise everyday. They face not just records managers but all whose administrative life involves records. (That's about everyone!). Take a very mundane and very simple example: many people who receive messages initial and date them to indicate receipt. When does this receipting occur? I know of instances where someone has opened a message, read it, and assessed it as not urgent. Then put it to one side until later that week. Then they dealt with it by initialling it and using the earlier date so as to give the impression that they had initiated action on an earlier date when it turned out to be important. Bad practice? Dishonest? Unethical? Probably. But if it ever became important to you to know just exactly when you had seen something, then this arbitrary approach means you could not be confident that what you had written on the message was factual.*

But to return to the scenario: the various options discussed above go nowhere near covering all the possibilities. The scenario was in fact designed to be somewhat 'messy' - just like real life ethical situations. Similarly, that we have to work through them with what we have available; to try and determine the real issues and how best to resolve them. Unfortunately, there are no easy answers in a book labelled 'Ethics'. A book which will tell us what is right to do in particular situations - and also what will leave us with a clear conscience afterwards.

But given the scenario, just what are the likely or most probable course of events? My answer to that question would be - given Schwartz's approach to matters generally - that he will do as he is told. He will arrange for the records to be destroyed to the extent that when White returns on Friday he will express satisfaction about the situation. Nothing is said, or done, by Schwartz about the off-site records.

A few weeks or months after the destruction Schwartz will join the list of ex-employees of Gelber Corporation. He knows that this event is coming but hopes until the very last moment that it does not. The litigation about asbestos and the ASC investigation then moves into high gear. At last, Schwartz decides to tell the plaintiffs or their lawyers about the surviving records.

The question is by that time will White (in the course of realising the assets of the Corporation) have discovered them? And will he have taken similar disposal action? If so, can anyone then prove they ever existed - let alone what was in them?

Ethics in a practical sense are not only about *what* you do but perhaps equally importantly is about *when* you get around to doing it.



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# No Change to the Association's Name

**A**t the meeting of Federal Directors in Melbourne on 17-18 February 1995 it was resolved that the issue of seeking further views from the membership about a possible name change for the Association be discontinued.

A poll which was conducted last year indicated that the majority of respondents supported a proposal to change the name to the *Records and Information Management Association of Australia (RIMAA)*. At the AGM in Adelaide last September it was carried that a referendum be conducted to formalise the prevailing opinion. However, the

process of initiating the referendum was found to be done in a matter which contravened provisions of the Memoranda and Articles of the Association.

It would appear that the poll and the issue of a referendum engendered considerable further debate about the matter, and the general feedback prior to and at the February meeting of Federal Directors indicated that the predominant feeling of the membership had shifted to a lack of support for the name change. The decision to discontinue this matter was also encouraged by some

frustration experienced in conducting a referendum in a timely but legal manner.

Whether one agrees or disagrees to a name change, the issue has now been laid on the table and given due consideration. This should be regarded as a positive move by the Association. There is every possibility that the issue will re-emerge at a later date, and it is expected that the association will then be in a more experienced position to make the right decision.

**Greg Coleman**  
Returning Officer

# The Internet: Records Management LISTSERV Groups

**S**usan Myburgh is a lecturer in Information Management at the University of South Australia, where she has been teaching since 1994. The subjects she teaches include Computerised Records Management, Communications and Technology in Organisations, Corporate Information Resource Management and Information Retrieval. Prior to this she lectured in Library and Information Science at the University of Cape Town, and was also Corporate Information Officer for Arthur Andersen in Cape Town. She is presently engaged in PhD studies, doing research on the use of the Internet in Australia.

It is hard to open a newspaper or magazine these days without seeing a reference to the ubiquitous Internet. It seems to have pervaded every topic or area of interest that one can think of. Records management is no exception. In fact, records managers need to be kept aware of developments in this area, as it directly affects their professional responsibilities. One of the easiest ways to pick up what is going on in the international records management community is to join a LISTSERV on the Internet. Listservs are a bit like mailing lists - you send a message to the computer that runs them, telling it that you want to have your name added. You will then get a copy of each message that is sent to the group. If you want to send a message to the group, then you MUST use the group address. It is a bit like using the fax address for subscribing, unsubscribing etc, but using the telephone number when you want to speak to real people.

I am therefore listing the LISTSERV addresses (i.e. the computers' addresses that you would use to subscribe). The format always is sending a message to the address, leaving the subject line blank, and in the body of the message putting in "Subscribe nameofgroup firstname lastname".

This means you must put in the name of the group, and your own first name and last name. In due course you will receive a message acknowledging your subscription and welcoming you, and also providing you with further information regarding sending messages, replying to messages that you have read, and so on. LISTSERV groups are accessed through the email function of the Internet.

RECMGMT -  
LISTSERV@SUV.M.SYR.EDU  
Deals with the whole field of records management - American emphasis.  
Group address:  
RECMGMT@SUV.M.SYR.EDU.

ARCHIVES -  
LISTSERV@MIAMI.ACS.MUOHIO.EDU - deals with archival problems, from governmental to cultural to corporate.  
Group address: ARCHIVES@MIAMI.ACS.MUOHIO.EDU.

ERECS-L -  
LISTSERV@UACSC2.ALBANY.EDU - covers electronic records in particular.  
Group address: ERECS-L@UACSC2.ALBANY.EDU

DATA\_RECORDING -  
LISTSERV@WWW.NML.ORG.  
Self-explanatory!

Group address:  
DATA\_RECORDING@WWW.NML.ORG

ISO9000 -  
LISTSERV@VM1.NODAK.EDU -  
Also self-explanatory. Important to know of the developments regarding this standard.

Group address:  
ISO9000@VM1.NODAK.EDU

AMIA-L -  
LISTSERV@UKCC.UKY.EDU -  
Association of Moving Image Archivists.

Group address: AMIA-L@UKCC.UKY.EDU.

LIBPRESV -  
MAISER@EDU-SUU-LIFAC.LI.SUU.EDU - A new list dealing with preservation of books, documents, photos etc.

Group address: LIBPRESV@EDU-SUU-LIFAC.LI.SUU.EDU

Other addresses of interest are constantly coming up, e.g.

<http://www.warwick.ac.uk/WWW/services/library/mrc.html>, which is a page for the Modern Records Centre, University of Warwick Library. It hosts materials regarding trade union and employer association records.

Also, if you send an email message to "ebecker@cni.org" with the word 'JOIN' and in the subject line, you will receive news on the proposed Electronic Record Management Standards for the Federal Government (of the USA). You need to put your name and full email address in the body of the message.

A new newsgroup is starting as well. This will be called misc.business.records-mgmt, and

should also be interesting. A newsgroup works like a bulletin board - you can only read the messages if you go to the board to read them.

The address for the Archives of Australia gopher is:

aa01.aa.gov.au.

One last quick snippet

A copy of the draft "Guidelines for Managing Electronic Documents in Australian Government Agencies" is

available on the Internet at:

<http://acslink.net.au/~tomw/edg1301.html>

Those without a HTML document browser can send a message to

"listproc@www0.cern.ch" with

"www <http://acslink.net.au/~tomw/edg/1301.html>"

(without the inverted commas) in the body of the message. A text version of the document will be sent back.

## Branch Reports

### QUEENSLAND REPORT

The Branch, in conjunction with the Queensland Government's Information Policy Board, conducted a successful seminar regarding the recently released draft records management standards. The seminar examined in depth each of the standards and then through a workshop, invited debate and discussion on the documents. Many useful thoughts and discussions arose from the seminar and participants were

encouraged to forward their written comments to Standards Australia.

The Branch is associated with the visit of Associate Professor Richard Cox to Australia to participate in a number of conferences and seminars. He is visiting Queensland in early August and will be presenting seminars on Records Management and Archival Issues.

A major promotion campaign was launched in June commencing with a mail-out to organisations in the Central Business District. The

brochure highlights the benefits of joining RMAA.

Enrolments are being received for second semester subjects in the Advanced Certificate in Records Management.

The Branch is conducting its AGM on the 19 July combined with a dinner.

**Philip Taylor MRMA**  
**Vice President**  
**Education & Professional Development**

### WESTERN AUSTRALIA REPORT

The WA Branch have had two successful meetings for branch members since the last report and it was encouraging to see a large number of members gathered together and supporting these functions.

The April meeting's topic "Personal Reflections on the Separation and Integration of Records Sections" and was presented by Julie Henderson and Neil Granland.

On the 23rd May Mr Murray Allen,

Regional Commissioner of Australian Securities Commission and Mr Rob Dunstan, Manager Information Management Services BP spoke on Electronic Records Management.

The Branch Council extends thanks to these speakers and appreciates the time and effort they have given to their presentations.

Branch Council continues to meet each month and at the time of writing the Chairpersons of the different committees are busy preparing reports for presentation to

members at the Annual General Meeting which will be held on Tuesday 18th July 1995.

Just a reminder that all members are encouraged to upgrade their status in the Association and more information and an application form can be obtained from Mr Jim Bonzas by telephoning (09) 222 3686 or writing to the RMAA (WA Branch) PO Box 8213 Perth Business Centre, Perth WA 6849.

**Norma Easthope ARMA**  
**Secretary**  
**WA Branch**



# Branch Reports

## SOUTH AUSTRALIAN REPORT

I write as we prepare for the Branch AGM. The activities of the last quarter are therefore seen in comparison with the whole year.

Those activities are a fitting conclusion to a fairly active year, at least for the Council, half of whose membership was new.

Congratulations must be extended to Kristen Green and Melanie Gurner, who between them did the lion's share of the work in organising a successful one day seminar which was conducted on the 7th June 1995. Eighty one people registered for the seminar, titled "Records and

Risk", and a fairly lively day was shared by those who attended. The demand for Seminar Papers is so strong that calls are being received daily for copies. A number of extra copies are being printed and will be available at \$25 each including P&H. Another benefit of the Seminar has been the applications for new members received.

Sufficient enrolments for the Records Management Certificate are continuing to be made to sustain the course at the Adelaide Institute of TAFE, and the Branch is challenged to provide Association lecturers. The demand for new teaching materials arising from the

introduction of the National course puts a substantial load on potential lecturers already in full time employment.

News of the imminent availability for comment of the State Records Bill, and of the finalisation of State Record's Whole of Government approach to records management contract, continue to tantalise.

With these, and other projects, before us we look forward to an exciting year in 95-96. We wish all other Branches the same. See you in Melbourne!

**Peter Crush ARMA  
SA Branch President**

## UCollect Items Management System

### Complete Records Management

- Registration
- Movements
- Attachments
- Actioning
- Searching
- Archiving
- Reporting

### Powerful Search

- Across one or more item types
- Across any or all fields at once
- Many searching options

### Automated, High Productivity

- Archiving
- Cross-Referencing
- Managing Attachments

### Unusual Flexibility

#### Unlimited Item Types

- File types e.g. Administration, Sales, Personnel, etc
- Correspondence
- Photographs
- Drawings
- Journals
- Electronic Documents etc

#### Open Systems

- Windows, Macintosh, Motif etc
- most Network Protocols
- most major databases
- DOS, UNIX, VMS and many other operating systems

#### Customisable

- Up to 29 Fields
- User defined field labels
- Business Rules
  - Numbering
  - Titling
  - Legal Lists
- Any or all fields indexed for search purposes



For Further information contact Jenny Robins or Mario Misso at  
**Logical Technologies Pty. Ltd. Ph (03) 9629 5200 Fax (03) 9629 8383**

# Branch Reports

## TASMANIAN REPORT

**W**e are faced with the perennial problem of most Branches at this time of the year, that of recruiting suitably qualified members to stand for Branch Council at the AGM. Several different approaches were tried this year but the nett result was one additional nomination. Given that two current councillors are for various reasons not seeking re-election, this is not an outstanding show of interest in the running of our professional organisation. What happens when those of us who have served for years on Branch Council pack up our PC's, pens and walking sticks and say "OK I've had enough of this"? Where are all the younger

records management personnel who should be taking an interest in their profession and its representative body, RMAA? It's really easy to sit back and criticise, or worse still, be apathetic to the efforts undertaken on your behalf by a small band of hard working stalwarts, then accept any benefits and advantages their efforts might accrue. Come on all you up and coming records managers - put your hands up and be counted!

Enough of the soap-box. The strategic planning day held by this Branch, and very capably facilitated by our very own Dennis Wheeler, was a resounding success and our plan has been adopted and implementation of action plans

commenced. We intend to continue annual planning days on Saturdays as it certainly takes the pressure off if a whole day can be devoted to the task and it doesn't have to be slotted in with work commitments.

Another very successful workshop on keyword classification was conducted in June, this time by Susan Kennedy from the RMO of NSW. Susan also attended a GADM User Group meeting where she outlined proposed changes to GADM and also received feedback and suggestions from those records managers who managed to attend at short notice.

**Trish Wichmann ARMA**  
**Branch President**

## The paper you've been throwing away is money.

Imagine the time and money you would save if all the information generated by your computer was available at the touch of a button.

Happily, Computron's Computer-Output-On-Line (COOL) system is already making this a reality for many leading Australian corporations. COOL is a proven, powerful, yet cost-effective storage replacement for traditional unwieldy paper-based systems or outdated microfiche.

Using powerful client/server technology, COOL cuts archival and storage costs by 90%, revolutionising the way you deal with information, delivering unheard of flexibility, and driving down operating costs.

Take a tip from leading international companies like County Natwest, Union Bank of Switzerland, CCH and Toys "R" Us and make the paper chase a thing of the past.

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# Branch Reports

## ACT BRANCH REPORT

The ACT Branch Council met recently at an extraordinary meeting to revisit our branch objectives and strategic plan for 1994/95. I am pleased to report that the branch is on target and with some key result areas have exceeded our objectives.

Branch Council will be collating comments received by our membership and councillors on the Standards Australia Draft report on Records Management through a small working group chaired by Alex Lang.

July is a busy month for the ACT with our Annual General Meeting organised for the 11th July followed by a seminar. The seminar will be presented by Lotus Development and is titled "Document

Management and Publishing with Lotus Notes." At this seminar Lotus will discuss how Notes' combination of compound databases, communication capabilities, integrated document imaging, workflow and full text search capabilities can help organisations develop a variety of customised document management applications.

We have also had a good response to our dinner seminar to be presented by Associate Professor Karen Drabensstott of the School of Information and Library Studies, University of Michigan USA to be held on the 12th July.

One of the ACT Branch objectives is to foster close liaisons with like associations, we are therefore pleased to be part of a joint seminar with

OSTIG (Optical Technology Special Interest Group) to be held on the 2nd August. The seminar titled "Australia's Most Modern Medical Records Imaging System" will demonstrate how the Woden Valley Hospital has faced up to the challenge of managing its records. Guest speakers will include Louise Ali, Acting Director, Medical Records Woden Valley Hospital and Dennis Connell, ACT Manager Opticon Australia Pty Ltd.

Planning for the 1996 National Convention is progressing well. An advance registration document offering a significantly reduced early bird registration fee will be ready for distribution at the close of the 1995 Convention in Melbourne.

**Julie Lenson ARMA**  
**ACT Branch President**

## NSW BRANCH REPORT

We are rapidly approaching the time of year when we will be conducting our Annual General Meeting. This meeting is officially scheduled 11th July 1995 and it will be held at the Hyde Park Plaza Hotel, College St, Darlinghurst. Historically, our AGM's are not as well patronised as they should be. However, I expect that this year will be different. I am also asking that members who possess ARMA Status or above, to nominate for Branch Council.

The current Branch Council has also been considering the possibility of restructuring our current cycle of meetings, seminars etc. At present we are locked into a regular pattern of monthly meetings and these are complemented by occasional Breakfast Meetings and Seminars.

We are looking to determine the viability of reducing the number of

monthly meetings and replacing these with breakfasts and seminars. Our motive for the proposed change is to determine whether members' interests are better served by spending more time on activities which can be presented either before working hours or as a day session.

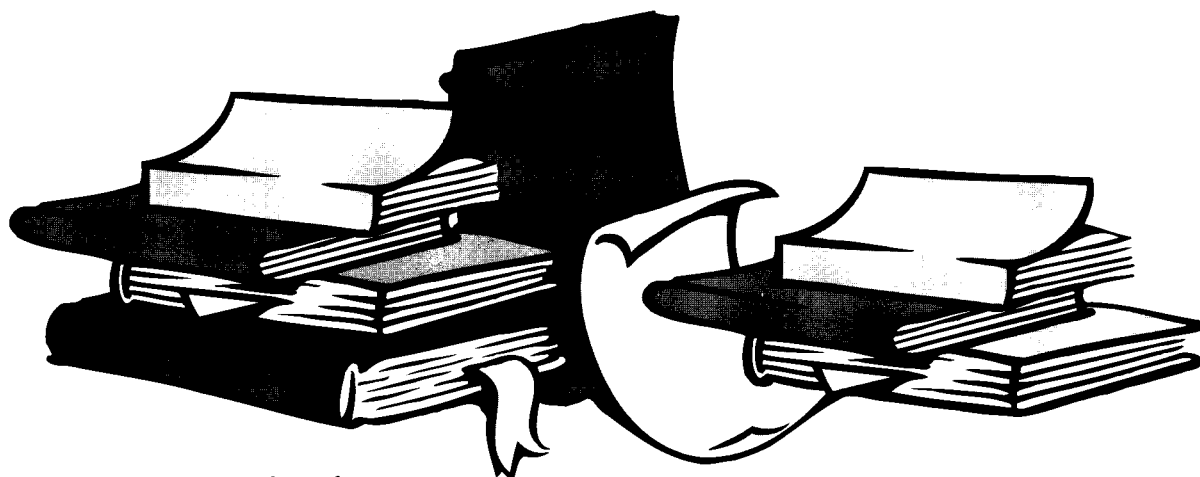
Branch Council is dependent on members to identify their requirements and expectations. We are also seeking your views about issues that are important to you. To enable this process to be successful we require your feedback.

Although there have been some hiccups throughout the year, we are ending our term on a high note. Our May seminars have proven to be extremely popular and this is very encouraging as it clearly demonstrates that the broader records community sees value in this type of activity. The Seminars at Newcastle were particularly

successful and it has given us the confidence to plan similar activities there in 1996. I would especially like to thank those vendors who willingly gave their time to display their products at the seminars.

Lastly, I would like to take the opportunity to thank all members of Branch Council for their unstinting efforts during the last twelve months. The behind the scenes work often goes unnoticed and all too often, members only witness the outcomes. I have been in the fortunate position of having worked with a dedicated team of professionals who have made it possible for the Branch to accomplish a number of goals both at the Branch and Federal levels and I would like to thank all members of Branch Council for their efforts.

**Denis Comber ARMA**  
**Branch President**



# Publications Review

## Past as Prologue: The Royal Commission into Commercial Activities of Government and Other Matters

**P**roceedings from a conference on the Part II Report of the Royal Commission and the reform of Government in Western Australia. November 1994.

*Edited by Mark Brogan and Harry Phillips.*

*Published by SASTEC Edith Cowan University, 2 Bradford St Mount Lawley WA 6050. \$29.95 including postage. ISBN 0-7298-0198-5*

The Royal Commission on 'WA INC' concluded its work in November 1992 producing two major reports on the conduct of government in Western Australia between 1983 and 1989. In the second of these reports, the Commission made forty separate recommendations for reform to be implemented by a Commission on Government.

This publication includes an introductory essay by Dr Harry Phillips, Associate Professor of Politics, Edith Cowan University and 14 conference papers which examine the legacy of the Royal Commission, the work of the Commission on Government and

issues in the reform or "re-invention" of government. Speakers include Ian Temby QC former ICAC Commissioner, Michael Barker one of the Council who assisted the Royal Commission and Jack Gregor Chairman of the Commission on Government. The conference concludes with presentations from the current generation of political decision makers on the reforming of government and the role of the media in the work of the Royal Commission.

These proceedings provide an important chronicle of the many background issues relating to the Westminster system and public administration. They serve as a useful reminder that such a major review of government should not be allowed to pass away from the public memory without fundamental reform. Of particular interest for records managers and archivists are issues of accountability, record keeping and operation of FOI legislation. A key recommendation of the Royal Commission was the establishment of a separate and independent archives authority, acting under its

own legislation. This matter has not as yet been resolved.

Of particular concern, were the views expressed by the Minister responsible for public records in Western Australia that "it is the people not the system" and "I do not accept that the WA Inc disaster had much to do with our systems of government". Given the plight of the Royal Commissioners who said "The absence of effective public record keeping has dogged this Commission in its enquiries. Records provide the indispensable chronicle of a government's stewardship. They are the first defence against concealment and deception" (Royal Commission Report Part 1 Vol 6 Section 27.2.7), the Ministers comments are hard to comprehend!

I would recommend these papers as compulsory reading for all records managers and archivists who wish to obtain a contemporary view of the public administration arena and for an indication of the magnitude of the challenges that lie ahead.

**Ken Ridley**

# NEW PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

## Formfile Develops Total Approach Concept ...

With the continuing emphasis on Quality Systems, and the need to provide accurate and complete information with fewer staff, public and private sector organisations are increasingly using a wider range of support services. An extension of the latter point is the emergence of records management companies and specialists, consultants providing outsourcing services. In a practical sense client organisations are seeing the financial benefits of contracting out support services which are not part of their core business. Outsourcing means greater productivity and less potential for industrial relations problems and human resource management problems.

Formfile has recognised this trend through its vigorous national team of sales consultants. Accordingly we have established a consulting and outsourcing arm of the business headed by Messrs Richard Mensink and Peter Walker. Richard Mensink heads the outsourcing component of the business and draws on his own experience building an international organisation, in the costing and delivering of services. In addition Richard has formal training in Marketing and costing. Peter Walker and Ian Millard make up the consulting team and between them have accrued knowledge and experience totalling some 50 years. Peter and Ian have successfully completed a range of assignments across all levels of government and the private sector. A recent assignment has taken Peter to Papua New Guinea and we have other offshore enquires currently. Services cover system analysis and design, to

documentation, training, staff selection and project management.

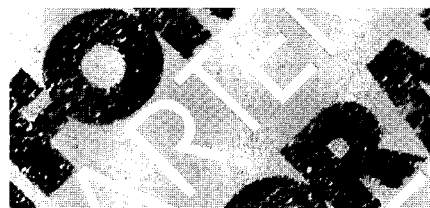
The emphasis of our approach is to partner the client to identify the issues and own the outcome jointly through active participation in the process. To this end we are driven by a philosophy of implementing solutions not proliferating the consultation process. This is not to devalue the outcome but rather to develop a proactive partnership where Formfile acts as a facilitator of change.

In practical terms, Formfile has the skills to manage a diverse range of issues concurrently and in different geographical locations if required. For example we can conduct an appraisal of an organisations requirements, design the solution, negotiate with management and implement it in a range of fixed and mobile storage systems, lockable or open fronted in timber or metal.

While all of this seems fine in theory the question arises as to where do we start. Our response is an obligation free appraisal of your existing systems, with a written report and a fully costed implementation.

The capacity to identify all the issues and implement a solution from one source saves time, effort and money.

**Inquiries:**  
**Richard Mensink**  
**Formfile**  
**Ph (03) 9819 6503**



# It wasn't your fault!

There was an unexpected rainstorm and water penetrated a storage area early on Saturday morning. On Monday you find that your files and archives are saturated and, because the weather is warm, they are also mouldy. Or, perhaps, a computer which seemed to be in good condition caught fire; the computer and its hard disk are severely damaged and soot has travelled through the air conditioning and damaged other offices - and there are toxic fumes from burnt plastic.

A disaster may be Cyclone Tracy or the Newcastle earthquake. It may be a bushfire or a flood. It may be just a leaking roof or pipe and only a couple of shelves of files affected but these shelves may hold vital records of important clients.

We are writing a handbook about disaster recovery in Australia and New Zealand. Why write about it? Because, if people are aware of what can happen and what can be done they can

- prevent an unnecessary disaster from happening
- stop a minor mishap from becoming a major disaster
- mitigate the effects of a disaster which does occur.

If you *don't* do these things your company may lose important business because of what was, initially, a quite minor mishap.

There is a reluctance on the part of some people and institutions to talk about a disaster because it may reflect on their housekeeping practices but it will reflect much more if the company could have taken effective action quickly and did not. Conservators have told us of companies who contacted them

and asked for advice about water damage which happened *three weeks* before! You will certainly lose material if you leave it this long. You will also lose material if you take uninformed action. There have been cases of willing staff reacting quickly but ignorantly. Trained staff have arrived and found material removed from the disaster site and staked in no logical order. This will not help if one of your important clients needs to consult your firm and you cannot locate the relevant files. You know that it is there *somewhere* but you can't find it. This is not going to help you or your company! A damaged computer may be junked because it is assumed that the hard disk is not recoverable. This may not be so, there are commercial companies who specialise in recovery of data from damaged disks.

If you have a disaster plan, if you have trained key staff and if you have publicised the existence of the plan so that other staff know who to contact then the effects of your disaster can be mitigated. As part of your plan you will have identified vulnerabilities in your organisation and either rectified them or, if this is not possible, established a regular check so that a problem does not develop. You will certainly have identified high value material (not only files and records but also operational documents) so you will know what to recover first. Keep in mind that this may involve painful decisions and staff may need to accept that a pet project must take lower priority. A rough rule of thumb is that mould will develop in wet paper in about 48 hours and mould is not only bad for the object but can be dangerous for staff working on recovery. Publications

printed on coated paper will begin to block in only a few hours. Time for recovery may be limited so it is important to ensure that vital material is retrieved first and staff must be clear about which material is so identified.

If you have a plan it is most important that its existence is known. We know of one organisation which had a plan and had trained staff but water damage in a small store room was discovered by an employee who did not know this. It was after hours and did not appear to be serious so he did not report it until the next day. In this store room was material which was extremely important to another staff member and not all could be recovered.

So: - Have a plan  
- Train staff  
- Publicise!

And, in addition to this, please talk to us about what you are doing. We are prepared to treat information with discretion. We have no wish to cause embarrassment to any one who is prepared to talk to us. We are not interested in pointing a finger at a named firm and saying "Bloggs and Son had a major fire because they left the tea urn on over night and it boiled dry, there were flammable materials left nearby, these caught fire and a lot of records were destroyed. Bloggs are still in business but they are shaky." We are interested in your experiences in as far as they provide examples of what can happen or what can be done. You might be able to alert us to pitfalls or to direct us towards useful practices or solutions.

The authors of the handbook are Judith Doig and Eric Archer. Judith Doig can be reached on Email : [ajdoig@netspace.net.au](mailto:ajdoig@netspace.net.au) or at 5/39 Aintree Rd., Glen Iris, 3146.

# NEW PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

## TRIM for Windows

**L**ocating company files, knowing what documents are contained within them, finding documents associated with one of your records - are all part of necessary organisational records management.

Good Records Management is an essential, if often overlooked, prerequisite for business. Regardless of whether your business is public administration or private enterprise the need for good records management remains.

**Every organisation has a records management problem and every records management problem is different.**

TOWER Software has developed a records management system which may be easily configured to provide a solution to most organisation's records management problems.

The TRIM for Windows product is a flexible, item based records management system which manages a wide variety of record types regardless of media type. TRIM provides a number of optional modules which allow organisations to tailor the system to meet their own specific records management requirements.

The TRIM system incorporates a number of time and cost saving features which assist staff in the day to day management of records and information. For physical records TRIM makes extensive use of

barcode technology to reduce the time required to process records. TOWER introduced the ability to attach retention schedules to records, archive records, place records in containers, and complete actions using barcodes. In TRIM for Windows TOWER has introduced "tag & task" to allow bulk processing of catalogue entries. The Multiple Document Interface provided in TRIM allows users to be working on many tasks simultaneously. Extensions to enable electronic records to be managed provided users with on-line access to important records.

TOWER recognises that many widely varied information management and retrieval requirements may exist within a single organisation. The TRIM System may be configured to manage any number of different records types within a single data base or, alternatively, allows organisations to define additional databases at no extra cost. Perhaps more

importantly, each user within the organisation is able to tailor the system to provide the information which they wish to view about a particular record type. Unwanted information and unused search criteria may be turned off on a user by user basis. This allows users to more easily find the information they require.

**Inquiries:**  
**Tower Software**  
**Ph 008 020 149**





# UCOLLECT ITEMS MANAGEMENT

## - Records Management for the Future

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### THE NEED TO CATER FOR DIVERSE INFORMATION SOURCES

Over the years, records managers have developed comprehensive systems for managing files and correspondence through their life cycles. The disciplines involved will provide a solid base for records managers who will now need to manage a much wider range of electronic and other information sources. However, records managers will also need new tools to manage diverse information sources in a flexible but unified manner.

They need 'items management systems' that can manage information using terminology and business rules appropriate to the different item types or information sources involved. At the same time, they need to be able to search in a flexible manner across any or all item types and fields. They should easily be able to identify all relevant sources of information whether they be recorded in files, correspondence, drawings, images or word processing documents.

### OBJECTIVES OF UCOLLECT ARCHITECTURE

The UCollect items management system of Logical Technologies is believed to be the first product designed explicitly to meet the above needs. UCollect version 2.1, recently released, provides the flexibility and functionality required of future records managers.

UCollect is designed to make customisation of item types easy. Users can set up an unlimited number of item types, each with its own business rules and up to 29 registration fields. They can manage photographs, drawings, videos, slides, journals and even geological core libraries or art

works just as easily as files and correspondence. Similarly, they can set up different types of files, such as administrative, sales and personnel, as different item types with different field labels and business rules.

UCollect searchers can then use a single search screen to find the location of all relevant information, whatever item types and fields contain the information. If they wish, users can modify their searches with a few key strokes and without losing previous data.

### ENHANCED USER PRODUCTIVITY

Users can access most facilities from a single screen, minimising the need to move in and out of modules. This applies whether users are search only or full users.

UCollect caters for the needs and wishes of users of all levels of experience. Users may choose to use a toolbar of icons (or of labelled buttons, if preferred), menus, hot keys and/or function keys. They may also use the menu of frequently used commands displayed by pressing the right-hand mouse button in the same manner as Microsoft Word for Windows 6 and Excel 5 users.

UCollect's powerful search functions, ease of navigation and behind-the-scene automation of many functions result in increased productivity. Users gain special benefit from the way UCollect handles cross-references and attachments and automates archiving tasks.

### CHANGING TECHNOLOGY

Records managers need to be conscious of two other factors when planning systems for the future. Firstly, a greater proportion of the information they manage will be

electronically stored; users will need to be able to view and possibly modify the electronic documents they find. Secondly, they will need to adapt rapidly to changing technology and to the pressures of managing increased volumes and diversity of information. Records managers should accept some responsibility for selecting systems that can survive change in technology and that provide a sensible growth path.

UCollect will provide two approaches to electronic documents. It offers its own direct two-way interface and will also offer interfaces to third party document management applications. UCollect now interfaces with Microsoft Office. Interfaces to a wider variety of electronic document packages will become available on a progressive basis.

Logical Technologies chose to build UCollect using the Uniface 4GL so as to obtain the open systems flexibility required of future packages. UCollect runs under Windows and Macintosh, most operating systems, major databases and network protocols. As a result, users gain an immediate flexibility, a growth path for the future and a method of preserving their investment when changing platforms.

As an integral part of its core business, Uniface (and its major USA parent, Compuware) provide specific drivers to cope with new technology as it emerges. Logical Technologies, and UCollect users, are therefore largely insulated against changes in operating environments. For its part, Logical Technologies can concentrate on providing its clients with enhanced solutions rather than on re-writing drivers.

# NEW PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

## Brambles Sets the Records Straight

**B**rambles Records Management has been appointed as the sole provider of records management and security storage to the Municipal Association Victoria Cooperative Purchasing Scheme Limited.

The MAV Co-Op was established in 1989 to act as a central agency on behalf of councils, water boards, foreshore committees and community and charitable organisations in the appointment of suppliers of goods and services commonly used by these organisations within the rules of the Compulsory Competitive Tendering (CCT) process.

The MAV Co-Op received CCT approval in October 1994 and has been actively tendering for goods and services on behalf of its membership since then.

Under the provisions of the MAV Co-Op Purchasing Scheme, the members can deal directly with Brambles Records Management for their records management and security storage needs rather than going through a tender process with the associated costs to both Local Government and suppliers.

Outsourcing of records management functions is becoming more popular with Victorian councils facing the difficulties of amalgamation.

The merging of 211 authorities into 78 shires and councils has meant that in many cases several records management functions have had to be amalgamated into a newly formed entity, creating major systems and space problems.

Brambles has been providing records management services to many local government bodies for some time and its success with the MAV Co-Op

Purchasing Scheme tender will strengthen its relationship with this important market place in Victoria, particularly during this period of transition.

Initially, the Brambles Records Management contract with the MAV Co-Op Purchasing Scheme is for two years from July.

Following the winning of the MAV Co-Op tender, BRM has established a Government Consulting Division in Victoria.

The Government Consulting Division will be led by Julie Apps and John Sim, who together bring more than 20 years professional records management experience to Brambles from their respective State and Local Government and private sector backgrounds.

Both are involved in the Records Management Association of Australia, Victorian Branch, with John the president of the Local Government chapter and Julie the educator and training co-ordinator.

Julie Apps was involved in the MAV Co-Op Purchasing Scheme tender preparation and believes BRM Government Consulting Division provides an excellent vehicle to cost effectively assist Local Government with their records management needs, particularly during the current review and transition period.

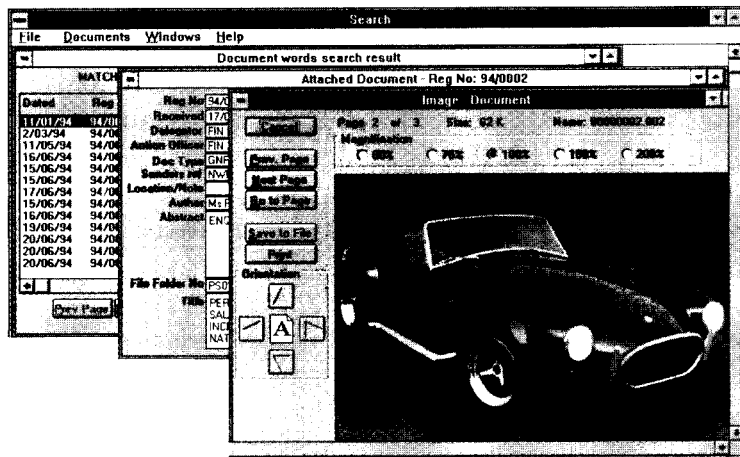
Consulting services are available across the whole range of records and information management areas, including systems analysis or electronic based systems development, project management, indexing/cataloguing/sentencing and IT RMS solutions.

**Inquiries: Gary Pask  
Brambles Records Management  
Ph (03) 9706 5169**

# The Paperless Office - A Reality for \$199

Every business wastes up to 5% of its annual budget on time lost trying to find, (or recreate), lost or "misplaced" paper documents, file folders and electronic documents. Your business is probably losing tens or hundreds of thousands of dollars each year because your staff do not have immediate access to key documentation. In other words, you can add up to 5% to your bottom line just by managing documents more effectively.

Using DocFind you can scan and/or enter an abstract of all incoming correspondence; scan, index, store and display letters, reports, newspaper articles, colour photographs; capture word-processing, spreadsheet, image, database and ASCII files. DocFind automatically indexes all words, dates and numbers in the title, description and abstract fields; finds any information instantly via free text, partial word and phrase searches and provides the ability to create multiple databases.



The same technology that GMB provides to hundreds of major organisations is now available in a brand new package specifically designed for the small business and home user.

GMB have recently launched a brand new product - DocFind for Windows. DocFind is a revolutionary product incorporating all of the sophisticated features and sizzle of GMB's premier product, RecFind-Corporate. Simply put, DocFind is a complete paperless office in a box, designed for easy installation by the small business user, with a comprehensive manual, tutorial and on-line help for each and every function.

Any information within DocFind can be "exported" to other packages just as information in other packages can be "imported" to DocFind. You can for example, export a scanned image to an OCR package and then re-import it as ASCII text. You could also build your database by importing it from a comma delimited file, just as you can export your database to another application as a common delimited file. DocFind is the most "open" document management application available today.

DocFind interfaces smoothly with a large range of electronic document formats including ASCII, Hex, Graphics (BMP, TIFF, PCX, DIB,

Targa, IMG, WPG, JPG, DCX, WMF, EPSF) Icon, MSWord, Word for Windows, WordPerfect, WordPerfect for Windows, AMI, DBase, Paradox, Lotus, Excel, ZIP, LZH, Quattro Pro for Windows, Windows Sound files ie WAV, Windows Meta files ie WMF, Q&A for DOS, Q&A for Windows, MSWorks, Works 3 Database, MSWrite. DocFind supports any scanner with a Twain interface, eg HP Scanjet Plus, HP Scanjet IIC, IIP, IICX, HP Officejet LXLogitech ScanMan 256, Logitech Fotoman, Microtek Scanmaker IIXE, Ficus Leoscan 610, Canon IX4015 and many more.

When you decide everyone on the Network needs access to DocFind, multi-user network versions are available. DocFind can be installed on your file server and then additional copies installed with a workstation installation procedure.

DocFind for Windows only requires a 386 CPU, 4MB memory, MS Windows 3.1, 3.5 floppy drive and 30 MB of hard disk space.

So think again, are you wasting time and money searching for lost information? Is your document management system equipped to protect you during litigation, government investigation or audit? At \$199 GMB's "Paperless Office in a Box" could be the solution.

DocFind and RecFind are designed and developed by GMB at their head office in Sydney. A 1800 help line is available to support and advise you, so you are never left wondering what to do next.

**Inquiries: Louise Lindop  
GMB Records & Information  
Management Solutions.  
Ph (02) 418 6333.**

# NEW PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

## The New "FastFile" The Records Management System for the Paper + Paperless Office

**F**astFile now offers you the best of both worlds with the new version to be released in September 1995. The new FastFile allows you to manage all your hardcopy documentation as well as electronic objects and image files. Electronic objects can be scanned images, animation, digitized sound, video, graphics, spreadsheets, etc.

The choice on how to store your information will be yours. You decide the mediums in which to store your information. You decide what you need to store as hardcopy and/or electronically.

The new FastFile will allow you to index all this information with ease and precision. Additionally you will be able to view/print, in the FastFile Indexes Find module, any electronic object file associated with your loaded Windows application software.

**Access to stored information is the prime objective of the FastFile record management system.**

FastFile is an established computerised records management package composed of the advanced Keyword index and methodology, recognised as the Australian Standard for organising information storage with the incorporation of barcode tracking.

FastFile, developed in Australia by CentreTech, provides an efficient and easy to use records management system.

The Keyword system has been in use in Australia since the early 1970's. It has gained widespread acceptance as it brings a tried and tested

dimension of office administration whilst providing a simple standardised and easy to understand and use methodology. In particular the methodology is person independent - not relying on the particular thought processes of any individual. Records can be paper documents, images, tapes or almost any item or mixes of different media.

Suitable for Standalone PC or Novell Network systems with MS Window. The Windows based software is designed for use in both the large and "small office" organisation.

### WHAT MAKES FASTFILE SPECIAL

*Grouping into Classes* - The Keyword is the first word of the file title. A comprehensive list of Keywords, contained in the Thesaurus, is used to control the use of language in the creation of file title categories. The standard Thesaurus is intended as a guide and can be utilised in full or amended to as required.

Once the appropriate file title category (Keyword) is selected from the Thesaurus, the information to be filed is automatically assigned a code reference.

With a further facility of allowing up to eight descriptors for each file/document. With user determined prompts FastFile offers the user fast search and speed of retrieval whether there are hundreds or tens of thousands of records.

All information is precisely indexed for storage and retrieval purposes.

*Further Language control* - Banned Terms List. This important feature



of FastFile eliminates confusion by not allowing the use of synonyms or homonyms. Words such as "personal", "staff" and "contractors" convey different meanings to different users. FastFile overcomes this problem through use of the Banned Terms List. This list can be enhanced to reflect words particular to the user's organisation.

*File Reference or Number* - Each file title has a unique code reference. A maximum of eight descriptors can then be assigned for each Main file which in turn can have subfiles.

File titles are created by adding descriptors to a category name/Keyword.

FastFile will again generate a specific reference number as an extension to the code reference for each specific file. This reference acts as an address for all files.

*Essential codes* - Specific to the File reference, colour coded reference/stickers are placed on file folders for faster retrieval from housing. The folders and cabinets are designed to house files effectively for fast filing and retrieval. Every separate grouping of files for a special purpose or because they are used only by a group of people (Department) are assigned a File Station code to enable these collections to be indexed separately. The colour coding provides visible indication of misfiling.

*Protection and Security* - Attached to the title is a single letter code indicating the degree of protection and the degree of security from unauthorised access required in both cases.

*Borrow facility (with the optional use of barcoding)* - Includes a User Register for all Departments and allocates security on two levels.

Firstly, by restricting the ability of users to see or change information.

Secondly, restricting the types of files allowed to be borrowed.

Borrowing information is entered either by keyboard or barcode scan, detailing the file reference number and person requesting the file. If the user has the requisite authority, borrowing is facilitated. If the file is already borrowed when requested, resubmissions are entered and files are allocated when they become available.

The barcode facility allows for direct scanning of information, and the remote collection of data for down loading to FastFile.



*Retention code* - All records pass through a life cycle, from creation through active use, thence to inactivity and final disposition (destruction or accession into an archive). Available for selection is a Retention Schedule based on either statute or organisational policy.

*Annual or Reference File Code* - All records fall into two categories. Either they age rapidly and can be transferred out of the active file housing annually or they must be retained for on-going active reference purposes. Should the subject of an annual file occur again the following year, a new cover with the same file title and reference could be opened.

*Index* - An index is the key to finding stored information.

Reports on Key Word Out of Context (KWOC) i.e. Descriptors in alphabetical order, Sequential Files and Old File Reference numbers can be printed for one or more Keywords or File Stations or for all files.

*Search and Retrieval* - The index facility also allows the user (skilled or novice) to search for files using Boolean expressions of the descriptors pertinent to that file and if required to print the results of that search and/or activate any associated electronic object.

*Inactive records* - This facility enables files no longer required to be archived. It also maintains details of the contents of the archives and allows retrieval of the information.

Security of Information, Thesaurus, Banned terms list, Borrow facility, Indexes (including Key Word Out of Context),

Reports, Inactive and archived files are a few of the purposeful features of the FastFile system.

FastFile allows for a step by step system designed for ease of data entry to retrieval and File can be used in a very simple fashion or implemented as a full professional records management system without compromising ease of use.

The FastFile system incorporates the optional use of the Barcoding/Tracking/Printing facility, and the Computer Based Tutorial (which is included in all FastFile software programs).

**For further information and/or obligation free demonstrations contact CentreTech Computer Products.**

**Ph (02) 9906 8900  
Fax (02) 9906 8939.**

# PRODUCT INFORMATION GUIDE

Yes I would like to know more about the following products  
which appeared in INFORMAA Quarterly - Volume Eleven  
Number Three. (Please Tick)

Name: .....

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..... Postcode: .....

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- ☐ Page 5 Brambles Records Management
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- ☐ Page 21 Opticon
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We understand your needs.**

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- Twenty representatives across Australia providing the ultimate in service.
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## **FORMFILE**

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