INFORMAA
QUARTERLY

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Contributions in the form of articles, case studies, letters, book reviews, are welcome. Please include brief biographical information e.g. position, place of work, previous experience and qualifications and a black and white photograph.
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

CONTENTS

RMAA National Convention 1995

'Redefining Records Management

Melbourne, 18-21 September 1995

What can you expect?

- Interaction, enlightenment & an explosion of ideas.
- Contact with the best minds in the business.
- The chance to broaden your experience by using the experience of others.
- A wealth of case studies - from local government, state government and private organisations.

Over the three days of the convention, you will be able to hear speakers with a wide range of backgrounds; to participate in discussion groups and workshops; to discover ways of coping with an expanding information universe.

The keynote address will be given on the opening day (19 September) by Professor Ashley Goldsworthy of Bond University.

The presentations that follow will include:

- Remote Computing - Implications for Recordkeeping
- The Changing Nature of the Australian Organisation
- Data Management from the IT Perspective
- Managing Change - Lessons Learnt from the Local Government Restructuring Experience
- Other Avenues for Professional Development
- Records as a Part of a Re-Engineered World
- The Role of the Records Manager
- Diversification of Records Management in the Modern Environment
- Standards and the Implications for Recordkeeping
- Organisational Accountability and the Challenges for Records Managers
- Ways of Thinking about Appraisal and Disposal in the Modern Office
- Whole of Government Records Management System - the South Australian Experience

It's not all business. There will be a welcome cocktail party on Monday 18 September. There will also be plenty of opportunities for social activities and informal discussion; and one of the largest trade exhibitions to browse through.

Cost of early bird registration for RMAA members is $550 and this includes morning and afternoon tea and lunch each day, the convention dinner and your own copy of the papers presented. Registration fee for non-members is $650.
A late fee of $50 will be charged after 30 June.

It would take more than one lifetime to acquire the knowledge and the breadth of expertise that you may sample at the convention. The new ideas, and the new life breathed into old ones, will re-energise you professionally. And you'll have the chance to meet others who work in the records management field - many more others than you would normally meet. These are people who think as you do, who speak your language and share your ideals.

Further information from:
Waldron Smith Management,
93 Victoria Avenue, Albert Park, Victoria 3206
Phone (03) 690 6744
Fax (03) 690 7155

When you consider the benefits of attending the 1995 RMAA National Convention, you may like to ask yourself: Can I afford not to attend?

President's Message
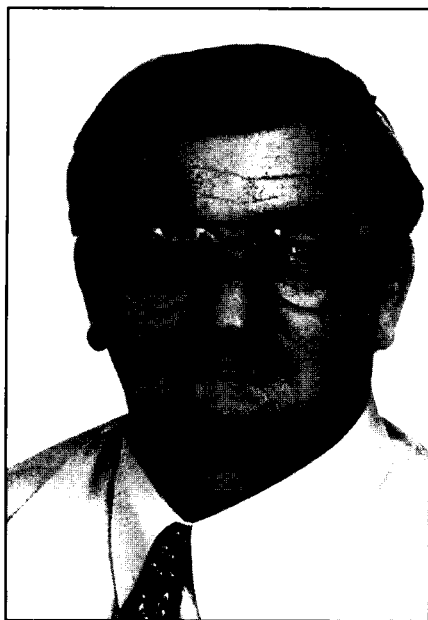
I believe that the Association has had a tremendous start to the New Year. It has come as a direct result of the many far reaching decisions made at the meeting of Federal Directors in February, 1995. The decisions have resulted in a number of key policies being developed which will contribute to significant savings in the management of our finances, provide higher levels of accountability and assist in the planning of new initiatives.

Some of the key issues that were addressed at our February meeting include:

1. Strengthening Financial Management Practices

Prior to the meeting of the Federal Directors, a meeting was convened for the Association's Treasurers. The purpose of this meeting was twofold. Firstly, it had become increasingly evident that a number of key issues needed to be addressed, particularly funds management, payment of levies and audit requirements.

Secondly, it was necessary to conduct a training course and workshop in the use of our financial and membership package [AIMS]. The meeting proved to be a resounding success and it clearly identified anomalies in our auditing processes, provided a forum for Treasurer's to discuss the AIMS package and enabled our Federal Treasurer to articulate policy on funds management. An outcome of the meeting was the realisation that significant savings could be made in the payment of auditing fees. In addition, we were able to frame improved procedures for the training of Branch Treasurers.

A special vote of thanks is also made to those members of the Association who made this event happen and to all State Treasurers whose active participation enabled the Association to develop sound procedures for the future management of our financial resources.

2. Referendum

A report was tabled concerning our name change by Greg Coleman, NT Federal Director. The majority of Federal Directors held the view that a name change was not warranted. Consequently the referendum will not proceed and the name RIMAA will no longer be registered.

3. Expenses for Federal Directors

A schedule of expenses payable to Federal Directors has been approved and the new schedule removes, once and for all, anomalies and misconceptions about financial entitlements payable to Federal Directors whilst they are acting on behalf of the Association.

4. Competency Standards

Excellent progress is being made with the Competency Standards and Ray Holswich and his team are to be congratulated on the performance thus far. A detailed report concerning the progress with the Competency Standards is available from the Federal Secretary.

5. Review of the Code of Ethics

A committee has been established to look at our Code of Ethics and to make recommendations concerning the reframing of the Code. The team comprises Denis Comber, Team Leader, Peter Crush [S.A.] and Greg Coleman [N.T.].

6. National Conventions

It has become increasingly evident that the Federal Council should become more involved in the strategies, direction and development of Annual Conventions. Accordingly, it was recognised at our meeting that there is a need to undertake a more coordinated approach to the conduct of this event.

To this end, the Federal Directors have voted to create a Federal management team which will comprise five members of the Federal Council. The new Steering Committee comprises Trich Wichman [Convenor] and the mandatory appointments of the Federal Vice President [Ray Holswich] and Federal Treasurer [Allan Kavanagh], Kate McCarthy and Neil Granland.

The Committee has been given the responsibility for reviewing current Convention guidelines and for developing new strategies. Their report and recommendations will be tabled at our next meeting in September 1995.

7. Development of a Marketing Plan

A marketing plan is to be written for the Association by Joy Siller [N.S.W.]. This plan is expected to be produced by July 1995.

8. Technology and Standards

The draft Australian Standards on Records Management are due for release in April 1995. Members are encouraged to obtain a copy of the Standards. Enquiries can be addressed to Mr. P. Treseder, Standards Australia, TelephonE Sydney (02) 746 4700 or facsimile (02) 746 4700.

9. Review of Strategic Plan

The Association's Strategic PlAn has been thoroughly reviewed and a number of significant changes have been approved, namely:

• the amendment of the Mission and Vision statements with the deletion of the wording *'records and*

information management'. The two are not mutually exclusive.

• clearer and extended performance targets. A number of previous performance targets were strategies rather than performance targets.

• the addition of a new key result area *"Marketing"*.

A revised Strategic Plan incorporating these and other amendments will be drafted by our Secretary.

10. Production of Informaa Quarterly

On the recommendation of our Editor, we have decided to review our current publication practices which includes changing our mailing labels and distribution centre.

11. Guidelines for Professional Status Upgrade

A new set of guidelines is currently undergoing final editing. When this process has been completed the

document will be circulated to all Branch Secretaries for implementation.

As you can see, Federal Council, has been extremely active in the areas of administrative and financial reform. Although many of the reforms may not seem readily apparent, they have never the less enabled the Association to get on with the business of devoting more time and resources to issues related to the professional development of our members.

Furthermore, the introduction of a revised Strategic Plan and new Marketing Plan will enable the Association to maintain its impetus as an Industry leader and by extension, responding to the challenge of improving the quality and professional status of the Association and its membership.

Denis Comber ARMA
Federal President

Editorial

M inimum standards for the advancement in professional status of members were recently endorsed by Federal Council. Notwithstanding the amount of work - indeed controversy - involved in revising these guidelines I would argue that even more review and analysis of present and future trends is required if we are to elevate our professional status in the wider business community. Advancement in professional status is inextricably linked with education and training and in support of this contention I urge you to read Vicky Wilson's paper "Sources of Expertise". The message is clear : we can no longer rely just on experience, particularly for advancement to Member and Fellow.

One of the best ways of learning about the activities of our peers is via well documented case studies and we feature such an example of a back to the basics approach focusing on quality service undertaken by Regis Williams at Murdoch University.

Following a recent trend with articles in the Informaa, that legal issues underlie many records management functions and activities, we present the first of a two part paper on the legal aspects of information collection, data matching and privacy. Those who have come into contact with the Federal bureaucracy should appreciate and perhaps be concerned about the ramifications of data matching from the huge data bases that have emerged as outlined by Vicky Wilkinson and Patricia Looker.

Finally, electronic records and the activities of the Information Exchange Steering Committee are discussed by Lee Welch. Such an initiative from the Federal Department of Finance is to be applauded, but I am sure many readers would be interested to know what is happening (if anything) on these issues at state and local government level.

Ken Ridley ARMA
Chair Informaa Quarterly
Editorial Committee

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Centre Perth 6849

Notice of RMAA Annual General Meeting

N otice is hereby given that the 20th Annual General Meeting of the Records Management Association of Australia, will be held on Tuesday, 19 September 1995. It is to commence at 12.15am and will be held at the World Congress Centre, Melbourne, Victoria.

TO ALL MEMBERS

In accordance with the Articles of Association, notice is hereby given of the date and time of the Annual General Meeting of the Association.

Article 57 states: A member wishing to bring before an Annual General Meeting any motion of business not relating to the ordinary Annual Business of the Association, shall give notice thereof in writing to the Federal Council not less than forty five days before the day of the meeting and no business or motion other than the business brought forward by such council shall come before the meeting unless notice thereof has been so given.

The closing date for any items of business is 7 August 1995.

Michael Hangan ARMA
Federal Secretary

Sources of Expertise:
Education and Training for Tomorrow's Records and Information Manager

Vicky Wilson
Lecturer
Department of Library and
Information Science
Edith Cowan University
2 Bradford Street
Mt Lawley WA 6050

Vicky Wilson is a lecturer at the Department of Library and information Science at Edith Cowan University in Perth Western Australia where she teaches records management, information science and information services management. Vicky is heavily involved in developing distance education courses for records section personnel and has a particular interest in reshaping records management education to meet the needs of the next century.

Abstract: This paper reviews the international literature and presents a model for the future role of the professional records and information manager in the rapidly changing business environment. In doing this, it draws on the recommendations of the Education Forum at the RMAA Hobart conference and on the opinions of the international commentators. It discusses this model in the context of the differing philosophies tertiary institutions have adopted towards the design of records management courses in Australia.

INTRODUCTION

There really is no doubt that traditional records management is dying. Even a brief survey of the recent records management literature serves to confirm this fact (McKenna, 1993, p. 19; Coulson 1993, p. 21; Diers, 1992, p.9; Dmytrenko, 1992, p. 20). Perceived wisdom suggests that the central registry is disappearing as rapidly as the central typing pool or the mainframe computing centre (Gable, 1993, p. 18; Ellis, 1991, p. 280) and that the role of the records manager is being dramatically redefined by various forces in the business environment, including the advent of the personal computer and distributed processing (Dollar, 1993, p. 41; Stephens, 1994, p. 56), the trend towards decentralised records management, the 'empowerment' of the office worker and the consequent fragmentation of the information management environment (Coulson, 1993, p. 24; Dollar, 1993, p. 41; Eccleston, 1993, p. 6).

In addition, the 're-engineering' of organisations through 'interdepartmental functional teams' (Ross, 1992, p. 10; Dmytrenko,

1992, p. 22; Hayes, 1989. p. 40) and other forces, such Information Resource Management (Dollar, 1993, p. 41), Quality Assurance Standards such as the ISO 9000 series (Weise and Stamoolis, 1993) and moves towards corporatisation, privatisation and outsourcing (Sanders, 1993, p. 38; Diers, 1993, p. 14; Ross, 1992, p. 4; Stephens, 1994, p. 58; Kohl, 1992, p. 8) are also impacting on the records and information manager's role.

As the electronic record establishes itself as the major medium of business communication, management techniques that have struggled to keep control of the relentless onslaught of a 'bazillion pieces of paper' (Constantini, 1994, p. 26) will become as antiquated and quaint as the use of the quill pen or the gestetner machine (Chartaby, 1991, p. 110).

This presents those of us involved in developing 'sources of expertise' with a major challenge; how can we, as educators, develop individuals capable of meeting the complex information requirements and corporate and social responsibilities of modern business organisations? How can we ensure that the 'corporate memory' with which we wish to be entrusted meets the information needs of the organisation and the demands of society for accountability in both public and private enterprise? How best can we metamorphose today's custodial 'records manager' into tomorrow's responsive and responsible 'records and information manager'?

THE DEBATE OVER EDUCATION

There has been no shortage of debate on these issues. Arguments over the advancement of professionalism in records management (Eccleston, 1993; Pemberton, 1994a; Pemberton and Pendergraft, 1990; Coulson, 1993; Penn, 1994; Wales, 1988, Rosenthal, 1990), over those areas of commonality and difference between 'information professionals', (McKemmish, 1992; Allen, 1992; Ellis, 1991) and whether records management can lay claim to a discrete body of 'theory' (Eccleston, 1993; Caunt, 1992; Brumm, 1992, p. 335; Pemberton, 1991, p. 53) have raged unabated for many years.

From all this debate has emerged some elements of consensus and some of disagreement about the direction of records management education that I would like to summarise here.

1. The Interdisciplinary Approach:

Nearly all commentators who have given this matter serious thought are agreed that an interdisciplinary approach to records and information management education is the most appropriate (Hayes, 1989, p. 40; Iacovino, 1994, p. 12; Pemberton, 1991, p. 53). They also agree that education of records and information managers is inextricably related with that of other information professionals such as archivists, librarians and information technologists (Hoo, 1988, p. 18).

The Education Forum at the 10th National Convention of the Records Management Association of Australia (RMAA) recognised that education for records and information managers should identify the links between the professions. It also articulated the need for tertiary courses that

incorporate elements of all the present information disciplines (Wheeler, 1993, p. 16; Onopko, 1994). Other commentators promote the use of a 'common core' in the education of all information specialists (White, 1991, p. 226; Pemberton, 1991, p. 53).

Pemberton suggests that what is needed is an interdisciplinary field of information studies within which specialised fields of study - records management, librarianship and archives - will be pursued after the core knowledge that applies to all fields is understood (Pemberton, 1991, p. 53). He goes on to identify five core areas of knowledge common to all information disciplines that he advocates as part of the interdisciplinary field:

- a comprehensive view of the life cycle of information

- the fundamentals of information storage and retrieval

- information representation (eg., cataloging, database configuration)

- the management of information resources and services

- the ethical foundations of information systems and services'

(Pemberton, 1991, p. 53)

White takes a different approach and gives one example of an integrated curriculum for Information Management as being:

- Management techniques

- Physical Resources Management

- Human Resources Management

- Management Theories

- Management Principles and Practices

- Financial Resources Management

- Organisational Theory

- Marketing

(White, 1991, p. 228)

While there may be considerable argument about the content of the core knowledge areas, this approach engenders mutual respect and cooperation amongst information professionals and an understanding of the contribution that all information professionals have to make to creating integrated information systems.

Other commentators recognise the value of an interdisciplinary approach but identify fundamental differences between records managers, archivists, librarians and data processing personnel that make a totally generic approach inappropriate. Sue McKemmish provides us with a very clear exposition of the differences between the 'unitary' and 'pluralist' concepts of recorded information and makes a strong case for maintaining a differentiation between the training of librarians on the one hand and records managers and archivists on the other. She argues for the development of parallel course structures that would provide the 'opportunity for dialogue and the challenge of diversity' (McKemmish, 1992, p. 112).

2. The Relationship with Other Information Professions:

Given that the links between records management and the other information disciplines are accepted, it is important to define how close those links should be and how they should be reflected in the academic course structure.

Records Management and Librarianship

Most commentators feel that the most appropriate place for records and information management education at the tertiary level is within the library and information science area. The reasons for this are that the interdisciplinary nature of records and information

management will never justify the establishment of independent schools or faculties within the universities. Library and information science is a well accepted and established tertiary discipline that, like records management, focuses on 'organising, storing and retrieving information' (Brumm, 1992, p. 334). It is likely to provide a more hospitable environment for the development of serious records and information management courses than the schools of business or information systems, where the foci are at present, quite different (Pemberton, 1981 and 1991, p. 53; Brumm, 1992, p. 334).

Records Management and Information Technology

All information professionals are inescapably wedded to technology either to meet the demands of the business community or to provide adequate standards of accountability in both the public and private sector. Not least among the arguments for records managers and archivists to develop a closer relationship with computer personnel is so that we can promote the development of recordkeeping systems that take into account the transactional nature of records (Upward, 1993). Poor communication has been a source of tension in the past and mutual benefits can be gained from far closer cooperation between the two groups (Ellis, 1991, p. 284; McKenna, 1993, p. 20; Gable, 1993, p. 19; White, 1991, p. 225).

Effective communication should begin in the educational institutions where close relationships can be established between schools of library and information science and schools of information technology and/or information systems.

The Education Forum at the 10th National Convention of the RMAA

in Hobart emphasised the need for any Records and Information Management courses at the higher levels to have a strong technology focus (Wheeler, 1993, p. 16).

Livia Iacovino comments that the Graduate Department of Librarianship, Archives and Records at Monash University moved into the Faculty of Computing and Information Technology in 1994 and that this has opened up exciting new possibilities, especially in the area of electronic records management (Iacovino, 1994, p. 10). The Department of Library and Information Science at Edith Cowan University is also in the School of Mathematics, Information Technology and Engineering and the relationship is proving to be a happy one, with major cooperation in areas of mutual interest such as multimedia and electronic records.

Records Management and Archives

Most archivists and many records managers recognise the complementary nature and symbiotic relationship of the two professions and dismiss the 'anachronistic tension' between them (Brumm, 1992, p. 335; Rosenthal, 1991, p. 42; Sanders, 1989, p. 12; Dan, quoted in White, 1991, p. 226; Walker, 1989. p. 20).

Charles Dollar argues that the organisation and use of electronically-recorded information makes it imperative that archivists and records managers understand how their disciplines are engaged in a joint enterprise (Dollar, 1993, p. 37). He identifies three fundamental concepts that delineate the common ground between records managers and archivists and differentiates them from other information professionals: records integrity, records disposition and records accessibility (Dollar, 1993, p. 43). That the concerns of records managers and archivists are

inextricably linked by these concepts is, I believe, beyond argument.

Livia Iacovino (1994, p. 3) and other members of the Graduate School of Librarianship, Archives and Records at Monash University maintain that the distinction between records managers and archivists is artificial and the result of a basic misunderstanding of European archival traditions in the United States. The School contends that the life cycle concept as propounded by records managers is moribund and should be replaced with the concept of the 'records continuum', where records managers and archivists are part of the same process and exist simultaneously 'side by side' (White, 1991, p. 227). They claim that artificial divisions between the two groups arise out of the lack of an adequate construct to explain 'the processes of creating and maintaining recorded information arising out of transactions'. They argue that the concept of the 'archival document' that they have developed fulfils this role (McKemmish, 1991, p. 19; Upward, 1991, p. 50; McKemmish and Upward, 1993, p. 1). Frank Upward goes further than this and maintains that the new theories of the 'archival document' and transactional mapping support the contention that records managers are archivists (Upward, 1993). He admits this to be an extreme view and it is one that ignores the information services aspect of records management in favour of the audit and accountability role.

On the other side of the coin, the English commentator Kiran Chartaby argues that giving records managers a totally archival training and discipline is akin to developing 'information officers with the training and discipline of librarians'. She argues that the traditional cultures of both archivists and librarians have been passive and

reactive and are inappropriate to the demands of contemporary job roles that are proactive and assertive (Chartaby, 1991, p.112). Her stance represents the other extreme of this debate in that it ignores the accountability-recordkeeping aspect and does not acknowledge recent efforts by both archivists and librarians to reinvent their own roles.

No one can deny that modern archival theory as expounded by David Bearman and our colleagues at Monash is making an enormous and exciting contribution to records and information management. They are also justified in stating that the theory 'shifts attention from the information delivery concerns that records managers share with other information management professionals to processes that are their exclusive concern' (McKemmish, 1994). Links between accountability and recordkeeping also suggest a 'strong

social mission for recordkeeping professionals' (McKemmish, 1994) that can only advance records and information management towards professional status. However, it is important to maintain a balance between the accountability-recordkeeping nexus and the information services aspects of records and information management. This is where archival educational philosophy, at least in its present form, may not be totally appropriate.

A very recent international study by Ann Pederson of 201 archival educators (Pederson, 1993) suggests that they do not consider records and information management as a particularly important part of their curriculum and that they remain strongly committed to their wider social, cultural and historical roles. None of the respondents considered management knowledge appropriate for entry level professional archivists and only one respondent

recommended a total records focus, rather than only archives. The day-to-day concerns of 'coal-face' records managers in the modern business environment are unlikely to receive the attention they deserve in this context. While there is no doubt that there should be very strong links developed between the two educational strands, that there should be a deliberate sharing of ideas and discussion and support in areas of mutual concern, I feel there are inherent dangers in subsuming records management education totally into an archival context. David O. Stephens believes it is difficult for records management to realise its full potential as a management discipline unless it evolves from the archival profession into its own independently recognised professional endeavour (Stephens, 1993, p. 56). In an article written in 1991, Pemberton comments that 'by definition,

records management can achieve professional status only when a professional education is available to all practitioners' (Pemberton, 1991, p. 50). In the same article, he goes on to maintain that individual 'courses' within another degree program are insufficient and that professional education requires its own program (Pemberton, 1991, p. 50). I would return to Sue's own words quoted earlier in this paper and suggest the development of parallel course structures that provide the 'opportunity for dialogue and the challenge of diversity' (McKemmish, 1992, p. 112) is just as appropriate for records managers and archivists as it is for librarians. Other commentators share this attitude. Robert Sanders, in his article Archivists and Records Managers: a marriage in trouble? (Sanders, 1989. pp. 12-20), explores some of these issues with great care and I recommend his paper to those of you who would like to pursue this debate further.

A MODEL FOR RECORDS AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

While debates over the electronic record and the re-emergence of discussion of the concept of 'transactionality' are both thought-provoking and stimulating, we are still a long way from being able to totally abandon the custodial and paper-based techniques of our recent past. It is an uncomfortable truth that the vast majority of our records are still paper based and that we are a long way from implementing, on any large scale, the theories of electronic records management that are being propounded. Until the legality and veracity of the electronic record can be established 'beyond reasonable doubt' and the technologies of scanning and storing images become as all pervasive as the personal computer and the network, traditional paper-based records

management techniques will remain an important component of any practical records management program (Diers, 1992, p. 10).

However, a paradigm shift is occurring. We are moving from what has been an exclusively custodial role to a more authoritative and advisory role, in which intellectual custody of the record, whatever its format, will still remain an important element. The following model illustrates the way in which the records management functions may continue to contribute to organisational effectiveness and meet organisational obligations for accountability, regardless of the medium of the records or the impact of further technological change. I am indebted to Dagmar Parer of Australian Archives for introducing me to the very useful definition of records as either personal, workgroup or corporate.

intellectual control of the recordkeeping functions of the organisation will be maintained through the implementation of carefully designed electronic recordkeeping systems that 'capture complete, accurate, reliable and useable records' (McKemmish, 1994). These systems will be developed in conjunction with experts in information systems and data-processing. Outsourced records management functions will remain a major responsibility for the records and information manager.

The environment in which the organisation operates determines its administrative and information requirements. The records manager will be one of those responsible for meeting those requirements and will develop policies, standards and strategies in conjunction with other information professionals to deliver services in the most efficient and cost-effective manner.
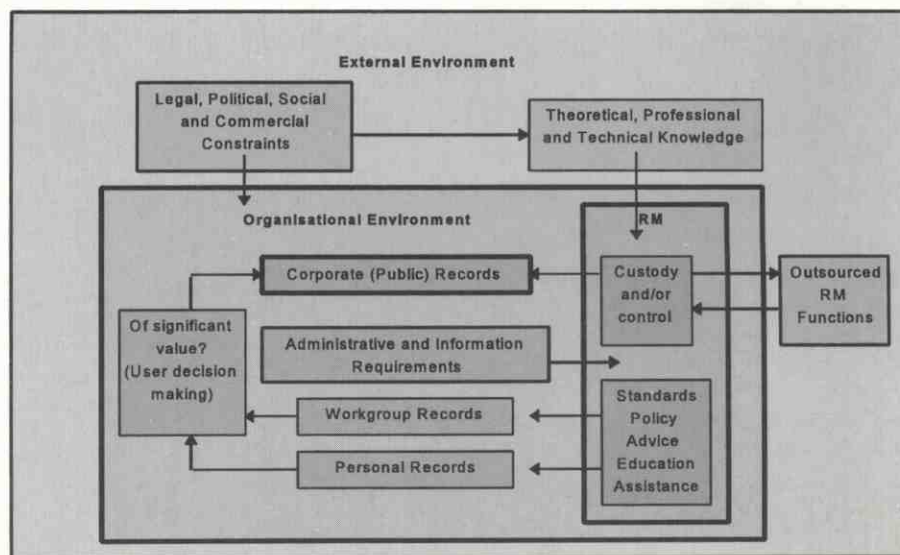

Figure 1: Records and Information Management - A Model for the Future.

In this model, the physical location or format of the records is irrelevant. Records managers are likely to continue to provide custodial services for corporate records, such as indexing and scheduling. Overall

The records manager will also have a professional understanding of the legal, ethical and social obligations of the organisation and a broad understanding of the constraints of the external environment. He/she will develop policies and devise systems to ensure that the standards of recordkeeping within the

organisation are capable of meeting those obligations. He or she will be ultimately responsible for ensuring the 'corporate record' is preserved and safeguarded, no matter what its format.

The initial decision-making process as to what constitutes a 'corporate record' rests with the creator of the record. This decision-making process will be supported through the design of the electronic recordkeeping systems, through the development of policies and standards and through the provision of education, advice and assistance to the action officers and support staff in the organisation.

PROFESSIONAL AND PARA-PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Central to the operation of this model is the theoretical, professional and technical knowledge of the records staff. The model also confirms the very high levels of managerial skills and theoretical understanding that will be demanded of records and information managers. The managers will continue to need both para-professional and clerical support staff for the foreseeable future, particularly if they continue to be responsible for the intellectual custody of the corporate record. Tasks such as indexing, abstracting, classification, data entry and scheduling will continue, regardless

of whether the record is in paper or electronic format. Because of the very high level of performance that will be demanded of tomorrow's records and information manager and the fact that there will still be important work at the para-professional and clerical level, it is imperative that we carefully differentiate between what is required of records and information managers, records technicians and records clerks (Eccleston, 1993, p. 5; Browne, 1992, p. 13; Hoo. 1988. p. 19; Pemberton, 1994b, p. 56). Not everyone is going to want to be a records and information manager, given the level of responsibility that this job will entail. If individuals do aspire to these positions, then it will be very important that they are recognised and accepted as highly educated professionals amongst other professionals and are recompensed accordingly. Both Rosemary Kaczynski and Judith Ellis have commented in the past on the fact that there were no standard requirements for attaching qualifications to positions in the records management field and that there were no awards or standard salary structures (Kaczynski, 1989, p. 16; Ellis, 1991, p. 278). Peter White, in addressing the 8th National Convention of the RMAA stated:

'Historically, records management has educationally lagged significantly behind the other

information professions. This in turn has meant that a low profile has been assumed and thus ultimately RM has suffered greatly from the lack of professional and business status and clout'. (White, 1991, p. 221)

The American commentator, Michael Pemberton writing three years later says:

'a continued lumping together of all levels of RIM personnel under the general heading 'records management' is a polite fiction which will serve only to perpetuate the widespread misperception that 'records manager' is but a 'fancy filing clerk'. (Pemberton, 1994b, p. 56)

At the 10th National Conference of the RMAA, participants in the Education Forum recognised the critical role of formal qualifications in leading to recognition for the profession (Wheeler, 1993, p. 16).

The real difference between professional, para-professional and clerical staff members is the difference between 'education' and 'training'. Formal education at the tertiary level develops the professional skills of reflection and analysis, the ability to see the larger picture and to understand and apply theory to the working environment. The hallmark of a professional is a graduate qualification that prepares someone for a career, rather than for a specific job. The graduate's professional practice is defined by

the professional body for that discipline, rather than by the employer (Pederson, 1993, p. 316; Pemberton, 1994b, p. 58-59).

Technical education concentrates on preparing individuals for a particular career but at a more task oriented and limited level than that of the professional. Technically educated individuals are not expected to take on responsibility for highly analytical processes or for systems design, although they may well assist with project planning, systems administration and other supervisory tasks. Training, on the other hand, concentrates on technique and task-specific skills that equip a person for work of limited scope, frequently defined by the employer (Pratt, 1990. p. 24). Training courses should be available to all staff - professional, para-professional and clerical - but they cannot provide participants with the same level of understanding as a fully fledged educational program.

At both the professional and the para-professional level, there are specific skills and qualities required. A recurring theme throughout the literature is the need for records and information managers to have a high level of knowledge and expertise in negotiation, strategic planning, organisational behaviour, systems theory, project management and evaluation, problem solving, cost-benefit analysis, risk-management and marketing (Coulson, 1993, p. 21; Eccleston, 1993, p. 5; Diers, 1992, p. 11; Summerville, 1992, p. 10; Sanders, 1993, p. 38; Dollar, 1993, p. 11; White, 1991, p. 223, 230; Wheeler, 1993, p. 16). In addition, records managers need highly developed interpersonal and communication skills (Ellis, 1991, p. 286) and skills to train users to take more responsibility for the day-to-day management of corporate records (Eccleston, 1993, p. 6; Penn, 1994. p. 70).

Pemberton and Wallace also explore

the skills-base that could be expected at the para-professional and clerical levels (Pemberton, 1994b, p. 60). The structures he discusses mirror those adopted by the Australian Library and Information Association in their *Work Level Guidelines for Librarians and Library Technicians.* Those structures underpin the development of courses in library and information science both at the para-professional and professional level in Australia.

RECORDS AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT EDUCATION: THE PRESENT SCENE

Given that the above review accurately reflects the opinions of the profession on directions for records and information management education, how have the post-secondary institutions responded to the challenge? I would like to begin with a brief survey of what is happening elsewhere in the English-speaking world before moving on to take a closer look at the Australian scene.

The United Kingdom:

Anne Mordell, writing about Britain in 1989, painted a grim picture of the state of records management education. At that time there were no professional qualifications in records management nor were there any degree programs. Training was limited to one or two day seminars conducted by practising records managers 'some of whom were in dire need of more education themselves' (Mordell, 1989, p. 34). Only two universities offered any serious courses in records management and then only as a component of a masters program in archive administration that included subjects such as English Law, Palaeography and Norman French (Mordell, 1989, p. 36). The only course that met the needs of practising records managers was not available to British participants

(Mordell, 1989, p. 38). Mordell cites the reason for this inertia as the perception of records management as being an obscure and totally non-academic field (Mordell, 1989, p. 55).

The 19th edition of '*British Qualifications*' (1993) and *Higher Education in the United Kingdom 1992-1993* list fourteen first degrees in Library and Information science with no mention of Records Management or Archives. However, Belfast, Aberystwyth, Ealing College and Queen Margaret College do offer first degrees in Information Management. Seven higher degrees are offered in the UK, of which three specialise in Archives and one, at Loughborough, is in Archives and Records Management. University College London offers a Certificate in Archive Administration and the program in Overseas Records Management and Archive Admin-istration mentioned by Ann Mordell earlier. There are also two Diplomas and one Postgraduate Diploma offered in Archive Administration.

The United States and Canada:

Pemberton (1991, pp. 50-54) comments that in 1991, there were no more than six general-purpose degree programs clearly defined at the bachelor's level in the US and Canada for records and information managers at junior, community and collegiate schools. Most existing post-secondary programs, as opposed to courses, were at a technical or para-professional level under a two year associate diploma or certificate program.

ARMA International produces an annual Education Liaison Directory that mainly records courses in colleges and universities. At 2800 US colleges there are 385 undergraduate and graduate majors available in 1991, but none in records management. Despite the fact that ARMA International produced a statement on

educational credentials for entry into the field of Information and Records Management in 1987, by 1991 it still was not recognised as an accrediting agency for academic programs. At the postgraduate level, records management is a component of the archival program. For instance, at the University of Pittsburgh there is a single records management/ information resource management course and three archives courses (personal conversation with Professor Richard Cox, June, 1994).

The situation in Canada appears to be even less favourable. The Commonwealth Universities Yearbook 1993 lists twelve programs in Library Science of which three are archival. There appear to be no records management courses although the University of Quebec offers one special certificate program entitled 'Gestion des documents administratifs et des archives'.

Australia:

Para-professional Education

International commentators who have looked closely at our education initiatives for records management compare them favourably to other countries. David O. Stephens, who spent considerable time in Australia in 1993 and 1994, was particularly complimentary about the National Curriculum Project, that provides a comprehensive records management curriculum for nationwide implementation at the TAFE level (Stephens, 1994, p. 59). The National Curriculum initiative is a very exciting development and Peter Smith and the other members of his team are to be congratulated on bringing such an ambitious project to fruition. The program consists of approximately twenty-five core courses arranged in three levels or 'modules' (Stephens, 1993, p. 60). Individual TAFE Colleges can design their own curriculum by picking and choosing between the

modules to create a course leading to the award of Certificate, Advanced Certificate, Associate Diploma or Diploma.

Stephens does highlight some obstacles that the TAFE project will have to overcome. Firstly, we still do not have an Australian textbook that can adequately meet our base level training needs. Secondly, and more seriously, it will be very difficult to find well-qualified instructors for such comprehensive programs (Stephens, 1994, p.59). Only a tiny minority of practitioners in Australia have any formal qualifications in records management or a related field. The only people available to conduct these programs are individuals who have learned records management on the job and in an incomplete, patchwork fashion. These people are experts in the areas where their companies or departments have used them and most try to learn more about the field through day courses and seminars. Unless they are exceptionally talented and motivated independent learners, their view of the field will inevitably be skewed and 'comparable to that from a laparoscope being thought to be the best way to understand what the human body looks like' (Mordell, 1989. p. 36). We need, in essence, to 'train the trainers' to a higher level of competence and understanding than the students in their care, otherwise we run the risk of producing graduates who are incapable of meeting the challenges ahead of them. This would have disastrous consequences for our credibility with the other information professions and with the wider business community.

This is one reason why it is imperative that TAFE level courses are not the only courses available to records and information managers. Another compelling reason is that the qualities and skills that will be demanded of tomorrow's professional

records and information manager simply cannot, and should not, be taught at a para-professional level. This is not to denigrate a technical level education in any way. The first two modules of the National Curriculum program and several courses from the advanced level, if competently taught, will provide us with a pool of expertise of world class quality - but they will not be records and information managers.

In an effort to provide a comprehensive education, the advanced module of the National Curriculum program attempts to develop a structure for 'fully qualified' records managers. However, only four of the ten courses - Ethical and Legal Issues in Records Management, Marketing Records Management, Information Resource Management and Researching Information, appear to address issues identified as important to the development of the professional records manager.

Where are the management skills of strategic planning and systems theory, project management, organisational behaviour, problem solving and communication - all of which are regarded as critical by writers in the field? Where is the emphasis on the transactional nature of the recorded information and the processes of accountability and information management that are considered so important by the archivists?

Even if these elements are intended to form part of the TAFE curriculum, are we not still trying to do far too much at this level? People enrol in a TAFE course either because they are interested in working at the para-professional level or because they are unable or unwilling to meet the educational standards required for entry into University. Is it fair to expect them to complete what would, if properly taught, be an extremely heavy and

challenging University course and then award them (if they survive) with an Associate Diploma? If we water the content down to a level appropriate to the students who have enrolled and then, on graduation, call them 'records managers', will they be credible in the eyes of other information professionals and the business community? I do not believe that we can escape from the conclusion that a professional discipline must have a professional education at the graduate and post-graduate level.

The challenge, articulated by participants at the Education Forum of the 10th National Convention in 1993, is to develop professional level courses in cooperation with para-professional and further education and to present a coordinated spectrum of educational offerings from technical to postgraduate and research level, so that prospective students can choose those programs that most suit their temperaments, experience and talents (Wheeler, quoted in White, 1991, p. 222; Wheeler, 1993, p. 16). In particular, we must make the transition from para-professional to professional as smooth as possible by providing recognition for prior learning, particularly in the first year of study.

This last issue was also discussed in some detail at Hobart (Wheeler, 1993, p. 16).

Professional Education

The tertiary institutions are responding to this challenge, even if the mix available at the moment is a little uneven. In the matrix of relevant courses identified by the Federal Education Committee of the RMAA published in November of last year (Wheeler, 1993, p. 15), there were six TAFE programs with a significant component of records management and four undergraduate programs. The 1994 edition of the Directory of Postgraduate Study lists

Curtin, Edith Cowan, Monash, Canberra, New South Wales and Melbourne as offering postgraduate courses, ranging from Graduate Diplomas to PhDs in both Archives and Records Management. Many of these are research degrees where the individual student defines the area of study and is supervised on a one-to-one basis while preparing a thesis. The availability of postgraduate and research study programs suggests a willingness on the part of the educational institutions to further develop the theoretical and research base of records and information management, a theme often discussed in the literature (Caunt, 1992; Eccleston, 1993; Brumm, 1992, p. 335; Pemberton, 1991, p. 53). However, such offerings presuppose a reservoir of suitably qualified graduates ready to pursue advanced study in the field, something that I believe to be lacking at present.

Of the four undergraduate offerings,

one - at the University of Sydney (Cumberland) is in Health and Information Management and outside the scope of this paper. The second is a six unit elective major in Information and Records Management at the University of Canberra that can be undertaken as part of any undergraduate program that permits studies in 'another field' (Personal communication with Elaine Eccleston, June, 1994). Advanced standing can be awarded at the discretion of the course coordinator.

In Western Australia, Curtin University offers a Bachelor of Applied Science (Records Management) and as such is unique in offering the only fully-fledged undergraduate Records Management program in the country. This degree has been substantially revised and now shares a common core with the other undergraduate offerings in the School of Information and Library Studies. The common core covers information management,

database management, information resources and indexing theory. Courses from other disciplines such as computing, general management and office organisation are also integrated into the program.

Edith Cowan University is launching a six unit minor in Records Management in 1995 that will be attached to the degree of Bachelor of Applied Science (Communications and Information Technology). The B.AppSci (CIT) offers a comprehensive introduction to the new communications and information technologies for students who are interested in practising in other fields but need a strong technology base to operate effectively. At present, students studying business, management, accounting, computer studies, multimedia and several other disciplines are all undertaking this degree. Advanced standing can be offered in recognition of prior

learning. This is negotiated on a case-by-case basis.

COURSE RECOGNITION AND ACCREDITATION

A major theme of the Hobart discussions was the role the RMAA has to play in setting national education standards. A major role of any professional body is the recognition and/or accreditation of educational programs in post-secondary institutions. Of the two processes, accreditation is the more rigorous. In this process, the qualifications of the academic staff and the content of the individual courses are reviewed and the physical facilities offered to students are inspected. Course recognition, on the other hand, is more of an information gathering exercise and does not exert any formal quality control on the organisation. The RMAA has prepared a draft paper on course recognition but feels that accreditation is premature at this stage (Wheeler, 1993, p. 14). For the RMAA to accredit courses, it must be able to draw on the expertise of a group of records and information managers who have themselves obtained professional qualifications and who know what is required of students and staff. As yet, there are not enough of these individuals to take on such an onerous task. However, in terms of promoting the credibility of records and information management as a professional activity, I feel that formal course accreditation is a vital element and that the RMAA should look to adopting this role as soon as it becomes practical.

CONTINUING EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Continuing education and training for practising records managers is another essential ingredient in the educational spectrum and one that was discussed in some detail at Hobart

(Wheeler, 1993, p. 16). In Australia, the RMAA, the universities and the State Records Management Offices are all very active in this area, as are a number of private consultancy firms. Courses, seminars and conferences range from a few hours to several days and attempt to cover issues of immediate concern such as Keyword File Titling and Indexing, Retention and Disposal Scheduling, Records Automation, Electronic Records and Legal Issues.

A particularly difficult area of continuing education is providing programs for highly experienced people who are totally without qualifications. Such programs would reinforce the status and credibility of the individuals within their own organisations and would serve as a preparation for further academic study. This is a challenge that I feel it is appropriate to address at the tertiary level and that has yet to be resolved. If they were to be developed, such programs should provide participants with opportunities to develop their professional, rather than their para-professional skill levels. They should concentrate on introducing them to a broad range of higher level concepts, while accommodating their expertise in discrete areas. They should be of relatively short duration and be offered either off-campus or at night, so that they can be successfully completed by working individuals within a reasonable time frame. While such courses would not award a graduate qualification, on successful completion it should be possible to 'fast track' participants through the provision of 'advanced standing' in established tertiary courses.

PROFESSIONAL STATUS

Records and information managers will not establish an identity until they can demonstrably prove their authority over a discrete knowledge area. The educational institutions can

define that knowledge area as a unique combination of interdisciplinary theory and practical knowledge but they cannot lay claim to it in the wider business community. That must come from the Records Management Association of Australia and it must be unequivocal. This means that the RMAA must demand recognised professional qualifications before awarding professional membership. Doing so would allow the RMAA to openly welcome individuals who have established their credentials in other disciplines, on the proviso that they too can prove, through a Graduate Diploma or some other qualification, that they have mastered the professional discipline of Records and Information Management.

CONCLUSION

We still have a fair way to go along the road towards recognition of Records and Information Management as a professional discipline on a par with other, more well established occupations.

A mature and comprehensive education and training program and the establishment of professional status are major components of that recognition. However, the Records Management community in Australia has no reason to be ashamed of the progress being made. Personally, I am very optimistic about the future of Records and Information Management in Australia and feel that we are in an ideal position to take up a leadership role in the development and promotion of our occupation worldwide, if we should choose to do so.

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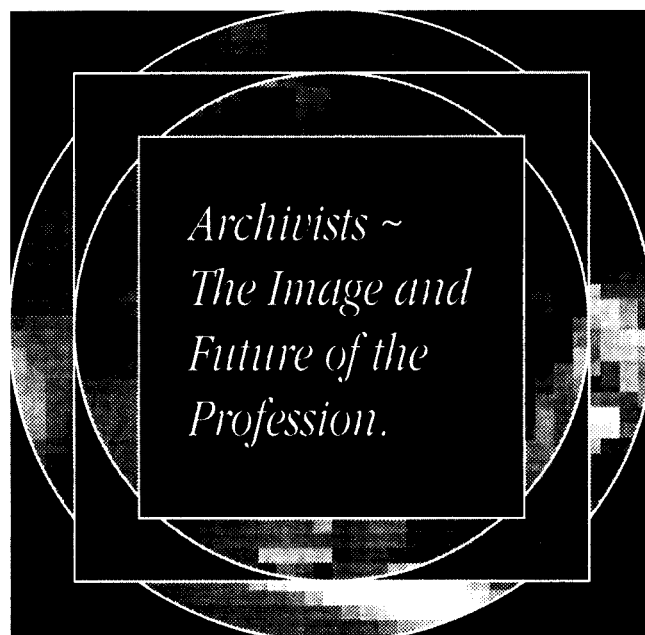
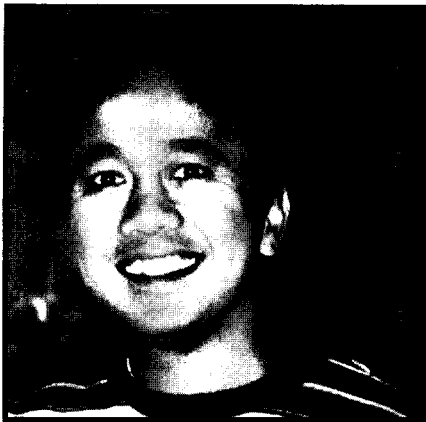Hyatt Hotel Canberra, Australia
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CASE STUDY

*By Regis Williams B. Bus.
University, Perth Western
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*R*egis Williams has been
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payroll systems.

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*He was appointed Records
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University in 1992.*

Abstract: State Government records
managers in WA have an active
network known as the Records and
Information Management Liaison
Group which, inter alia, exists to
promote professional development
of its members, raise the status of
records management and provide a
forum to discuss topical issues.

In 1994 The RIMLG launched its
inaugural Excellence in Records

Management Award. The award
was jointly won by the Murdoch
University (records manager Regis
Williams) and the Education
Department (records manager
Marita Keenan). Both winners
delivered a short paper at an RMAA
breakfast function held recently and
the following is the text from Mr
Williams's address.

INTRODUCTION

The Excellence in Records
Management Award presented an
opportunity for the Records Section
at Murdoch University to proudly
demonstrate what the section had
achieved in the area of records
management in the past 14 months.
By applying for the award:

• we wanted to endorse an award
that formally recognised the
importance of records management
and records personnel. Often the
records section in an organisation is
not given the status that it deserves
and its usefulness and importance is
underestimated

• we also wanted to document in
print what we had achieved in our
section and bring this to the
attention of senior management and
the award was an avenue where we
could do just that

• from a personal point of view,
the Records Clerk and I felt that we
had been successful in giving the
section a positive facelift by the
initiatives and changes we
implemented and if we were
successful in winning the award it
would only serve to enhance our
reputation as an important and

necessary link in the university's
administrative structure.

However we did doubt our chances
of winning the award given the
small scale of our records operations
compared to those organisations
competing for the same award. I
make the analogy of a small fish in a
big pond but we nevertheless reasoned
that the changes we implemented
were based on improving the quality
of records management practices to
which this award embodied.

Our application for the Excellence
in Records Management award
focussed on the importance of the
service delivery role of records manage-
ment i.e. improving and strengthening
the client relationship between the
Records Section and its users.

When the records clerk and I
commenced work in the section in
1993 we were surprised at the status
given to the records section. We
would hear comments like:

• "Oh, you're working in the
dungeon."

• "You have a degree, why are you
working in records (the inference being:
you're too good for a job like records)"

• "I've tried to look for this
correspondence everywhere and you
are my last resort."

When in fact the records section
should have been the first port of
call not the last.

One of the points on the selection
criteria that I had to address for the
position of Records Officer was "a
good memory". This was not
records management.

All these examples highlighted to us that staff still had stereotype perceptions of records work and records personnel.

QUALITY OF SERVICE

In order to correct these perceptions we felt it important to place emphasis on the quality of the service delivery role of records management - a client orientated approach to help build and promote confidence in the records section where information could be easily shared via central files and where future changes in records procedures and policies would be easily accepted.

From my experience in working in records management type work here and abroad, a records organisation can have the most aesthetically pleasing surroundings, up to date computerised records tools, organised colour coded records filing systems but all this is lost if the service delivery role is inadequate. One of the key objectives in records management is to render maximum service to users of the Records Section.

There exists at Murdoch University a strong culture towards improving the quality of management practices. The use of the Central Records Section at Murdoch University is very much dependent on the service provided by the section. Users of the records system expect a service that is co-operative, user friendly, reliable and dependable, and if they don't receive such a service, this will give rise to pockets of underground filing systems within an organisation.

The records section strives to maintain a reputation of efficiency, trust and confidence among its users. By providing such a service, it not only discourages sections from holding their own records personal filing systems but it encourages the free flow of information to Central Records. In this way, the records

section becomes the centre for information gathering, holding and retrieval.

We wanted to be Machiavellian in our approach where we saw ourselves as the "corporate memory" of the organisation: the only contact point for information request where staff would be dependent on us to respond to their needs thereby limiting or even eliminating all other options and focussing solely on the Central Records Section.

We adopted a motto for our section - "information should be shared" which we try to inculcate to staff.

This leads into the question on how did we achieve our objectives.

From experience, I have learned that in order to implement changes in an organisation one should understand the structure of the organisation first and the social culture that prevails. This is turn will determine whether the *softly softly* approach or the *sledge hammer* approach should be used.

At Murdoch University, the working environment is that of an intimate nature. By this, I mean that everybody knows everybody, there is no rigid formal hierachial structure and everyone is on a first name basis. It is one of a personable and friendly working community.

BACK TO BASICS

Our reputation would be built on staff impressions of our service. It became evident to us that if we were to change peoples impressions of the section and get them to utilise the section more frequently and encourage the flow of information to the records section, we would not only have to rely on "word of mouth" but we would also have to market our profile and let people know who we were and what services we had to offer i.e. become proactive and so began operation

"Back to Basics". We did in the following:

• seek, identify and target key sources of information. It has the hallmarks of an espionage plan but it was our way of understanding the information network at the organisational level. By understanding the information flow we could eventually channel information to central files. We identified secretaries to senior management as key personnel for the holding and despatch of correspondence. We also targeted new administrative staff to the university and made them aware of the records services available to them

• took control of delivering central files personally rather than send them through our internal mail system. This was to provide an efficient and personal touch to records service

• wrote a chapter on records and archives procedures for the university's administrative policies and procedures manual thereby registering the section as an integral part of the university's administration and importantly providing information to staff on correct records procedures. Information for the manual was taken from the comprehensive policies and procedures manual developed by us

• Email was installed on our system which meant that the records section was "bridging the gap of isolation" and we were now networked to staff on the campus and other outside bodies. This provided an efficient mode of communicating information

• visit sections and the Schools to discuss correct records keeping practices and archives policies and procedures

• the section also wanted to move laterally to give records management

a different dimension in terms of the type of service it had to offer. We did this by undertaking new responsibilities that previously might not have been traditionally classified in the realm of records functions. The reason for this is that we wanted to shake the traditional image of records work by highlighting to staff that we did more that just store and deliver files

The section became the contact point of all freedom of information (FOI) requests and we were responsible for preparing the annual FOI report to the FOI commissioner.

This promoted our reputation and profile among staff and it also enabled the Records Section to be more aware of what records and information were held around campus.

We also undertook to be site contacts of licenced software i.e. if any staff requested new software they would have to go via central Records. This paved the way for staff to be familiar with the records personnel and the section. It also gave the section access to up to date software.

POLICIES AND GUIDES

We prepared annual summaries of decisions of the two major university committees (Senate and the Board of Research) and circulated copies to staff. So if staff wanted to find out if a university policy had been ratified, rather than go through copious amounts of paper they would just need to look at the summaries provided.

• provide advice to staff on document control and holding

• we developed and circulated "Records/Archives Guide" training booklets to promote staff awareness of the records/archives systems and to also highlight to them records policies and procedures and the benefits and usefulness of the central Records section

• the records Classification Manual was redesigned to be more user friendly to encourage staff to quote file numbers on correspondence and to make them aware of the central files that exist in their area of work

• Retention and Disposal Schedules were developed to provide staff with a legal basis and a control for the retention and destruction of administrative and student records held within the university

• a publications database was established listing all university and non university publications held in central records for easy user reference

• file indexes were prepared to serve as a guide to correspondence on central files

Given the limited resources available, the Central Records Section designed and established, in house, various information databases on the Macintosh computer as finding aids to provide a more organised and efficient search and retrieval of information to its users. Previously such information was held in paper medium and locating information was cumbersome and laborious. By databasing the information we could select and manipulate the information we wanted and provide reports to staff as requested. The databases were designed:

• to supplement the records mainframe systems as a provider of information which at times provided a very slow response rate to queries

• to escape the stereotyped image of the typical records officer who is expected to be the only person in the organisation that remembers where every piece of correspondence is filed. This is not records management. The databases were designed to be part of the "corporate memory".

The gradual changes and initiatives introduced to the Central Records

Section were positively and favourably received by staff and this was measured through:

• feedback from senior management and general staff

• dramatic increase in the flow of information to central records

• increase in the usage of central files

• increase in the number of new borrowers

• increase in the number of new file creations

• increase in the number of queries

FORMAL RECOGNITION

However winning the inaugural Excellence in Records Management Award was the best testament to what we had achieved in the records section. It represented to us, that we were formally recognised and rewarded for our achievement in the area of records management and it importantly demonstrated the vital role that records personnel play in an organisation. The award recognised our contribution to the university's quality assurance program.

By winning the award, it served to enhance our creditability and authority in the organisation. As previously mentioned, sometimes records management and its personnel are afforded the creditable status that it deserves and by winning this award it not only reinforces its importance in the administrative structure. It was also satisfying to know that staff within the university from senior management to general staff were especially pleased for us and they felt it was an award that was well deserved.
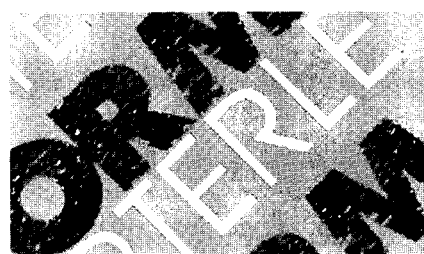
EDUCATION&TRAINING

Education and Training is a new section of INFORMAA QUARTERLY in which selected educational institutions can advertise course information on records management. For more information please contact:

Bernadette on (049) 29 7766

Information Collection, Data Matching & Privacy - Part 1

Vicki Wilkinson, Bachelor of Arts (CCAE), Grad Dip Computing Studies (CCAE), LLB (ANU - current)

Vicki's interest in the legal and technological aspects of records management developed through her work in the computing profession and her current studies in law. Privacy, security and accuracy of electronic records are major themes presented in Vicki's units at the University of Canberra. She is an active member of the University's Information and Communication Services Committee which is developing information and IT strategic policy for the University. She is currently a member of RMAA.

Patricia Looker, Teachers' Certificate (Wagga Wagga TC), BA (Biological Science) (Macquarie University), Grad Dip Office Management (University of Canberra).

Patricia's interest in records management began when she was challenged to develop practices and procedures for keeping records in various formats for students, for teaching resources, and for school archives. After joining the University of Canberra she taught in the information and records management units within the BA in Office Management. She is currently an associate member of RMAA.

We live in a society in which the privacy interests of the individual compete with the interests of the group, the society.

Society expects that governments will provide services and ensure economic prosperity. To accomplish this, governments collect a large amount of information on citizens. In conflict with this, individual citizens expect the government to respect and enforce their privacy.

Increasingly, individual Australians' privacy, their power to retain complete control over the maintenance, use and dissemination

of personal information has to be balanced against the interests of Government.

As society becomes more complex and requires Government to provide an increasing range of services, the control of the individual potentially becomes more tenuous.

"The more complex the society, the more likely it is that what the individual regards as personal and private information, will be required for some official or public purpose..... The provision of every service, at every level of government, means more records about individuals. ... To that extent, the right to privacy has to yield."[1]

Within this context, this balancing of individual rights against Government requirements, how does the increasing use of information technology (IT) affect the balance?

Information technology - a threat to individual privacy?

Information is the key to the relationship between Government and the individual, and personal information has always been gathered, stored and analysed by Governments.

The fact that Governments can use IT to vastly increase the scope of information kept about individuals, means that those threats to individual freedom that existed when manual systems were used are also expanded and magnified.

"...computerised information storages should be regarded as more than a simple alternative form of record-keeping. They should be regarded as an independent technological phenomenon with capacities and implications previously unanticipated and unappreciated."[2]

In addition to the vastly increased amounts of data that can be stored using IT, this technology can also be used to match and disseminate personal information with ease. With the advent of IT, cross matching of data is a relatively simple procedure that can be applied to a vastly increased number of individual records.[3]

Scope of threat

The potential impact of IT on the privacy of individuals was identified by the Australian Law Reform Commission ("ALRC") in its Report on Privacy in 1983.

The ALRC identified four major dangers arising from technological change:

1. the ability of computers to store, collate and transmit huge volumes of information;

2. an increased risk of unauthorised

disclosure by persons with authorised access;

3. the ability to store large amounts of information without the need for destruction, resulting in the retention of out-of-date and perhaps inaccurate records;

4. increased temptation for unauthorised access by outsiders.[4]

While this view of technology is held by a broad cross section of society, others argue that "computers are [not necessarily] anathema to privacy. It has been .. argued that the centralisation of data ... possible through computerised collection and storage ... has led to greater anonymity .... Not only is the information kept in computer-readable form, but access is reduced to essential personnel rather than the greater number demanded by a manual system."[5]

While this may be true to a limited extent, this argument fails to acknowledge the threats to privacy posed by data matching.

The issue of potential transgression of personal privacy has been a subject of considerable concern for the Privacy Commissioner. The potentially threatening characteristics of IT in general are exacerbated when combined with data-matching facilities.

In the Privacy Commissioner's 1992 report[6] to the Attorney- General large scale computerised data matching was recognised as inherently intrusive. Today's computers are able to make sophisticated comparisons of the entries in databases at great speed even when there is no field which acts as a unique key between the two databases.

This issue was also identified in the Independent Commission Against Corruption Report on Unauthorised Release of Government Information ("the ICAC Report") in its findings regarding data matching techniques.

Computer linking and data matching techniques enable complete profiles to be created in moments from isolated pieces of information. "What is recorded may not be true. What is true may be misleading. The individual whose privacy is invaded, has no control over how or to whom the information is released, how it is construed, or to what use it is put".[7]

And, this threat to individual's privacy is not confined to Government collection and use of information it also occurs in the private sector.[8]

Therefore an effective legislative response to the threat posed by the increasing use of IT to individual privacy must regulate both public and private sectors.

In seeking to strike a 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, Government has legislated to favour the state over the individual.

The Commonwealth privacy legislation reflects both a lack of understanding of the current and future threats posed by technology and a reluctance by the Governments "to set down strict limits on the degree to which it can subordinate people's privacy not simply to wider social needs but to its own narrower political needs."[9] The extent to which the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) and the Data-matching Program (Assistance and Tax) Act 1990 (Cth) meet the threat posed by advances in IT will be explored in Part 2.

1   Independent Commission Against Corruption, *Report on Unauthorised Release of Government Information*, Sydney, 1992, p178.

2   G H Hughes, 'An Overview of Data Protection in Australia',

Melbourne University Law Review, Vol. 18, June 1991, p85.

3   Prof R A Brown, 'Information technology and the law - the future?' Science, technology and the Law. Speeches from the Symposium: "The Law and the Future - the impact of scientific and technological change', Melbourne, 1986, p1.

4   The Law Reform Commission, *Privacy,* Report No. 22, Canberra, AGPS, 1983.

5   Greg Tucker, *Information Privacy Laws in Australia,* Longman Professional, Australia, 1992, p 7.

6   Privacy Commissioner, *Data-Matching in Commonwealth Administration,* Report to the Attorney-General, June 1992, p25.

7   ICAC Report, p 177.

8   Frits W Hondius, *Emerging Data Protection in Europe,* quoted in Hughes, G H. *Data Protection in Australia,* The Law Book Company Limited, Australia, 1991, p5 in Hughes, *Data Protection in Australia* p5.

9   L Bygrave, 'The Privacy Act 1988 (Cth): A Study in the Protection of Privacy and the Protection of Political Power'. *Federal Law Review,* Vol. 19, 1990, p132.

Under Control: Putting Electronic Records Management in its Place

By Lee Welch, BA (LS), AALIA

*L*ee Welch has worked in a variety of positions including reference librarian, database customer services manager and information broking. In recent years she has been living in Ethiopia and while there undertook various consultancies in records and information management for organisations such as the United Nations and the Ethiopian Government.

Back in Australia, Lee now works as a freelance writer and consultant in information management and marketing through her business 'The Write Alternative'.

Progress always has at least one good kick in the tail for the unwary. Take technological progress and the realm of records management for example. All of a sudden, what used to work is now suspect. Relatively stable, simple systems such as managing correspondence are no longer as simple - or as stable.

Records managers and their colleagues in related fields have been wise to the danger but even so, the speed with which facilities such as electronic mail have infiltrated our organisations has been such that practitioners are scrambling to keep up. Records managers, always faced with the challenge of not only maintaining the corporate memory but also with instilling the right attitude or 'culture' within their organisations must now work harder than ever to align new work methods with existing practice.

THE CHALLENGE OF CHANGE

The news isn't all bad. Recognition that a potential threat can also be a potential opportunity means the introduction of new technology is an opportunity of significance for records managers, bringing with it the chance of a higher profile within the organisation and the chance to play a key role in shaping the future of the organisation.

Electronic records raise some issues that need special attention. Staff may tend to regard what they create on a personal computer as somehow 'private', or at least unofficial. This leads to a perception that it is they who should decide what happens to that record and not the records management service. Considerable problems may be caused by the easy manipulation or alteration of an electronic document, leading to confusion over which is the final or official version and users who don't

abide by the organisation's file naming rules will produce documents that may never be found.

While we can read the records of some ancient civilisations with perfect clarity centuries later, the records we are creating today may prove unreadable in less than a decade due to the seemingly daily updates to equipment and software. And we will need to be able to read them in context with the rest of the system as facilities such as electronic mail give rise to somewhat cryptic messages that may lack information about where they came from and who they went to.

Electronic management systems are now available to track the resulting records from word processing, spreadsheet and mail technology and these systems offer greater power in retrieval than ever before. But these systems also need some considerable forethought before introduction. While paper is still king, most organisations now work on a mix of record media.

NEW GUIDELINES FROM THE IESC

In the public sector, the Information Exchange Steering Committee (IESC) has been ranging its resources up against the problem since 1991. The IESC is an advisory body, responsible for the provision of guidance on matters of policy and strategic direction in information technology to Commonwealth agencies.

In 1991 the IESC formed an Electronic Data Management Sub-committee (EDMSC) after submissions from a group of Commonwealth agencies who were working in the area of data in office automation systems. The EDMSC's first product was a report entitled 'Finding information needles in government haystacks'[1]. That report identified the speed with which government agencies were heading towards electronic documentation as an issue of concern.

Further work by the Sub-committee led to another report, designed to deal with the concerns raised. This report, 'Management of electronic documents in the Australian Public Service'[2] was pounced upon by public and private sector managers alike in need of help with the transition to, and control of, electronic records. Records managers across Australia will share the wariness expressed in the introduction:

"Organisations, both public and private, have been embracing information technology at an ever increasing rate in a drive for greater efficiency and productivity. But there are growing concerns that while there have been major efficiency gains, there has been a loss in terms of lack of attention to records management.

The suggestion that loss of corporate memory may be a consequence of increasing computerisation may seem paradoxical, but the threat is real enough as we move from institutionalised and often centralised approaches to handling paper flows, to the more complex and devolved world of large scale office automation and electronic data transfer."

The EDMSC has taken a singularly practical approach to the problem with this report. As I write, the next report from the Sub-committee is in draft form and it continues in the same vein. This third report is the one that will become a well-thumbed bible - the guidelines for implementing a strategy of electronic document management.[3]

The preparation of the guidelines has drawn on not only the discipline of records management but also librarianship, information systems and archives management. Both documents target a wide audience and will be of great assistance to records managers working towards recognition of their role in the organisation because of this. Apart from records managers themselves, the reports have been produced with agency executives, information technology staff, librarians, archivists and users in mind. Each group has a vested interest in the records management system and each group is likely to have very different priorities.
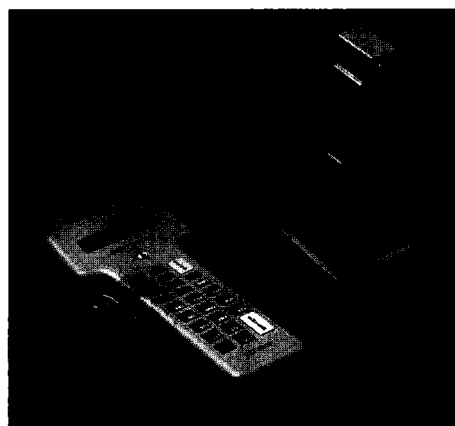
CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

'Management of electronic documents in the Australian Public Service' identifies five critical success factors to the implementation of any document management strategy. In theory, they look dangerously obvious but in practice, they are challenges in themselves.

1. Agency commitment to cost-effective electronic information management.

2. A team of staff with the right mix of skills available to do the task.

3. Clearly defined and consistent agency-wide policies and procedures in place for staff to follow.

4. Easy access to agency standard information management tools.

5. Security and privacy requirements incorporated into information management policies and procedures to ensure best practice.

How to achieve the first of these factors is a matter for the individual records manager and the strategy adopted will need to take into account not only the organisation but the individual key players and stakeholders in the management of records as an organisational resource. This is a lobbying process and, as such, requires ongoing commitment from the records manager to alert and educate staff to the importance of controlling electronic records.

Great assistance in achieving the remainder of these factors will be found in the pages of the guidelines themselves, which include advice on management of the document life cycle, legislative requirements and common elements of electronic document management principles. Requirements for a fully electronic system, a parallel system of electronic and paper- based records or fully paper are discussed and checklists are provided for individuals covering quality,

registration, security, access, storage, training and software selection.

The Australian Archives have contributed a chapter on records and the archival process that describes the process of appraisal, disposal and access in plain English.

LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

Common to both reports and any records management strategy is the need for an understanding on the part of staff of the records management function. It need not be detailed but it does need to be there. Staff are prone to dealing only with their own concerns and often do not see themselves as part of something larger, or see their work as an historical record destined for the public domain.

It is common to hear government department executives express concern that the introduction of electronic mail leads to a lack of an audit trail, with conversations becoming documents and never being recorded on a file, or inappropriate communi-cations ending up on file where they may cause embarrassment later on. One government department currently surveying its records management needs has reported the desire of some staff to literally pull the plug to avoid the problems caused by enthusiastic adoption of electronic mail.

While some organisations leap to embrace new technology and are then disappointed in the result, others are too fearful to attempt the introduction. The change in work practices and devolution of some record management tasks, such as storage and distribution, brought about by technology highlight the need for a change in management policy and training.

Both training and policy development in the field is as new as the technology. Brenda McConchie,

Executive Director of AIMA Training and Consultancy Services Ltd and a committee member of the Electronic Document Management Sub-committee that produced the reports described above, believes the development of a comprehensive information management policy and training programme are key elements in managing the change.

AIMA was established in 1985 to provide specialist training and consultancy services in information management and human resources management, and services clients in both the public and private sector. Ms. McConchie came to the position of Executive Director from the Department of Human Services and Health in Canberra where, as Librarian, she was responsible for introducing electronic document management over a five year period.

The work done at the Department of Human Services and Health is considered in the field to be ground-breaking and is often used as a model for others to follow. Ms. McConchie has continued the work since in close co-operation with Australian Archives and has used the experience to develop new training and consultancy services aimed to organisations facing the same transition.

Training companies are likely to see electronic document management as a topic with considerable potential for growth and such services have much to offer the records manager, especially when one of the main messages they contain for the organisation executive is the vital role of the records manager in supplying ongoing support to staff.

Tailored services can be particularly useful. An assessment of the current status and advice on the next stage may be all that is required if the existing records management structure is effective. Starting out from scratch can be a lot less painful if expert advice is sought at the

beginning rather than later when problems occur, and a mix of overviews for various staff groups to involve them in the development of an organisation-wide information management policy is always a good idea. With a rapidly developing field such as electronic records management, seeking the advice of experienced consultants is a sensible and cost effective method of dealing with the implementation of a new system.

The appearance of guidelines such as those prepared by the Electronic Document Management Sub-committee of the IESC are a major step forward for Australian records management. With approximately one third of Australia's Commonwealth agencies now accessing the information super-highway through the Internet by the end of 1994 (expected to increase to over half by early 1995),[3] the challenge to records managers is clear.

Good electronic document management means faster and better retrieval, greater accountability and preservation of the corporate memory. Organisations ducking the challenge will face the costs in wasted time, legal problems and poor service due to unreliable systems, according to the EDMSC.[3]

Pulling the plug is not an option.

Note: The guidelines (see reference 3 right) are to be published shortly. All EDMSC publications are available from the Information Technology and Systems Group, Department of Finance, Canberra. Phone (06) 263 2253 or fax (06) 263 2276. This is also the point of contact for the IESC.

REFERENCES:

1. Electronic Document Management Sub-Committee for the Information Exchange Steering Committee. Finding information needles in government haystacks: a report on electronic management in Australian Government agencies. Canberra, EDMSC, 1991.

2. Electronic Document Management Sub-Committee for the Information Exchange Steering Committee. Management of Electronic Documents in the Australian Public Service. Canberra, EDMSC, 1993

3. Electronic Document Management Sub-Committee for the Information Exchange Steering Committee. Improving electronic document management: guidelines for Australian government agencies. Canberra, EDMSC, 1995.

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Branch Reports

TASMANIAN REPORT

With people on holidays during the summer months (and we in Tassie must make the most of them) things have been a bit slow getting underway again.

Our education Committee has set its program for the forthcoming year and is providing workshops and seminars covering a range of topics such as Disaster Management; Keyword Classification (a perennial favourite); Legal Issues - Evidence Act; Records Management Operations - Introduction, a two day course followed later in the year by Records Management Operations - Intermediate. We are also planning a series of product "show and tell" sessions to keep those of our members who are not fortunate enough to attend National Conventions, where the trade is out in full force, informed about current products.

The Records Management national modules are up and running at TAFE Colleges in Hobart and Burnie and hopefully Launceston will follow suit before too much longer.

The Tasmanian Branch Council will be holding a planning day early in May so that we can revisit our business plan and tailor our aims to those of Federal Council. As work usually gets in the way of such plans, we are holding it on a Saturday, followed by a dinner for Branch Councillors and their partners. That should compensate for our absence during the day!!!

**Trish Wichmann ARMA
Branch President**

WESTERN AUSTRALIA REPORT

The annual RMAA Breakfast proved to be a success with a large number of members attending to hear Marita Keenau and Regis Williams speak on "How to Achieve Excellence".

Branch Council continues to monitor the proposed new legislation for Public Records and will keep members informed of events that are likely to impact on Records Managers.

The Education Committee continue to meet each month and have several projects in the planning stages and members will be advised of the outcomes when these are finalised.

Nominations closed on 30th March 1995 for the RMAA Medal and 1995 Certificate of Excellence Award.

**Norma Easthope ARMA
Secretary WA Branch**

SOUTH AUSTRALIA REPORT

The first quarter of 1995 has continued the pattern of invigorating change which has so far characterised the 94/95 term for this Branch.

At its meeting on the 18th January the Branch Council elected Brigitte Stephen as Federal Director replacing Helen Schoder. Vice President, Spiros Sarris has resigned from Branch Council due to heavy work commitments; resulting in Andrew Wood becoming our second Vice President and Kristen Green adding to her secretarial duties by taking over as Chair of the Functions Committee.

We have also accepted, with regret, the resignation of Margaret Mainland after 18 years of continuous service on the SA Branch Council. Margaret is a Life Member of the Association and will be well known to many of you across Australia. We wish Margaret well and look forward to her company at future events where she can enjoy as a pioneering member should.

Debbie Ophof of Brambles Records Management addressed a Branch General Meeting on Escrow Software Agreements on the 28th February.

An Action Plan was adopted by Branch Council on the 22nd March challenging us with its intentions.

Substantial effort is being expended on planning for a seminar in June, and there is an air of expectation engendered by State Records' plans for the introduction of its Whole of Government approach to records management and new archives legislation.

**Peter Crush ARMA
SA Branch President**

Branch Reports

QUEENSLAND REPORT

The Branch has finalised the shape of the Strategic Plan for 1995/96. The plan is to foster the understanding and promotion of records management through providing services in the areas of education and development and promoting the image of records management.

Successful Branch activities recently held included an FOI Forum to debate the impact on records management that FOI has had in the last two years. A site visit to the CSIRO Queensland Centre for Advanced Technologies provided an interesting insight into how records management and new technologies are being managed within the Division of Exploration and Mining and, also a breakfast with a guest speaker on the topic "Records, History and You" have made it an interesting few weeks in Queensland.

Philip Taylor MRMA
Vice President

ACT REPORT

The "Storage Media And The Law" seminar to be held on the 29th March 1995 has attracted over a hundred delegates. The seminar has proved to be timely with Anthony Willis, Senior Associate from Blake Dawson and Waldron addressing new changes to the Evidence Act. The papers from the seminar will be published and available at a cost of $50.00.

Planning is underway for our May/June seminar and in July we have organised a special dinner seminar with guest speaker Karen Drabenstott Associate Professor, School of Information & Library Studies, University of Michigan USA.

The theme of the seminar will be "Information How Can We Manage It?" The seminar will cover issues such as superhighways, technology explosion and does our education curricula reflect advances in technology. The seminar will be held in conjunction with the Optical Technology Special Interest Group (OSTIG) and we are grateful for assistance of the Faculty of Communication at the University of Canberra in making this seminar possible.

Planning for the 1996 National Convention is progressing well with the date of the convention chosen, the venue booked, the conference secretariat selected, a preliminary draft budget drawn up, workload sharing teams established, a tentative theme chosen and work has commenced on a presentation for the Melbourne Convention.

Julie Lenson ARMA
ACT Branch President

NEW SOUTH WALES REPORT

The Branch has gotten off to a very good start in the New Year and we have conducted two very successful monthly meetings as well as a breakfast meeting which was attended by 65 people. Let me say how pleased Branch Council is to see so many new members appearing at our functions. As we indicated last year, we have embarked on an ambitious programme of seminars and meetings during the last few months.

There has been serious discussion about the way we conduct our activities, for instance the feasibility of conducting bi-monthly members meetings (instead of regular monthly meetings) has been canvassed, as has the suggestion that we also increase the number of breakfast meetings. As an Association, we in NSW are constantly striving to improve the quality and variety of our activities. Therefore, we have been actively encouraging our members to comment on their requirements. The Branch has also actively sought to encourage members who possess Associate Status or above to consider becoming members of Branch Council.

The Branch Council has also sought to raise an awareness of records management issues through Seminars. This year two have been organised and these will be conducted at locations in Sydney and Newcastle. The themes of these activities are:

1. Disaster Planning - Issues and Considerations.

2. Records Management and the Law II.

On the whole, the Branch has been able to capitalise on the sound foundations that were laid the previous year and we are as a Branch looking forward to an even more successful year.

Denis Comber, ARMA
President, NSW Branch

FileMaster
The Cross-Platform Records Management Tool

FileMaster is a new player in the electronic records management game. It has been created by DB Developments Pty Ltd in Sydney in order to fill a perceived need: up to now there has been no professional records management software that will run on Macintosh except in terminal emulation mode with its inherent limitations.

FileMaster will run on Macintosh, Power Macintosh, on any Windows or machines and on any combination at the same time in a cross-platform mixed network. FileMaster is comfortable in virtually any network configuration.

FileMaster records, controls and tracks the creation and movement of all files, archives or other material. Although designed as a combined records management/archives application, its uses include the control of museum and library collections. FileMaster has been designed to be fast, efficient and, above all, easy to use. Data entry is quick and simple. Enquiry and Reporting are both fast and flexible.

The FileMaster retrieval engine gives the system impressive speed and flexibility. Since every word (except words that have been chosen to be excluded by the user) is indexed, files can be located and displayed according to their contents. This can be done quickly even in very large databases.

The system will produce its own barcode labels. All functions that require the entry of file numbers or locations will accept barcode data directly and usually require no keyboard input. There are a range of functions that support data collection using a remote barcode reader.

FileMaster produces a comprehensive activity tracking module. It allows the system administrator to select which activities should be traced, and then, each time that activity occurs in the system, a record is taken of who did it, what they did, and other pertinent data. System statistics are kept on a monthly basis.

FileMaster offers comprehensive security for your records. A user can be restricted from viewing selected records, given view-only access of full access to records based on two mutually independent levels of classification. Movements of files to restricted locations is controlled.

Daniel Weinstein, Technical Director of DB Developments states that FileMaster offers professional records management in a way that is easy to understand even for the non-specialists. Clients comment on FileMaster's ease of use and flexibility.

FileMaster users include banks, universities and government institutions, records storage and retrieval companies. It is used to track personnel records, art collections, corporate files, and more.

Inquiries David Blaymires, DB Developments, (02) 954 4687

Concord for Windows

Complete control over ...
corporate files, documents,
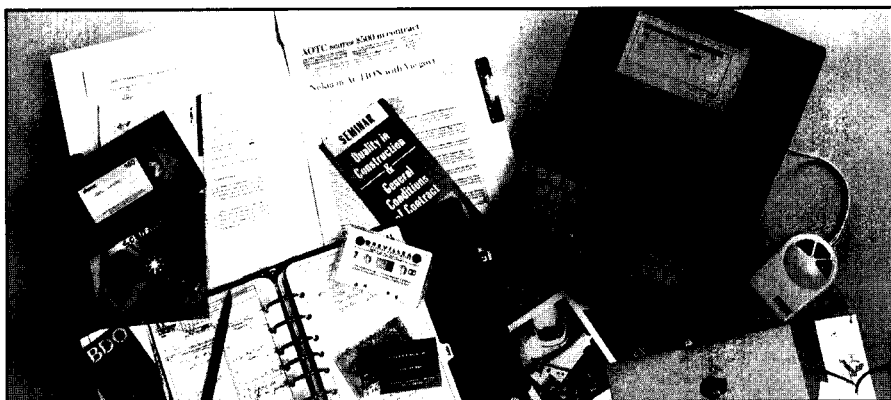images and library material.

Concord for Windows is a powerful large-scale free-text storage and retrieval system which has the ability to store and retrieve the full text of electronic documents and physical documentation that has been scanned using OCR technology.

The system also manages profiles which enables instant access to physical and electronic files, documents, and images. It is a proven management solution to a client base of private enterprise organisations to multi-national corporations and local, state and federal bodies in all states of Australia and throughout Asia.

Concord for Windows is developed by Dialog Pty Ltd, one of Australia's leading Information Technology organisations, with its head office in Brisbane, other offices in Sydney and Singapore, and authorised representation in Canberra, South Australia and New Zealand.

Dialog employs a large staff of Information Technology professionals covering a broad range of skills in a variety of methodologies, software and hardware environments, programming languages, database products and applications development tools.

Bob Tisdall, Company Director, notes that Dialog understands both the Information Technology industry and the desktop environment and were the first Microsoft Authorised Training Education Centre (ATEC) in Queensland. Dialog also understands the intricacies of Records, Library, and Information Management by employing expertise out of these fields.

The company developed a Quality Management System, to provide clients with systems and services of the highest quality and was one of the first Australian Information Technology companies to receive full certification under International Standard 9001 and Australian Standards 3901 and 3563.1.

The Concord for Windows product employs integrated system modules that are easy to use since they utilise the Windows industry-standard front end.

Dialog's Manager, Software Sales and Marketing, Wayne Bullock, maintains that the point and click 'drill-down' functionality of the system makes its usage intuitive. The user can launch retrieved electronic document into native applications such as Microsoft Word, Excel, or other applications. A major advantage of Concord for Windows is that it can store complete text and index every word if this is a necessary requirement.

The modules consist of Information Retrieval, Records Management, Library Management, Electronic Document Management and Imaging. Standard automatic and user-defined reports, a language-control Thesaurus, advanced security, and user- controlled database design and maintenance facility are all standard features with Concord for Windows. A bar-coding facility is offered to warehouse and ensure integrity of physical data.

Concord for Windows is a true Client/Server application which runs over VAX VMX, OPEN VMS, UNIX, Windows NT, and Macintosh operating systems. The application operates across networks that support the TCP/IP protocol.

Dialog offers a full support and maintenance program with the use of a 1-800 support telephone number. Users of Concord for Windows can phone-in, fax, or e-mail support issues and Dialog provides guaranteed response times as part of the standard maintenance agreement. The company also encourages ongoing quarterly User-Group meetings. The User-Groups have been integral to the current Windows development specifications and assisting in version control.

Inquiries Ken or Wayne, Dialog Products , (07) 368 2011 or fax (07) 369 0815.

Document and Data Security Using Barcoding

Over the last five years, the management of business records has become a rapidly growing market in Australia. Each year billions of records are stored and retrieved by companies now specialising in records management.

Most Australian businesses are now recognising the advantages of a record management service located off-site, especially as CBD rental costs rise and the trend towards quality systems grow requiring detailed records to be kept.

Document and Data Security (D&DS), a division of the AUSDOC Group Limited, is Australia's leading records management company amongst legal and financial institutions, and its national facilities make it one of the market leaders in the records management market as a whole.

Information Technology Manager for D&DS, Richard Hill, says that Australian companies are looking for a variety of services from records management companies. Document and Data Security provide, in addition to storage and retrieval services for both hard copy and electronic records, an extensive range of ancillary services. These include records management consultancy, active file management, secure document destruction, disaster recovery consultancy, escrow services and media maintenance.

To enable controlled management and provide a prompt, efficient service through rapid access to the vast array of stored records, D&DS has adopted barcode scanning equipment from Opticon Sensors.

Document and Data Security has large warehouses, holding billions of documents, located through all metropolitan areas of Australia.

Records are transferred to the repositories where either the record or the records container is identified with a unique, client-specific barcode. The records cartons are then lodged into high-density racking in locations which again are uniquely identified to each warehouse.

Individual files or items are also lodged into specific locations but into specialist - designed shelving constructed to meet individual client requirements.

Operatives use an Opticon SLT804 portable scanner to read the barcodes attached to the records or cartons, and this barcode is matched against the location barcode. This enables rapid tracking of all records throughout all warehouses at any point in time. This data is downloaded from ware-houses across Australia into D&DS' main computer via a communications network and ISDN link.

Richard Hill commented that use of Opticon equipment has resulted in a 50 percent saving in time taken for scanning sessions when compared to the company's previous system. This system consisted of two separate devices, a scanner and hand-held computer connected via a short cable.

Inquiries Dennis O'Connor, Opticon Sensors, (02) 878 5577

Records Management Standards and Codes of Best Practice

Many readers will be aware of the role played by the Records Management Office, as part of the Archives Authority of New South Wales, in promoting sound records management practices in the New South Wales public sector.

The Records Management Office provides records management consultancy services, training, publications and keyword thesaurus products, both to its core market in the New South Wales public sector and more broadly around Australia.

Recently the Records Management Office has taken a new direction in its work. It has started a program of developing standards and codes of best practice for recordkeeping and for the management of records in all formats in the New South Wales public sector.

One reason for this change of direction is the new State records legislation, currently being drafted: the legislation will require New South Wales public offices and institutions to manage their records management programs in accordance with standards issued by the State Records Authority that will be established under the legislation. The first group of these standards need to have been prepared before the legislation is implemented.

Even in the absence of new State records legislation, the establishment of standards and codes of best practice for recordkeeping and records management in the New South Wales public sector would be a priority for the Archives Authority. They are expected to provide a much-needed guidance to public sector agencies and play an important role in supporting public accountability through sound recordkeeping practices.

The Authority sees this program primarily as a service to public sector agencies, rather than as a regulatory measure. The standards and codes of best practice will help clarify and codify recordkeeping requirements, which are currently ill-defined or spread through a range of disparate sources of authority, guidance and best practice. In the event of delay in introducing and implementing the new legislation, these will be introduced through existing administrative arrangements.

The standards and codes will represent authoritative statements of the responsibilities of agencies in relation to recordkeeping and records management and of the means of meeting these responsibilities. They will act as benchmarks which can be used:

• by chief executives to assess the quality of records and recordkeeping in their agencies, and

• by ministers, investigative bodies, the courts and any other person or body to whom or which the agency is accountable, to assess whether adequate records have been made, maintained and managed in specific cases and investigations.

The standards and codes of best practice will be based on national and international best practice, such as the new Australian Standard on records management (which should have been released in draft form for public comment by the time you read this), and will be developed in consultation with government archives authorities and other relevant bodies around Australia.

The standards and codes of Best Practice will be introduced progressively following consultation with central agencies and affected public sector agencies in New South Wales. Where possible, the Records Management Office expects to adopt, endorse or adapt existing standards, guidelines and other best practice documents.

These standards and codes will be supported by training and other education and by guides and manuals. To enable the Records Management Office to concentrate its efforts on this work, it does not currently offer the records management consultancy services. Its training courses, publications and thesaurus products continue to be available and, indeed, are already benefiting from the preliminary work that has been done for the standards program.

Inquiries David Roberts, Records Management Office, (02) 327 0135

HPA Launches World First Cold/Com System

Hermes Precisa Australia (HPA) has developed an innovative system which produces Computer Output to Microfilm (COM) and COLD data files in a concurrent process.

Until now, COLD technology was available predominantly in in- house environments. HPA's system is the first to take simultaneous COLD/COM technology into a service bureau environment.

Mr Bruce Vial, HPA Services Manager states that there are strong benefits for their customers in using a system which can handle the two technologies in terms of improved efficiency, quality control, and enhanced information storage.

As HPA has built HPA COM and HPA COLD systems together, they can microfilm and COLD files simultaneously. This creates significant time and cost savings. It also ensures consistency of images and quality between the COM and COLD end-products as both outputs are produced via the same process.

COM can also provide COLD users with the security of knowing that information is constantly available should there be a system or electrical failure. COM is a proven, low-cost, long-term archive storage medium, and it is a medium acceptable as evidence in a court of law.

Customers simply send in the same tapes and they return the information back in two media: film and CD-ROM. The system can also output onto other types of magnetic media. The customer does not need to alter their processes in any way, and yet they gain the added benefit of receiving data which is suited to both instant and archive retrieval.

HPA COLD gives multiple users digital access to information via defacto industry-standard Windows PCs. This allows customer service staff to be more responsive to enquiries because they can access files instantly rather than having to search microfilm or paper documents.

HPA COLD also offers up to 10 index fields per page which can be used to significantly speed search times. Accordingly with computerised on-line reporting, all users on a COLD network can gain access to the same information simultaneously.

The emergence of COLD in the service bureau environment will open the market for this technology. "HPA COLD" can handle data in various formats making this service broadly available to most computer users.

HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS

1. The customer supplies HPA with data in a magnetic medium.

2. HPA runs the information through a COM Recorder to generate COM and COLD files simultaneously.

3. The COLD files are fed through the "HPA COLD" processor which builds indexes and writes the information to CD-ROM.

4. The CD is retuned to the customer, where it is loaded onto a PC which runs "COLD View" software.

5. Multiple users gain instant access to information via a single PC or network, using a detailed set of indexes (up to 10 per page) as search tools.

Inquiries Kathryn Foley, Hermes Precisa Australia, (02) 562 5776

Space Saving Filing Solutions

PAS Australia provides an extensive range of "unique" modules to house all facets of horizontal documentation filing to fulfil any requirement: A4, foolscap, computer printouts (burst or unburst), pigeon hole units, Poly-Bac, cards, diskettes - the list is endless.

Space is minimised and utilised by the versatility of the product. All modules interlock horizontally and vertically allowing single stacks, double stacks, up to wall units. They can be housed in mobile trolleys for 6, 12 or 18; in cupboards, bays, compactus; sit under desks, on top of desks; be lockable or unlockable - whatever the individual requirement.

Added advantages of the system include: enormous space saving, increases in efficiency, completely dust-free filing, a high degree of flexibility, enhancement of any office environment and cost-effectiveness. All products carry a minimum five year warranty, are available in a range of pastel colours or beige, and can be tailor-made to suit specific needs.

Neville Ward, Managing Director of Neville W Ward Pty Limited, said their problem was the efficient storage and retrieval of over 500 different A4 brochures with the maximum stock quantities of each requiring storage space from anywhere between 15 mm and 100 mm.

They needed a system that would:

• keep the brochures in good condition,

• allow fast storage and retrieval,

• allow for the wide variation of space required for different brochures, and

• allow for daily additions to and deletions from the range of brochures while keeping the whole system in alphabetical sequence.

They looked at over 20 different systems before settling on a wall of 154 five-drawer PAS Poly-Bac units.

Vertical systems were not suitable because although the pocket system kept the brochures in reasonable conditions they did not allow fast storage and retrieval. Nor did they easily cope with the range of space per brochure.

A horizontal system like PAS Poly-Bac keeps the brochures in the best condition. The wall of units are very sturdy and looks as attractive as it is efficient.

Paul Jones, Site Supervisor of City Rail Projects Group, said they have installed both the T-Glide and PAS systems in the office and have found since using these systems the office procedures have become more efficient by cutting down filing times and mis-files. The ease of these systems allows instant access to any file at any time, and due to the design of the storage units and the space-saving layout, valuable office space is being utilised to the fullest whilst always looking very professional. Being able to add more units as required means that the system will grow with the business.

The staff at PAS are always available to provide back-up service, offer advice and supply further materials as needed.

Inquiries Barbara Grimsley, PAS Australia, (02) 9997 6646.

WorkFlo Products

WorkFlo software products allow users to create highly scalable, mission-critical, client/server applications for automating business processes and controlling information access. In 1994, FileNet won the Network World Work Management Award in recognition of its long-standing leadership in workflow software. Products include:

• Visual WorkFlo software allows organisations to intelligently manage their workflow processes. More than just a development tool, it augments FileNet's other WorkFlo products with a management architecture that allows users at all levels - - end users, department managers and programmers - - to graphically create, maintain and modify business process automation applications enterprise-wide.

• WorkForce Desktop software is a suite of document imaging and WorkFlo products for PC workstations in Microsoft Windows and OS/2-Presentation Manager environments.

• WorkShop software is a programming system for Windows and OS/2 environments. It includes AutoForm software, a forms toolbox for designing GUIs and creating menus, electronic business forms and form letters; WorkFlo scripting language, an easy to use macro language specialised for business process automation; and WorkFlo Controls for Visual Basic, enables programmers to develop customised document imaging and WorkFlo solutions.

• WorkFlo Application Libraries, or WAL, is a set of open, standard application programming interfaces (APIs) that allow a variety of client workstations to communicate with FileNet server applications. By using WAL with development tools such as C, C++, Microsoft Visual Basic, PowerBuilder, or Uniface, systems integrators and application developers can develop powerful applications. WAL is currently available for Windows, OS/2, SunOS, HP-UX, IBM-AIX, and Macintosh workstations.

Application software products include:

• WorkFlo/Payable. This accounts payable WorkFlo application, packaged for rapid installation and customization, reduces the time and resources normally required to develop a new document imaging and WorkFlo solution.

• WorkFlo/ICR. This intelligent character recognition (ICR) system integrates multiple recognition technologies with WorkFlo, allowing document imaging users with forms processing requirements to take advantage of automated data entry and document indexing.

Inquiries Bijan Assaee, FileNet Corporation Pty Ltd, (02) 246 0500
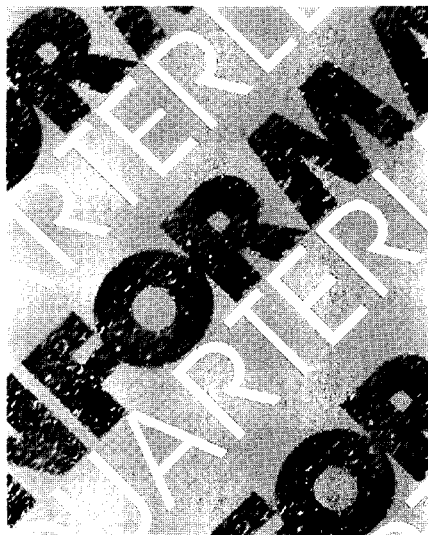
Lock up your Lans!
Computer Storage Unit adds Security to Open Systems Environments

How open is open? How open should an open system be?

These are not just obscure philosophical issues. They are questions concerning computer system security, an issue that managers must face as business turns more and more to the use of local Area Networks (LANs) in open systems environments.

LANs allow staff throughout the LAN network to share business information and applications. At the same time, they increase the loss or damage that can result from unauthorised or even malicious access.

Australian information storage specialists Datafile's answer is: A LAN should be open to authorised users, but managers should be able to close all access when the system's authorised users are not present, to avoid damage, theft or unauthorised access to key business information.

Peter Donnelly, Datafile's Marketing Manager, explains that people can get a little starry-eyed about LANs. Although LANs are powerful business tools, they do not change basic business principles. One of those principles is the need to maintain security over expensive equipment and sensitive data.

Datafile is now offering Australian companies a newly developed modular storage system, LAN Locker, designed to give users comfortable access to all terminals, towers and peripherals, but to fully enclose and protect the hardware when not being used.

LANs are moving out of specialised data centres within the business, where they were relatively secure, and into general offices and working areas.

Staff gain easier access to data and applications through having LAN systems in their workspace, but that also increases the risk to equipment and to information held on the network. When businesses have their proprietary data on their network, such as financial information, personnel records, new product research, then they need to be able to put that information firmly out of reach when it is not being used. That is what the LAN locker system does.

LAN Locker is an enhancement of Datafile's LAN Management System, LMS II. Like LMS II it provides comfortable access by users to terminals, monitors and keyboards, but where the LMS II system is open, LAN Locker is a totally enclosed unit. When not in use the equipment can be locked behind tinted pexiglass front doors, as well as full length steel rear doors.

Peter said the doors provide a high level of security, but at the same time they do not look too imposing, as though you have moved an outpost of Fort Knox into your office. They are designed to be aesthetically pleasing.

LAN Locker is a fully modular system, with single, double or triple LAN Locker modules with a choice of two depths (for 19 or 27 inch deep equipment), so managers can customise their unit to fit monitors, keyboards, towers, servers, printers and other peripherals. The system offers the choice of fixed or roll-out shelves.

LAN Locker is the solution, when you want to combine the benefits of a LAN architecture with total security protection of applications, data and equipment.

Inquiries Peter Donnelly, Datafile-Wrightline, (02) 436 4000.
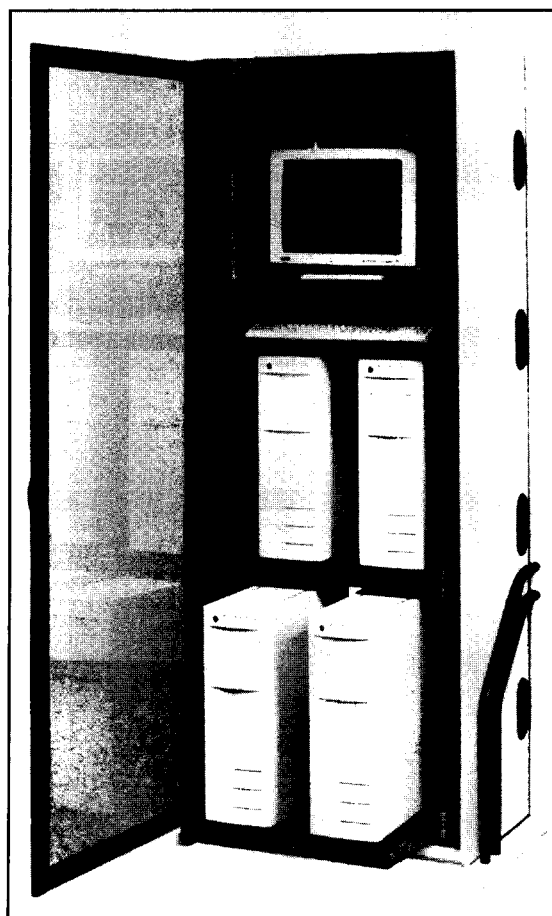
PRODUCT INFORMATION GUIDE

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

Name: ....

Company: ....

Address: ....

.... Postcode: ....

Type of Business: ....

Position: ....

Telephone: (...............)................................

Facsimile: (...............)................................

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