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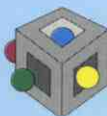
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INFORMAA Quarterly

Volume 15, Number 2, May 1999

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	Exec. Secretary	Michael Hangan	Ph (07) 3865 1611
	Postal	PO Box 97 Boondall Heights QLD 4034	

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Please forward to: The Executive Secretary Federal Office PO Box 97 Boondall Heights QLD 4034
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Federal President's Message

Throughout the 30-year history of the RMAA, enthusiastic volunteers have been providing a range of services to our members. These services have included the organisation and running of the Annual Convention, publishing the Association's national journal, the INFORMAA Quarterly and Branch newsletters, arranging State Branch seminars, workshops and regular member meetings, and collating and publishing the RMAA Product Directory. Through these services the RMAA has supported many hundreds of records managers in their professional development.

Over the last few years, the RMAA has been involved in funding and developing a number of substantial initiatives. The most prominent of these have been the National Records and Archives Competency Standards, and the Australian Standard for Records Management (AS4390). Current projects include the development of the RMAA web site as a principal information resource for our members, and the development of the International Records Management Standard ISO46/S41 based on Australian Standard Records Management - AS4390. Added to this is the continuing commitment to the RMAA National Course Recognition Program.

As records management evolves to encompass the electronic environment, the role and status of records managers is changing dramatically. Our membership, which in 1998 grew to over 2900 members, is demanding increasing levels of services and support. We are also experiencing high demand from non-members for professional advice as the wider community becomes more focused on records management issues. As an example, our web site is now receiving an average of 120 queries each day.

Supporting these initiatives and responding to these demands have called for considerable investment in time and resources by our volunteer workforce.

The Federal Board, in recognition of the increasing professionalism of the records management industry, and the need for members across Australia to receive consistent services, has adopted standard levels of member services. These entail holding the National Convention each year, and publishing the national journal, the INFORMAA Quarterly and the Product Directory. As well, each Branch will produce four newsletters each year and conduct regular member events such as Branch seminars, workshops, and network functions. The web site will be maintained to promote the RMAA and its activities, library services are to be provided, and support will be given to Chapters and Special Interest Groups.

Two years ago, the RMAA established a part-time secretariat, working three mornings each week, to assist with the management of our growing membership. The Federal Board has now identified a need to extend this to a full time secretariat, and reduce the dependency on our volunteers.

To fund these developments, we will be changing the membership fee structure at the end of this financial year. The corporate membership fee will increase from $200 per annum to $395 per annum. Company membership will increase to $450 per annum. However, individual membership fees are to remain unchanged. This fee structure brings us into line with our related professional associations.

We look forward to your continuing support as we plan for a more secure future and continue to pursue the RMAA mission - to be a world leading authority in records and information management.

On a more personal note, I would like to thank all those who sent wishes to me during my recent indisposition, and especially to Julie Lenson, who so ably carried out my presidential duties when I was unable to do so.

Ray Holswich ARMA
Federal President

Editorial

The response to our February 1999 issue has been particularly gratifying: in the letters we have received, and in the debate Laurie Sletten's article engendered on the *Aus-Archivists* listserv. This discussion, which responded to her perceptions of Australian approaches to the records life cycle and continuum models, provided an interesting insight into theoretical and practical attitudes to the application of the 'records continuum' regime of records management in the workplace.

In this issue, we revisit the perennial subject of the effects on records management and recordkeeping practices and procedures of developing technology. Keith Parrott suggests that new technologies have not necessarily been implemented in ways that maintain the evidential trail of transactions. Again, the need to introduce recordkeeping requirements at the design stage when new systems are being contemplated, is emphasised.

Danielle Wickman, in her article, develops her theme that records management is inherently concerned with justice and moral behaviour. She uses an interesting approach in relating the functional requirements for evidence in recordkeeping, codified by researchers at Pittsburgh University, to support her thesis.

In keeping with an editorial commitment to promote student work to the records management community, this issue includes an article prepared by two students from Edith Cowan University. The paper describes their eminently practical and successful project in which they, in collaboration with the WA Police Service, developed an Online Hypertext Recordkeeping Manual for the Police Service. The overall project, of which the Policies and Procedures Manual was an integral part, won the 1998 Western Australian Records and Information Management Liaison Group Award for an outstanding Public Sector Project.

Also in this issue, a new section, RMAA Notes, has been introduced. This responds to an identified need to publicise Federal Board initiatives and Branch activities that have wider interest than just for the individual Branch membership. In this section, members will find the formal notice of the RMAA Annual General Meeting, and the announcement, by the Federal Board, of three awards for excellence in records and information management.

Another innovation, at the initiative of the Marketing Coordinator, is the inclusion of a Consultants' Special, which provides the opportunity for consultants specialising in the information industry to promote their expertise.

There have been a number of very successful Branch seminars and meetings described in Branch reports, and more are being publicised on our web site. May I, again, ask Branch Councils to approach speakers or editors of proceedings to consider publishing some of the papers or reviews in the *INFORMAA Quarterly*, so that we all may benefit from these excellent programs.

Anthony Eccleston ARMA
National Editor

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor

I have been inspired to put fingers to keyboard and write a letter of congratulations to Laurie Sletten. Ms Sletten may have been unaware of the impact she was likely to make when her article, *Records Management in Australia and the United States: Appreciating the Differences*, was published in the February issue of *INFORMAA Quarterly*. However, in discussing her experience in the "space/time continuum" (or is that the "records continuum" or could it be the "life cycle"), I believe that she has, in fact, described the same feeling records managers in Australia have had when the records continuum was presented as an alternative to the records life cycle.

As a records manager and consultant in the field, I have always been of the opinion that the life cycle was about managing records from creation to disposition being aware that they pass through stages that are not distinct. Ms Sletten described and explained my, and many of my colleagues, understanding of the life cycle very succinctly. Previously, I was apprehensive at showing my ignorance at not understanding the need to develop the concept of the records continuum when, in my opinion, the records life cycle already addressed such a concept. Ms Sletten has now put the whole thing in perspective for me.

It's amazing that a "foreign archivist" was able to communicate a concept in such a way that allowed Australian records managers to understand it. It's a pity that all the writings of the Australian archivists couldn't quite get across the same point. No matter what you call it, we are all responsible for managing records from creation to disposition. Thanks Ms Sletten.

Shirley R. Cowcher, AALIA, AACS, MRMA
Director
Information Enterprises
Australia Pty Ltd

Dear Editor

Thank you.

I write to express appreciation for the excellent articles provided in the February edition of the magazine. Each of the three lead articles raised my understanding and awareness of important issues. I am now able to communicate clearly to senior management certain points I previously found difficult to articulate in order to win their support. Such new learning is especially of value to our organisation at the moment as we have embarked on developing and implementing a policy and procedural framework for our Information and Records Management systems (including most probably implementing an Electronic Document Management System). I have noted a number of the points raised and will be ensuring that our improved practices and specifications address them.

Annette Bale
Business Officer
Gippsland Water

Dear Editor

A return to work after a holiday is not made any happier by discovering that you forgot to turn off the List-servs before you went away. And there are hundreds of messages awaiting deletion and a very few that look interesting or relevant enough to read. I am referring to the Records Management List-serv from the USA in particular. During the deletion process, I noticed that a significant number of messages are from Australia, on all sorts of subjects, and include many that could only be of interest to Australians. I don't know the numbers, but of the 2 600 or so US List-serv subscribers, I would not be surprised if there were several hundred Australians.

The question is: why is there no equivalent Australian List-serv for records management? I mean, if there is enough of interest to send from Australia to North America, surely there is much more on records management issues in Australia of local interest or relevance to a wider Australian audience? Surely, there would be more contributors to be found and, given the number of Australians who contribute to the US List-serv, there would be enough to sustain a List by themselves.

I could speculate on the reasons for the present situation, but I am not sure that it would be helpful. But I will close by saying this is an issue on which the RMAA could take the initiative. And, I would not have to spend so much time deleting so many messages unread.

Stephen Yorke
Canberra

Technological Change and its Impact on Records Management

AUTHOR

Keith Parrott

Keith Parrott is a Senior Consultant with Office Productivity Centre (OPC), Canberra. Prior to joining OPC, Keith was with the National Archives of Australia responsible for developing Commonwealth policy for the management of electronic records. He has had extensive experience in the information technology industry, including in the management, design and implementation of information and recordkeeping systems.

ABSTRACT

Records management definitions and practices have been forced to adapt to changes that have been induced by the introduction of computer technology, from the era of paper-based registry files through to the present personal computer networked environment. Advances in 'new' software packages, Document Management Systems, imaging, workflow, groupware computing, email, the Internet and intranets, have not necessarily been implemented in ways that maintain the evidential trail of transactions. As part of the overall spectrum of information management, specific recordkeeping solutions need to be introduced at the design stage to ensure that valuable records are preserved and are accessible, using contemporary technology.

Introduction

There is ample evidence that the British colonial officials responsible for the early government of Australia had established a strong culture of recordkeeping by 1901. This was not necessarily reflected elsewhere in the world. Alexis de Tocqueville, reporting on the situation in America at the time, said:

The instability of the administration has penetrated into the habits of the people; it even appears to suit the general taste, and no one cares for what occurred before his time. No methodical system is pursued; no archives are formed; and no documents are brought together when it would be easy to do so.[1]

Such a description could well apply to the current state of recordkeeping in the electronic environment. In many organisations Personal Computers (PCs) are 'owned' by the individual with little recognition that the documents and records created on PCs are a part of the corporate asset and memory. In the absence of suitable software and procedures to manage electronic records, de Tocqueville's appreciation remains apt in that 'no methodical system is pursued; no archives are formed; and no documents are brought together when it would be easy to do so'.

The Registry File

The tradition of recordkeeping that was established by 1901 had at its heart the registry file. The registry file today, as it was then, is recognisable as being 'the record'. It is a collection of documents within a standardised folder whose physical features are well described elsewhere. Even with such a standardised and recognisable 'record object' as the registry file, archivists and records managers in Australia continue to argue as to what it is that constitutes a record - often to the bewilderment of information technology and business professionals.

Without getting into a technical discussion on the definition of a record, it is worth reflecting on what others expect from records. Professor Pearce gave a valuable insight when he was asked to investigate the circumstances surrounding the non-requirement of a deposit for satellite Pay-TV licences in 1993:

I commenced the inquiry by examining the relevant departmental files. It could not be said that these were in as good a state of presentation as one normally expects from departmental files. Papers do not always appear chronologically, folios are not always numbered and officers who have accessed them have not so indicated on the file cover. It is also to be observed that notes have not always been made of the outcome of meetings. These deficiencies were explained as following from the extraordinary pressure under which officers of the Department were working to bring the pay-TV scheme to fruition...Adherence to usual public service paper procedures was not possible...however, it has made my task more difficult.[2]

The first thing to note is the expectation that departments will keep good files. Those working in the Australian Public Service would not be surprised by Pearce's findings that good files were not being kept - and that this is not an isolated case. The Australian Law Reform Commission in its 1998 review of the Archives Act stated:

...Submissions made to the Commission during the consultation process suggest that the problems of mediocre and fragmented recordkeeping are so widespread within the Commonwealth administration that they have come to be accepted with a degree of fatalism.[3]

Recordkeeping needs

Returning to Professor Pearce, put simply, he had an expectation that a story would unfold as he read the records. He expected to be able to follow an evidential trail for each of the business activities he examined.

Records need to be created as part of the business process or as soon as possible after an event, and kept in a way that prevents alteration. Records should provide links to other records of that transaction, activity or function so that the record tells the story: what, who, how and when; the order of events and decisions, and, by implication, what didn't happen or wasn't recorded.[4]

Records are that which are kept as evidence of business functions, activities and transactions. An organisation keeps records to: support managerial decision making; meet legislative and regulatory requirements; protect the interests of the organisation and the rights of employees, clients and citizens; support better performance of business activities; provide protection and support in litigation, including the better management of risks associated with the existence or lack of evidence of organisational activity; support consistency, continuity and productivity in management and administration; document organisational activities; and support research and development activities.[5]

A recordkeeping system is a system that captures and maintains the context and structure of records, along with their content, secure against alteration.

These expectations for recordkeeping are independent of the media on which the records are kept. If investigators like Professor Pearce are required to access an organisation's electronic records, they expect to be able to access that same 'story' or evidential trail as Professor Pearce was hoping to find in the paper registry files. Is this possible in your organisation?

Recordkeeping technology

The technology for recordkeeping in Australia had remained pretty well constant until the advent of the computer. As information technology has developed, there has been greater specialisation in the technology that computers use to handle different types of information. There are now different software packages for word processing, spreadsheets, email, the Internet, relational databases, and so on. Once there were just mainframe computers, and the only function they performed was to process numerical data.

Mainframe computers have been used by most Australian government departments since the 1960s; their applications have typically been developed in-house, and have had little or no recordkeeping functionality built in to them. The exceptions were where a high degree of accountability was required, for example, with financial and human resource management systems.

To assess whether there is adequate recordkeeping in mainframe computer applications, it is necessary to know what records should be created, what value those records will have, and how long those records should be retained. The involvement of records managers and archivists is necessary at this stage. The best time to consider recordkeeping requirements is at the system design or redesign stage.

The problem with mainframe applications

Many mainframe computer applications use relational database software. The evidential trail, or record, is dependent on the software that links the tables, and the software that provides access to the required view of the information. This is not a problem in a live computing application if the right linkages between the tables have been made; but is potentially a problem for an inactive system, or in situations where vital information, metadata, or linkages have been superseded or deleted.

The issue of creating and maintaining access to records over the long term in the mainframe environment is then, fundamentally, a management one. Given the right advice at design time, systems can be designed to keep appropriate records. While the set of records that requires long term retention is likely to be a small subset of the total, the issue remains: what happens to the records when storage space becomes short, the system is redesigned, the technology changes, or the system is no longer required?

The utilisation of simplified data structures and stable standards for records of enduring value will minimise the probability of corruption when those records are migrated at times of technological change. If access to the records is required by other organisations or the public, then maintaining those records in a physically separate computing environment may be a necessary security or design consideration. These are issues that business managers need to raise and question when specifying their requirements to information technology professionals.

The problem with personal computers

Australia has long been recognised for the quality of its computer application development based on the use of skilled staff, sound system development methodologies, and good data management. While Australian government departments maintain high standards in the management of their mainframe applications, the same cannot be said about their PC environments. PC hardware is typically well managed, and more and more

departments are standardising on PC software, but the use to which PCs are put is not well managed.

The percentage of unstructured information in documents, spreadsheets and email is about 60% (some commentators suggest it is as high as 80% or 90%). This figure implies that the mainframe computer applications are only managing, at most, 40% of the information on which the organisation is reliant. PCs are invariably under the control of an individual who decides how to name documents, and in what folders or directories they will be put. They decide when a document will be changed, when deleted, and whether a copy will be retained after it has been transmitted.

The knowledge of what is on the PC resides in the individual's head. Even if a document can be located, it may not be possible to tell whether it is a final version or a draft. If it is a final version, was it transmitted to someone for modification, or did the receiver create a new document using the received document?

With traditional paper file recordkeeping systems these problems are overcome through well-established procedures which ensure that the records are authentic and reliable. Until recently, there have been no such procedures and systems developed to manage records held on PCs. The policy of most Australian government departments (in an environment where a lot of staff spend most of their time working in front of a PC) is to print and file copies of electronic records. Business pressures are such that operational staff have little time or inclination to maintain a paper-based recordkeeping system in addition to their personal holdings of electronic documents.

In Australia, there are a number of successful computer systems that manage paper files which, if implemented properly, can provide valuable information as to what files exist and where they are currently located. The main benefit, however, of these systems has been to the central registry that manages large quantities of files stored on and off-site.

The effect of 'new' software packages

During the period that registry file tracking systems have been developing in sophistication, there have been big advances in document management (DM) systems, imaging, workflow, groupware computing, email, the Internet, and in intranets. These technological advances, however, have not, in most cases, been implemented in ways that maintain the evidential trail of transactions.

DM systems have evolved from text retrieval and imaging systems, which manage information objects of the one type, whether blocks of ASCII text or bit-map images. Modern DM systems are able to handle a mix of information objects but, in most cases, still do not encompass the functionality required of a recordkeeping system.

Workflow software is providing some of the linkages that recordkeeping systems require, but does not provide the infrastructure to capture the information and its linkages into a secure environment for future reference. When implementing workflow applications, consideration needs to be given to where in the process records need to be captured or created, rather capturing the outcome of each elemental step of the workflow.

Groupware software enables documents to be associated with a topic, but still falls short of providing the functionality required of a recordkeeping system. Software developers are now providing links between groupware software and recordkeeping systems to support the capture of records.

Electronic mail has been the most visible area of technological change that has, or should have had an impact on records management. Email is officially recognised in many organisations as the preferred means of communication. It is used for business communication and therefore supports the transmission of records. Even when the record is an email enclosure, the transmittal information provided by the email system is part of the record's context. Email systems do not keep records in a properly managed, secure environment that provides links to other records. Email needs to be captured into a proper recordkeeping system where it can be linked to other records of that transaction, activity or function.

The Internet and organisational intranets are other areas of technological change that have a high level of visibility, and have a potential impact on records management. Fundamentally, the Internet and intranets are publishing environments. How you deal with published material, in records management terms, will depend to a great extent on the nature of your business. In some cases, it will be important to capture the look and feel of published information into the recordkeeping system.

The Internet is increasingly being used to conduct business. Its role is to provide data entry forms which clients complete and transmit to commence a business transaction. The processing of the transaction is done in a secure environment that is not part of the Internet. The information relating to a transaction is transient, and needs to be captured into a recordkeeping system. The Internet does not retain evidence of business transactions, and is not a recordkeeping system.

Information management

Records play a very specific and important role in organisations, but they are only a relatively small subset of

the total information environment. In most organisation's there are collections or sources of information that are not records, but which are vitally important to the organisation's survival and development. Indeed, a major challenge for organisations is to determine the nature of the information they deal with, whether they are records or not, and gain control of that information.

Information management (IM) is still an imprecise science, but it needs to be developed if organisations are going to survive the information explosion of this decade and the next. IM should be approached from a holistic perspective. The importance of IM was recognised by Australia's Office of Government Information Technology's Information Management Steering Committee, and described in its 1997 report *Management of Government Information as a National Strategic Resource.*

New Information Management technologies have emerged in recent years which make it possible for the Government to more efficiently manage information resources and participate effectively in the online economy. It has a responsibility to lead and demonstrate sound Information Management practices which will create a catalyst for change in the public sector and to stimulate growth in emerging information industries...Better information management will improve public sector responsiveness, timeliness, flexibility, and accountability.[6]

The report proposes an IM framework that includes information management and information service principles. As part of these principles, the report makes reference to the need to consider recordkeeping requirements: 'Commonwealth records in all formats should be captured in appropriate record-keeping systems'.[7] The report also promotes the concept of IM planning as one of its major recommendations, in which it suggests that 'all agencies [be requested] to

produce Corporate Information Management Plans as an integral part of their corporate/business planning processes'.[8]

These IM plans are seen as emphasising the relationships between business processes, clients and corporate information, the costs and benefits of IM, the role of information management technologies in supporting corporate information management needs, and the role of records in supporting corporate business needs.[9]

The IM plan is then the 'missing link' between the Corporate Business Plan and the Information Technology (IT) Strategic Plan that ensures the IT strategy continues to support business goals. Without a strategic approach that seeks to address all information, the 60% of information that is out there on PCs will continue to incur a costly management overhead, will be under-utilised, and will put organisations at risk through the inability to meet legislative accountability and business requirements. Business needs to focus on the information not the technology. The technology is just an enabling tool.

IM plans are an ideal vehicle to highlight the need to consider appropriate recordkeeping in the design and acquisition of systems, to identify various responsibilities through the organisation for recordkeeping, and to point to relevant legislation, policy, procedures and advice. The IM plan is a communication tool that supports coordination between business units and encourages strategic planning to use information to achieve the organisation's business objectives.

Conclusion

Overall, it is safe to say that records management has not kept up with technological change. A major impediment has been the lack of consideration of the recordkeeping

requirement when designing systems but, more importantly, the lack of availability of cost effective solutions from the information technology vendors to support recordkeeping. It is essential that solutions be found to these problems to ensure that valuable records are preserved, and are accessible using current technology.

Endnotes

1 Alexis de Tocqueville 1900, *Democracy in America,* trans. Henry Reeve I, The Colonial Press, pp. 213-214.

2 Professor Dennis Pearce 1993, *Independent Inquiry into the Circumstances Surrounding the Non-requirement of a Deposit for Satellite Pay-TV Licences, and Related Matters,* Report to the Secretary of the Department of Transport and Communications, AGPS, Canberra, pp. 3-4.

3 Australian Law Reform Commission 1997, *Review of the Archives Act 1983, Draft Recommendations Paper 4,* ALRC, Canberra, p. 60.

4 Australian Archives poster, *Keep a Record.*

5 Standards Association of Australia 1996, *Australian Standard AS4390 - Records Management,* (AS4390, Parts 1-6), Standards Australia, Homebush, NSW, Part 2: Responsibilities.

6 Information Management Steering Committee (IMSC) on Information Management in the Commonwealth Government 1997, *Management of Government Information as a National Strategic Resource,* Report of the Office of Government Information Technology, Canberra, p. iii. <http://www.ogit. gov.au/publications/publications.html>

7 IMSC 1997, p. 40.

8 IMSC 1997, p. 168.

9 IMSC 1997, pp. 168-169.

Requirements for Evidence and Ethics in Recordkeeping*

AUTHOR

Danielle Wickman

Danielle Wickman is currently Acting Project Leader in the Recordkeeping Standards project at the National Archives of Australia. She joined the Archives as a Graduate Administrative Assistant in 1994 after working at the Australian Defence Force Academy Library and completing a BA (Communication) and a Graduate Diploma (Library and Information Management) at the University of Canberra. She is currently studying for a Masters in Information Management at Monash University.

ABSTRACT

Records management is inherently concerned with justice and moral behaviour - it strives to ensure that reliable evidence of rights and obligations is created and maintained. The functional requirements for evidence in recordkeeping, codified by researchers at Pittsburgh University, provide a framework in which to ensure ethical records management practices. The elements of compliant organisations, complete and accurate capture of the record, maintaining the authenticity and inviolability of records, and controlling the use and re-use of records, all serve a legal, ethical and moral commitment to the community.

Requirements for evidence and ethics in recordkeeping

You have had your credit card stolen. You know exactly when it was stolen because the thief hit you over the head with your briefcase after he grabbed it, making off with the contents which included your credit card, the report you were working on, and your lunch. The first thing you do after picking yourself up is walk into the nearest bank branch and report the theft.

The bank is getting tired of the bad debts racked up by the notorious credit card bandit. Rather than cancelling your card, it decides to track his movements, watching the electronic transaction reports as he uses your card to buy a crow bar here, a pair of stockings there. The transaction reports allow the police to pinpoint his movements and wait outside the shoe shop to arrest him while he is putting on the joggers he just bought with your card. Justice is done, the bad guy caught, and shoppers can enjoy the cashless society in safety again.

What if it's not a thief but you, in the legitimate use of your credit card, that the police and the bank are following?

The bank needs to record these transactions. It needs to know that you made a purchase and did not receive cash, because the interest rates for cash and purchases on your account are different. It needs to know which shop you bought from, so it can credit the value of the purchase to its account. It needs to know the date of the transaction, so it can adjust the balance of your account and calculate interest charges. It may need to know the time of the purchase, so that it can distinguish between transactions made by you in the same place on the same day, or as a quality control measure in case of system errors or downtime. The creation of transaction records by the bank is legitimate. What we may object to is the context in which they are used.

Information ethics

The ethical use of recorded information is a relatively new issue. Michael Piggott points to the rise of computing and databases in government in the 1970s as the catalyst for the rise in information privacy concerns in Australia.[1] H Jeff Smith agrees that 'two drivers - new technological capabilities and the increasing value of information - have created an environment in which consumers' privacy awareness is quite high'.[2] The increasing ease with which information about our daily lives and activities can be gathered, manipulated and used, generally makes Australians nervous. Ironically, at the same time that the general population becomes more concerned that electronic information might be collected, stored and used in unethical ways, records managers are concerning themselves with the problem that information technology has caused us not to keep specialised kinds of information in the form of records, at all.

Pittsburgh University's project to define the functional requirements for recordkeeping arose out of a need to restate previously implicit recordkeeping requirements in the new electronic environment. The Pittsburgh functional requirements for evidence in recordkeeping were derived from traditional records management principles to ensure that evidence of business transactions can be created in an electronic environment to serve the same purposes as in the paper one.

The functional requirements for evidence in recordkeeping are not new. However, information ethics are relatively new phenomena. Given that the functional requirements for recordkeeping developed and evolved when information ethics were not of great concern to society, but were codified when the ethical collection, collation and use of information had become a public issue, we need to ask how well the stated functional requirements reflect ethical values.

Professions are given a high status by society because they uphold and protect principles that society values. Records managers and archivists are important accountability players - they ensure that records are created to provide reliable evidence of actions, and make them available so that the actors can be held to account, within an organisation or beyond it. Pemberton and Pendergraft suggest a number of moral and social values that records managers uphold, including supporting the principles of:

• the free flow of information, within justified legal and proprietary limits;
• credible and accurate creation and maintenance of information to protect the rights of information subjects;
• collection of information about persons as a privilege in trust; and
• resisting the illegal, unethical or immoral use of information against persons and organisations.[3]

The requirements set out by the Pittsburgh researchers dictate what is required to ensure that records that contain evidence are created and managed. While they do not address information ethics directly, they can provide us with a framework in which to do so. Records management is inherently concerned with justice and moral behaviour - it strives to ensure that reliable evidence of rights and obligations is created and maintained.

Conscientious organisations

The first of the functional requirements for evidence in recordkeeping, overarching all other requirements, is a conscientious organisation.[4] This requirement insists that organisations must know of and comply with laws, regulations, and best practice statements relating to records creation and business functions.

'Ethics ... is a matter of personal commitment, enforced by one's conscience, or by peer pressure or some other social sanction, including laws.'[5] Stephen Yorke proposes that 'an ethical issue can be seen as a situation or problem which cannot in good conscience be resolved by application of normal managerial practices or procedures which may have been formulated or condoned by an employer'.[6] An ethical problem is one in which you cannot necessarily do 'the right thing' by following established policies and procedures. It follows that a conscientious organisation will have more chance of acting ethically if it produces and promotes ethical practices and processes. The recordkeeping requirement of organisational conscientiousness can be applied to ethical considerations. Organisations must know of and apply laws, regulations and best practice statements that govern the ethical creation and management of records.

The Pittsburgh Project identifies a number of literary warrants for the requirements they set out.[7] There are warrants in Australia for creating and using records in ethical ways. The Commonwealth *Privacy Act 1988* establishes Information Privacy Principles which govern the way Commonwealth government agencies collect and handle information, and in 1998 the Privacy Commissioner produced the *National Principles for the Fair Handling of Personal Information*[8], which largely reflect the principles already established in the Privacy Act.

Such principles apply to the collection of information about individuals, but many of them could be said to apply in other situations as well. They include using and disclosing information in ways consistent with public expectations or in the public interest, collecting only accurate information and making sure there is a mechanism for correction if proved inaccurate or out-dated. These principles, when applied to non-human subjects, might be good management principles, but are rarely codified outside an organisation. Where there is no external warrant for the ethical management of records and the information they contain, conscientious organisations must produce their own codes of information ethics for the guidance of staff.

Ethical records capture

The Pittsburgh requirements also state actions and processes that we can relate specifically to the ethical creation and capture of records in the information society. One way to manage information ethically is to limit the amount of information captured, and to control the ways in which it is collected. The less sensitive information an organisation holds in its records, the lower the risk of its misuse.

The functional requirements specify that business transactions should be 'conducted only through the documented recordkeeping system and its documented exception procedures'. The provision for 'exception procedures' is important. The Privacy Commissioner's information privacy principles state that 'an organisation should only collect personal information that is necessary for one or more of its legitimate functions or activities'.[9]

Information technology allows us to assist in this aim, although it seems in practice more often used with the opposite result. Internet technology allows individuals to request and access

products and services, or information about them, without identifying themselves to the provider. The transaction of requesting and receiving information about a product via the Internet can and often should legitimately take place outside the recordkeeping system. In the paper environment, there is a greater chance that requests for information would take place within the recordkeeping system, as inward correspondence is often registered into the system before any action takes place. To prevent such simple and private transactions from entering the recordkeeping system is to help prevent personal information being used for purposes other than those for which it is collected.

While exceptions to the rule must be allowed and tolerated, the substance of the functional requirement to conduct all business through the recordkeeping system is important, and relates to the primary purposes of recordkeeping. As

Sue McKemmish found 'poor or unethical organisational cultures appear to spawn poor or unethical recordkeeping substructures'.[10] Even conscientious organisations might appear to have behaved in a dubious manner if records of their transactions are not created and captured. Organisations already under scrutiny will endure heavy suspicion if they cannot account for their actions. For the majority of business activities, to allow business transactions to take place outside the recordkeeping system is to allow unethical behaviour, or at the very least, to leave the organisation open to the suspicion of having behaved unethically.

The flip side of this requirement is that 'no records can be created in the recordkeeping system except through the execution of a business transaction'.[11] If a transaction is a legitimate one authorised by the organisation, only information in the

proper context of the transaction - and required to complete the transaction - should be captured in the recordkeeping system and stored for use by the organisation. The information privacy principles ask organisations to collect only information necessary for their legitimate activities,[12] implying that business transactions are the only legitimate avenue for collecting personal information about individuals.

The Pittsburgh requirements also specify that 'records creators must have been authorized to engage in the business that generated the record'. Authorisation relates to the reliability of records. Reliability is in part determined by the competence of the records creator - when records are created according to prescribed and accepted processes by persons competent to carry out the transactions they document, they are reliable, and can be said to speak for the transaction

or fact they represent.[13] By authorising individuals to carry out certain activities, organisations guide and take responsibility for the actions of staff who conduct business in the organisation's name.

The idea of engaging in *un*authorised business immediately conjures up ethical concerns, and unauthorised business is far less likely to be recorded. Sue McKemmish quotes a *Sunday Age* article on the corrupt behaviour of some Australian entrepreneurs as saying, 'some Australian networks went close to the law's edge; others beyond it into outright fraud. And because many deals could not be documented, each network often engaged the services of an "honest broker"...who could be trusted by all sides to keep the complicated details in his head and "judge any dispute".[14] The "honest brokers" took the place of the recordkeeping system, because formal recordkeeping works directly against such dishonest or unethical behaviour. The requirement for authorised records, then, serves both the purposes of producing evidential records and of helping ensuring ethical business and recordkeeping behaviour in organisations.

The need for accuracy

The Pittsburgh requirements also state that 'information in the system [must] correctly [reflect] what was communicated in the transaction'. There are, of course, good business reasons for capturing accurate information in records, but there are also ethical considerations.

One of the information privacy principles says that information about individuals must be 'accurate, complete and up to date', and another, that organisations should take reasonable steps to correct inaccurate, incomplete or out of date information.[15] The Commonwealth *Freedom of Information Act 1982* also reflects the importance of maintaining accurate

information about individuals, by giving citizens a right to correct information held about them in government files and databases. Keeping accurate information is good business sense, but it also has implications for ethical decision-making and individual rights. H Jeff Smith gives the example of Richard Nolan, who was given an American Express gold card - fourteen years after his death - by an expert system acting on out-of-date, incomplete and inaccurate information.[16] In another example, the first 'clean' elections in ElSalvador were made possible in 1984 because, for the first time, records were assembled, corrected and updated so that multiple 'votes' from individuals and dead persons were stopped.[17]

Use and reuse of information

The information privacy principles ask organisations to use personal information only for the purpose for which it is collected, and to disclose it to others only in prescribed circumstances, including where 'the organisation has reason to suspect that unlawful activity has been, is being or may be engaged in'.[18] In the case of our credit card thief, the bank has a reasonable suspicion that the law is being broken, and may be quite justified in disclosing information to the authorities. The bank would have no justification for turning over to third parties information about legitimate credit card transactions.

Perhaps the most common complaint about the reuse of information about business transactions regards the selling of mailing lists for direct marketing purposes. The privacy principles allow the use of information for direct marketing where the information subject is given the opportunity to decline further direct marketing communications. Interestingly, the principles do not rule out the selling of information to third parties. The selling of such 'value added'

information may in some cases have serious ethical implications, for example, the advertisement for sale of 'a list of 106,378 names of individuals who have been rejected for bank cards...[and]...[a] list of 28,768 callers to "900-number national dating service that allows men and women [to] meet. They are primarily middle to upper-middle class and between the ages of 25 and 50". Phone numbers, presumably captured by Automatic Number Identification technology, are available'.[19]

While the Pittsburgh requirements do not prevent the reuse of information captured in records, they do provide measures that enable the reuse of information to be controlled and documented. The requirements recommend that each representation of a record 'must reflect the context of the creation *and use* of the records'[20] and that 'the release of redacted [revised] versions of a record is a discrete business transaction...[and] is an auditable use of the original record and therefore results in creation of an audit trail with a link to the transaction which released the redaction'. While such requirements do not prevent the reuse or disclosure of information in records, they do reduce the likelihood of unethical reuse or disclosure. Unethical behaviour is unlikely to be documented in recordkeeping systems. If it is not possible to reuse or release information without recording the action in the recordkeeping system, the risk of unethical use of the information is reduced.

Evidence and ethics

One of the purposes of recordkeeping is to control organisational behaviour by accurately recording actions and making them available for scrutiny. The need to create evidence in the form of records is in many ways inseparable from the need to ensure legal, ethical and moral behaviour by individuals and organisations, to protect the rights and entitlements of all parties to

business transactions. While technology and the rise of the information economy have made our concerns about information privacy more apparent, and the risks inherent in the use of information greater, the requirements to manage recorded information in ethical ways have changed very little. The failure to keep proper records is to increase greatly the risk of unethical behaviour. By providing a framework with which to ensure that records are created and maintained accurately, and their use documented, the Pittsburgh functional requirements for evidence in recordkeeping also provide us with a framework within which to guard against unethical behaviour. A failure to create, maintain and use records in ethical ways is to deny the rights of individuals and organisations, and to break the social contract that recordkeepers seek to uphold in the information society.

Endnotes

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[13] Luciana Duranti 1995, 'Reliability and authenticity: the concepts and their implications', *Archivaria*, no. 39, Spring, p. 6.

[14] McKemmish 1994, p. 11.

[15] Office of the Privacy Commissioner 1998, available at <http://www.hreoc.gov.au/privacy/natprinc.htm>, accessed on 9 June 1998.

[16] Smith 1994, p. 122.

[17] J Michael Pemberton 1986, 'Records management, professionalism and social values', *Records Management Quarterly*, vol. 21, no. 4, p. 50.

[18] Office of the Privacy Commissioner, available at <http://www.hreoc.gov.au/privacy/natprinc.htm>, accessed on 9 June 1998.

[19] Smith 1994, p. 100.

[20] Emphasis added by the author.

* The original version of this paper was written for the Electronic Recordkeeping masters unit at Monash University.

Development of an Online Recordkeeping Manual for the WA Police Service

AUTHORS

Elaine Brady & Carol Muir

Elaine Brady and Carol Muir were final year recordkeeping students at Edith Cowan University (ECU), Western Australia in 1998. They took part in this Cooperative Education for Enterprise Development (CEED) project for the WA Police Service under the supervision of CEED Coordinator, Sue Jones and recordkeeping lecturer, Mark Brogan. The final project was submitted as part of course requirements.

ABSTRACT

In 1998, Edith Cowan University and the WA Police Service (WAPS) initiated a joint project to develop a Recordkeeping Manual for the Police Service. Based on contemporary accepted theory, performance indicators, and best practice models, the project team developed a three-phase plan. This involved research, investigation into current status and practice, and finally, drafting and receiving approval for the Manual. The resultant Manual, formatted as an online, hypertext document, has now been accepted by the WA Police Service.

Introduction

The implementation of the reform program of the WA Police Service (WAPS), called the Delta Program, has resulted in a new organisational structure with responsibility for recordkeeping devolved to police personnel at all levels. The Records Branch initiated a program of improving recordkeeping standards with the objective of corporate standards, policies and procedures being used consistently across the Service. This was expected to result in improved information retrieval efficiency, compliance with legislation and greater accountability.

In 1998, a joint project was initiated by Sue Jones, CEED Coordinator at Edith Cowan University (ECU), with John Layton, Manager of Records Branch, WAPS, to assist in developing a Records Management Kit, the final version of which was to include records management and recordkeeping policies and procedures; the new WAPS retention and disposal schedule; the new WAPS thesaurus; and an introductory training video. The kit was to be developed for use as an online reference and, eventually, as a training tool for cadets attending the WA Police Academy. The authors, as final year students, were invited to develop the first part of this kit - the Records Management and Recordkeeping Policies and Procedures Manual for District and Local Police Stations. The target audience was police personnel working in District and Local Police Stations.

Public sector organisations and accountability

A recent investigation by the WA Office of the Auditor General found that:

It is...essential that a comprehensive records management framework exists to ensure that accountability obligations are clearly defined, assigned and discharged to the public...[1]

The Auditor General also discovered a number of non-compliant and non-standard practices within the public sector regarding recordkeeping, noting that:

comprehensive records were not kept of decisions made and those records destroyed without due authorisation. In addition, a number of agencies did not have a comprehensive management framework supported by policies, procedures, standards and controls to ensure that records are managed with due regard for economy, efficiency and effectiveness.[2]

Increasingly, the general public expects government agencies to be open in their decision-making and accountable for their actions. An effective and efficient records management system will ensure that adequate records have been kept which will enable public sector agencies to comply with the 'requirements of the regulatory environment in which they operate'.[3]

Margaret Pember, in describing accountability, states that:

It includes, inter alia, the ability to provide accurate and verifiable information on all manner of activities across the organisation as well as accepting responsibility...for the consequences of one's decisions/actions. As such, the concept of accountability is applicable to all individuals and organisations across the public and private arena and at all levels of responsibility in an organisation.[4]

Changes in the external operating environment of WAPS, in conjunction with a new change ethos within the organisation centred on Delta, led to critical examination and review of the performance of the organisation in all

operational and support areas. WAPS information systems and recordkeeping were included in the review process.

The Australian Standard for Records Management AS4390, the notion of auditability and the Control, Access, Disposal and Storage (CADS) Model (as discussed later) were important components of the work undertaken by the records project at WAPS.

Auditability and performance indicators

The Australian Standard AS4390 - Records Management, emphasises the importance of monitoring and compliance in achieving recordkeeping goals.[5] Performance indicators 'have become an integral part of modern management...as an accountability tool...[to] enable senior management to devolve responsibility yet monitor and remain cognisant of the programs and activities within the organisation'.[6] They may be built into the system to enable individuals to know exactly what is required of them in the execution of their recordkeeping responsibilities.

The indicators should be applicable to the tasks, 'relevant, appropriate and measurable so that real comparisons can be made between actual results and corporate goals and objectives',[7] and should 'support the overall goals and objectives of the organisation'.[8] Further benefits of implementing performance objectives have been noted by the Office of the Auditor General, such as allowing public sector agencies to become customer orientated, contributing towards improvements to the system and recognising best practices.[9]

Keenan describes three main types of performance indicators, namely Workload Indicators (which measure the amount of work done), Efficiency Indicators (which relate outputs in cost terms to level of inputs required to produce them), and Effectiveness Indicators (which measure the extent to which an outcome is achieved).[10] Due to the nature of the project, a full analysis of applicable performance indicators was not possible, but Effectiveness Indicators were derived and included, wherever possible, to serve as an action checklist. It is envisaged that these indicators will be developed further by the Records Branch to include the full complement of performance and accountability measurements.

CADS and the records continuum model

Recordkeeping functions are more and more being seen as a seamless whole, rather than activities that are complete in themselves. AS4390 defines the records continuum as:

the whole extent of a record's existence. Refers to a consistent and coherent regime of management processes from the time of creation of records (and before creation in the design of recordkeeping systems), through to the preservation and use of records as archives.[11]

It differs from the traditional life cycle model by focussing on the dynamic continuous process of records management based on business activities pertinent to those records, rather than following inflexible sequential stages.[12]

CADS refers to the recordkeeping functions of Control, Access, Disposal and Storage. It presents a way to dynamically integrate records within an organisational framework based on the records continuum paradigm.

Control concerns the activities of creating or receiving records, registration, classification, indexation, and movement control. Issues of access may be harder to define. AS4390 does not treat this as a discrete process, however, it does include some recommendations for user access in the Control Section. In public sector organisations, access may be used to refer to user access permissions, public access especially in the context of the Freedom of Information Act, security classification, and physical security of records in whatever format. Disposal identifies the relevant actions to be applied to records in storage. Public sector agencies must comply with authorised Retention and Disposal Schedules. Activities include regular review of all records in storage, disposing of records in a lawful manner and preparing records for transfer to the Public Records Office for archiving. Section 6 of the Standard is about Storage. It contains recommendations for the safe and secure storage of records onsite including the building environment, storage furniture, and safe handling of containers, procedures which ideally should be put into place at the time of implementation.[13]

Organisational context

Armed with its benchmarking and analytical tools, the WAPS/CEED project team got down to the real work of measuring compliance with best practice and the creation of a revised recordkeeping regime. The organisational setting should not be forgotten. Over the previous two years, the WA Police Service had undergone major structural changes with the old hierarchical structure being flattened and greater responsibility put upon the individual officers to create and maintain accurate records. The Police Service is dispersed over the whole of Western Australia with diverse operations such as district and local police stations, dog handling, marine police, traffic management, aerial and helicopter, homicide and drugs divisions. Consequently, many different types of records are created or received during the course of daily business. There is a Records Branch which can be contacted for advice, however, most recordkeeping knowledge police officers have is acquired through experience on the job.

Some records management procedures were available to personnel at Police Stations through the online Commissioner's Orders and Procedures (COPS) but they were general and rudimentary. Moreover, the different stations had developed their own procedures with regard to their local requirements, rather than applying standardised conventions. The disadvantages of these individual systems were many. When officers were transferred they had to learn new procedures each time. There were undesirable delays in access to information due to mislaid or inappropriately named files and records. Information was unnecessarily duplicated increasing the need for more storage space. Of growing concern was the possible exposure of the police service to risk of prosecution from lack of compliance with various state legislation dealing with public records, including the Evidence Act, Freedom of Information (FOI) and the Privacy Acts. Finally, there was an associated cost of lost public faith regarding the ability of the police service to do their job efficiently.

The project goal was to compile a set of corporate policies and procedures based on best practices and Standards as recommended by the Australian Standard, AS4390 - Records Management. Existing policies, procedures and practices in recordkeeping were benchmarked against the standard, supplemented by understandings of industry best practice. New and revised policies, procedures and practices were developed where the need was suggested by benchmarking. A monitoring and compliance regime, based on performance indicators, was also developed as an important tool to achieve continuous improvement in recordkeeping.

The new recordkeeping regime and associated performance indicators form the substantive components of the project deliverable: The Records

Management Policy and Procedures Manual. The client did not want the manual to be too prescriptive, but it had to be comprehensive enough to be applicable to the many different kinds of police records. Also, it had to be written in a clear and direct manner for police personnel, many of whom have had little formal training in records management concepts. On completion, the kit would be integrated into the electronic Commissioner's Orders and Procedures (COPS) Manual and delivered over the WAPS Wide Area Network as a hypertext document.

Project plan

The CEED project was divided into three stages. Initially, the project team consulted different sources of information relating to current recommended procedures of recordkeeping and management, such as literature published by qualified records management professionals, Standards Australia's AS4390, and the Australian Archives Handbook.[14] Advice was sought from external professional organisations involved with public records management, such as the WA Public Records Office, the Archives Authority of NSW and the Australian Archives. Other public service records management procedures manuals were researched for applicable practices, including those of the Education Department of WA[15] and Homeswest.

During stage two, the project team investigated current recordkeeping procedures used within a sample of WA police stations and used these findings to identify inconsistencies within WAPS, and any activities considered incompatible with recommended best practice. The team employed several methods to gather the information, for instance, site visits to various local and district police stations to observe current practices and conditions. Follow-up visits were made to interview WAPS staff involved in

managing station records. The existing WAPS records management procedures resident on the online COPS (Commissioner's Orders and Procedures System) were reviewed as much of the original content was too general or incomplete.

The third stage consisted of writing and compiling a draft manual that was organised into three broad sections. All policies and procedures were based on the AS4390 recommended best practices which were operationalised to take into account the diversity of police service records management environments. For example, AS4390.6 recommends storage that includes secure, air conditioned facilities with low UV lighting levels, an environment few police stations are in a position to provide.[16] The recommendations, therefore, had to accommodate the financial and environmental constraints under which most stations operate, and provide realistic procedures that will still ensure adequate protection for the records. The instructions were composed with the intended client group in mind, taking into consideration their general level of expertise and training in records management, and environmental constraints.

The Standard recommends that records should be named in a consistent manner over time.[17] The project team found that many files were not named in a standard fashion. Procedures needed to be developed to instruct police personnel how to use the official WAPS Thesaurus.

Two focus group meetings were organised with police staff who had managerial responsibility for police records to review the information collated by the project team and determine its applicability. The manager of Records Branch, John Layton, presented the draft manual to District Superintendents for approval and any recommendations for changes.
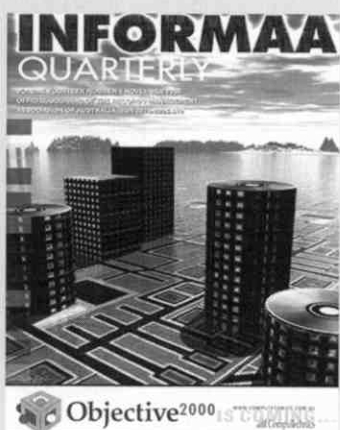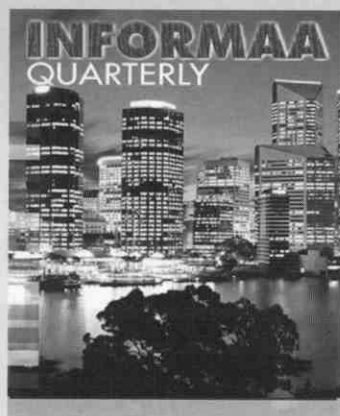
The WAPS Quality Assurance Department edited the final draft for compliance with the WAPS corporate publications format.

Overview of the Manual

The Manual has been developed along guidelines that incorporate five inter-related and mandatory elements of a records management system, namely Policy, Procedures, Technology, Standards, and Performance Evaluation. Too many organisations have relied on solutions that comprise only one element; for example, technology, to increase corporate efficiency and productivity. However, no one element operating in isolation can be relied upon to furnish a strategy for improvement. All of these elements are required to ensure optimal outcomes in records management and recordkeeping.

Policy: Policy describes the organisational framework, authorises programs, and practices. Basically, policy determines what the organisation will do.

Procedures: Procedures are the processes and steps for records management, i.e., the "nuts and bolts" of how the records management activities are to be done, based on the policies.

Technology: The information technology, the communications technology, the software and hardware needed to do a records management task. The technology helps maintain efficiency if workable procedures are already in place.

Standards: Standards are the benchmarks of procedures and practices and provide a framework for continuously improving records management and recordkeeping.

Evaluation: Evaluation is necessary for maintaining the efficiency of any system. It ensures an organisation meets its stated objectives. Performance indicators may be used as evaluation tools giving objective feedback about performance.

Components of the Manual

The Manual is organised into three main components - Policies and Responsibilities, Records Functions, and Tools and Glossary. The Policies

and Responsibilities section defines the mission statement and rationale for recordkeeping and management within WAPS, establishes the standards for legislative compliance, and allocates the responsibilities of adherence to these standards to individual members of the organisation. It places emphasis on the need for auditing the recordkeeping performance of WAPS personnel by promoting the use of effectiveness indicators, and the AS4390 Standard is adopted formally as the benchmark for best practice evaluation.

The CADS model, which refers to the major recordkeeping functions of Control, Access, Storage and Disposal, is a 'commonly accepted way of classifying recordkeeping work in Australia',[18] and is used as the format for segregating the procedural sections of the WAPS manual.

Control deals with the activities of creating or receiving records, registration, classification, and indexing. Applied to WAPS it includes the following: registration of correspondence, Station email, accountable books and non-accountable items, the creation of paper and electronic files, the classification and indexing of records and files using the WAPS Thesaurus, and the tracking of file movements.

Access refers to the provision of records for utilisation. This includes the security of records in all media, the physical availability of the records to police staff, and the public's access to records through Freedom of Information requests.

Disposal identifies the relevant actions to be applied to records in storage. It includes the review of all records in storage on a regular basis, the application of the appropriate retention periods and disposal actions to records in compliance with the WAPS Retention and Disposal Schedule, the disposal of unlisted records, the disposal of non-paper media records, the preparation of records for onsite storage or for transfer to the Public Records Office (PRO) for archiving, and the lawful destruction of records.

Storage discusses the different types of storage environments and the requirements for secure

storage of records onsite as recommended in AS4390, looking specifically at the building environment, the internal storage environment, storage furniture and shelving, and containers and their safe handling.

The Tools and Glossary section contains aids that can be used to enhance the effective use of the Manual. The tools include the WAPS Retention and Disposal Schedule based on public records requirements, and the WAPS Thesaurus, both of which have been developed by the WAPS Records Branch. A list of Effectiveness Indicators based on the procedures is included in this section, to be used by police staff as the basis of an audit regime.

Outcomes

In the final report, the project team detailed several issues of which the Records Branch had not been aware, and the recommendations the team made are now being examined. The Manual was accepted by the Manager of Records Branch on behalf of the WA Police Service. During the focus group meetings, the police management recommended that the policies and procedures be adopted across the whole of the Service. It was formatted as an online document in HDK (Hypertext Development Kit) to be made available to all departments.

Towards the end of 1998, the project, initiated by the Records Branch to improve the standard of records management throughout the Service and of which the Policies and Procedures Manual was an integral part, won the 1998 Western Australian Records and Information Management Liaison Group Award for an outstanding Public Sector Project.

Endnotes

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Intranets: Problems or Opportunities for Recordkeeping

RMAA ACT Branch Seminar, 10-11 March 1999, Parliament House, Canberra

REVIEWER

Andrew Lund

Manager, Corporate Data, Australian Trade Commission

In his opening address to the Seminar held at Parliament House, George Nichols, Director-General of the National Archives of Australia, challenged the other speakers to prove that the prospect for records management and archives was no longer a black hole but rather, a golden age. His thesis was that in the past five years, the professional debate had progressed from abstract consideration of theoretical possibilities in the context of technological developments foreign to the records management profession to the consideration of practical applications of powerful tools. In the process, there had developed a new understanding of the fundamental issues and the inter-relationships between the various disciplines within the information professions.

This opening gambit set the scene for a series of professional presentations that addressed a wide range of practical issues which confront information professionals seeking to implement effective records management regimes in today's technology-driven environment. Speakers from Australia and overseas drew on their wealth of hands-on experience to provide participants in the Seminar with a comprehensive consideration of the implications of the electronic world for records managers, and strategies to move forward.

The keynote speakers were: George Nichols; Rick Barry, an internationally recognised authority in the field of information and records management, and in particular, management of electronic records; and Tony Miller, Principal Consultant of the IT/Systems Integration Group at PricewaterhouseCoopers in Canberra, a specialist in the implementation of knowledge, financial and HR management systems. Their papers were more than ably supplemented by contributions from Adrian Cunningham, of the National Archives of Australia, Conni Christensen and Joy Siller, independent consultants in the records and information management field who have worked with a range of public and private sector organisations in Australia; Anthony Willis of Dunhill Madden Butler; Dagmar Parer, now with AIMA and the National Library of Australia, but bringing also a wealth of experience from the National Archives of Australia; and Bob Morton of the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs.

Willis provided a broad legal perspective. Cunningham spoke to his recent work and the work of others in developing practical metadata standards for information and records management in an Australian context. Morton is currently bringing to conclusion a major project implementing an integrated paper and electronic document and records management system.

Expanding use of the nets and the increasing understanding of the central role of knowledge as the basis for commercial and economic competitiveness provided the context for discussion.

The seminar papers focussed on providing an understanding of the 'nets' - the Internet, intranets and extranets, their importance and use, the needs of users, the potential and pitfalls of the technology, records management in the knowledge management world, and the legal and management issues presented by the current information environment. Discussion of these was grounded in case studies which drew on the experience of projects at the World Bank, NSW and Federal Government Internet initiatives, Fedlink and Connect.NSW, Sydney University, the National Archives of Australia, the Business Entry Point, Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, BP, and the ACT Medex Consortium.

Barry and Siller pointed out that there was little evidence to suggest that the profile of knowledge management and the nets as panaceas, largely driven by marketing hype designed to sell net-related products, had a basis in reality. Siller identified a number of practical constraints to effective application of net technology including limitations on the bandwith available for network communications, security issues, lack of integration of legacy systems, the reliability of content and difficulties in establishing its authenticity, and a lack of user involvement in system development. Barry, however, pointed out that there are some instances where substantial achievement is being made. He also noted that developers, purveyors and advocates of technology deal with what is (or might be) possible, but not with what is acceptable.

Several presenters identified technological developments and related

trends which have the potential to impact on recordkeeping. Nichols talked about the emergence of the nets from a military and academic tool almost unknown to the majority library and records management profession five years ago, to being almost ubiquitous in business and home today.

In the first part of his address, Barry highlighted the opportunity created by the need for system redevelopment to address Y2K issues. Morton's paper reported on how this opportunity had been capitalised on in the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs.

Other trends identified by Barry included the development, and increasing deployment of large scale Enterprise Resource Planning systems using software such as SAP/R3 and Peoplesoft in typically high volume transaction processing environments, with associated data warehouses and datamarts. He also addressed the possibility of re-centralising information associated with the re-emergence of thin client technology and centralised storage, driven by total cost of ownership economics for large organisations. He drew attention to concentration on technology (e.g. the development of Functional Requirements) to the exclusion of consideration of human aspects and the issues of acceptability and accountability, and a re-emerging tendency for IT to increasingly drive (rather than respond to) business processes.

In their presentations, Christensen, Parer and Miller each noted the increasing moves by governments in Australia to use the Internet and web-based tools to provide access to and delivery of information and services. In the context of these trends, issues for records managers, archivists and other information professionals were considered.

Barry, Christensen, Siller, Parer, Morton and Miller addressed aspects of the role of the nets, their similarities and differences, and the implications for recordkeeping. Each of these speakers canvassed issues relating to the management of net-based records, such as web pages and email. Together with Cunningham, they saw a need for appropriate policies, procedures and standards to underpin effective management of electronic information. Barry and Parer, together with Miller, also considered the relationship between the nets, knowledge management and records management.

Barry, Parer and Willis discussed issues of accessibility, reliability and authenticity associated with electronic information and records. Willis noted that individuals (employers and employees) as well as organisations were subject to legal liabilities in relation to their management of electronic information. He also referred to some of the legal and accountability issues posed by outsourcing of information systems and records management. Barry also highlighted the recordkeeping implications of Y2K and specifically, the need to maintain vital records independent of the electronic environment during this period.

Barry, Christensen and Parer considered issues relating to the capture and classification of records and knowledge, and discussed the role of metadata. Cunningham's paper provided a detailed discussion of recent Australian contributions to the development of practical metadata standards, including the Monash SPIRT project and National Archives of Australia's work on AGLS and a recordkeeping metadata standard for Commonwealth Agencies.

A number of important conclusions emerged from the presentations at the Seminar.

Web-based technology is a key enabler for enterprise intellectual capital. The nets, the Internet, intranets and extranets, have assumed a significant place in the operations of organisations in the public and private sectors. They provide easily used tools for communicating with the wider world, either the general public or to defined communities, as well as within an organisation. They provide a vehicle for delivery of information and advice as well as providing access to services, and also provide a tool for managing and increasing the useability of the corporate knowledge base. The nature of the nets and the way they are increasingly used by business and public sector organisations as vehicles for the provision of advice and the conduct of core business transactions is such that they will often, if not usually, be at least record-making systems.

Records Management is closer than Information Management to Knowledge Management. Although the fundamental nature of records remains unchanged, the use of electronic tools for information management in a net environment raises challenges for records managers and will require significant changes to the way in which records are managed. Records managers must address electronic records, including those generated through the use of email, the World Wide Web and multi-media formats. There is a need to develop *systems with recordkeeping capability*, as opposed to *recordkeeping systems*. Appropriate policies, procedures and standards, and metadata regimes are keys to effective management of electronic records. It is important to avoid undue focus on technology to the exclusion of consideration of human aspects and the issues of acceptability and accountability.

Willis posited that 'All the laws which apply in the paper world apply in the electronic world'. However, the electronic world adds a layer of complexity in managing exposure to these laws. Individual employees as well as employers may be liable. Outsourcing of electronic information

management activities may have significant implications for the management of records, particularly in the public sector.

The need to re-develop or modify many computer systems in preparation for the year 2000 has provided a significant opportunity for the records management profession to become involved in the specification of the redeveloped systems, and include recordkeeping capability in those specifications. It also presents risks which records managers must address. It would be wise to commit vital records to paper and manage them in traditional ways until the real fallout from the year 2000 is understood.

The Seminar was well constructed, professionally presented and kept to time, standards that we have come to expect from the ACT Branch. The only disappointing note was the relatively small number of participants. Those who did come were treated to a wealth of knowledge and experience, which provided considerable food for thought and practical strategies to move forward. George Nichols' view of a golden opportunity for the Records and Information professions was certainly confirmed - but with this comes a serious responsibility to take hold of the opportunity and wrestle with the issues.

TOWER ANNOUNCES RM SCHOLARSHIPS

TOWER Software, developers of the TRIM Electronic Recordkeeping System, recently extended their sponsorship of professional activities to awards and scholarships. TOWER has announced the sponsorship of awards and scholarships for students attending two Universities: the University of Canberra, and the University of South Australia. Details of the awards are yet to be worked out, but are to the total value of $5,000 per year divided equally between the two Universities.

In making the announcements, Mr Brand Hoff, Managing Director of TOWER Software, recognised the advocacy of Elaine Eccleston of the University of Canberra, and Sue Myburgh of the University of South Australia, before noting that 'the scholarships were in a long line of sponsorships that TOWER has provided to support the professional side of the Records Management and Archives Industry'.

Mr Hoff went on to say, 'Not many are aware that each year TOWER supports one, and sometimes two, overseas speakers for the RMAA's annual National Convention. Furthermore, not many are aware that TOWER is the only private organisation that contributes $3,000 each year to support the activities of Standards Australia in their endeavours to promote the Australian Standard AS3940 - Records Management as an ISO standard. This money goes directly to the travel expenses of the Australian delegates involved in that initiative'.

'Also, TOWER is the only company that, over the years, has consistently supported the INFORMAA Quarterly with advertising. It is our way of supporting the RMAA and its professional journal. We believe in the professional side of the industry, and challenge other companies to do likewise, to recognise their community obligations', said Mr Hoff.

On a lighter note, Mr Hoff mused over whether the sponsorship of the annual Christmas drinks associated with the end-of-year seminar held by the ACT Branch constituted 'professional activities'.

CompuTechnics Expands Sales Team with New Sales and Marketing Executive

CompuTechnics Pty Ltd has expanded its sales team, appointing Greg Robinson as sales and marketing executive based in the company's Sydney office.

Greg joins CompuTechnics from Educom Business Solutions. He will be responsible for generating new business and servicing CompuTechnics' existing Objective Information Management System customers.

Originally from the United States of America, Greg brings more than 19 years' experience in the information management industry. He moved to Australia in 1985 as an employee of Intergraph Corporation where he worked for 10 years. During this time, he received formal qualifications from Macquarie Graduate School of Management. He also spent time working with Tower Technology.

'CompuTechnics is well placed to continue expanding its client base by providing records management and workflow as integral parts of document management', said Mr Robinson.

'The Objective suite is emerging as the information management trend setter in Australia and has done so by providing standards-based document and records management solutions that compliment the Microsoft and Lotus Notes platforms. Objective is an intuitive application that allows users to work in an environment that they are already familiar with. It's easy to implement and easy to use, with the same look and feel as Microsoft Explorer.'

New Products and Services

RELEASE OF TRIM 4.3

TOWER Software is pleased to announce the availability of TRIM 4.3. TRIM 4.3 will only be available in a 32-bit version capable of running on Windows 95, Windows 98 and Windows NT desktop operating systems. Many important new features come with TRIM 4.3, and TRIM users should take the opportunity to attend the TRIM seminars being planned over the next few months. See one of our three World Wide Web sites for dates, times and registration information.

Space Management

In keeping with our philosophy of being a complete Electronic Recordkeeping system, TRIM functionality has been extended to include warehouse space management. Users can define buildings, floors, bays, shelves, and pallets, or any subset of these, and have TRIM manage the space allocation.

Billing

Together with Space Management comes the ability to monitor many different events and generate billing information for users.

TRIM TopDrawer

Major new changes to TopDrawer have been incorporated, opening up many more TRIM functions to desktop product users.

TRIM WebDrawer

TRIM WebDrawer is a new product opening up access to the TRIM information from Internet/Intranet Browsers.

More Security Features

Lock TRIM allows users to temporarily prevent access to an open TRIM session. An automatic time initiated option is also available. TRIM 4.3 introduces more security (as though there are not enough options now) to restrict records and documents on a 'need to know' basis, right from TopDrawer.

TRIM Reference Object

TRIM allows users to create 'pointers' to record information in the TRIM database and include those 'pointers' in electronic items such as WP and email. When received, the TRIM Reference Object can be double-clicked which will invoke TRIM login and display the item in TRIM.

External Program Links

Allows a user to define an external application to receive information from any number of specified TRIM fields. Once the target application and field has been defined, the user can initiate the application.

Versions and Revisions

TRIM now supports the dual concepts of revisions and versions.

Most Recently Used Containers and Documents

It has been found in practice that most users re-access most recently used containers and documents. These are now conveniently available in many different places within TRIM.

Integration with Groupwise

Further integration with Novell Groupwise email.

Search by Record Plan Terms

Further improvements to allow easier access to record plans and corporate knowledge plans.

Right Mouse Button Functionality

More TRIM functionality is available at the click of the right mouse button.

Navigate Enhancements

Improvements to the important knowledge management navigate functions to include both versions and revisions.

COM Application Programming Interface

The TRIM COM API continues to open the TRIM system to other line of business applications. By opening up many TRIM objects developers can now create and access essential Recordkeeping functionality.

See www.towersoft.com.au for full details on the TRIM Electronic Recordkeeping System . . . more than EDM!

RMAA Notes

Notice of RMAA Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the 24th Annual General Meeting of the Records Management Association of Australia will be held on:

Tuesday 31st August 1999.

It is to commence at 8.30 am and will be held at the

Darwin Entertainment Centre.

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. **The closing date for acceptance of any motion of business not relating to the ordinary annual business of the Association will be 5.00 pm on 10th August 1999.**

Michael Hangan MRMA
Executive Secretary

International Standard for Records Management

The Australian Standards Committee is heavily involved in the development of the International Records Management Standard known as ISO15489, the International Standard being developed based on the Standards Australia AS 4390 - Records Management.

The International Committee, responsible for ISO15489 is scheduled to meet in May 1999 to consider a draft structure proposed by Australia. The Australian delegation to the International Committee deliberations comprises; Barbara Reed as Head of delegation, Frank Upward, and Anne Cornish. David Moldrich will also be present as the International Chair, with Peter Tresedar from Standards Australia as secretary.

The International Committee meets twice yearly as a group, but has the facility to respond to comments and amendments on the standard through Internet connections. It is scheduled to meet again later this year in Melbourne, which will provide an opportunity for RMAA and ASA members of the respective Victorian Branches to meet the Committee members.

Supporting sub-committees have been formed to address the structure, content, and terminology, and an editorial sub-committee convened to produce the final document for public comment.

Sponsorship

The RMAA is a major sponsor of the development of the ISO15489. However, further sponsorship is required to support our continuing involvement. If there is an interest in becoming a sponsor of this Australian initiative, please contact Anne Cornish on (03) 9747-3077.

Anne Cornish ARMA

RMAA National Awards

The RMAA is pleased to announce three major awards for excellence in records and information management, open to all student, individual and corporate members of the Association. The inaugural presentations will be made at the National Convention Dinner in Darwin on 31 August 1999.

The awards are:

Award 1: Student of The Year Award.

This award will go to a student who has achieved excellence in tertiary studies in records and information management. The award is open to both full time and part time students, regardless of the number of years of study.

Award 2: Outstanding Group Contribution to the Records Management Profession.

This award is aimed at those RMAA members who, as a group, have achieved excellence in records and information management, and have contributed highly to the profession.

Award 3: Outstanding Individual Contribution to the Records Management Profession.

This award will be made to the individual RMAA member who has demonstrated excellence in records and information management, and contributed highly to the profession.

The judging panel, this year, comprises Anne Cornish (Chair), Tina Howard, and Margaret Pember. The panel will assess the nominations on their achievements in Records & Information Management based on the following criteria.

Records and Information Management Awareness: a development that increases the awareness of the profession to those outside the RMAA.

Best Practice: an example of achieving best practice within the records management field, which extends the boundaries of common practice.

Innovation: achievement of a level of innovation in a field relevant to records and information management.

Involvement: evidence of a commitment to Records and Information Management issues leading to increased motivation, involvement, and improved business practice which has elicited respect.

Performance: demonstrated contribution to improve business performance. Key internal personnel will need to verify the initiatives made had made significant strategic and practical contributions to the organisation.

Achievement: A level of achievement that results in an increase of RMAA members, or displays a dedication and commitment to the profession.

A nomination form is included in this edition of the IQ. The closing date for all nominations is June 30th 1999. Further information can be obtained from the RMAA web site <http://www.rmaa.com.au> or through Anne Cornish on 0419 366 109.

Mrs. Betty Powell ARMA - Life Member

As most members would be aware, Life Membership is not a status that the association bestows upon its members lightly. The guidelines state that to become a Life Member, one must be a person of good character, who has rendered meritorious service over a period of at least 10 years, whose records management activities have brought credit to the Association, and who has contributed to the growth of records management and its recognition as a profession.

Mrs. Betty Powell has fulfilled all these requirements. She first joined the Association in 1980, and was elected to the Victorian Branch Council in 1981. She served continuously on Branch Council until July 1996 when she stepped down due to family commitments, but was seconded back in January 1997. Betty is still an active member of the Victorian Branch Council today.

Whilst Betty may not be a member who carries a high profile, she has always been one of those members that most committees long for. She is quiet and unassuming, but highly professional, and always willing to raise her hand when a job needs to be done. Over the years Betty has performed many roles with the Victorian branch including that of Status Committee Member and Chair, Branch Informaa Editor, Registrar, Treasurer and several positions on Victoria's National Convention Committees in 1987 and 1995. However, her main interest has always been in the area of Education. With the exception of her 6-month break in 1996, Betty has, for the last 10 years, been either Chair or a member of the Education Committee. She has been intimately involved with the:

Course Review Committee:
Certificate of Records Management, Archives, Prahran College of Advanced Education (PCAE) 1984 (now Swinburne TAFE).

Course Advisory & Steering Committee PCAE & Swinburne:
Certificate of Records Management, Archives and Certificate of Records Management July 1985 to June 1995 inclusive.

Course Advisory & Steering Committee:
Information Technology (Records Management), Swinburne University of Technology TAFE Division July 1995 to June 1996 and 1997.

Course Review Committee:
Graduate Diploma in Records Management (Information & Archives), Melbourne College of Advanced Education (MCAE) July 1986 to June 1987. Co-opted by MCAE and then the University of Melbourne July 1987 to June 1991.

National Accreditation Records Management Industrial Advisory Committee:
Invited Industry Representative (Victoria) 1994 & 1995.

As a long time supporter of Prahran College of Advanced Education (now Swinburne University of Technology, TAFE Division), the Victorian Branch has provided part time lecturers for the Certificate course over many years. Betty also filled the role of part time lecturer for the Certificate II Information Technology (Records Management) course in 1996 & 1997.

The Board awarded Betty Life Membership in September 1998. As a Life Member she will no longer pay annual subscriptions and she is entitled to hold a full voting position on any Branch Council or the Board for the remainder of her life. Betty, on behalf of the entire association please accept our sincere thanks and congratulations.

Sir Rupert Hamer Records Management Inaugural Awards

The Victorian Public Records Advisory Committee and the RMAA Victorian Branch, joined forces to sponsor the inaugural Sir Rupert Hamer Records Management Awards. Victoria's Parliament House was the location of the award presentations. The red carpet and spectacular chandeliers emphasised the prestige of this event.

The award was named the Sir Rupert (Dick) Hamer Award by the current Victorian premier Jeff Kennett in recognition of Sir Rupert's involvement in the establishment of the Victorian Public Records ACT proclaimed in 1973.

Invitations were sent and nominations were called. Multiple nominations were received and all were considered. The panel had difficulty in making the final decision, however, two agencies were successful. The winners of the award were:

Parks Victoria, and
The Department of Education

Parks Victoria

Parks Victoria was created in December 1996 following the merger of National Parks Service and Melbourne Parks and Waterways. An immediate imperative was to apply a consolidated records management system throughout the organisation. In June 1997, a project team was formed which inherited 'disjointed systems of various levels of operating efficiency'. The team completed its extensive task in April 1998.

On winning the inaugural Sir Rupert Hamer Records Management Award, the team members were 'ecstatic' and 'substantially surprised', despite the fact that earlier in the year they had won an in-house award for excellence and innovation.

Has the implementation of the consolidated records management program improved the administrative functions of Parks Victoria? Dennis Ward, Manager, Corporate Risk Management strongly believes so; 'The corporate management level recognised, along with field staff, the importance of records management for accountability and workflow, in providing a platform for evidence of our business transactions and as a sound basis for the incorporation of future electronic systems'.

The strength of Parks Victoria's records management program lies in the support of senior management, and close affiliation with the Public Record Office Victoria. Records Management Officer Renate Nuske believes "that discussions with PROV were very important, especially in developing policy and procedures, resolving secondary storage issues and serialisation of records of cultural and permanent value".

Department of Education

Staff of the Department of Education's Records and Information and Archival Services units was 'over the moon' when presented with the inaugural Sir Rupert Hamer Records Management Award, according to Chief Finance Officer RoseAnne Macleod. The award will markedly increase the profile of units and emphasise the importance of sound records management practice within the department.

Their application was based on the development of the *Department of Education Records Disposal Schedule* launched in August; the move to the Treasury Reserve from the Rialto Building; and the implementation of a single electronic records management system throughout the department. Effective records management has led to significant cost savings in the areas of file retrieval, destruction of temporary records and transfer of permanent value records to PROV custody.

1999 Sir Rupert Hamer Award

The overwhelming success of the award has inspired both the PRO and the RMAA to continue the award and look at increasing the nominations received, and the prestige of the entire event.

The award is open to all Victorian Government agencies that have completed a major initiative within the Records Management environment during the previous 12 months. The panel will assess each nomination using the following criteria:

Preservation of records of permanent value to Victoria.
Minimisation of costs.
Facilitation of access to current information.
Provision of government accountability.
Enhancement of government efficiency and service delivery.

The 1999 Award will be held next November. Nomination forms will be available from the PROV in the coming months. Further details will be available from the Victorian Branch Update, the RMAA web page, or by emailing the Victorian Branch Communications Officer on RMAAvic@bigpond.com.
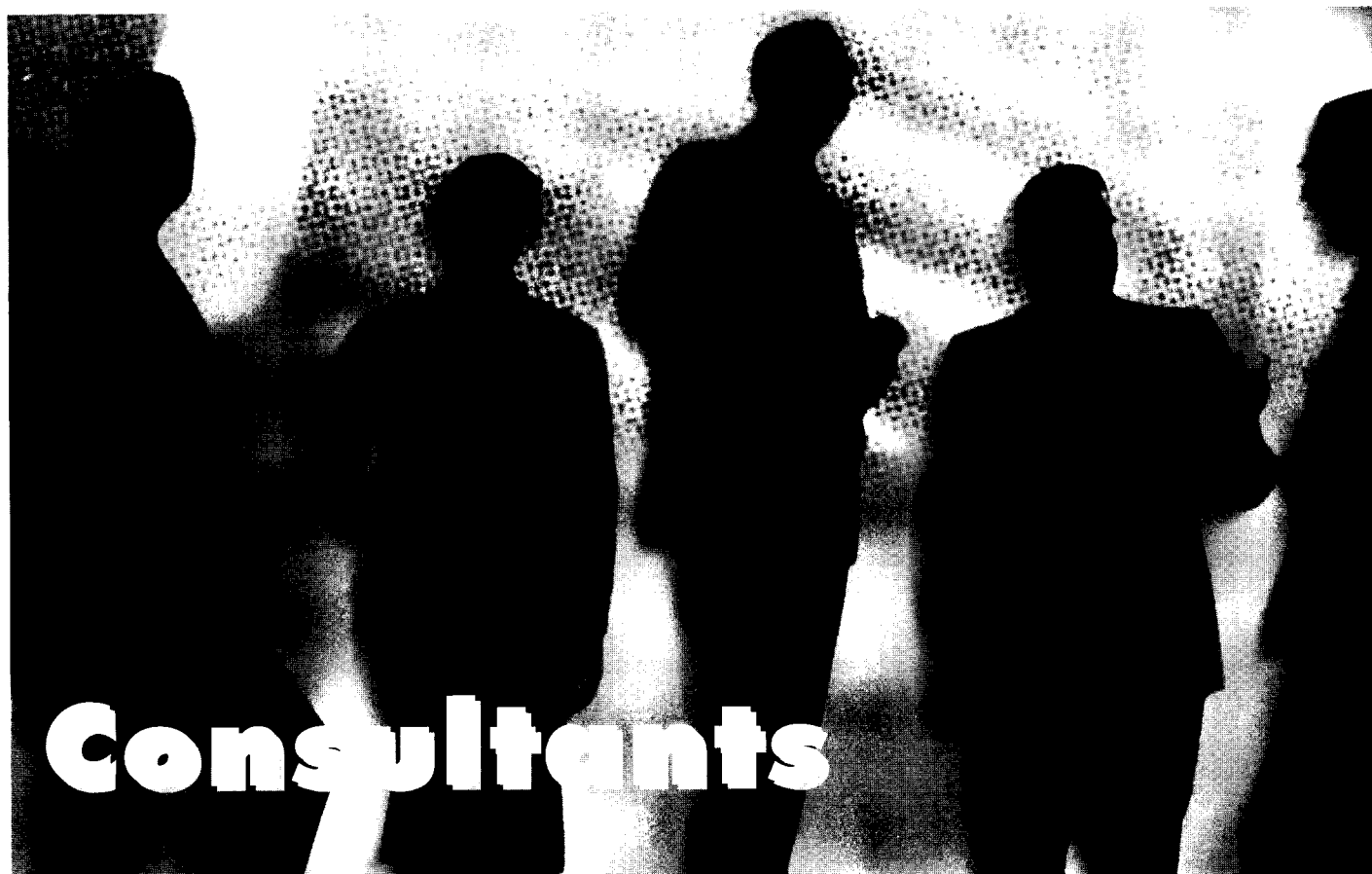
Consultants

A quick glance at the RMAA Product Directory reveals that there are over 40 consultants working in the records management industry. Consultancy services are available for a wide range of disciplines - the development and design of record keeping systems, thesauri, and disposal schedules; development of documentation for policy and procedures; systems analysis, design and selection; project management; training; and business and strategic planning.

Many organisations use consultants to obtain expertise that is not currently available internally. Often it is not cost effective to have staff acquire expertise which may only be required for a one-off project. Even when expertise is present in-house, it may not be possible to release valuable staff from their core business.

The use of consultants can also minimise the risks of project failure. When implementing new technologies, many staff find that there is a steep learning curve to climb before they can understand the available technologies and apply them to solving business problems. It can be beneficial to the project team to engage an independent consultant who brings comprehensive knowledge of the products and services in the market and can provide impartial advice. This makes the team less dependent on system vendors for professional assistance.

Suitable consultants should be able to bring to a project a broad range of experience gained from working with multiple clients, and an understanding of the complexities involved in project management. Through their knowledge, they can identify the pitfalls and help reduce the project risk.

External consultants, who are free from the constraints of internal politics, can play a valuable role in being able to stand outside the organisation and make recommendations. And, because of their experience in working across industry, many can help their clients build their understanding of the big picture issues associated with records management. This can be a valuable part of the internal selling process.

When selecting a consultant, you should establish firmly which skill sets you require. Once you have determined suitable candidates, request from them a copy of their résumé and a list of reference sites which you should check before making your decision.

Conni Christensen ARMA

Coordinator Reports

MEMBERSHIP AND STATUS REPORT

t is pleasing to report that as at 28 February 1999, the Association had an increase of 115 new members. These have been broken up as follows:

International	3
ACT	14
NSW	31
VIC	19
QLD	10
SA	13
WA	12
TAS	2
NT	7
Subscriptions	**4**

Currently, two applications for upgrade to Member status are under review by the committee. The committee encourages all members to obtain professional status.

Have you had an aggregate of 3 years' experience over 5 years (*with tertiary qualifications in records management*) or an aggregate of 5 years' experience over 7 years (*existing knowledge and experience*) in a records office, records centre, document control centre, or the like, or as a line manager directly (i.e., next above the Records Office Supervisor) responsible for the records function, or as a commercial records management service provider, contractor, consultant, or sales representative, or a combination of these or the like?

Membership as at 28 February 1999	
Professional Members	304
Corporate Members	690
Corporate Nominees	1846
Subscriptions	30
Total	**2870**

Then, you could be eligible for upgrade to professional status, to find out more contact your local Branch representative or ring our free call number 1800 242 611 and ask for an application form.

Chris Fripp MRMA
National Membership and Status Coordinator

MARKETING REPORT

The major focus for RMAA marketing activity in the last few months has been the ongoing development of the RMAA web site <http://www.rmaa.com.au>. A business plan has been developed to identify the role of our web site as a marketing and communications tool for the Association.

Through the web site, the RMAA can deliver an extensive range of services to our members, and promote our activities and services to non-members. We envisage our site as a records management 'corporate portal' - leading visitors seeking information about records management to relevant information sources. Visits to the site are being tracked and, at present, over 100 visits per day are made to the home page.

New sections on the web include the revised calendar of events, the Darwin Convention page, a publications and resources page, and State seminars. Several Branches, including NSW and SA, are already active with their own pages. Planned developments include professional development pages, and the product directory on-line. To assist branches with the development of their own pages, a web procedures manual has been developed and circulated to each Branch.

Another marketing activity has been the negotiation of a free 12-months subscription offer for RMAA members for Image and Data Manager magazine. Our goal has been to help records managers keep abreast of many technologies associated with producing, managing and storing electronic records. While initially taken up by NSW in January this year, the offer has been extended to all other states.

Don't forget to visit our web site <http://www.rmaa.com.au>. Your comments and contributions are welcomed.

Conni Christensen
National Marketing Coordinator
Connic@ozemail.com.au

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

A Records Management Taskforce was formed in February 1999 as a part of the Economic, Legal and Social Implications Committee (ELSIC) of the Australian Computer Society (ACS). One of the roles of the Taskforce is to facilitate liaison between the ACS and the RMAA. Members of the RMAA Information Technology Committee (ITC) now have ex-officio membership of the ACS ELSIC RMT. Membership has also been extended to include other members of the RMAA who are either eminent and/or who are highly active in the area of information technology. Access and involvement can be arranged through the Coordinator, Andrew Freeman.

Geoff Smith, of the New South Wales Branch has contributed to this report with the following:

For the last three or so years, I have been Chair of the Technology and Industry Standards Committee for the NSW Branch. Essentially, my purpose is that of trying to ensure records managers are aware of emerging technologies, how they will impact on the work of records managers and what issues are developing which records managers need to know about. We have kept the area of Industry Standards with technology, as the two are almost inseparable.

Each month I produce a report, which is available at the NSW Branch page of the RMAA web site. My reason for doing these pages (other than for my own interest) is that as we move into the 21st century, the days of records managers just looking after paper files are over. We, as professionals, need to know about all the technologies around and involve ourselves in implementing new systems ensuring that what we believe is needed, is included. We need to sell the skills we have, skills that are vital to our employers.

Future events being arranged in the information technology domain include firstly, on 19 May 1999, Anthony Willis, of Dunhill Madden Butler, speaking on 'The Internet and the Law'. Then, on 18 August 1999, Brand Hoff, Managing Director, TOWER Software, will discuss 'Possible Directions for Electronic Recordkeeping' at a joint ACS Canberra/RMAA ACT Branch Meeting. Both of these events will take place in Canberra.

Andrew Freeman
Information Technology Committee Coordinator
<afreeman@pcug.org.au>

Branch Reports

TASMANIA

The major item on the agenda for the Tasmania Branch is the State Seminar, planned for Wednesday 21 April 1999. *'Looking to the Future'* will concentrate on technology and change management. The Seminar is to be held at the Elizabeth St Pier Conference Centre, located on a former wharf in the Hobart docks area close to restaurants, bars and other distractions! A number of members have been heavily involved to ensure that all is in place to make this a memorable occasion. The organisation of this event has been very much a team effort.

Planning is in progress for a number of training and information sessions to continue throughout the year to ensure members are kept up-to-date with new and emerging technologies.

Everyone is talking about the new millennium. Don't forget that the first Convention of the RMAA in the new millennium, that is, in the year 2001, will be held in Tasmania. Note the event in your calendar. Start saving. Alert your managers and partners. Pack gear suitable for all weather.

Jill Saunders ARMA

NEW SOUTH WALES

The year 1999 is shaping up to be an excellent one for the NSW Branch. The first meeting for the year was a panel discussion on the so-called Y2K Bug on 9 February which attracted 113 people. The panel was chaired by Conni Christensen, and consisted of Graham Whittall of Systematics, John Pearce of Efeco, Ashley Porter of Gilbert & Tobin, and myself.

Our next members' meeting is set for 19 April on *'Knowledge Management* - Is Knowledge Management a Technological Solution or a Cultural Issue?' Following that, on 19 May we are having our second full-day seminar on information technology, 'What is New in IT for RM?' This proved very popular last year, and we believe it is vital for records managers to stay up-to-date with what is happening with technology, and how it will impact on our work. Further information is available via our page on the RMAA web site.

NSW congratulates those who are working on developing the web site (especially Conni and Gary Barber) as we see it as a vital way of communicating with our members, and those who may wish to be associated with us. We also congratulate the ACT Branch on their successful two-day seminar held in early March. A number of our people attended and I have heard only positive comments.

The Branch continues its involvement with TAFE in NSW with the State Records Office. TAFE want us to be involved in developing new courses in records management, and to help promote those courses. Also, we continue with planning for the 2000 Convention (which will be held in December 2000 - put it in your diaries now).

The Local Government Chapter continues to go from strength to strength under Chris Fripp and other very dedicated people. It is repeating the successful seminar held in Albury last year, this time in Port Macquarie for its north coast members on 27 and 28 May 1999.

Also, we wish to record our appreciation of the work both Chris and Conni are doing on Federal Council. Indeed, the reports we receive of Federal Council meetings make it clear we are in for exciting times ahead should we wish to explore opportunities opening to us.

My thanks to my fellow Councillors who make the work seem easier. Also, my thanks to the membership and other interested people who, by their involvement, certainly help continue to encourage and even enthuse the Council.

Geoff Smith ARMA

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

The New Year continues to see major focus at the Branch level concentrated on the new records legislation. Laurie Varendorff and his team continue to meet with various politicians and the Minister, Peter Foss, to discuss with them our concerns about the projected legislation. Our skills in lobbying and knowledge about the political process have certainly been developed!

Professional mentoring is set to take off in a big way this year. The Education Committee received enthusiastic support and assistance from the pioneers of ALIA mentoring in WA, Paul Genoni and Ann Ritchie. Over 20 members attended the first mentoring meeting for 1999 in March at The Brass Monkey in Northbridge. The aim of the program is to facilitate the sharing of information, challenges and ideas between new practitioners. It also provides a basic support system for those new to the profession; a great way to begin building up one's professional network. Those who have been working in the records management industry for some time will provide insights, advice and guidance. Mentoring will be focussed at the group level with activities such as workshops to assist mentorees with such issues as addressing selection criteria. If you would like to be involved in the mentoring program, either as a mentor or mentoree, please contact the Education Committee (Vicky Wilson v.wilson@cowan.edu.au). Mentoring provides a great opportunity for experienced practitioners to give something back to the profession, and for those just starting out to learn from the experiences of others, and hopefully avoid at least a few of the pitfalls.

Any activity about electronic recordkeeping or document management continues to draw a crowd. Over 100 attended *The State of the Nation* event to hear, at first hand, about the experiences of members currently planning and implementing new systems. Speakers were asked to address their most 'critical incidents' and we heard about the successes and the 'challenges'. Case studies were presented by Pauline Armstrong of CAMS, Trissa Dent of the City of Joondalup, Lesley Ferguson of the Ministry of Premier and Cabinet, Carole Harris of the Education Department, and John Leibich from Cooperative Bulk Handling. The presentations focussed on issues ranging from scoping the contract clearly during contract negotiations so vendor and agency have the same basic understanding of requirements, managing the contract successfully to completion, the importance of involving the users right from the start to develop ownership and support, the critical import of top management support, etc., as well as all the usual technical implementation issues. The presentations provoked lively and enthusiastic debate for the workshop sessions that followed. The event was voted such a resounding success by those attending that it is hoped to hold similar activities in the near future.

Nominations are now called for the WA Branch's annual awards. The *RMAA Medal* is awarded to the best student graduating from a course in records management in WA in 1998, and the *Certificate of Excellence* is awarded to a member making a special contribution to records management. These awards are presented at the AGM in July. For further information, contact the Education Committee.

Margaret Pember ARMA

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

As was anticipated in the previous edition of the *INFORMAA Quarterly*, the event 'EDM. Making it Happen' which was hosted here in February 1999 by our State branch was highly successful. There was a lot of good feedback from the attendees who indicated that they had found the speakers very informative. There was a large number of attendees, and the organising committee was very pleased that their hard work had all been worthwhile. Thank you to the tireless committee members, and also to Tower Software for their sponsorship of the event.

Upcoming events over the next quarter which have been arranged, include:

• A breakfast meeting in the restaurant at our beautiful Botanic Gardens on 11 May. The topic will be 'Change Management', presented by Kate Spargo of Ryan.Spargo.

• A presentation and workshop on 2 June to develop 'an understanding of electronic records management principles and techniques including imaging, DMS, E-mail and evaluations'. The speaker will be Chris Fripp of the Sutherland Shire Council in NSW, and will be sponsored by Canon.

Recently announced in the State Records (SA) February newsletter, State Records has taken up the challenge to provide records management training to State Government personnel. The modules have been put together by TAFE Institute, and are the result of an initiative by a committee which included members representing State Government Records Managers, the State Government Chapter of RMAA, TAFE personnel, representatives of RMAA SA Branch, and State Records. Congratulations State Records for meeting the challenge. (Modules were due to be released late in March.) With modules broad enough to encourage attendance by other than State Government employees (as was initially intended), State Records will certainly be meeting the training needs of a vast range of people in this State. The fact that they will also be available on CD-ROM for self-paced training, and that they have been created in accordance with the Competency Standards, is sure to spark a lot of interest.

Debbie Ophof ARMA

QUEENSLAND

Seminar program. The Branch has concluded its planning for the 1999-2000 seminar series. We will be presenting a series of seminars which concentrate on building fundamental skills in records management under the banner 'Building a Records System'. The series will build on one another, and provide participants with the opportunity to enhance their skills and understanding throughout the whole sequence of presentations. The first seminar commences on 20 July with 'Getting Started - Identifying the Objectives and Tools for an Effective Records Management Program'. Also, in April, the Branch is hosting two Professional Development Workshops. The first is on Disaster Preparedness, and the second on Managing Time Effectively.

New Professional Members. The Branch was pleased to approve three new Associate members: Nelly Heath, Darren Quinn, and Evan Williams.

Local Government Chapter Activities. The Local Government Chapter has been very busy with a recent trip to the Wide Bay-Burnett Region, hosted by the Burnett Shire Council. This visit gave people working in the surrounding region an opportunity to talk with their peers, and discuss a variety of issues affecting Local Government.

Philip Taylor MRMA

NORTHERN TERRITORY

The approaching 16th RMAA National Convention continues to dominate planning activities within the NT Branch. The Convention will be held this year in Darwin from 29 August to 1 September. The venue is the Darwin Entertainment Centre and the Carlton Hotel which are located on the same site. The registration brochures have been distributed widely, and at the time of writing, registrations have started to come in. Please check the RMAA web site <www.rmaa.com.au> for details of the Convention including the speakers program and online registration facilities.

Intending delegates to the Convention are encouraged to utilise the discounted early-bird registration and register before 30 June. August is a busy time of year in the Top End (because the weather is so good!), and early registration will ensure that delegates get the cheapest available accommodation and airfare rates.

The other major activity at the grass roots records management level, which is impacting on the majority of records managers in the Northern Territory, is the implementation of the whole of government records management system within the Northern Territory Public Sector (NTPS). At the time of issue of this journal, the implementation throughout the NTPS will be well under way. All agencies (at last count there were 36 agencies) will be installing standard software using a corporate thesaurus adapted from the NSW Keyword AAA. Records retention and disposal services for the NTPS are also being contracted to the private sector.

The focus on records management within the NTPS has expanded dramatically over the past twelve months, and has generated a new energy (and some money) towards improving utilisation of the government's records resources. The NT Branch involvement in this process has been considerable, and members are seeing a level of focus on records management in the Territory not experienced before.

We look forward to seeing readers in Darwin come August for *Records Management - Whose Territory?*

Greg Coleman ARMA

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

The ACT Branch major seminar 'Intranets: Problems or Opportunities for Recordkeeping' was held in March. The seminar committee had invited an impressive line-up of speakers, including George Nichols, Director-General, National Archives of Australia; Rick Barry, of Barry Associates, Washington; and Tony Miller, Principal Consultant, Information Technology/Systems Integration Group, PricewaterhouseCoopers, Canberra. The feedback from delegates and speakers was very positive, with people expressing the view that the Seminar was extremely relevant to the issues facing the industry at present, and was very timely. The Seminar Proceedings are available at $39.95 from:

Veronica Pumpa
Ph 02 6285 3644
Fax 02 6285 4114

In May, we are having a joint seminar with the Australian Computer Society featuring Anthony Willis from Dunhill Madden Butler, Solicitors, giving a paper on 'The Internet and the Law'.

The ACT Branch is also involved in preparing the *RMAA Product Directory* which, this year, will offer an online service on the RMAA Home Page. For more information on the Product Directory, please contact Julie Lenson on 02 6276 6568.

On behalf of the Branch, I would like to offer our congratulations to Helen McCarthy who has been awarded an upgrade to the status of Associate. Well done, Helen!

Julie Lenson ARMA

VICTORIA

The Victorian Branch has been extremely busy since our last report. The functions committee has been organising our annual State seminar, which is to take place on 27 May at the Yarra Glen Conference Centre. The conference centre is nestled in the foothills of the Great Dividing Range. All Victorian members have been surveyed to determine their preferred topics for the seminar, so don't miss it. We will be presenting what you, the members, have asked for. This year, the Branch will be holding its Annual General Meeting in conjunction with the State seminar. Details for the event can be obtained by contacting the Victorian Branch Communications Officer via email at:

<RMAAvic@bigpond.com>, or
Ph/Fax: (03) 9740 4820, or
Ms. Joedy Grey on
Ph: 03 9747 3077 or
Fax: 03 974 76599.

As a means of improving contact with the Branch, we have created a position of Communications Officer. Please refer to the Email and Phone/Fax numbers above for contact details. The Communications Officer will be happy to provide any information on Branch activities or, if unable to do so, will provide you with contact details of a Branch Councillor who can. However, membership enquiries should still be made on phone number 1800 242 611.

In an effort to provide our membership with greater educational opportunities, the Branch is currently investigating the possibility of becoming an accredited training provider. We will keep you informed as further information comes to hand. The Branch is also looking forward to continuing its association with the Public Records Advisory Council (PRAC) records management awards. A committee has been formed to work with PRAC, and the awards ceremony has been tentatively scheduled for November 1999. We encourage all members who work in eligible public sector offices to keep their eyes peeled for further details, and submit an application at the appropriate time. Best of luck in your endeavours.

One part of Victoria's strategic plan is aimed at raising the profile of records management across all industry sectors. In this respect, we have been keeping a close eye on the media looking for opportunities to comment on records related issues. During the recent AFL 'scandal' on salary caps, many references were made to the fact that inadequate records of player payments had been kept. Whilst we were unsuccessful in gaining media attention on this attempt, we did submit a letter to radio station 3AW and we will continue to look for further opportunities. On a related issue, we have also been lobbying the State Government in relation to its 'Government-on-Line' strategy, and we will keep members informed as further developments occur.

The Branch has also instigated a new meeting structure. The Branch Executive will meet monthly, with the full Branch meeting on a quarterly basis. Individual committees will meet as required and report back to the Executive and full Branch Council.

John Sim ARMA

FIRST CALL FOR PAPERS

Planning is well under way for the program for the RMAA 2000 Convention in Sydney. (Please note that the later date for the convention is because of the Sydney 2000 Olympics).

The program committee has developed an innovative program, incorporating a diverse range of presentation and session styles.

Our theme **"BRIDGING THE GAP"** provides us with a platform from which to address many of the issues facing records managers today:

- Bridging the gap between traditional and modern records management, and attaining the management skills required for the modern records manager

- Bridging the gap between the "organisation" and the record keepers

- Bridging the gap between information technology systems and record keeping systems

The program committee invites submissions, which are dynamic in content and presentation and which reflect the conference themes.

All submissions should include:

- Title of the paper

- A 200-300 word abstract

- Author(s) contact details including name, organisation, position held, postal address, telephone, facsimile, e-mail

- A brief biography of the author(s)

Electronic submissions are preferred, and all submissions must be labelled: **"RMAA 2000 Convention - Call for Papers"**

E-mail to: rmaa@systematics.com.au

Post to: PO Box 945
Parramatta NSW 2124

The deadline for submissions is July 31, 1999.

Acceptance of papers will be at the discretion of the RMAA convention committee. The conference secretariat will advise in writing acceptance of papers. All papers accepted for presentation will be included in the conference proceedings and distributed to delegates.

PRODUCT INFORMATION guide

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

- ○ Inside Front - *CompuTechnics*
- ○ Page 12 - *Rolls Manufacturing*
- ○ Page 14 - *Qualified Records People*
- ○ Page 14 - *RMIT*
- ○ Page 19 - *Microsystems*
- ○ Page 22 - Zenith
- ○ Inside Back - *Tower Software*
- ○ Back Cover - *Pickfords*

Name

Company

Address

Type of Business

Position

Telephone

Facsimile

Please post or fax a copy to:

MAP Marketing
Corner Scott St & Parnell Pl
Newcastle NSW 2300
Ph 02 4929 7766
Fax 02 4929 7827
Email informaa@mapmarket.com.au

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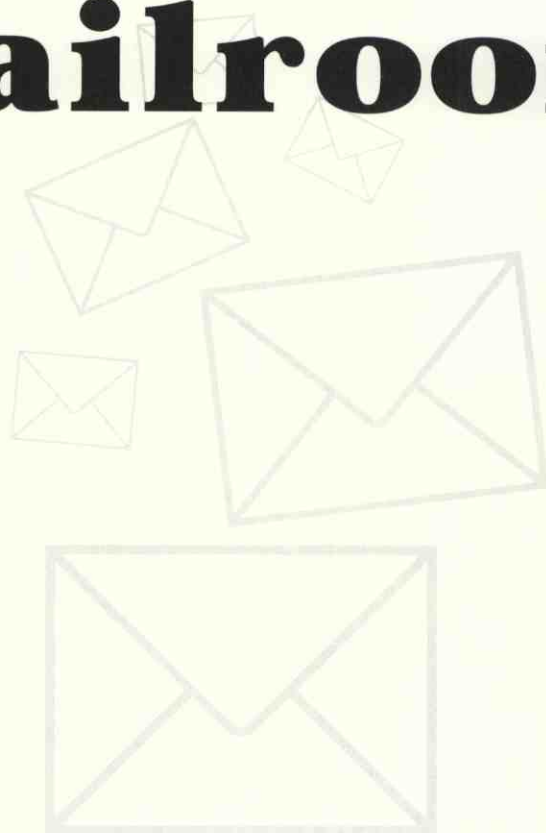
Australia Post and Pickfords Records Management have formed an alliance to provide the country's most comprehensive mailroom and records management system.

So, whether it's receiving, registering or despatching mail; opening new files or archiving old ones; or arranging an urgent courier, Pickfords and Post have the solution.

For more information about this major step forward in mailroom management, contact Pickfords on **(03) 9586 7222.**

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