

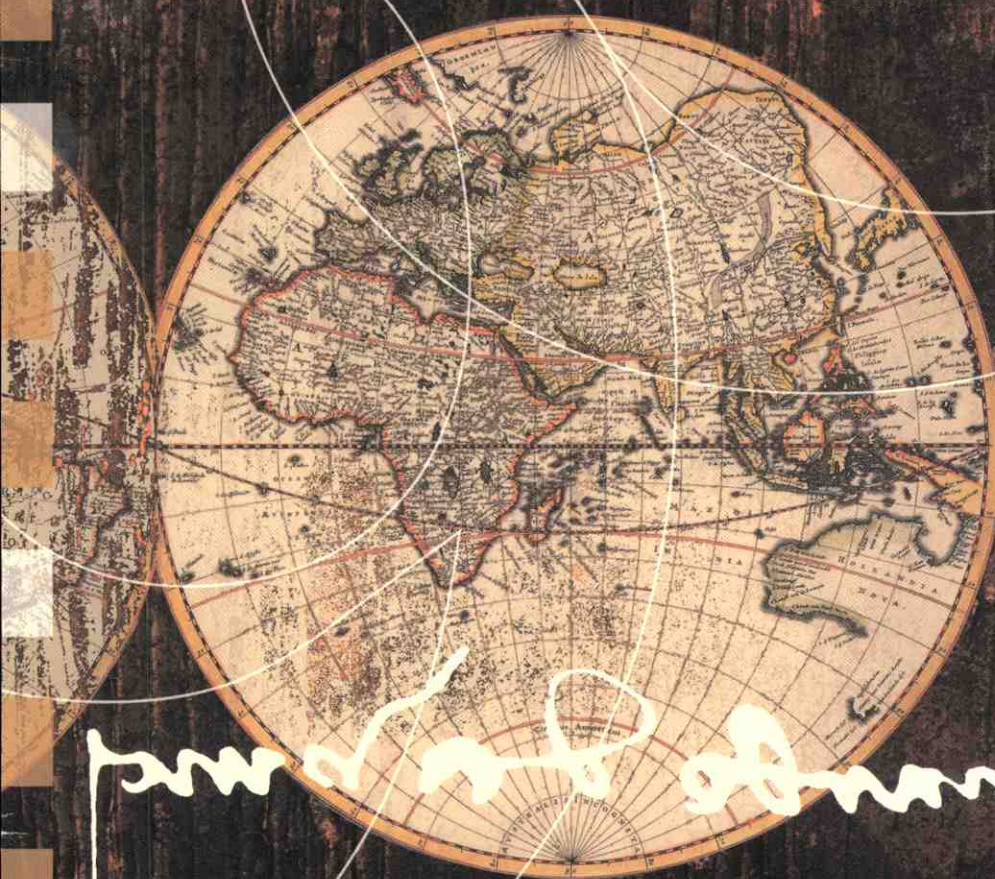
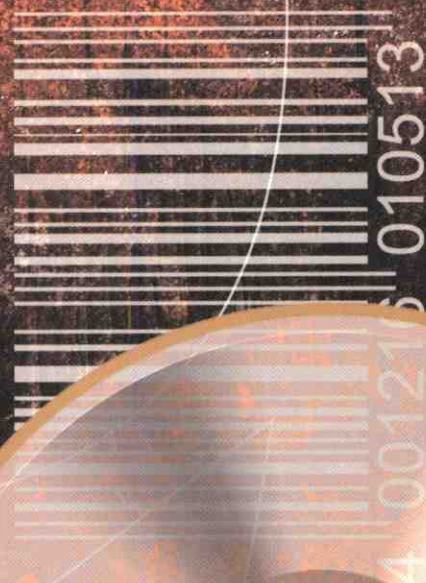
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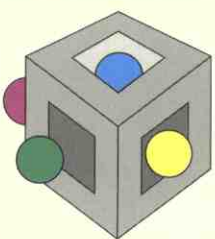
VOLUME FIFTEEN NUMBER 1 FEBRUARY 1999

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE RECORDS MANAGEMENT

ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA ISSN 0816-200X



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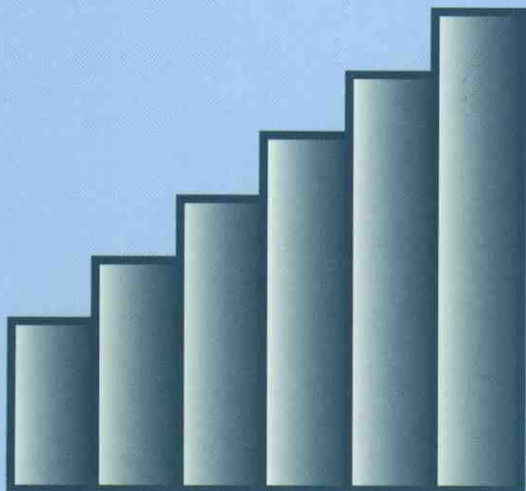
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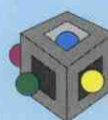
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Federal President's Message



Firstly, I would like to take this opportunity to wish all members and their families a belated happy and safe New Year.

I'm sure that 1999 will hold many surprises in one way or another, not least the millennium bug associated with the turn of the century. My own belief is that we must be very positive and clear about our individual perceptions about Y2K compliance, which is now a real challenge for us all. No doubt many of you have been working hard and contributing towards successful solutions within your own workplaces. Good luck with the outcomes.

Insofar as the Association is concerned, 1999 should be a year for reflection by the Federal body and by Branch Councils respectively. The Federal Board has set a day aside during its planned February '99 meeting to revisit its Strategic Directions and those of the Association as a whole. The issue has become serious enough for us to engage the services of a professional facilitator. By the time this edition of the *INFORMAA Quarterly* is released, the outcomes of this exercise will already be known. However, the

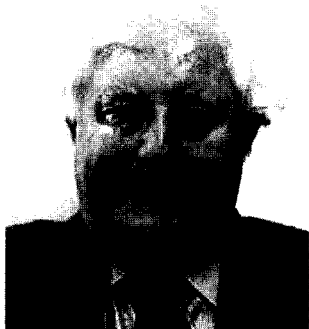
membership will be advised of the Association's future directions in the May edition of the *INFORMAA Quarterly* or through the pages of your respective Branch Newsletters.

Please keep your eyes on the RMAA web site <<http://www.rmaa.com.au>> for the full details associated with the 1999 National Convention scheduled to be held in Darwin in August/September. The complete details of the Convention Program and speakers, together with registration details, costs, on-line registration, etc., will all be available, as well as a program for accompanying persons.

Yours in records management,

Ray Holswich ARMA
Federal President

Editorial



Last year was challenging for recordkeepers. In the legislative field, there were the enactment of the *State Records Act 1998* (NSW), the completion and tabling in the Federal Parliament of the Australian Law Reform Commission's review of the *Archives Act 1983* (Cwlth), and the Western Australian Records Bill, as reported by the WA Branch, reaching the second reading stage. All of these reflect significant input by the membership of the RMAA, and serve to increase the profile of records management and recordkeeping throughout the government and business communities.

The *Australian Standard AS4390 - Records Management* has been receiving greater acceptance in Australia, and is moving towards becoming an International Standard, with the ISO Technical Committee on Information and Documentation working to have a draft international standard for consideration by mid-1999. Additionally, the very active conference industry has similarly been promoting the urgency of effective records management in terms of business needs, accountability and social responsibility, particularly as it affects electronic records and the technologies used in creating them, and the trend towards knowledge management. And, there is yet the Y2K problem.

In this issue, aspects of each of these subjects are addressed. The President of the Federal Law Reform Commission, Alan Rose, has developed an after-dinner talk to the ACT Region Branch of the Institute for Information Management Ltd., to share with us his views on the allocation of responsibility for effective recordkeeping in organisations. Rick Barry, an internationally recognised authority in the field of records and information management, who has accepted an invitation to speak at the ACT Branch 1999 Seminar in March, has provided us with

a preview of his paper on technological developments which are having an increasing effect on recordkeeping world-wide.

Finally, Laurie Sletten, a North American records manager and archivist now teaching in Australia, offers a comparative discourse on the conceptual similarities and differences of recordkeeping in the United States of America and Australia. Among other issues, she questions Australian perceptions of the life cycle concept preferred in the United States, and relates that to the unique Australian records continuum model.

We are attempting to increase the journal content on happenings in the records and information management industry. A new section, titled 'The Industry' has been included which provides those companies that support the RMAA in so many ways, with the opportunity to promote new services, products, or achievements, and by doing so, keep the membership of the RMAA up-to-date with developments in the field.

The State and Territory Branch reports demonstrate a high degree of activity, with some fascinating programs having taken place, and being planned for 1999. Similarly, Branch Newsletters are becoming increasingly informative, and include excellent material on a broad range of issues relevant to us all. May I invite Branch Councils to consider sharing, with due recognition of course, some of their events, articles or reviews with the wider membership and beyond, and send them to me for inclusion in the *INFORMAA Quarterly*.

Anthony Eccleston ARMA
National Editor

You Want Me to do What?

Individual's Responsibility for Archival Records*

AUTHOR

Alan Rose

Alan Rose is President of the Australian Law Reform Commission, and was for some 5 years Secretary of the Attorney-General's Department. Previously he was Associate Secretary of that Department, having earlier been Secretary of the Department of Community Services.

ABSTRACT

Three questions are relevant in allocating responsibility for effective recordkeeping. These are: why do we create and manage records, what are our obligations in relation to recordkeeping, and how do the technical innovations introduced by information technology affect each of these issues? In its review of the *Archives Act 1983* (Cwlth), the Australian Law Reform Commission (ALRC) recognised the need for a legislative framework for recordkeeping, with one coordinating body, the National Archives of Australia (NAA), to formulate standards, and for assigning ultimate responsibility for effective recordkeeping in Government agencies at CEO level.

Introduction

In looking at an individual's responsibility for records and recordkeeping, one should be able to respond to three separate questions - why do we create and manage records; what are our obligations in relation to recordkeeping; and finally, how do the

technical innovations introduced by information technology affect each of these issues? It is necessary to focus on the **needs** of recordkeeping, rather than simply imposing obligations to create, maintain and preserve records.

Why do we create and manage records?

The Australian Council of Archives (ACA) published in 1996 'a statement of an agreed position produced by a meeting of key industry participants, individual practitioners and organisations . . . to establish policy, standards, and practical strategies for electronic recordkeeping'.¹ The ACA saw the need for records and the role of recordkeeping as operating in three distinct domains: the business domain, the accountability domain, and the cultural domain.²

The **business domain** requires that records be produced and maintained to support the essential activities of the business process. Decision-makers must draw on precedent to ensure consistency, and the evidential nature of records demonstrates that actions were indeed carried out, in such fashion, and at the stated time. The record of transactions which provides evidence of the conduct of business, who owes what to whom, and who may be entitled to what, are all reflected in the record. Without records, no business is able to operate. In large measure, these records comprise case files, and budget papers, the outcomes of research into areas of immediate concern, and the essential communication with others, both internally and externally, which takes the form of correspondence in

whatever medium or mix of media.

There are also the longer term business needs of records, ones that provide continuity in specific functions and activities, and ensure logical and consistent development beyond the application of individual officers. There are also those that are kept so that they may be referred to as models of previous successes (or failures) without having to 're-invent the wheel'.

The ACA statement leaves no room for dissent: 'records are an indispensable ingredient in organisational accountability'.³ Irrespective of whether the record refers to internal relationships, to dealings with others, or to the legal or social environment in which business is conducted, the **accountability domain** determines whether 'the organisation, or individuals within it, have met defined legal, organisational, social or moral obligations in specific cases'.

The records have their uses beyond the immediate needs of the organisation. They are there for auditing and general taxation purposes, they demonstrate the rights of an organisation to claim certain benefits, and provide the basis on which to justify the position taken in given circumstances. They are there available for use in litigation, where the records may be used as evidence, either in defence of action taken, or to sue another. An increasing phenomenon nowadays is the 'discovery order', in which parties involved in litigation are able to obtain records or information relevant to the proceedings that are in the possession of the other party. The relevance of appropriate, legal and effective disposal programs becomes

immediately apparent, particularly in the case of electronic or multimedia documents in dispersed databases or individual's computer directories.

Cultural domain: beyond business needs or the requirement to be answerable in terms of legal or societal demands, records also need to be available to society as a collective resource. The information stored in the records may be called on to demonstrate, both in the shorter term and historically, how society as a whole has conducted itself, how it has responded to social and moral issues, and how it may be drawn on to account for its collective behaviour.

Records document the organisational history of an organisation, the structure, purpose and functions, and changes to those elements over time. Collectively, these provide a basis from which the national history is created and recorded. Government organisations in particular have a wider public interest in documenting purpose and functions, and outcomes of the application of policies and their implementation. However, there are a number of large companies such as BHP and Westpac which, having a sense of history for the benefit of both the organisation itself and the wider public, retain selected records in organisational archives.

Also, beyond the immediate business needs of the organisation, records document the rights and obligations of individuals (whether employees or clients), and legal provision is made for access to those records by persons who may find a need for the records as proof of individual rights or eligible benefits.

There has been a well-recorded deterioration in recordkeeping standards in the Australian Public Service over the past 30 years. As recorded in the Australian Law Reform Commission Report No 85,

The . . . parlous state of recordkeeping in many Commonwealth agencies bears ample testimony to the shortcomings of the present [Archives] Act in focussing on the management of older records. This focus relies on the assumption that creating agencies will systematically and effectively manage their records until they cease to be regularly required for the discharge of the agency's business. That this assumption has long been entirely misplaced in the context of Commonwealth recordkeeping has been resoundingly demonstrated to the Commission in this inquiry.⁴

This has been accompanied by a significant downgrading in the value placed on records management staff and their qualifications and experience.

What are our obligations in relation to recordkeeping?

The general position is that, apart from what might be included in particular legislation, or department or agency rules, **there is no specific obligation on an individual to keep records.** The legal obligations fall on institutions rather than on individuals. Thirty years ago, creating records was seen as a proper part of an officer's responsibilities and was part of the culture. As implied earlier, over the last 30 years there has been a downward trend, with fewer professionals involved and almost an emphasis on not creating records.

It can be argued that it is an implied employment obligation, that an intrinsic part of work is the creation of records for business needs, both for the conduct of business itself, and for the longer term needs as described earlier. Appropriate records need to be created, and they need to be classified and stored to ensure accurate and timely retrieval when required. It is also necessary to have a program in place to legally destroy redundant records both to conserve space and money, and to reduce exposure to unnecessary risk.

Obligations for management and for undertaking the business of the

institution are imposed on the institution because of its status as a legal entity. There are further obligations for creating records; the need for records as evidence in litigation and to support accountability. Deficiencies are becoming obvious in both errors of omission and commission in response to discovery orders and through the Senate Estimates process.

There are of course, business contractual obligations. It could well be that it is a part of the business requirements to create and keep particular records; for example, an employment agency would need to create and keep records on their clients who use the agency to get a job. That information is kept and used when attempting to place that individual with an employing client. In government, when dealing with Human Resources Management, the Public Services Regulations and other specific Acts have an immediate and direct effect on the records that are made and how, and for how long they are maintained.

There are evidential requirements, and the evidence contained in records must be able to meet the requirements of authenticity. The *Evidence Act 1995*, together with many specific evidentiary provisions of other Acts, individualise responsibility for ensuring the authenticity of the evidential records. This is increasingly problematic in the current electronic environment, where the adequacy of controls on reliability and authenticity of the records in document management or electronic recordkeeping systems cannot be assured or where the systems themselves are still being developed. One area that bears some emphasis is that records held on backup tapes, those agency business records and an individual's email stored on their personal H-drive, that are automatically captured and held in the system, are also subject to the legal

discovery process described earlier!

There are, as well, taxation and auditing requirements. The new *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997*, the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997*, and the *Auditor-General Act 1997* all refer to the requirement for accountability which is provided by effective recordkeeping. Government organisations, under these Acts, have statutory responsibilities. Too often, however, in the absence of specific agency instructions for individuals and resources, there are breaches.

In reviewing Government obligations, it is necessary to be aware that there is no stated general recordkeeping requirement. There is nothing specific in the *Public Service Act*, nor is there anything in the Australian Public Service Code of Conduct. It is noteworthy however, that the equivalent New South Wales Code of Conduct requires officers to 'maintain adequate documentation to support decisions made'. The *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI) implies a need for the management of records and their effective retrieval through obligations to provide access to the records to the public. There is actually a limitation on the creation and management of records provided in the *Privacy Act 1988* for privacy reasons. These include not collecting or recording certain information in records, and limitations imposed on storage, security, and provisions of access. The extant Archives Act places no constraints on the creation of records, and only has implied obligations for the management of those records such as not destroying them without authority, and retention of selected records for future access after 30 years.

In summary, there is a need for change. Recordkeeping obligations at present are mostly indirect, excepting those related

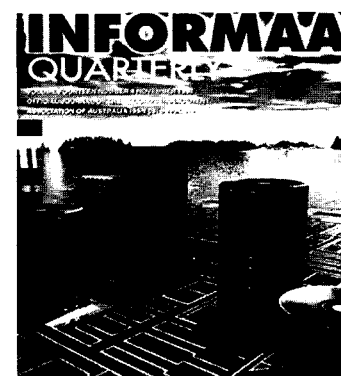
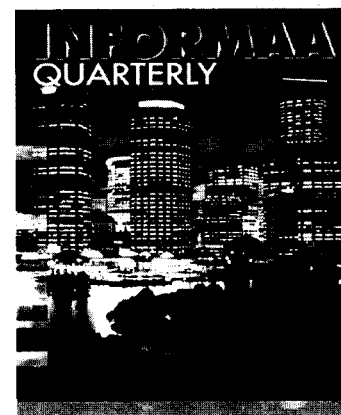
to access. There is a need to introduce some measure of management over the creation and control of records to ensure appropriate and timely access, to provide proof of activities and processes, and to meet the business requirements of responsible agencies.

The Australian Law Reform Commission (ALRC) Review of the Archives Act

The Australian Law Reform Commission's review of the Archives Act approached recordkeeping from the point of view that recordkeeping is necessary, that efficient recordkeeping is a good thing, but that help is required for both individuals and organisations to introduce and maintain efficient recordkeeping systems. To be able to do this, a legislative framework for recordkeeping is fundamental. The review demonstrated that current recordkeeping methods and processes are only providing for the survival of records, especially electronic records. Fundamental electronic recordkeeping procedures were generally inadequate to meet needs for the conduct of business in agencies. The broader requirements for evidential and accountable records received even less emphasis.

The deficiency is even more obvious in the access and review legislation - FOI, Privacy, Ombudsman and Administrative Decisions (Judicial Review) Acts. The use of these Acts is declining because of the high cost to applicants which may be beyond their means, and the inability of agency's records management systems to respond to the requirements imposed by the legislation in the required periods.

The ALRC had appreciated the need for one strong coordinating body in the recordkeeping area, and had recommended that the National Archives of Australia should be given that responsibility. It would need to be modern and provide relevant, up-to-date advice and guidance on all



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recordkeeping matters. It should issue recordkeeping standards derived in consultation with government agencies, and provide guidance on how to apply the standards.

The only way to recover the situation is to put responsibilities back on to individuals, and to start at the top. In 1994, the Public Service Review Group recommended that public service legislation should specify that the department's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) have obligations in relation to recordkeeping. This was further encouraged in 1998 with the ALRC recommending that archives legislation should include CEOs having an obligation to ensure that adequate records are created and maintained. Placing responsibility on the CEO reflects the reality that effective recordkeeping is a result of organisational policy development, implementation and evaluation, and having the CEO responsible ensures that adequate policy is in place and is adhered to.

Information technology problems

During the review of the Archives Act, the ALRC had identified that recordkeeping was becoming IT-driven without real application of recordkeeping policies or principles. The increase in electronic document and record creation and use was one of the major reasons for the ALRC to initiate the review of the Archives Act. Many agencies that were consulted seemed to think that responsibilities for records related only to paper records.

The underlying problems that have been introduced with burgeoning technology include the lack of applicability of records management policies to records created electronically, or to a hybrid system of paper and electronic records, and backup procedures disregarding recordkeeping issues. In its report, the

ALRC didn't dwell on electronic records as an individual issue. It had recognised early that recordkeeping obligations and policies must be able to be applied to all records, without being technology specific and therefore technology bound. The redefinition of the term 'record' to accommodate the concepts of recorded information, created or received, independent of format, and the relationship to the transaction of business or conduct of affairs together with the evidential nature of the record, was a necessary element in the process. However, some of the recommendations refer specifically to electronic records where a particular imperative to do something was identified.

There is a need for education so that individuals in organisations, at all levels, from the CEO down, understand that the recordkeeping requirement is important, and relates to all media. It is necessary that individuals recognise that appraisal, sentencing, preservation and destruction strategies need to be applied equally to all records, irrespective of format. Recordkeeping systems must ensure the proper management of electronic records so that the three reasons for records management, ensuring the essential conduct of business, legal, organisational and social accountability, and the requirement to ensure the availability to society of a collective resource of information, are met.

Endnotes

¹ Australian Council of Archives (ACA) 1996, *Corporate Memory in the Electronic Age*, ACA, Box Hill, Victoria, p. 1.

² ACA, p. 5.

³ ACA, p. 6.

⁴ ALRC Report No 85, 1998, p. 27.

*Note: This paper was presented at an Institute for Information Management, ACT Region Branch Seminar on 17 November 1998.

Catching Up with the Latest Technology Train at the Next Station¹

AUTHOR

Richard E Barry

Rick Barry, Principal of Barry Associates, is an internationally recognised authority in the field of information management, records management and electronic records. He may be remembered from the RMAA 1996 Convention in Canberra and subsequent workshops. More recently, he has had engagements with the United Nations Headquarters, the International Council on Archives, the US Department of Justice, and provided consulting services to the Electronic Records Work Group set up by the US National Archivist.

ABSTRACT

Tracking developments in other disciplines and emerging technologies provides one means for recordkeeping professionals to avoid being overtaken by technological change, and concurrently permits proactive innovation to adapt to such change, using the technology in the interests of organisational business. The technologies discussed include multimedia, the Internet and internets, the World Wide Web (WWW), intranets and extranets, web-enabled recordkeeping systems, Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems, and Thin-Client technology, suggesting some recordkeeping implications for them.

changes to the best of our abilities. At least in the knowledge and service sectors, most often change came about because of innovative ways of managing organisations and not very often because of threatening new office technologies. Now that has changed too. As far ahead as we can see, change will be an inherent feature of modern organisations. Organisations will have to sense, learn and adapt to movements in the social and economic ecosystems in which they operate, like humans and other biological forms. In years past, it was only the organisational theorists who used the biological metaphor. Now it is practically a part of the workplace vernacular. It is not difficult to understand why some archives and records management (ARM) professionals throw up their hands and hope that it will all somehow work itself out before anything really bad happens, or before they move on. This paper will stress the importance of tracking developments in other disciplines and emerging technologies as a way for ARM professionals to avoid being taken by surprise, and to catch 'technology trains' rather than be overrun by them. It will discuss briefly some of the more recent and upcoming of these trains and suggest some recordkeeping implications for their use.

The value of weird disciplines and technology

Coming from an interdisciplinary background in both the arts and sciences, and professional experience in information management and technology as well as records management, I frequently find that important changes in one discipline or technology pose risks, or offer opportunities to another that are not

always readily apparent across those disciplinary or even technological lines.

For many years, I have tried to alert the archives and records management community to emerging technologies, mainly in the information management and information technology fields. Similarly, I have tried to warn information management and technology professionals of their increasing exposure to risks associated with electronic records, and the potential effect of technology on *recordkeeping* practices. For example, I cautioned about natural language processing and computational linguistics research in the early 1990s that was being applied to new *recordmaking* systems that were not fully trustworthy recordkeeping systems, and therefore presented new records management risks. Such systems are already in place in many organisations, and are likely to be more prevalent in the future. They include *speech generation*, a fairly simple text-to-voice conversion, and more recently desktop *speech recognition*, a very complex voice-to-text conversion. These applications provide the tools for easy conversion between text and voice, including email and vmail. They also remind us of the senselessness of basing records disposition management decisions on document creation technology, as opposed to the intrinsic evidentiary and informational value of documentation to the organisation. Now we have quite inexpensive continuous speech recognition systems such as Dragon Systems, Inc's *Naturally Speaking*TM and *Point and Speak*TM, Dictaphone's *Boomerang*TM and L&H's *Voice Xpress Professional*TM; and integrated voice/email messaging systems such as *Voice E-mail 3.0 for*

Introduction

In the 'good old days' major changes came in periodic cycles. There was time in between to acknowledge, digest, accept, adapt and master these

AOL™ and ITServ's *FirstGate*™. There are also highly sophisticated intranet-ready integrated telephony and messaging systems such as the *IBM/CallWare*™ system and Lucent's *Video MultiMedia Call Center (VMMCC)*™, and so on.

On the other side, the same basic research is beginning to yield opportunities for electronic records, e.g., automatic language translation and automatic document abstracting tools by Xerox. Another example of this technology involves artificial intelligence research being carried out by the US Army Research Laboratory. These offer great potential as means of addressing one of the most intractable problems facing records managers: how to consistently and reliably ensure that email and other electronic records are identified and captured into trustworthy recordkeeping systems. The current method of leaving it up to document creators is not an effective way of identifying and capturing such records. However, up until now, no other alternatives have been available. EDMS vendors, anxious to provide a technical solution to this problem, would do well to embrace this technology.

Multimedia

A couple of years ago, an archivist told me that the best strategy for dealing with electronic records was to simply print them to paper and treat them in the old fashioned way as paper records. It was something I had been recommending as a short term strategy. We understand paper. We know what to do with it. It's a more stable medium, *et cetera*. I agreed that this is a common and wise stopgap approach that many archivists and records managers are finding necessary to employ until such time as they can deal more directly with electronic records in their native forms. I now believe that it is a wise approach to take in any case at least until after we discover what the real fallout will be following Friday, 31 December 1999, Y2K. At least for vital

electronic records, I recommend capturing electronic records on paper or in computer output microfiche form, readable using battery-driven readers. Until we see a clear path beyond Y2K, we should seriously consider running dual electronic and paper records, at least in the final months of 1999, especially for mission-critical systems that are either not Y2K compliant or that rely heavily on external systems over which the organisation has little Y2K control. The keepers of paper-based organisational knowledge may be among the busiest of all on 2 January 2000, and much more appreciated for the services they render.

Does this mean that we should put a moratorium on the development and implementation of trustworthy electronic recordkeeping systems? Not at all. However, it does suggest a short-term strategy of 'prudent avoidance' of Y2K problems by maintaining parallel electronic and paper-based systems. Pay a relatively small amount up front as you would for fire insurance, and don't consider it a waste if there isn't a fire. Consider it a reasonable cost of risk reduction. Even taking Y2K into account, however, managers should continue to work even harder towards implementing electronic-based recordkeeping systems Y2K-compliant, of course.

In my opinion, innovations in information management and technology have not changed the nature of the record, but they are significantly changing the manner in which records will have to be managed.² The increasing use of the Internet and the World Wide Web (WWW) have given people a glance at how effective multimedia documents (including records) can be in conveying business messages and attracting clients. Virtually all new desktop computers are multimedia equipped for sound, CD-ROM, extensive memory and storage facilities, and often, Web browser and video capture software. This, coupled with the relative ease and low costs

associated with access to the WWW, and the coming of age of Generations X and Y, raised on multimedia games and systems, will hasten the day when multimedia will become standard fare in business communication, private and public. It does not need to be emphasised that multimedia records cannot be printed on paper.

The Nets

The WWW Glossary of the World Wide Web Federal Consortium³ offers these definitions:

- **Internet** - An internet is a collection of interconnected networks. The Internet is the largest of the internets. It has a tiered architecture and supports multiple protocols.
- **Intranet** - The intranet is the use of internet technologies within an agency deployed on an internal network based on open WWW technologies.
- **WWW or World Wide Web** - The World Wide Web is a network information delivery system that uses HTML as the authoring language and the Hypertext Transport Protocol (HTTP) as the transport protocol. It is used to find and access Internet resources.

The Internet and internets

The internet concept has been with us for many years. As defined above, any interoperable set of local area networks constitutes an internet. When capitalised, as in 'Internet,' the term refers to the Internet of internets, the largest worldwide collection of internets, likely to serve over 300 million people and a billion home pages by the dawn of the 21st Century. The Internet itself has also been with us for decades. As a young naval aviator in the Pentagon in the 1960s, the author recalls the early form of the Internet, then known as the Advanced Research Projects Agency Network or ARPANET. However, it was limited in membership largely to organisations

carrying our federally-funded research. Only in the 1990s did it blossom into the worldwide, fully open Internet.

There are few recordkeeping implications of the Internet that do not apply also to internal email systems. While the recordkeeping aspects of internal email systems are not trivial by any means, the recordkeeping aspects of the Internet and the internal system email can normally be addressed at that same time, and should be. An added complication of Internet mail is that, while internal email is usually well controlled in terms of linking employees' names, functions and locations, external mail may not include sufficient person and organisational identification information to fulfil requirements for recordkeeping metadata for the record's provenance. Thus some approach needs to be employed both to require, and to enable the recipient of the incoming Internet mail to ensure that it is so identified and marked.

WWW

The WWW had its beginnings about 1993 with the invention of the first web browser by Tim Berners-Lee, while at CERN (a European centre for physics research) and the development of a markup language that would make it possible to view documents across disparate technology platforms. Subsequently, Marc Andreessen and other undergraduate students at the National Center for Supercomputing Applications (NCSA) in the United States, developed Mosaic. It was the first web browser to become widely used⁴. At that time, most people who had Internet access did not have access to the WWW. In recent years, however, the two most common browsers, Netscape Navigator™ and Microsoft Internet Explorer™ became free offerings and were included with Internet Service Provider (ISP) accounts. This has resulted in a blurring of the distinctions between the Internet and the WWW even though

they serve different functions in bringing web information to the user.

At first, when organisations began to use the WWW to establish customised WWW home pages or web sites, there were few recordkeeping implications because there was little information on most of these pages beyond what might be found in a newspaper advertisement. Also, the information did not change much and was thus probably well reflected in the organisation's recordkeeping system. Organisations using web technology soon discovered, however, that people would visit a web site once or twice, but not more, if the content was not changed. Soon organisations began providing interesting and regularly updated information on products, schedules, etc., mainly to present its desired image to the outside world. More recently, especially with the advent of secure systems for making credit card charges, web sites have become widely used for public access to purchase goods and services in what is now commonly called electronic commerce or e-commerce. As the use of web sites for business purposes increases (whether private or public sector), so do the recordkeeping implications.

A recent project funded by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (the research grant arm of the US National Archives and Records Administration), and carried out by Charles McClure and Timothy Sprehe, studied web site usage patterns of various federal and state government organisations⁵. The study found that, in numerous cases, there were more up-to-date records on the web sites than there were in the paper record systems of the parent organisations. It further noted that no provisions had been made to capture web site records into a recordkeeping system or otherwise to make the web sites functionally recordworthy. The study recommended guidelines for the management of web site information, recommended that federal and state

organisations examine their web sites from a recordkeeping perspective, and suggested the following separation of responsibilities in the management of web sites:

- **Webmaster:** manage the technical aspects of the web site.
- **Content manager:** manage the information maintained on the web site.
- **Records manager:** ensure appropriate recordkeeping arrangements for the site.

Intranets

In 1996, only two years after the WWW came on line, it was becoming increasingly apparent that there were powerful new players in the Internet/WWW arena intranets. It seemed clear that they would bring about considerable changes in the conduct of business in the public and private sectors and that archivists and records managers would want to learn more about them.

Intranets are the logical extension of WWW technologies and applications in systems that are designed for use *within* an organisation, rather than between an organisation and the public at large. Think of the typical web site that is now common on the WWW, only now restricted to internal use within an organisation.

Intranets are similar to the Internet and WWW in that they use like standards and technologies. It is not important to the thrust of this article to explain them here. For the purposes of this discussion, it is enough to note that they include the open system standard Hypertext Markup Language, or HTML, web browsers, servers, and related software and Internet protocols such as Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol (TCP/IP). Intranets may use architectures that are logically or physically centralised or decentralised depending on the need. HTML is a daughter of the long-

established and internationally recognised Standard Generalised Markup Language (SGML or ISO Standard 8879). Structure is an important characteristic of records that is apparent in traditional paper documents. One of the important features needed in electronic records is that they have, or can be given, that needed structure. SGML, and now HTML help do this, and thus are standards of considerable interest to the ARM community.

Intranets also differ from WWW web sites in some very important ways. First, most WWW sites on the Internet are open to anyone in the world who has a web browser and an ISP account. The public is the customer. By contrast, intranets exist behind organisational, password-controlled, telecommunications/computer security 'firewalls'. Its customers are the internal operating units and staff.

Secondly, the content and applications of intranet systems are normally vastly different from those of the typical WWW site or homepage. The content of web sites is normally information about the owner organisation or individual - usually concerning public or private sector services or products (including information) that the homepage owner wants the public to use. They were originally of primary interest to public relations or sales managers. By contrast, the intranet is typically used as a vehicle for conducting the core internal business and support processes of an organisation, for example:

- knowledge-management platforms for sales and service representatives;
- human resources business processes (hiring, training, pensioning, etc.);
- internal 'help desk' or 'call centre' operations;
- gaining access to and searching internal document stores and legacy databases in different technological environments, whether through off-the-shelf or customised database

packages, using forms created in HTML instead of the vendor-supplied interface;

- manuals and forms management including dynamic 'fill-out-the-form' applications, such as time sheets and vacation requests;
- ordering reports, parts, supplies, etc.; and
- groupware applications, such as group authoring and project management tasks.

WWW applications and intranet systems are in no way mutually exclusive. On the contrary, most organisations implementing intranets will probably also have WWW sites or homepages where they can have a public image and presence. They will serve very different but complementary purposes. Similarly, intranets and groupware (e.g. LOTUS NOTES) are not presently mutually exclusive. Today, most intranets are more in the nature of networking utilities than groupware. However, as groupware developers race to give their products Web functionality, and intranet technology matures to include groupware functionality, the differences between the two will become less distinct. Intranet technology, in contrast to most groupware products, uses open systems architectures rather than proprietary ones, and typically costs much less than most groupware products. Intranets will become quintessential groupware.

However, as public-access web sites become used increasingly for business transactions, the demarcation lines between them and extranets are also becoming blurred. Thus web sites, extranets and intranets are all becoming of increasing interest to senior executives and operational managers.⁶

Extranets

Extranets are external intranets, the next wave in TCP/IP internetworking. Extranets allow an organisation to permit selected customers or suppliers to

securely connect via the Web to carry out ecommerce transactions, or to access typically product-oriented information stored behind the organisation's firewall on its intranet, while disallowing access to others not so authorised. They operate much like private networks but enable external access, virtual project team operations, and secure electronic commerce applications.

The definition of 'internal' is up to the implementing organisation. Access can be selectively extended outside of the immediate organisation to global field offices and designated suppliers or customers. This selective extension ensures the security of the system, protecting it from the general public, while providing access to the 'extended family' directly involved in the business of the intranet organisation. When so extended, the intranet becomes an 'extranet'. To illustrate the recentness of the term 'extranet', the term 'extended family' was used in the original version of this paper in September 1996 because the term 'extranet' had not yet been coined. Similarly, the WWW Federal Consortium Glossary, that was last revised in November 1996, did not include a definition for 'extranet' or any alternative term for the concept. This technology is ideal for supporting emerging workplace patterns involving strategic partnering, supplier and other ecommerce transactions, and outsourced services.

About two and a half years ago, a client, who is an EDMS developer, asked me what, beyond recordkeeping functionality, would be wise to consider for the next generation EDMS. My response was to make the EDMS interface browser-like and intranet/extranet/WWW enabled. As more and more record creation takes place in an intranet, extranet, and Web environment, it will become critical for EDMS applications to be where that action is.

Web-enabled recordkeeping systems

What is most interesting about this emerging technology from an ARM practitioner's perspective is its potential for the delivery of textual and multimedia records and recordkeeping services to the clients of the ARM function. Moreover, if transactions and other organisational business are taking place over them, then intranets will be recordmaking systems whether they are so regarded or not. Some ARM professionals have learned the hard way already, and others likely will, that the fact that a system produces records does not guarantee that it is a trustworthy recordkeeping system. It probably isn't. The fact that a system produces documents that are not considered part of the recordkeeping system, does not technically lessen the evidentiary value of those documents, or the likelihood that they will become the subject of court discovery findings.

The ARM function should, of course, deal with the recordkeeping aspects of the underlying individual systems independently of the intranet. But this will often be very costly to undertake; for example, in legacy mainframe applications. The intranet offers an excellent platform for the delivery of certain records management services to the client within the organisation and its extended family or, in the case of web sites, to the public. Similarly, web sites offer the same opportunity for records that are available for public access. A technical barrier to this approach has been the fact that HTML is not of sufficient depth and strength to serve recordkeeping functions. The emergence of eXtensible Markup Language (XML) and other advanced markup languages for special purpose applications, will reduce that barrier. However, it will continue to be necessary for ARM practitioners to deal with the difficult issue of preserving the underlying data, video, image, sound and text materials which exist in their separate formats.

Are web-enabled recordkeeping services a panacea for electronic records problems? Not likely! As noted above, while it can significantly automate services and improve responsiveness to client needs and productivity in the conduct of ARM business activities, it is still necessary to worry about long-term preservation of electronic records in different and complex formats. Working through some of the recordkeeping functionality of intranet/WWW applications would make an excellent candidate for anyone interested in electronic records management R&D. With or without the benefit of such applied research, ARM professionals are going to have to step onto the platform again (or hire their own IT specialists) to ensure the appropriate incorporation of recordkeeping functionality in web-based systems. Archivists and records managers should approach their chief information officer or equivalent, and find out if plans for implementation of an intranet are already under way. If not, ARM managers may be in the unusual position of advancing a state-of-the-art technology to their IT colleagues as a means of improving their own ARM services.

Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Systems

A technology that is becoming increasingly of interest to organisations is Enterprise Resource Planning or ERP. These are shrink-wrapped software packages such as the SAP/R3 and PeopleSoft products. These are large, transaction-based systems for handling such applications as those required to support high-volume financial and human resources business processes. They are very attractive systems for a number of reasons. They offer the possibility of totally replacing a large number of outdated, non-integrated systems that require a great deal of duplication of effort for the same transaction. ERPs may be used to handle all aspects of a single transaction for financial, human resources and

other functions. As some large companies found themselves behind the power curve in reaching Y2K compliance for their myriad applications, they concluded that they might just as well replace all of them with newer, much more efficient, Y2K compliant ERP technology. Others considered what it was going to cost to make their legacy systems Y2K compliant, and found that, even after spending millions of dollars to achieve that result, they would still be left with outdated and unintegrated systems. Again, replacement for the same or maybe even lower costs seemed like the obvious solution.

Some of the largest users of ERP have a counterintuitive, tradition-breaking secret that they think gives them an advantage. They have broken the old mould of adapting complex systems to their organisations. Instead, because of the complexity of ERP software and the domino effect of changes, some organisations take the view that it is better to change and build the organisation around the software than the reverse.

As these are typically high volume systems; for example, those implemented at General Electric and Kraft Foods, it is not ordinarily desirable to allow organisational users to access the ERP directly. Thus, some such organisations have created one or more separate data warehouses mirroring ERP transactions but only periodically updated by the ERP. In some cases, duplicate warehouses are created under a conscious policy of database replication for disaster recovery and other security reasons. As transactional data is often quite raw, a 'data mart' also may be created that draws from one of the data warehouses and organises the information in ways that make it easy to access and use. External information may also be introduced into the data mart foreign exchange rates, pricing schedules, etc., as well as a pick-list of common enquiries for user convenience.

There are some important implications of this technology for recordkeeping purposes. First and most important, if organisations are replacing old systems on a wholesale basis, it offers an extraordinary opportunity for the ARM function to make the case for electronic recordkeeping functionality to be built into the system. It also affords the opportunity for typically lower priority recordkeeping requirements to be bundled in with very high priority Y2K requirements, if the former are not too resource intensive. Further, ARM professionals would do well to encourage such systems, including a data replication architecture. One of the continuing issues in electronic records remains the ability to demonstrate that a digital record has not been tampered with. Making the case that no alterations have taken place in a record will be much stronger if it can be demonstrated by comparison of identical electronic originals in replicated systems. This is particularly so if the replicated systems are architecturally partitioned from one another in a manner that makes it highly unlikely that the same person could tamper with both sites.

Thin-Client technology

'Thin-Client' is another emerging technology that may become attractive for cost and operational reasons. Thin-Client refers to the use of inexpensive network-centric PCs (network computers) that have little or no hard drive, or limited user access to the hard drive, and no floppy disk drive. Work on these PCs (clients) is carried out on network servers rather than in the PC. The extent to which this is the case varies with system and application. In some cases, it is tantamount to a return to the old days of mainframes and dumb terminals. However, the jury is still out as to how many thin PCs will actually make it to the market, in what quantities they will be used, how well they will be supported by NT operating software; and how well they

will be received by (human) clients.

Use of these products is driven by two main forces. One is the 'TCO' or total cost of ownership concept wherein many IT managers have found that hardware and software installation, upgrades and maintenance for a large number of PCs distributed across an organisation constitute a major organisational cost. By substantially reducing the complexity of PCs and forcing them to use network resources (including software, cycles, hardware and data), the TCO for the systems combined can be cut by as much as one half. Another factor is to shift control of the PC from the user to the IT function for data security, or other reasons.

If thin-client technology does take off, it could be a godsend for records management. One of the most intractable problems facing electronic records systems is the total lack of control over large numbers of electronic records scattered over difficult-to-control organisational PC hard drives, on diskettes in people's desks and notebook computers, and in their homes. Attempting to properly execute a records management program including comprehensive records disposition management, under these circumstances is a daunting challenge. The possibility of having all organisational electronic records created, used, preserved and otherwise managed on network servers would greatly reduce the size and scope of that challenge. This approach, especially if combined with an ERP architecture, would also require us to re-think our ideas about the virtues of centralised versus distributed recordkeeping systems. Centralised systems are back with a vengeance.

Summing up

As IT and ARM professionals, we will better position ourselves and our organisations for the next waves of technological and organisational change, whatever they are, if we look up from our desks frequently enough

to hear the sounds of the distant locomotives driving other disciplines and emerging technologies. In so doing, we can embrace technologies that meet our organisations' business needs but also their needs for trustworthy recordkeeping. If we all do these things, chances are we will be ready for the next train as it pulls into our station, or at least to run ahead and catch it at the next stop, whether that will be the Intranet, Extranet, ERP or Thin-Client Station or some other now only in the architectural design stage.

Endnotes

- ¹ © RE Barry 1999 and published here with the permission of the author. This paper is an update of the one that originally appeared in the September 1996 issue of *The Record*, a publication of the US National Archives and Records Administration. It reflects significant changes in technology and in the use of technology since it was first written in the summer of 1996. The paper is accessible electronically at the author's web site at <<http://www.rbarry.com>>
- ² This topic is discussed further in my paper 'The Changing Workplace and the Nature of the Record' accessible electronically at <<http://www.rbarry.com>> under the Other Papers section.
- ³ *World Wide Web Home Page Guidelines and Best Practices, Appendix A. Glossary of Terms*, World Wide Web Federal Consortium rev. - Nov. 1996, accessible electronically on 8 January 1999 at <<http://dtic.mil/staff/cthumps/guidelines/aglossary.html>>
- ⁴ 'What is a web browser?' by Thomas Boutell, <boutell@boutell.com>, electronically accessible 8 January 1999 at <<http://raq002.aa.net/openfaq/browsers/1.html>>
- ⁵ The reports on this study may be accessed electronically through <<http://www.rbarry.com>> under the HOT TOPICS/WWW vs Records section where there are other relevant papers.
- ⁶ For a comprehensive discussion of the subject, see *Building Intranets*, by Tim Evans, Sams.net Publishing 1996, ISBN 1-57521-071-1, from which a number of the above examples were taken.

Records Management in Australia and the United States: Appreciating the Differences*

AUTHOR

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ABSTRACT

Records managers in Australia face many of the same issues and challenges as do their counterparts in the United States. In this article, a North American records manager currently teaching in Australia reflects on the differences yet similarities in records management practice in the United States and Australia. This article focuses on three areas for comparison: the records continuum, which is the prevalent records management theory professed in Australia; the day-to-day issues facing the records manager in Australia; and electronic records management issues.

management at the University of Canberra. What did I really know about Australia, Australia's information and records management practices, or for that matter, teaching?

What I knew about Australia was infinitesimal and could probably be listed on my fingers:

- It is the biggest island in the world.
- It had a key role as a strategic position in the Pacific arena of World War II.
- 'Discovered' by Captain James Cook, it was used initially as a penal colony and is part of the British Commonwealth.
- The Olympics will be in Sydney in the year 2000.
- Helen Reddy, Olivia Newton-John, Men-at-work and Mel Gibson are from Australia.
- There is a beautiful opera house in Sydney.
- The Great Barrier Reef is off the coast of Australia.
- There are duckbill platypuses (or platypi), cute koala bears, kangaroos, and many poisonous snakes and spiders in Australia (oh, and in Tasmania, there is the Tasmanian Devil).
- The movie 'Crocodile Dundee' was about Australia, so there are crocodiles, men with big knives and cool hats running around saying things like 'G'day mate' and 'Throw another shrimp on the barbie'.
- There are indigenous people known as Aborigines who use boomerangs, have interesting artwork, and play didgeridoos.

I knew a little more about Australia's information and records management

practices because of some publications that have been available in the US, and the very informative web sites I found through the National Archives of Australia's homepage. I had used *Keeping Archives* (the first edition)¹ extensively when I was developing the criteria for the appraisal of records at Harvard. I had read parts of *Playing for Keeps: The Proceedings of an Electronic Records Management Conference hosted by the Australian Archives, Canberra, Australia, 8-10 November 1994*.² Everything I had read from these sources (the above mentioned books and the web sites) as well as the contributions made on the Records Management Listserv by the records managers in Australia, all pointed to a very progressive and aggressive approach to recordkeeping practices.

And, what **did** I know about teaching? (Not much, as it turns out!) My parents were educators, so I had a basic idea of what life was like giving lectures, constantly researching, and grading papers and exams. I had always given presentations about various aspects of records management to various audiences. And sure, I had taught Forms Management and Design, and Records Storage and Retrieval at a community college in Oregon, but that was for three students. When I was offered the position in Canberra, there were 168 students enrolled in the introductory records management class! The number of students has gone down to about 120, however, we can already see there is a different attitude towards records management in Australia. They take recordkeeping very seriously and, in some ways, generally speaking, have better control over their

Introduction

On 18 June 1996, I walked off the plane in Canberra, Australia for the adventure of a lifetime. Getting close to the age of 40, I was probably experiencing some form of mid-life crisis when I decided to go from an ideal job as an archivist and records manager at Harvard University to a lecturer in information and records

records than records managers do in the United States.

The records management scene in Australia

Things are different here in Australia. Actually, they are different and yet they are the same. I drive on the left side of the road, marking kilometres off the odometer, put litres of petrol in the car, etc. All of these things are different from my existence in the United States where I drove on the right side, marked off miles and put gallons of gas in my car. Yet these are really the same activities. I often feel as if I am in a parallel universe where everything is the same, but just a little bit different. It reminds me of the StarTrek, Next Generation episodes where Captain Picard and his crew would be caught in some kind of time/space continuum and life would almost be the same. There would be these slight differences which they would finally notice, and by the end of the hour they would have realised they were not in their universe (and of course been able to fix the situation!).

It is the same with records management here. Everything is the same, but just a little bit different. This paper will address this North American's view of what is currently the records management scene in Australia. I will address three issues:

- The Records Continuum, the prevalent records management theory professed in Australia.
- The day-to-day issues facing the records manager in Australia.
- How Australia is dealing with their electronic records management issues.

The Records Continuum, the prevalent records management theory professed in Australia

The Australian Standard for Records Management, hereafter referred to as

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 the creation of records (and before creation, in the design of recordkeeping systems), through to the preservation and use of records as archives'.³

The Australian continuum model is just beginning to gain momentum. Until 1996, most official documents considering records management principles and practices discussed the records life cycle approach. Steering the continuum into the prevailing model position are some very dynamic theorists. From Monash University there are Frank Upward, Sue McKemmish, and Barbara Reed, and their colleagues, David Roberts from State Records, New South Wales, and Chris Hurley, acting Director and Chief Archivist of the National Archives of New Zealand. Through their writings and teachings, the continuum has been the records management model adopted by the National Archives of Australia and AS4390.

Shortly after my arrival here, I was introduced to the 'Records Continuum' concept for records management. I was privileged to be able to attend a five-day intensive course on this continuum and other information about recordkeeping principles for electronic records. Frank Upward, Sue McKemmish, Barbara Reed, David Roberts, Chris Hurley, and other individuals led this 'Managing the Records Continuum Intensive Workshop' which was sponsored by Monash University.

My introduction to the continuum theory was interesting. It turned out that these theorists have a very different view of the life cycle concept. They believe that, in the life cycle model, the management of records is done in very separate and distinct, somewhat

systematic stages that end with disposition. The records go from stage to stage, almost as if in some jerky assembly line syncopated rhythm, until they come to the disposition stage, when they are either destroyed or transferred to an archives. They are of the opinion that the life cycle model suggests that archival records are no longer managed in the records management arena once they hit the door of the archives.

I disagree with that interpretation of the life cycle; however, when I looked at a leading US textbook, I saw how the Australians came up with it. In the fourth edition of their book, *Information and Records Management: Document-Based Information Systems*, Robek, Brown and Stephens define the records management life cycle as follows:

...most records are of temporary value; that is, like most organizational assets, their value for business purposes tends to decline as time passes and, at some point, they become useless and may be discarded...If it is to be effective, a records management program must apply appropriate controls to records during each of the five major stages of the life cycle of information.⁴

'A new roadmap for electronic recordkeeping', is how one of the papers we were required to read before the week-long intensive course described the records continuum. Frank Upward, in his unpublished paper, *Applying the records continuum to electronic recordkeeping*. Terms and concepts for a base structural model. Mark One, explained the continuum as follows:

A continuum approach contains the premise that the way things are formed is the way things are, unlike a life-cycle approach which assumes that entities go through a series of stages. A continuum involves looking at layers of development. The archives is the archive, is the record, is the document. The document can be the record, can

be the archive, can be the archives.⁵

Under the continuum model, records do not move in distinct stages. Using this model, records can be in several of the four dimensions, and an archival record is an archival record regardless of the dimension in which the record may be. The four dimensions are document creation, capturing documents as records, organising memory, and pluralising memory.

I gather this to mean that under the continuum theory, records should be managed whether they are in offices, records centres, or archives, and that archival records should be managed as archives as they are being created in offices. This is what I think the life cycle concept already says. In other words, if you have a series that has been identified with a permanent retention period, we as records managers should be advising our organisations to manage that series from the beginning of the life cycle in ways that cost our organisations less throughout that record's permanent retention.

In their 1998 textbook, *Records Management: A Guide to Corporate Recordkeeping*, second edition, Jay Kennedy and Cherryl Schauder describe the continuum as it has evolved since the 1996 course:

The records continuum model focuses on the management of records as a continuous process which includes the creation of the records. It sees the need to manage records from the perspective of the activities which they document, rather than visualising it in consecutive stages, which is the emphasis of the life cycle analogy. It looks at managing records in the light of such questions as what records need to be captured to provide evidence of an activity, what systems and rules are needed to ensure those records are captured and maintained, how long the records should be kept to meet business and other requirements, how they should be stored, and who should have access to them.⁶

Kennedy and Schauder go on to explain the four dimensions that Upward uses in his concept of the continuum model:

First dimension - records of business activities ... are created as part of business communication processes within the organisation, e.g. through e-mail, document management software, or other software applications.

Second dimension - records which have been created or received in an organisation are tagged with information (metadata) about them, including how they link to other records.

Third dimension - records become part of a formal system of storage and retrieval which constitutes the corporate memory of the organisation.

Fourth dimension - certain records which are required for purposes of societal accountability (e.g. by corporate law) or other forms of collective memory become part of wider archival systems which comprise records from a range of organisations.⁷

There have been past references to a records continuum theory. I am not certain whether the Australian model comes from these other references, but there are definitely some similarities. As I mentioned earlier in my paper, everything here is the same, but just a little bit different. For example, Jay Atherton wrote an article entitled 'From life cycle to continuum: Some thoughts on the records management-archives relationship' in the Winter 1985-86 edition of *Archivaria*.⁸ Atherton, from Canada, asserted that there are eight stages to the life cycle. The first four parts are in the records management phase and include the creation, classification, maintenance and use, and disposition stages. The final four parts are in the archival phase and include the identification and accessioning of archival records, arrangement and description, preservation, and reference and access stages.

Atherton stated that the life cycle approach 'ignores the many ways in which records management and archives operations are interrelated,

even intertwined'.⁹ Atherton suggested that this theory be replaced with 'a simpler, unified model consisting of four rather than eight stages, and reflecting the pattern of a continuum, rather than a cycle'.¹⁰ This model's stages would be creation, classification, identification and application of retention schedules, and the maintenance and use of records. These stages would be 'interrelated, forming a continuum in which both records managers and archivists are involved, to varying degrees, in the ongoing management of recorded information'.¹¹

Atherton's paper notes that the life cycle's stages are segmented and with modern records this model is no longer appropriate: '...with electronic data the stages in the life cycle cannot be separated. The nature and volatility of the recorded data will not permit it. Creation, for example, is an ongoing process rather than an event in time'.¹²

After reviewing Atherton's continuum model, one can see a definite similarity between it and the Australian model in regard to the desire to encourage records managers and archivists to work together to manage records. This can be further illustrated by reviewing what Sue McKemmish says about the continuum in her paper 'Yesterday, today and tomorrow: A continuum of responsibility' which she presented at the 14th National Convention of the Records Management Association of Australia:

A continuum is something continuous of which no separate parts are discernible, a continuous series of elements passing into each other. A records continuum perspective can be contrasted with the life cycle model. The life cycle model argues that there are clearly definable stages in recordkeeping, and creates a sharp distinction between current and historical recordkeeping. The records continuum, on the other hand, has provided Australian records managers and archivists with a way of thinking about the integration of recordkeeping and archiving processes.

...In Australia, the records continuum has provided a way of articulating a mission that brings records managers and archivists under the recordkeeping umbrella. Records continuum thinking focuses on the unifying purposes shared by all recordkeeping professionals, defined as to do with the delivery of frameworks for accountable recordkeeping regimes that enable access to essential, useable evidence of social and business activity in the business, social and cultural domains.¹³

Similar, yet different. The life cycle concept I advocate is care and control of records **throughout** the life cycle, from creation, maintenance and use, **through** disposition (not to disposition).

Records, like living organisms, have **life cycles**. They are created or received (born or adopted). This stage includes the preconception planning, gestation, or pre-adoption planning periods. At this stage, their physical form (paper, electronic, magnetic, or photographic) and informational content are established. Records are then used and maintained (maturity). They are filed, accessed, re-filed, and occasionally reformatted or reorganised. As records become less necessary for the day-to-day operations of the office, they are often transferred (retirement) to inactive storage. They are perhaps taken off-line or taken to a records centre (nursing home where they are visited occasionally). Sometimes they are sent to an organisation's archives (the retirement centre where they still provide information about their pre-retirement lives and have useful knowledge for other activities as well). Sometimes, the records are just destroyed (death).

An effective records management program is designed to provide efficiency and economy in recordkeeping practices; to make sure that unnecessary information is destroyed or not even created; and to ensure that important information is preserved and available for reference.

This means that the creation phase of the life cycle is the most important phase of an effective records management program. It is during this phase that consideration should include reviewing whether the information **needs** to be created. If so, how long it will need to be retained, in order to determine the least costly and most efficient way to **create and maintain** the information so it will be available throughout its entire life cycle.

Ira A Penn, in his article, 'Understanding the life cycle concept of records management' in the July 1983 *ARMA Quarterly*,¹⁴ explains how all stages of the life cycle must be considered before a record is created. (Please note that that was written in the year nineteen hundred eighty-three - before Jay Atherton's article, and before the Australian continuum's momentum started.)

The most important question you must ask yourself when thinking of creating a record is, do you need to create it. And then, if the answer is yes, you can start thinking about how to create it and about the other phases of the life cycle.

...Let's back up a second and put this thing into perspective. We started out with creation and then we got all involved in maintenance and use and disposition. 'Why?', you may ask. 'Aren't the phases separate?' Well, yes and no. Certainly the life cycle is a 'cycle' for living purposes. Of course a record won't die before it's born. But at the same time, it must be realized that this is not a cycle for planning purposes. If you wait until it is time to file to consider filing, it's too late. If you wait to consider archival preservation until the paper has disintegrated, you've lost the battle...[The stages] are not distinct independent elements. They cannot exist alone. The segments are interrelated and interdependent...The elements blend with one another.¹⁵

So, the life cycle is not segmented, neither is the continuum. The elements need to be considered before the record is created in both models. The two theories are similar...but they are also different. A parallel universe.

The day-to-day issues facing the records manager in Australia

The day-to-day issues encountered by records managers in Australia are similar to those issues encountered by records managers elsewhere. They deal with the establishment and carry-through of recordkeeping policies and procedures. They analyse workflow processes and assist in the redesign of operations involving records. They interpret the laws and regulations pertaining to recordkeeping, such as their Freedom of Information, Evidence and Privacy Acts. They conduct records inventories or surveys and develop records retention schedules, have records centres and archival functions, work with imaging technologies, and all of the other things that I did as a practitioner in the United States.

These records managers also confront day-to-day issues that are different from the issues I came upon as a practitioner. There is more emphasis on managing and controlling active records here in Australia. Many records management programs are in charge of all mailing operations and there is quite an emphasis on the classification and indexing processes. This may be because the British registry system is still used in Australia, especially in government agencies. This is a system where records are logged in when they arrive in an organisation and as they are created in that organisation. Registration in most cases now involves the use of an automated records management system. Today's registry system has evolved, and in most cases not every single document that arrives or is created is registered. The process of registering documents is used only for those documents of certain divisions, topics, and/or types of records.

This is a country where records managers are used to keeping very close track of every single record. (In fact, they often express horror when I tell

them that there usually is no registration of records in US organisations.) This will be of great benefit to them in managing their electronic records. However, recently, in some organisations, the activity of registering records has devolved from the registry to the department receiving or creating the records. In these agencies, the records manager has expressed the concern that the records are not always registered, or put on the system. Access to these records has diminished and there is concern about losing control over some recordkeeping practices.

How records managers are addressing electronic records

This is one area where I believe the Australians are way ahead of the game. There may be various reasons for this; for example, they are quick to embrace new technologies and it may also be because of their adoption of the registry system. It really does not matter why, just let it suffice that we can learn something from them regarding the management of electronic records.

In 1991, the Commonwealth Government's Information Exchange Steering Committee (IESC) published a report entitled *Finding Information Needles in Government Haystacks*.¹⁶ The report was a result of a survey of some government agencies regarding the management of electronic documents. It highlighted that information was not being managed when it was in an electronic format. The report specified that there was no coordinated approach, that each agency had its own autonomous way of handling their electronic records and had different systems in place. It further pointed out that people did not know who was to manage the information/data or how to manage it; and that there were problems with basic records management issues, such as which version of a document is the latest, and security and other legal issues.

The IESC established a special subcommittee to address this report and to develop guidelines. This subcommittee was known as the Electronic Data Management Subcommittee (EDMSC). Two important documents were products of this subcommittee - *Management of Electronic Documents in the Australian Public Service*¹⁷ in April 1993, and *Improving Electronic Document Management: Guidelines for Australian Government Agencies*¹⁸ in 1995.

The Information Exchange Steering Committee in their 1995 work, *Improving Electronic Document Management: Guidelines for Australian Government Agencies* define documents as:

recorded communication with recognisable structure, on any medium, intelligible without further processing except for presentation on screen or on the printed page. Not all documents, however, are records in the archival or legal sense.¹⁹

The IESC then identifies four different types of documents found in governmental agencies - corporate, working, personal and private. This document, available at <<http://www.adfa.oz.au/DOD/imsc/edmsc/iedmtc.htm>>, defines each of these types of documents. The corporate documents are the ones that are considered records in the archival and legal sense:

Corporate documents are all documents which are used ... in the course of its business and are judged to have on-going value, including all documents kept for legal and audit requirements, and those which originate outside the agency, when they have reached a stage of development and quality which warrants them becoming part of the corporate record. Depending on security requirements, these documents should be readily accessible to those who need to use them.

...Corporate documents are seen as being an important asset of the organisation. They must be identified and controlled by agency

procedures, and registered, recorded and stored for corporate access. Corporate documents are kept in a corporate data store. This may be physically distributed, but has common document registration and access control requirements.²⁰

When corporate records are registered, they are captured into a recordkeeping system. This process includes capturing the necessary metadata to ensure the content, context, and structure of the record is complete, accurate and reliable.

AS4390, the document that provides Australian records managers with the guidelines to best practices discusses this capturing process:

8.4.2 Electronic documents. Electronic records are distinguished from electronic documents by their transactional context (they are created within business transactions) and evidential purpose (they are kept as evidence of that activity). Electronic documents are normally managed through data and document management techniques and tools, including electronic document management software.

An electronic document becomes an electronic record when it takes part in a business transaction, and is kept to provide evidence of that transaction. Thus a report prepared using a word processor remains a document until it is submitted, when it becomes a record. It may still be retained and used as a document, for example, as a basis for a new document. To function as a record, however, it must be captured into an electronic recordkeeping system and must incorporate relevant structural and contextual information, as well as content.²¹

Different than what records managers do in North America? Perhaps, yet it may be quite similar. I remember being at the ARMA Conference in Nashville, Tennessee and hearing a speaker talk about the difference between the official records of a business and the working documents. Who knows, maybe the Australians aren't so different after all.

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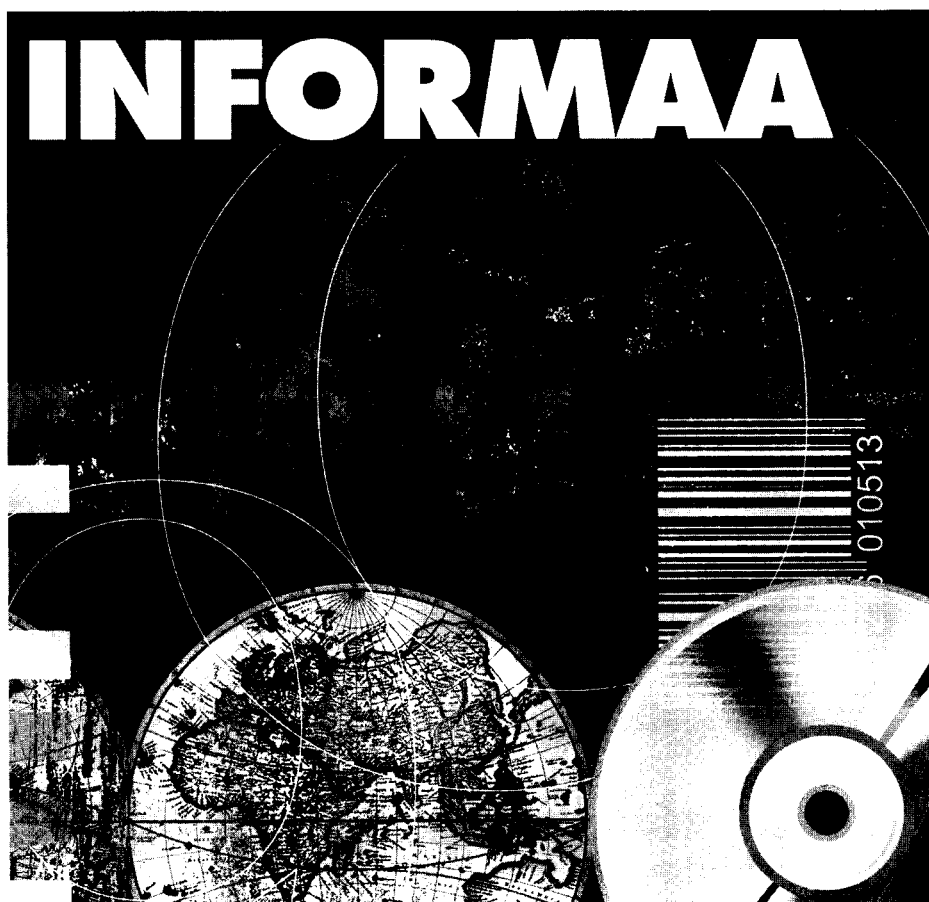
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*Note:

A version of this paper was given at the 1998 ARMA Conference at Houston, Texas, and appeared in the January 1999 edition of the *Information Management Journal* (formerly the *Records Management Quarterly*). This article is printed with permission from ARMA International. © 1999 ARMA International.



Electronic Document and Record Management in the Public Sector

IIR Conference at the Millennium Hotel, 16-17 November 1998, Sydney

REVIEWERS

Tom Adami and Karen Skelton

Project Officers
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The theme of the conference *Electronic Document and Record Management in the Public Sector* was full of promise. Indeed, there were some individually worthwhile papers presented, particularly relating to generic system design and implementation issues. However, the conference sub-title 'Capturing, maintaining & retrieving electronic documents and records to meet business and accountability requirements' was misleading. Many of the distinct and important issues implicit in the sub-title were not addressed at the conference.

The conference began well with David Roberts opening with an informative overview of the *State Records Act 1998* (NSW). It was interesting to get the impressions of a key stakeholder. Roberts spoke of the Act's coverage and key provisions (RM, retention and disposal, transfer and control, access, estrays), and of the State Records Authority's power to set mandatory standards and to perform audits to ensure compliance. One exception here is that the Act does not cover the records of Members of Parliament as they maintain their own effective archives operations.

Conni Christensen, of Christensen Consulting followed with a discussion on email, the implications of Email

transactions, and the problems of managing it. Much time was spent looking at how and why email is used so extensively as a business tool, the legal implications of its use, and the need for email policies and user education within organisations. While all these factors are relevant, the paper could have offered some new insights on the practical implications of managing email messages as records.

Justine Heazlewood (Public Records Office of Victoria) and Andrew Waugh (CSIRO) presented a good paper on the Victorian Electronic Records Strategy (VERS) project. The aims of the VERS project are to show that it is possible to capture and preserve electronic records (and access to them) over long periods of time and to provide a set of specifications for electronic 'archiving' which can be utilised by Victorian state government agencies. The technological solution proposed by the project, which includes document imaging, the use of digital signatures, and metadata encapsulation, is an interesting one. It is certainly worth a look by any organisation grappling with how to keep electronic records over time. The presenters also emphasised the need to integrate recordkeeping functionality into existing operational information systems, an important point that should be taken into account when considering the impact on staff of introducing desktop recordkeeping.

The Office of Government Online (OGO) online initiatives in the Commonwealth sector, were introduced by Jim Aked, including FEDLINK (the government-wide intranet), Internet 2001 (the delivery of

all appropriate Commonwealth services over the Internet by 2001), and the Shared Systems Suite of products for records management. As electronic recordkeeping in Commonwealth agencies will need to operate within these 'whole of government' frameworks for information management, the presentation was of informational value. However, as reflected by the presentation's focus on 'managing far more than just records', there was little recognition that records need to be dealt with in special ways.

Mark Hopkins of CSC Australia then spoke on the security aspects of the electronic environment. Security plays an important part in ensuring the authenticity and integrity of electronic records and, as he pointed out, it is an issue that needs to be addressed during the design and implementation of all systems including electronic recordkeeping systems. Hopkins described the major components which comprise security systems in electronic environments, and presented a useful layered security model which illustrated the various physical, personnel, and systems layers. His message was that a 'total', integrated approach to electronic system security is the most effective way to protect against unauthorised access.

Maria Cabrera (Bankstown City Council) presented a case study based on the fire that destroyed the Bankstown City Council offices recently. While much electronic information was saved because backup tapes had been stored off-site, the Council's existing information storage and retrieval systems were destroyed. The disaster proved to be a catalyst for

the implementation of a new document management system (which was also referred to as a 'knowledge and information system'). Cabrera's presentation really dealt with two separate issues; the importance of disaster planning in records management (including off-site storage for vital records), and the need to have an integrated information management system in place in order to 'leverage the corporate memory'. Unfortunately, issues specific to electronic recordkeeping did not rate much of a mention.

Russell McCaskie (CSIRO), on the other hand, spoke earnestly about electronic recordkeeping issues that are currently challenging the recordkeeping professionals in his organisation and their tentative efforts to deal with them. From this point of view, it was a very worthwhile presentation. McCaskie highlighted specific issues (for example, how to manage Web-based records that are held only on an organisation's intranet or public web site), suggested possible solutions, and stressed the importance of forming organisational partnerships to work through the problems and find solutions. He also emphasised the importance of integrating recordkeeping systems with information/document management systems, as users are hesitant to use different systems that do not fit together seamlessly, and which do not directly support their normal work processes.

Bob Morton, the Director, Records Management then described the implementation status of the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs' (DIMA) electronic recordkeeping system, which had been selected from the OGO Shared Systems Suite. Generic system implementation issues were covered, but with little emphasis being given to the importance of determining recordkeeping requirements up front.

Graham Pratt and Berni Dymet from Opticon Australia had been invited to conduct an interactive session on practical strategies for integrating workflow, EDM and imaging into one information management system. They suggested that technology did not provide the whole answer. Nothing really new was raised in the discussion, other than records managers need to be concerned about the quality of advice they receive from consultants who could have vested interests. The discussion that developed among the audience highlighted the importance of training, particularly when introducing new automated systems.

A debate titled 'The role of IT managers and records managers in the electronic document and record management process' followed, with Jan Murphy (St Vincent's Private Hospital, Sydney) and Ken Bullock (NSW Office of Information Technology) presenting. Murphy is from the life cycle school. She took a traditionalist view and maintained that there was little real prospect of change in the relationships between the RM and IT communities. As a consequence, she received a mixed reception from the audience. Bullock, on the other hand, offered some insights into what has led to, and perhaps caused, the present state of affairs to develop. He made the point that a wide gulf exists between the two groups, and it is really up to the records managers to catch up and make a more concerted effort to influence decision-making processes within their respective organisations.

Nigel Carruthers-Taylor (CVSI) gave a very useful paper on change management, and the importance of people in developing electronic information management systems. All of what he said is also relevant in the design and implementation of electronic recordkeeping systems. Carruthers-Taylor stressed the need to change corporate culture through:

- developing an understanding of the problem;
- selling the need for change to solve the problem;
- communicating all aspects of the change;
- making changes which will meet peoples' needs; and
- managing the changes systematically.

David Burt of the Victoria University of Technology (VUT) presented an example of what not to do when one is going through the process of re-engineering the records environment of an organisation. The solution the VUT implemented was to put in place a data warehousing system. It seems that little thought was given to the development of an overall recordkeeping regime. One earlier speaker had spoken of 'ad hococracy' in many situations, and this appeared to be a case in point.

Cheryl Edwards (Knowledge Manager, Rio Tinto), in addressing her subject of 'Developing an electronic document management system into a knowledge management tool', described the EDMS being implemented by Rio Tinto business units around the world. Her reasoning, however, seemed to be based on the theory, often promoted by vendors and consultants, that EDMS are synonymous with Electronic Recordkeeping Systems. Edwards spoke of the value of knowledge management to her organisation, but the relationships between the EDMS, the implied recordkeeping system, the developing unique thesaurus, and the knowledge management outcomes were somewhat obscure.

Summing up

In summary, the conference promised far more than it delivered. Overall, however, we were left with a feeling that no one had anything new to say about electronic recordkeeping, and that the chasm between vendors, practising records managers and archivists is as wide as ever.

A recent observation made by the National Archives' Assistant Director-General of Government Services, Steve Stuckey, in the context of international dialogue on recordkeeping, is relevant; 'We are divided by a common language'. Terminology, and its loose application, remains a major stumbling block within the recordkeeping community. Confusion will continue to exist while talk of electronic records management (ERM), electronic document management (EDM), information management (IM), and now knowledge management (KM), are bandied around and used interchangeably, if not randomly. More than one speaker at the conference stated that records are just documents, that is, another form of information. And, as a consequence, can be managed by any EDM system or IM system on the market today (but particularly by the product each one was trying to sell).

A number of speakers promoted the concept of 'corporate empowerment' through information and knowledge management. We believe that such statements are misleading - not because they are in themselves wrong, but because this focus is wrong in the recordkeeping context. Far more appropriate would have been a focus on the real issues of electronic recordkeeping and the provision of some practical guidance for dealing with its many challenges. Finally, there was a strong impression promoted throughout the conference proceedings that electronic document and knowledge management systems are able to meet the challenges of electronic recordkeeping. This has yet to be proved.

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Solid, Safe, Secure: Building Archives Repositories in Australia

By Ted Ling, National Archives of Australia, 1998 144p. ISBN 0 642 34403 5 \$30.00

REVIEWER

Karen Anderson

Co-ordinator, Archives and Records Program, Edith Cowan University, Perth, WA.

This book starts with a quote from Bob Sharman: 'The only person who is competent to plan an archives building is one who has just completed the planning of one, and seen it erected and brought into use'. In other words, experience is an invaluable asset and this book sets out to share Ted Ling's six years' experience with the National Archives' of Australia's (NAA) Facilities Program, and his current position as Director of the NAA Darwin Office. The practical nature of this experience is evident in every chapter.

Illustrations and examples from archival facilities of other Australian organisations and from some other recently constructed buildings in other countries are provided. This, in the author's words, 'is a "How To" book which synthesises recent experiences and deals with all aspects of the building and management of archival facilities in the generic sense, not something related to one specific building'. There are, however, five brief case studies in the book that describe particular projects undertaken by the National Archives. Two are concerned with site selection; one provides a timeline from planning to completion for the East Burwood facility in Victoria; and two outline strategies undertaken to improve formerly

problematic repositories. Curiously, none of the repositories mentioned in the book is included in the index, so a reader looking for a particular example is obliged to flip through the pages.

The book briefly surveys the development of modern repositories, citing key publications and referring to twentieth century buildings in Europe and North America. It also mentions buildings in Australia since 1965. It then provides a definition of an archival repository for today; discusses the practical considerations of site selection, building orientation and fabric and generally those issues that should be considered when evaluating the feasibility of refurbishing an existing building. Where standards either do not exist or provide inconclusive advice, as for example in the fire rating of walls, the text provides examples of solutions employed in several different facilities. A particular strength of this section is that it gives sample calculations of floor loadings and of floor to ceiling height requirements when catering for shelving height, mobile tracks and sprinkler system clearances.

Two chapters are devoted to planning the inside of the building. Chapter three is a guide to providing good environmental conditions for the records, beginning with a brief discussion of controversy concerning the 'right' conditions. Components of air conditioning systems, lighting and power systems including emergency power supplies, security, fire safety and containment are covered here. An informative table of fire suppressant systems currently in use in various

Australian and overseas facilities is provided. Chapter four discusses some special areas that may be required. These include special types of storage, shelving (including a handy guide to calculating the true length and depth of mobile shelving) and factors in the design of staff and public areas.

Chapter five provides a short guide to producing a design brief, communicating and working with building design and construction professionals. This is the shortest chapter in the book and while it provides a very good overview more detail would be helpful, since this is the area in which the archives project manager is most likely to lack experience. The advice to keep a record of progress of the project and of all site meetings is very wise.

Chapter six covers building maintenance, discussing standards and management of maintenance service contracts; pest management including managing fumigation; a brief overview of disaster preparedness and response. The emphasis is on issues to consider and decisions which must be made. This book does not provide a detailed guide to disaster preparedness, but warns that in the event of a community disaster emergency services will be preoccupied with the well-being of the general public and other cultural institutions with their own problems. This is a salutary lesson that we should all consider.

Chapter seven devoted to building in the tropics augments advice given in earlier chapters, describing the more extreme climatic conditions and

practical strategies for protecting against the extreme humidity, high rainfall and cyclone damage.

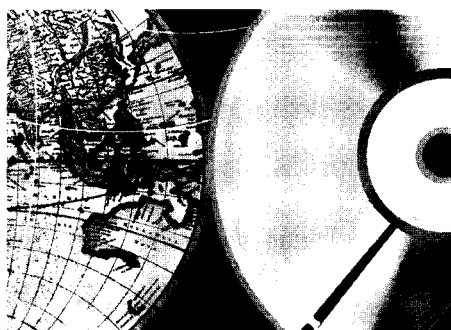
Chapter eight is aimed at the lone archivist and can be read without reference to the rest of the book since it revisits all the topics covered in the other chapters. Common sense solutions are given for managing and improving facilities that are less than ideal on a low budget.

The body of the text ends with a useful three-page summary of issues to consider in 'DO' and 'DO NOT' format.

The select bibliography provides a very good starting point for further reading on the topics covered in the book. It is further augmented by endnotes that point to many other useful sources although these are in a small, light font that is not at all easy to read. Records Managers and Archivists who have managed building or refurbishment projects should follow the author's example and share the benefit of their experience in print.

This book is a very worthwhile addition to the libraries of all recordkeeping professionals. It is succinct, clear and relevant. Its advice is adaptable to facilities for temporary records and its usefulness is much more wide-ranging than that once-in-a-career major building project. When that does arrive, present a copy to your architect.

In the meantime, acquire a copy for yourself.



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AMBRI selects CompuTechnics' Objective for Information Management

The vision for a start-up technology company is to build a world-class company with world-class business procedures. AMBRI Pty Ltd, the commercialising arm of the Cooperative Research Centre for Molecular Engineering and Technology, has selected CompuTechnics' Objective to provide a high-end information management solution.

AMBRI is commercialising the 'Ion Channel Switch' - a high-tech membrane sensing mechanism which measures changes in electrical impedance induced by binding of specific molecules to the membrane elements. The Ion Channel Switch is a world first with potential applications in human and veterinary in-vitro diagnostics, pharmaceutical applications, environmental monitoring, and food microbiology.

'The vision of AMBRI Pty Ltd is to build a world-class company with world-class procedures, to commercialise the cutting edge of biotechnology research,' said Don Darkin, operations executive at AMBRI. 'Unlike most companies we have the advantage of building our IT infrastructure from scratch. We realised from the outset that one of the most important features our IT system needs is efficient information management,' he said.

Engine for business processes

The medical and pharmaceutical industry requires companies to maintain detailed documentation on business, research and manufacturing processes. This is to satisfy customers and regulators who need to be able to verify research findings, audit company procedures and ensure a high standard of quality throughout the process.

'Electronic document management and workflow is the only way to properly manage and account for our information,' said Don Darkin. 'We want to create a paperless system, keeping a bare minimum of hard copy documents.'

'CompuTechnics' Objective Information Management will be used as an engine for AMBRI's business processes. It's the right size system for a growing company with a large information management need, providing the flexibility and power to manipulate information according to our unique requirements.'

Independent of file type or storage system

Objective will manage AMBRI's entire catalogue of information, regardless of file format or storage type. The document management system tracks movements of the physical documents and manages access and routing of electronic documents such as text, spreadsheet and database files.

'Up till now, the technology has not been available to allow easy access to all the information required. Because Objective is compatible with all the authoring platforms, everything talks to each other. Files are located faster and the information is more complete,' said Don Darkin.

'Audits will be far less disruptive than under a paper-based document management system,' he said.

Staged implementation

AMBRI is implementing Objective



Don Darkin, Operations Executive AMBRI

modules in the following stages over the next 18 months:

- **Objective Workflow:** a process automation tool for mapping workflow routes through an organisation;
- **Objective Foundation:** for electronic document management;
- **Objective Records:** for managing physical and electronic documents in the same environment.

The first stage of implementation, Objective Workflow and Objective Foundation, are expected to be implemented by mid 1999. AMBRI is a fully owned subsidiary of Pacific Dunlop Ltd.



**INTEGRATED ELECTRONIC
DOCUMENT AND
RECORDS MANAGEMENT,
WORKFLOW,
INTERNET / E-COMMERCE
SOLUTIONS AND
CONSULTING SERVICES.**



Job Opportunities for Records Managers

The Records Management Sector has now 'come of age' with its own dedicated Recruitment Service called **Qualified Records People**.

Set up to operate exclusively in Records Management, **Qualified Records People** is an innovative employment agency which recruits and appoints people with experience in document management, workflow systems, records policies, procedures and conversions, thesaurus compilation, indexing, disposal schedules, archives and conservation.

The service is managed by Anders Elfman who has worked in records management for a NSW State Minister's office, and for a major Government Taskforce. He has a sound understanding of the total records management process, from data entry to project management. 'I am proud to

be chosen to head **Qualified Records People**', said Anders. 'With new technology and changes in legislation, it is an exciting time to be involved in Records Management. I see it as a field with great potential for future growth.'

Qualified Records People operates alongside **Library Locums** under **The One Umbrella Pty Ltd**, - a specialist Records and Information Management recruitment company which brings together expertise and quality systems not matched anywhere else.

Qualified Records People offers employers the best choice of candidates in the field. Already, financial institutions, legal firms, major corporations and government departments are frequent clients. Job seekers, on the other hand, who register with **Qualified Records People** can tap into the widest choice of records management positions.



Anders Elfman

Qualified Records People can be contacted under The One Umbrella Pty Ltd web site:

<<http://www.oneumbrella.com.au>>

or contact Anders Elfman

Ph (02) 9263 0011

Fax (02) 9283 3113

email anders@oneumbrella.com.au

Have Tower Software Staff Become Award Junkies?

What a great year 1998 turned out to be for TOWER Software, developers of the TRIM Electronic Recordkeeping system. TOWER is rapidly developing TRIM into a world product with installations in over 25 countries. 1998 saw TRIM certified against the US Department of Defence RMA standard US DOD 5015.2. Both US Government agencies and private enterprise companies are rapidly accepting the US DOD 5015.2 standard.

The DOD standard demands both Electronic Document Management (EDM) features as well as a very strong emphasis on Records Management (RM) disciplines - which, of course, readers of the *INFORMAA Quarterly* will applaud. After all, an EDMS system without RM disciplines means that organisations have to double-handle the records to process them for 'back-end' records management. Trying to integrate separate EDM and RM systems could turn into a technology nightmare.

Brand Hoff, Managing Director TOWER Software believes one of the secrets to the success of the Canberra-based company is simply to 'understand where your customer is coming from, and where they would like to go'.

Nearly 15 years ago, TOWER saw that Records Managers were looking to computers for productivity and efficiency gains. TOWER saw that, eventually, the process of creating, storing, retrieving and disposing of documents and records would migrate from the physical world to the electronic world. At the time that was just a vision. Today, with TOWER's

TRIM software into its 13th major released version, cradle to grave document and records management can be achieved by record creators from their own desktop PC. The integration with email is particularly impressive, and IBM has developed an interface from Notes to TRIM.

In 1998, public and industry recognition of TOWER's 14 years of consistent effort was acknowledged. In the ACT, Chief Minister Kate Carnell presented TOWER Software with the:

- IBM ACT Small Business Award (less than 50 employees);
- ACT AusIndustry Award for Innovation; and
- 1998 Telstra ACT Small Business of the Year Award.

The Canberra Business Council also recognised TOWER with the 1998 Business Achievement of the Year award. TOWER, the September winner, was chosen from 12 monthly finalists consisting of large and small companies. TOWER then progressed to the National Finals of the Telstra Small Business Awards and was awarded the 1998 AusIndustry National Award for Innovation.

That was not the end to it. TOWER also won two other significant awards: the Most Innovative Stand at the Records Management Association of Australia (RMAA) 1998 Convention, and was runner up in the Channel Nine Small Business Show Software Awards.

In order to resource this effort, TOWER has forged strong relationships with business partners and resellers. In particular, strong partnerships exist with IBM, CVS,

MicroHelp, and OPC for the Federal Government, Sigma Data Solutions in WA, Kasys in Queensland, and SoftImpact in South Australia.

TOWER has its own offices in Sydney and Melbourne and a subsidiary company, TOWER Software Inc, in the USA, which now has about 20% of TOWER Group staff. The US subsidiary is actually growing at a faster rate than TOWER Australia. TOWER has grown in excess of 50% for the last 3 years, and at the halfway point to 1998/99, is showing 100% growth over 1998 with a significant proportion coming from the USA and the United Kingdom. TRIM is resold in New Zealand, Canada and Ireland by independent resellers.

Overseas TRIM users include Mercedes Benz, Thrifty, CISCO Systems, the giant CITGO Oil Company, the United Nations, UNICEF, FDIC (claims to hold more records than any other organisation in the world), Cargill (the world's largest non-listed company), US West, Mutual of Omaha, Johnson and Johnson, City of Tampa, Office of Thrifts Supervision, Center for Amy Lessons Learned, DARPA, New Brunswick AG, and many more with names that may not be familiar to *INFORMAA Quarterly* readers.

Brand Hoff acknowledges that 'sound RM practices used in Australia, based on the *Australian Standard AS4390 - Records Management*, have contributed to the overseas success of the TRIM Electronic Recordkeeping System. Indeed, sound RM disciplines form the heart of the current glamour whizzy world of Knowledge Management'.

TOWER is providing sponsorship assistance to help promote the *Australian Standard AS4390 - Records Management* for acceptance as a full International Standard by the International Standards Organization. TOWER also sponsors overseas speakers for the RMAA as part of its policy to promote the professional side of RM in Australia. In fact, TOWER takes pride in the fact that it is the only company that has consistently supported every issue of the RMAA's *INFORMAA Quarterly* continuously since 1986. Clearly, supporting this journal must have something to do with TOWER's success.

As the tag line for TRIM suggests, 'more than EDM'. Congratulations to TOWER Software!



From left to right, Frank Blount, CEO Telstra, Peta and Brand Hoff of TOWER Software and Andrew Bain from AusIndustry during the presentation of the Telstra Australian Innovation Award for 1998.

The New *State Records Act 1998* (NSW) and State Records Office of New South Wales

Commencement of the Act

The *State Records Act 1998* (NSW) commenced on 1 January 1999, with the exception of Part 4, which is concerned with transfer of archives to State Records' control. This Part is expected to commence in July 1999.

State Records Regulation 1999

The State Records Regulation 1999 also operates from 1 January 1999. The Regulation defers application to the Act to local government, the universities and the public hospital system until 1 January 2000, with the exception of Part 3 (protection of State records) and Part 5 (recovery of estrays). This is to enable these sectors, which have not previously been subject to State records legislation, to prepare for their responsibilities under the new Act.

The Regulation also permits provisions in existing legislation that authorises or requires the disposal of State records to continue to operate. These provisions would otherwise be overridden by section 21 of the new Act. This clause of the Regulation operates for one year to enable a proper assessment of the continued need for those provisions to be undertaken.

Finally, the Regulation exempts private records in local studies' collections and university research libraries and archives from the application of the Act. For technical reasons, this also applies for one year only.

Establishment of State Records Authority of New South Wales

The former Archives Authority has taken up its new identity as the State Records Authority of New South

Wales. Wherever possible, the short name 'State Records' is being used. The new organisation also replaces the former Archives Office and Records Management Office, operational arms of the former Authority. The Government Records Repository continues to operate as the State Records' commercial business unit.

In general, contact details remain the same. A number of email addresses have changed, notably the new general address: <srecords@records.nsw.gov.au>. Addresses for managers and staff can be found on the World Wide Web site at: <<http://www.records.nsw.gov.au>>. For information on the State Records Act or the new role of the State Records Authority of New South Wales, please contact: Martyn Killion, Executive Officer on telephone (02) 9237 0126.

Coordinators Report

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

Coordinator: Andrew Freeman

A key issue that the RMAA Information Technology Committee (ITC) has been considering recently is ways of facilitating interaction of committee members with organisations of like kind to the RMAA. An example of this interaction is that, in 1998, the Canberra Branch of the Australian Computer Society (ACS) and the ACT Branch of the RMAA held a joint meeting to discuss the Internet and the Law.

One option we have been considering is proposing the formation of a Records Management committee for the Community Affairs Board (CAB) of the Australian Computer Society. The CAB has now a number of special interest committees that include:

- Economic, Legal and Social Implications Committee, which includes encryption and privacy issues;

- Health Informatics Committee, in which medical recordkeeping is reviewed;
- National Computer Education Committee whose interests include issues relating to information technology education in the primary, secondary and tertiary education levels; and
- Women in Technology, which has a primary focus on facilitating female involvement in information technology.

RMAA members can subscribe to any of the email lists associated with these committees through the TOOLS link on the ACS home page at: <http://www.acs.org.au>.

Most Branches of the RMAA now have nominated members of the RMAA ITC. Any RMAA member wishing to support or be involved in the formation of a Records Management Committee of the CAB, or who wish further information on the activities of the Information Technology Committee should contact Andrew Freeman on:

afreeman@pcug.org.au or at (02) 6258 7411.

1999 CONFERENCE

Australian Society of Archivists, Inc.

SHERATON HOTEL, BRISBANE

Thursday 29 July
(Annual General Meeting)

Friday 30 July - Saturday 31 July
(Conference)

Keynote Speaker: John McDonald

Director, Office of Government Records, National Archives of Canada

Archives at Risk: Accountability Vulnerability & Credibility



Enquiries:

1999 Conference Secretary
C/- ASA Queensland Branch PO Box 1441
Sunnybank Hills Qld 4109
Phone: (07) 3875 8755
Fax: (07) 3875 8764
Email: asa@asap.unimelb.edu.au

Branch Reports

TASMANIA

Change! Are we the Island of Change? Apart from the changes resulting from a new government and agency amalgamations, Branch Council has once again undergone a number of changes. However, this has had a positive result as we have recruited a number of persons who have not previously been actively involved in RMAA affairs to assist on various Committees and Branch Council.

The Marketing and Membership Committees now have a very busy time ahead building up membership and projecting the RMAA image to ensure that members are not lost as a result of these amalgamations and changes.

The Christmas Party, which took the form of drinks and nibbles, was well attended and enjoyed by those present. The Functions Committee ensured we kept the grey matter working with a general knowledge quiz.

A convention organiser has now been appointed for the 2001 Convention, and plans are under way. The Education, Functions, and Marketing Committees are all busy organising the State Seminar for April 1999. Members are looking forward to a number of speakers from the little Island to the North of Tasmania.

Jill Saunders ARMA

RMAA STATE SEMINAR

Are you being left behind?

Are you looking to the future?

The Branch is looking to the future and has a dynamic program in place for the State Seminar to be held in April 1999. Speakers include industry leaders and innovators in Records and Information Management. Program and registration details will be circulated to Tasmanian members. Interstate delegates are most welcome.

For further information contact Janet Browning on 03 6333 2924; email janet.browning@dchs.tas.gov.au

Date: Wednesday 21 April 1999

Venue: Elizabeth Street Pier Conference Centre

Cost: \$160 full registration (single session and corporate registrations will be available)

NORTHERN TERRITORY

Hopefully, by now most readers will be aware that the 16th RMAA National Convention is being held in Darwin from 29 August to 1 September 1999. The Convention will tend to dominate proceedings within the NT Branch until September, as those of you who have been through this process before will testify.

The preliminary program has been distributed widely, but if you have not yet received a hard copy, fear not as the proceedings are now available on the Association's web site <<http://www.rmaa.com.au>>. The Speakers' Program is all but finalised at the time of writing (Christmas Eve) and will surely be by the time this issue of IQ is being read. We also intend to have an updated version of the program, including speakers, on the web early in the New Year. Please check the site regularly to keep up-to-date with developments.

Those hardy souls who attended the 8th National Convention held in Darwin in 1991, and are intending to revisit our fair city this coming August, will be pleasantly surprised at the developments that have taken place in the Northern Territory capital. The venue itself (the Darwin Entertainment Centre, the same venue as in 1991) has been

completely refurbished and has a very pleasant ambience. The area close to the venue now has an array of restaurants and bars, one is conveniently being constructed directly opposite the Entertainment Centre! And, of course, Darwin city is only a few minutes walk away. The climate is superb at the end of August, the ethos of the tropics is always relaxed (not to mention happy), and all this coupled with a great Speakers' Program will ensure that the 16th National Convention is the best ever!

Other than involvement with the Convention, Branch Council arranged for a workshop "Project Management for Records Managers" to come to Darwin in early December and this was very well received. We are also in the throes of arranging records management training workshops. These have been in great demand seeing that the last training conducted here was in August 1997.

All in all, it augers for a very busy 1999 for members of the NT Branch Council but that's why we volunteer for Council initially, isn't it? Hopefully, we'll see you in August for a great Convention!

Barry Garside ARMA

NEW SOUTH WALES

By the time you read this, 1998 will be over and we will be in a whole new year with lots of new opportunities and challenges. 1998 was a good year for the NSW Branch. The move to lunchtime meetings proved to be an excellent decision, resulting in attendance of over 80 people regularly. The first meeting for 1999 was a panel discussion on the so-called Y2K Bug on 9 February 1999.

The Branch Christmas party was a wonderful night. Held at the Sydney Rowers Club overlooking the Parramatta River, it was a most convivial evening where people had the chance to meet and mingle, while indulging in some excellent food, wine and music. The venue was excellent. For those who won prizes it was no doubt even better. Thank you to those who came, and a special thanks to those who sponsored the evening, especially CompuTechnics, the major sponsor. My congratulations to Mary Hooker, Conni Christensen, Sue Frost and Greg Brace with the work they put into these events.

We will continue to have members' meetings every second month, other seminars/workshops, and continue the

planning for the 2000 Convention (which will be held in December 2000). The Local Government Chapter continues to flourish under Chris Fripp and other very dedicated people. It was great to hear Chris's report to Council on the recent joint meeting with the Victorian chapter at Albury and the plans for 1999.

The Branch also recently met with representatives of TAFE in NSW, and State Records. TAFE want the RMAA to be involved in developing new courses in records management, and to help promote them. We will work with them closely on these courses and would appreciate input from members interested in sharing their skills and knowledge of the profession.

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

Geoff Smith ARMA

VICTORIA

November to February is traditionally a quiet time for the Victorian Branch, but this did not stop a highly successful joint meeting/seminar of the Victorian and New South Wales Local Government Chapters at Albury in November. The seminar attracted approximately 75 attendees, most of whom stayed overnight to take advantage of the networking opportunity.

Victoria's involvement in the Public Records Advisory Council's (PRAC) Records Management Awards, culminated in a ceremony held at Parliament House last October. Our congratulations go to inaugural dual recipients, Department of Education and Parks Victoria. The Branch is looking forward to our continuing association with the awards, and

has formed a committee that will work closely with PRAC.

Our efforts in early 1999 have continued to focus on a 5-year strategic plan, which has been developed in accordance with the Federal plan and should be completed by the end of February.

Special congratulations to Victorian Branch Councillor, Mrs Betty Powell, who was awarded Life Membership in September 1998. The awarding of Life Membership is a just reward for Betty's dedication to the Branch over some 17 years.

John Sim ARMA

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

The major effort on the part of the WA Council over the past few months has been concerned with the new records legislation. A small, but dedicated committee continues to meet with various members of Parliament about the new State Records Bill. As you are probably aware, the proposed legislation has had its second reading. About 80 members attended an RMAA briefing on the new legislation in December. Although the new legislation is far more extensive and inclusive than the old, it still, in the words of Philip Pandal, proposes a 'Clayton's independence'. Members are invited to contact Laurie Varendorff, Vicky Wilson, Marita Keenan or myself if they would like to add any further comment to the debate. We also urge you to contact your local members of Parliament, in person or by mail, to make them aware of your concerns.

A breakfast function held on Melbourne Cup Day at the Blue Duck in Scarborough, enabled WA members to catch up with a number of conferences around the nation. I started the ball rolling with highlights of the RMAA Convention in Brisbane; Lesley Ferguson gave an informative overview of the IIM Conference in Melbourne; Josette Mathers gave us impressions of her first ASA Conference in Fremantle; and Vicky Wilson concluded the proceedings with an overview

of the ALIA Conference in Adelaide. Western Australians have been well represented at conferences in 1998 despite the isolation of the West.

Ken Ridley, the President of the WA Branch, presented Janet Tombleson with the RMAA award for best-written work by a graduating records management student, at the recent Curtin University Department of Information Studies 1998 prize-giving ceremony. Ken congratulated Janet on her fine effort and welcomed her to the profession. All students graduating from a records management course in WA in 1998 are encouraged to consider applying for the RMAA Medal, which is presented at the AGM in July. Application forms are available from the Education Committee.

Council would like 1999 to be the year when many of those eligible for professional membership actually apply for an upgrading in status. The Education Committee is planning to hold a workshop early in the new year to help members get those applications ready. Please watch the WA Informaa Newsletter for details.

Margaret Pember ARMA

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

Last November, the Branch held its Christmas function, sponsored by Tower Software. OPC, represented by Keith Parrott and Veronica Pumpa, was given the opportunity during the proceedings to promote its company services, and to elaborate on its newly-formed training section.

I would like to recognise the support that has been given to the ACT Branch by our sponsors throughout 1998, and

look forward to maintaining our relationship in this last year of the millennium.

We anticipate a full and educational program in 1999, starting with our two-day seminar *Intranets - Problems or Opportunities for Recordkeeping*, to be held in Parliament House on 10-11 March, planning for which is well under way.

Julie Lenson ARMA

RMAA ACT Branch SEMINAR

INTRANETS - PROBLEMS OR OPPORTUNITIES FOR RECORDKEEPING

to be held at Parliament House, Canberra on

10 - 11 MARCH 1999

Developments in the combined information management and communication technologies are having significant effects on recordkeeping, an inextricably linked element of the business process. These technologies are being applied in organisations through intranets which combine the facilities of distribution, communication, processing, retrieval and storage of information. This seminar with internationally and nationally recognised speakers, led by **Richard E Barry**, has been designed to clearly define intranets in terms of their recordkeeping potential, to demonstrate their effects on operational and human outputs, and to expand on the opportunities they give to capture and share knowledge in the business environment.

For further information, please contact: **The Belconnen Secretary**
Tel: (02) 6254 9474
Fax: (02) 6278 3104
Email: cbrmail@ghd.com.au

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

The Branch's main focus continues to be providing professional development opportunities for members.

By the time this issue of *INFORMAA Quarterly* is published, we will have successfully hosted a major event entitled "EDM - Making it Happen". The 2-day conference and trade show offered advice, case studies, and theory to local Association members as well as providing an opportunity for vendors to showcase the latest products. The local Branch was keen to host such an event as many SA members miss out on vital information about the latest theories and technologies as the majority of similar conferences are held in the eastern states. The Event Organisation Committee, chaired by Debbie

Ophof, is to be congratulated for its organisational efforts and for encouraging vendors to become involved as sponsors and in other support roles. The Branch would like to thank all of the vendors involved for their commitment and support.

With this event behind us, we look forward to next month's event when the SA Government Chapter hosts another of its highly successful, quarterly half-day seminars on 17 March 1999. Also, the Branch is continuing to investigate its plan to develop a library of recordkeeping material for members.

Bernadette Bean ARMA

QUEENSLAND

As 1998 wraps up, the Branch has been busy planning for an eventful 1999. There are a number of new initiatives on the drawing board, which will continue to provide members with a range of services including educational, informational, and social.

Seminar Series

The Branch has conducted a monthly seminar series for some years. The series will continue in 1999 with a range of interesting topics and guest speakers. The schedule is under way and should be finalised soon. The final seminar for 1998 concentrated on assisting members upgrade their membership status to professional grade, one of the Branch objectives for the year. It was a successful afternoon enjoyed by those who attended.

Education

The accreditation of the current IV Certificate in Records Management provided by TAFE is to be reviewed by the end of December 1999. A substantial amount of work has been put into planning a new course to commence as soon as possible. The new course will be based substantially on the competencies identified in the archives and records

management competencies project. Meanwhile, existing students will be accelerated through the course with additional modules available in 1999.

Representations

The Branch responded to the discussion paper released by the Queensland Law Reform Commission on Electronic Records. The report recommends a substantial rewrite of the law in relation to this area. The Branch has also written to the Queensland State Government asking for an indication of its intentions regarding a review of the *Libraries and Archives Act 1988* (Qld) to bring it into line with contemporary legislation regimes in other States.

Local Government Chapter

The chapter held its last meeting at Maroochydore on the Sunshine Coast in November. It was an opportunity for Records Managers from local government to discuss a range of issues that affect this area of government. It is intended to hold the next meeting in the Wide Bay-Burnett region early in 1999.

Philip Taylor MRMA

Do you want to

- update your records management knowledge and skills?
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If **YES**, the Graduate Diploma in Information Management (Archives and Records) will provide you with the answers.

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For further information contact:

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RMIT

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Fax: (03) 9925 5837

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Enquiries all year round!

PRODUCT INFORMATION guide

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

- ☐ Inside Front - *CompuTechnics*
- ☐ Page 8 - *Microsystems*
- ☐ Page 20 - *Qualified Records People*
- ☐ Page 23 - *Rolls Manufacturing*
- ☐ Page 25 - *Pickfords*
- ☐ Page 36 - *RMIT*
- ☐ Page 36 - *Curtin University*
- ☐ Inside Back - *Tower Software*

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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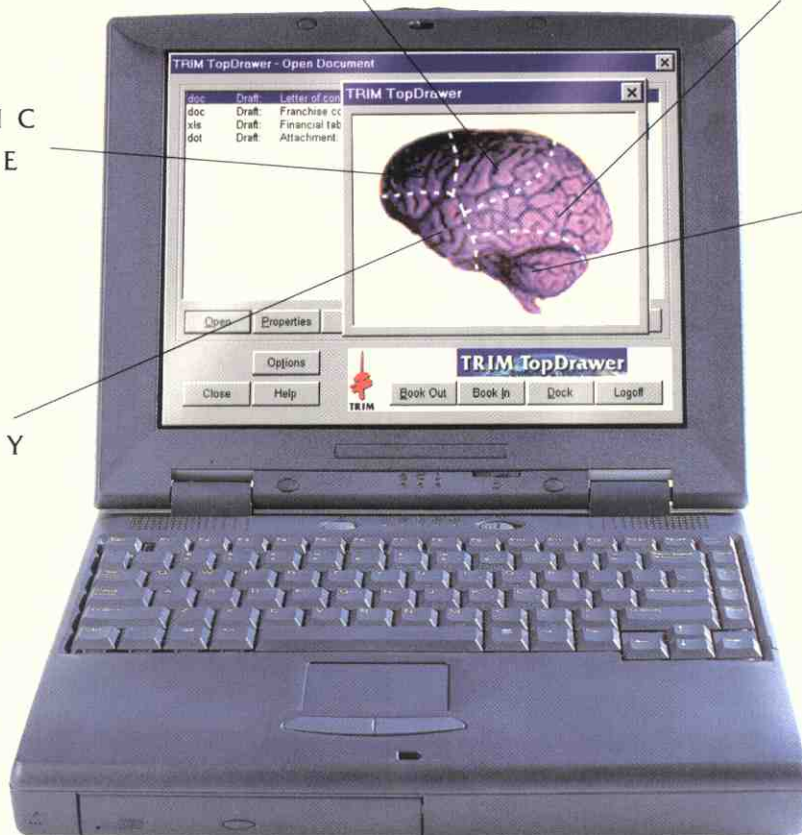
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- Supports a mobile workforce
- Provides easy WWW publishing



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Welcome to:

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...and all other recent new users.

For Federal Government Approved integrated TRIM solutions contact:

CVSI — joe.mammoliti@ausgate.cvsi.com

IBM Australia — jcheney@au1.ibm.com.au

For more information please contact TOWER Software:

Telephone: 02 6282 4655

Email: tower@towersoft.com.au

Homepage: www.towersoft.com.au



**Don't Be
Left Behind**



**Join the
RMAA**

Professional development through Branch Meetings,
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with people who speak 'your language'.

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