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1. Welcome back to the bulletin!

It has been a while since the last bulletin and there is a lot to fill you in on.

The National Archives has been working during the year with the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) on its performance audit on *Recordkeeping including the Management of Electronic Records*. This audit covered issues relevant to all agencies and makes recommendations for improving the state of government electronic recordkeeping generally. The final report has been tabled and is now available on the ANAO website at www.anao.gov.au.

The National Archives is committed to helping government organisations meet their recordkeeping responsibilities, especially in an e-government environment. As part of this, we are planning a new series of twice-yearly agency forums for you to find out what other agencies are doing and talk to recordkeeping experts. The 2007 sessions will be in March and September. This e-bulletin will also be published every two months to provide regular updates on what is happening and to let you know about new tools to help you and your agency.

To make sure you receive notices about future events please update contact details for yourself and any other interested staff – email recordkeeping@naa.gov.au with the subject 'Agency contact details', giving us the contact person's name, position, title, email and phone details.

2. Notice of impending disposal freeze

The Director-General of the National Archives, Ross Gibbs, advised agencies on 13 October that he is imposing a disposal freeze on selected personnel and superannuation records held by Australian Government agencies. The freeze will take effect on 1 November 2006, and will remain in force until 31 December 2008, when it will be reviewed.

The aim of the disposal freeze is to avoid the risk of losing crucial evidence for the processing of additional claims that may arise pending the outcome of a superannuation benefits case in the High Court due in November 2006. The decision to impose the disposal freeze was made at the request of, and in consultation with, the Department of Finance and Administration, which is the agency responsible for managing the litigation currently before the courts, and on the advice of the Australian Government Solicitor.

More detailed advice about the disposal freeze, including the categories of records affected and lists of disposal authorities relevant to the freeze, is now available to agencies on the National Archives' website at www.naa.gov.au/recordkeeping/disposal/freezes.html.

3. Recordkeeping standards, guidelines and advice

Take a look at these new standards and guidelines issued by the National Archives in the past 12 months.

Australian Government Implementation Manual: AGLS Metadata, version 2.0 (2006)

Need help implementing AGLS Metadata to describe your information and services? This manual will guide you through it. This new version removes the requirement to create and maintain Harvest Control Lists – a big timesaver!

www.naa.gov.au/recordkeeping/gov_online/agls/cim/cim_manual.html

Australian Government Email Metadata Standard (AGEMS), version 1.0 (2005)

This subset of the Archives' Recordkeeping Metadata Standard for Commonwealth Agencies recognises the vital role of email today and sets out what metadata should be used when agencies send emails relating to their activities.

www.naa.gov.au/recordkeeping/control/agems.html

Australian Governments' Interactive Functions Thesaurus (AGIFT), 2nd edition (2005)

This thesaurus describes the business functions carried out across Commonwealth, State and local governments in Australia and can help you describe your functions in a consistent way. The latest edition expands on the first edition released in 1999.

www.naa.gov.au/recordkeeping/gov_online/agift/summary.html

Functional Specifications for Electronic Records Management Systems Software and Guidelines for Implementing the Functional Specifications for Electronic Records Management Systems Software (exposure drafts – 2006)

These specifications detail the basic requirements for IT systems used to make and keep digital records. The guidelines will help agencies to interpret and use the specifications when designing, tendering for, purchasing, building and evaluating electronic records management systems software.

www.naa.gov.au/recordkeeping/er/erms/specifications.html

www.naa.gov.au/recordkeeping/er/erms/guidelines.html

The Archives is currently seeking feedback on these drafts, so if you have comments please let us know: recordkeeping@naa.gov.au.

Whole-of-Government Functional Analysis: The Relative Significance of Functions of the Australian Government, 1975–2005 (2006)

What functions are likely to have highly valued records? Where do researchers most often look for interesting government records? Find out about functions from the other side!

www.naa.gov.au/recordkeeping/disposal/appraisal/Whole-of-government-functional-analysis.html

What are other agencies doing?

Digital Recordkeeping Guidelines – Case Studies – IP Australia and the Royal Australian Mint (July 2005)

In 2004, two Australian Government agencies, IP Australia and the Royal Australian Mint, audited their recordkeeping systems using the Archives' *Digital Recordkeeping: Guidelines for Creating, Managing and Preserving Digital Records* and the companion Checklist. The outcomes of their audits are documented in these case studies that show how the guidelines can help you review your own recordkeeping systems and prioritise areas for improvement.

www.naa.gov.au/recordkeeping/er/guidelines/casestudies.html

New archives advice

Archives Advice is a series of fact sheets that provide up-to-date guidance on recordkeeping and archiving issues. Over the last 12 months the Advice issued includes:

- 15 Qualifications for records managers (revised Feb 2006)
- 46 Australian Governments' Interactive Functions Thesaurus (revised September 2005)
- 47 The AGLS Metadata Standard and the Australia Government's e-Government Strategy (revised May 2006)
- 65 Digital Recordkeeping Guidelines and Checklist (revised July 2005)
- 71 Shared systems and recordkeeping (issued July 2005)
- 72 Protecting and handling motion picture film (issued August 2006)

www.naa.gov.au/recordkeeping/rkpubs/advices

Need further advice?

The Archives' Agency Service Centre is designed to connect you to experts who can advise on a range of current recordkeeping and archiving matters. Drop us an email via recordkeeping@naa.gov.au or telephone 02 6212 3610 during business hours for help.

4. Records Disposal Authorities

In 2005–06 the Archives worked with the following agencies to develop functions-based Records Disposal Authorities (RDAs):

- Australian Electoral Commission (all functional records)
- Australian War Memorial (all functional records)
- Australian Communications and Media Authority (audiovisual records submitted for classification)
- Australian National University (student records)
- Australian Prudential Regulation Authority (all functional records)
- Australian Broadcasting Corporation (all functional records)
- Geoscience Australia (all functional records)
- Department of Finance and Administration (capital works and property management)

5. New software tool – XENA

The Archives has been working for some time on an approach to preserving digital records of archival value. We have developed a working prototype of a digital archive, and a software program called Xena that converts digital records into a format that can be preserved and used regardless of future technological change. At the Chief Information Officers' Forum held in June 2006 the Archives launched Xena 3.0 Lite – an easy to use tool for agencies with digital records. For more information about using Xena in your agency, email the Digital Preservation team at recordkeeping@naa.gov.au.

A brochure on the Archives' approach to digital preservation can be found at www.naa.gov.au/recordkeeping/preservation/digital/XENA_brochure.pdf.

The latest version of the Xena Lite software may be downloaded from xena.sourceforge.net/download.htm.

6. Recordkeeping training update

Introduction to Recordkeeping in the APS – a new course

The Archives is delivering a new one-day training course *Introduction to Recordkeeping in the APS*.

The new course focuses on practical skills for records management staff to sentence, list, transfer and preserve records and retrieve inactive records and is ideal for agency staff who are new to records management.

Participants become acquainted with Herbert, a recordkeeper with some problems (see cartoon), and are asked to help him improve the way he creates and maintains his records. They come away from the course with copies of the slides, an exercise booklet, handouts, and a reference manual, along with useful insights and practical skills that they can use in their agency.



Introduction to Recordkeeping in the APS will be offered on a regular basis from each of the Archives' offices throughout the year. Details can be found on the training calendar on the Archives' website. See www.naa.gov.au/recordkeeping/training/summary.html.

Keep the Knowledge – Make a Record!

The Archives continues to receive strong interest in the training package *Keep the Knowledge – Make a Record!* which enables agencies to deliver their own tailored training to staff on the importance of making and keeping records of their business activities. The electronic package as well as hard copy booklets and ready-reference cards are available to all Australian Government agencies.

Keep the Knowledge training materials have been used in a range of ways including:

- promotional material for agency training such as screen savers and mouse pads;
- part of induction for new agency personnel;
- ongoing training for agency personnel to explain and reinforce their recordkeeping responsibilities; and
- online, e-learning training about recordkeeping and accountability.

Please contact us at recordkeeping@naa.gov.au if your agency wishes to use *Keep the Knowledge – Make a Record!* For information about the package see www.naa.gov.au/recordkeeping/training/keep/package.html.

7. Transfer and lending services

Planning your transfers to the Archives

If you have identified any records that have been sentenced for 'retention as national archives' under either the *Administrative Functions Disposal Authority* (AFDA) or an RDA for your agency, or if you have a sentencing program beginning that may identify such records, please contact us via recordkeeping@naa.gov.au so we can provide advice to help make the transfer process a smooth one.

Outstanding loans

Most agencies have been contacted over the last few months regarding National Archives collection items on loan to them, which were overdue for return. This was in response to ANAO recommendations in its 2005 performance audit *Safe and Accessible National Collections*. We appreciate the responses of agencies so far and look forward to more returns of outstanding items. We are now putting in place procedures for following up outstanding loans, another ANAO recommendation. The plan is to contact the agencies concerned at six monthly intervals to ask that they return the items or advise if they are still required.

8. Review of Administrative Functions Disposal Authority (AFDA)

The Archives is currently establishing a review of the *Administrative Functions Disposal Authority* (AFDA). The AFDA is a general disposal authority that sets out the minimum retention requirements for records relating to the kinds of activities common across Australian Government agencies.

We will be seeking input to identify priorities for review, and provide assistance during the review process. If your agency would like to comment or participate in the review of AFDA please email recordkeeping@naa.gov.au with 'AFDA review' in the subject line and provide your full contact details. The AFDA is available online at www.naa.gov.au/recordkeeping/disposal/authorities/GDA/AFDA/summary.html.