

TAHO Audit - Assessment of the recordkeeping maturity of Agencies

Allegra Huxtable – Manager GISU

Over the past 6 months TAHO have been pilot testing our audit process. We have learned a lot from the pilot and we want to thank all of the agencies that volunteered to participate.

The audit program is an independent and bespoke assessment of how well you are managing your information and records. Individual assessments are risk focussed, and positioned to gain a clear picture of an agency's policies, processes and practices.

The onsite visit, review of documentation, a brief report for senior management and follow up visits are designed to help improve standards and raise the profile of records and information management within the agency.

The agencies that volunteered to participate in the pilot included 8 Local Government Councils, 9 state agencies/authorities and 2 Government Business Enterprises.

Whilst there is scope for improvement there were encouraging instances of good practice identified including:

- Records Management Policy implemented through the agency, and supported by Records Management procedures which are actively used
- Information asset registers have been developed by some agencies including documenting the value of assets (retention) format, risks, and asset owners.
- Some agencies have RIM induction processes and regular newsletters.

- One agency undertook a risk assessment for the use of cloud systems.

The recommendations we make are pragmatic and include a maximum of 3 key recommendations for improvement within the next review cycle (approximately 2 years following the audit).

The most common recommendations include:

1. Developing/updating an IM/RM policy.
2. Developing an Information Asset Register
3. Developing/updating RM procedures for all staff

Advantages of participating in our audit:

- promotes improved business processes – not just within records management itself, but within the business units responsible for records.

- provides an assessment of whether staff are following internal policies and procedures exposing areas of risk

- testing your agency's ability to comply with internal or external audit processes

The pilot enabled us to test our audit tools and gave us valuable feedback. We are currently adjusting the tools and aim to test them again so are seeking volunteers to participate in a second pilot of the process.

TAHO staff are now drafting the Audit reports for the agencies that participated in the initial pilot. Once this is done we will be meeting with the agencies to present the reports and discuss the outcomes.

Review of TAHO Publications structure

The State Archivist is participating in a project initiated by the Office of e-Government that will enable us to determine and implement a more joined up and contemporary approach to the manner in which information management policy, standards and guidance is developed and presented. Traditionally our State Archives Guidelines and Advices have been written primarily to guide and support Records Managers and others who are responsible for the day to day creation and management of State records.

The scope of our audience is much greater in today's digital environment so it is critical that our publications acknowledge this and the associated need to address the broader issue of information governance.

To support this work an experienced consultant (Roger McShane) has been engaged to undertake a review of all State Archivist publications including mapping out what this exciting new structure will look like.

The consultancy will also consider means by which TAHO and the Office of e-Government can best work together to address areas of shared responsibility in information governance.

Roger will soon commence a process where he will consult with a range of agencies, local councils and GBEs after which he will make recommendations on:

- The structure, tone, approach, and target audiences for information management policies and supporting documentation
- Advice on managing records in a digital environment
- Adopting a risk-based and standards-based approach to information management and governance
- Principles to ensure ongoing synergy between TAHO and the Office of e-Government
- Processes required for developing the new publications.

For more information about the project please contact via ross.latham@education.tas.gov.au or 03 6165 5579.

Ross Latham

Do you borrow back records from the Tasmanian Archive and Heritage Office? Here are some hints and tips to help this process move smoothly.

Jenny Jerome – Manager Collections

Loans are for reference purposes only:

Once a record is transferred to TAHO it becomes a State archive. It is no longer an active Agency record and cannot be reactivated. This means that it is closed and no extra papers or notes can be added, and nothing can be removed. To help remind agencies of this, TAHO includes a 'Do not add or alter' page at the top of all files that are loaned.

Creating a part two or an enquiry file:

Consider creating a 'part two' if further information is created related to a record that is now a State archive. This part two can stay in the agency, or once it is closed, it too can be transferred as a State archive. If an Agency receives an enquiry to access a record or for information held in a record, consider creating an 'enquiry file'. This enquiry-information can be held in the agency, and can be disposed of following standard procedures, instead of adding to a State record.

Items that cannot be loaned back:

In some cases the format of a record or its age restricts our capacity to loan back an item. If this is the case we can make records available for viewing in the History room, our secure reading room at 91 Murray Street Hobart.

Who to contact:

TAHO Collections is the area that liaises with Agencies who want access to records their agency created that are now State Archives. The easiest way to contact us is to email TAHOcollections@education.tas.gov.au.



Training in 2016

We have developed two new training courses -

- 'Introduction to recordkeeping challenges in business systems'
- 'Introduction to metadata for records'

We hope that these two new courses will assist you all to manage your electronic records. We will be running them in Hobart and Launceston during 2016.

Developing an Agency Retention & Disposal Schedule	Hobart	April 26
Introduction to metadata for records	Hobart	May 19
Introduction to metadata for records	Launceston	June 1
Demystifying Disposal	Launceston	July 20
Demystifying Disposal	Hobart	August 18
Introduction to recordkeeping challenges in business systems	Launceston	September 21
Digital recordkeeping on a shoe-string budget	Hobart	October 12
Developing an Agency Retention & Disposal Schedule	Hobart	November 3
Contributing to STORS (book via GISU)	Launceston	November 29
Digital recordkeeping on a shoe-string budget	Launceston	November 30

Deborah Drinkell

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