

On the Record

March 2011

Update from the Manager TAHO & State Archivist.

Recordkeeping in the Tasmanian Public Sector

Its now six months since I commenced in the role of Manager Tasmanian Archives & Heritage Office and State Archivist; having initially focussed my attention on getting to know TAHO I'm particularly keen now to gauge the quality of information management in the Tasmanian public sector, how TAHO is performing in this space and how we can improve the quality of our products and services.

I have commenced what I anticipate will be regular meetings with information management staff from across the public sector; by all means let me know if you would like me to visit your organisation to discuss how we can work together. I have gladly accepted an opportunity to speak at a RIM Information Awareness Month (IAM) breakfast on 10 May and will be doing likewise for the ASA at their IAM event. Another initiative I'm keen to implement is a regular series of "Recordkeeping Forums" to discuss contemporary issues and share information. At this stage I envisage there being at least two forums per year.

Legislation

In recent years there have been plans to initiate a review of our Tasmanian archival legislation, the *Archives Act of 1983*. Responsibility for this task is now with me and I have so far conducted detailed analysis of the major issues and prepared a recommendation on possible areas of reform. Should the project get the all clear from our Minister my aim will be to revise the language of the Act so it is clear and readily understood and that we make best use of the opportunity to add

necessary new content, update key definitions and add scope to enable the creation and appropriate retention of accurate and reliable records of business activity.

TAHO- some clarification about name, role and function

The Tasmanian Archive & Heritage Office (TAHO) is the successor agency of the Archives Office of Tasmania (AOT). Subsequently all reference to us whether it be in relation to public access to the collection or the government recordkeeping function should be to TAHO not the AOT. I acknowledge confusion has been created via the ongoing presence of the AOT website and use of AOT templates; a brand project is happening at present that will address these issues and in the process provide some very useful marketing tools including better web functionality

Digital Preservation

Along with fellow members of the LINC Tasmania executive I am working on ways by which we can potentially attract government support to enable the development of a whole of government digital preservation strategy and establishment of a repository for digital information of enduring value. Earlier this year a LINC Tasmania colleague (Jan Lavelle) was a member of an Australian delegation that visited Wellington for dialogue with the National Library and Archives New Zealand about their work thus far in developing and implementing a digital preservation strategy and repository.

It is equally as important for TAHO to provide interim guidance and solutions; I am very pleased to announce that some new guidelines and advices will be released in coming weeks to assist in the immediate management, preservation and ongoing accessibility of digital information

Storage and Transfers

A 2007 survey identified that there are over 20,000 linear metres of permanent value physical records in agency custody awaiting transfer to TAHO. My response thus far has been a short but productive discussion about the TAHO storage dilemma with the Minister for Education and development of briefings for government about the requirement for establishment of additional storage and preservation facilities. In the meantime some storage capacity has been created via a very well coordinated project to rationalise collection storage and accommodation in the Tower Building at our 91 Murray Street premises; this will enable TAHO to accept a limited number of transfers over coming months. Please liaise with our Government Recordkeeping team if you would like to initiate a transfer

The Council of Australasian Archives and Records Authorities (CAARA)

On 31 March I will be in Canberra for a meeting of CAARA; this is the peak body of government archives and records institutions in Australia and New Zealand. The aims of CAARA are to promote a sense of understanding and consistency in the management of records of the Commonwealth, New Zealand, and the Australian States and Territories. Matters that have been considered by CAARA have included digital recordkeeping, the management of records following the transfer of functions between governments, and between governments and the private sector; principles for the disposal and access to ministerial records; the ongoing review of copyright legislation; and the state of archives in Australia. The Council meets twice yearly; I will provide a summary of the March meeting in our next edition.

New Information Management Strategic Framework for the Tasmanian Audit Office.

(contributed by Narelle Absolom, Senior Executive Officer)



The Audit Office is in the process of establishing its information management strategic framework, including developing its disposal schedule and BCS, and formalising records management policies and procedures. We are also undertaking a project to implement the whole of government Information Security Framework guidelines within the Office.

The Office has a records backlog that comprises approximately 1000 boxes of paper records stored both on- and off-site, as well as nearly 100 000 electronic records within TRIM. This is not much in the scheme of larger departments, but when it is essentially a task for one person to deal with single-handedly, it is a bit more daunting! The majority of these records are audit working papers and client files dating back many years and cannot be dealt with until a formal disposal schedule is in place. As with most organisations, the Office also has innumerable records stored in email inboxes, network drives, local hard drives and removable storage. Even for an organisation of under 50 staff, the management of information assets is a huge (and often dusty) job and the main challenge lies in changing staff members' thinking and legacy practices. Thankfully, we manage to have fun with it - the task is a lot less onerous that way!



Raider of the lost Archives.....

Spotlight



Scott Finlayson
DHHS

What is your role at DHHS?

Archiving and Disposal Officer in
Information Support Services

To manage the sentencing and disposal of files held at Health and Human Services.

Provide training and guidance in Archiving and Disposal to Health and Human Services Staff across Tasmania. Support Business Units undertaking large scale intensive archiving and disposal tasks.

Act as a central liaison point for Health and Human Services and the Archives Office of Tasmania including the collation of Registers of Records Destroyed

How did you become involved in Information Management?

By applying through the former CES (Commonwealth Employment Service) for a 6 week temporary job at what was then Primary Industry and Fisheries in 1994. I worked in information management for a few years before spending several years working in telecommunications support and facilities management. I returned to information management at Health and Human Services 3 ½ years ago.

What's the thing you like best about your job?

Working with the wonderful group of people, which make up the Information Support Services Team.

Completing the archiving and disposal work for a series of files or seeing staff from a different business unit, that that I have been training and guiding complete a large intensive archiving and disposal project.

What's the thing you like least about your job?

Dealing with people who don't see that archiving and disposal, when carried out correctly, can provide multiple benefits back to a Business Unit – the most obvious being more space.

What do you see for the future of Information Management?

Electronic Document Management is the way of the future. But we still have to deal with the paper records that we still hold ie Legacy Records. These records are often forgotten about and take up valuable storage space which costs money. I think this is the big issue that will start to emerge as our building managers attempt to consolidate space.

What do you do for Professional Development?

Completion of courses that are applicable to my role, combined with on the job development. Working on site for a dedicated period really allows me to focus and consolidate my skills. I also draw on the skills and knowledge of colleagues.

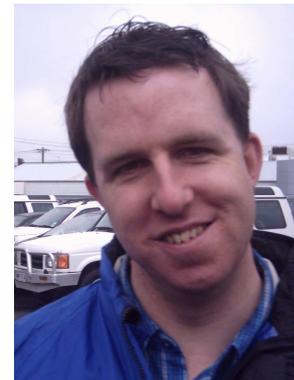
People in business units also provide a great insight in to what they do at that site. They can often teach me things or simply pass on information to allow me to develop other skills that influence supporting aspects to my core role of Archiving and Disposal Officer.

Share with us something about your life away from IM?

When I am not spending time with my beautiful wife and two wonderful children, I love to play with Fire, and then put it out! I am an active member of the Summerleas Fire Brigade (located to the north of Kingston).

It's a great opportunity to do something for the community as well as giving me many skills which are transferrable back to everyday life. It's also a great social outlet with many satisfying experiences and stories to tell.

WARNING this hobby can be addictive - February 2011 will see me accrue 19 years as a Volunteer Fire Fighter and I am only 36 years old!



Training for 2011

Disposal Procedures

Launceston	23 March
Hobart	13 April
Hobart	28 September

Using a Keyword Thesaurus

Hobart	11 May
Hobart	16 Nov

Using Keyword for Councils

Campbell Town	29 June
---------------	---------

Developing a BCS

Hobart	25 May
--------	--------

Writing a Functional Disposal Schedule

Hobart	20 July
--------	---------

Please book through the Training Consortium.

www.ttc.tas.gov.au

Registers of Records Destroyed

Central to the accountability process built into a Retention & Disposal Schedule, is the requirement that the agencies maintain a Register of Records Destroyed. It is important to recognise that the formal evidential record of destruction is contained in the registration process.

Registers of Records Destroyed are PERMANENT value records which remain in the Agency. The Registers are an extremely important record for the Agency, being proof that their records were destroyed legally. A Register of Records Destroyed may be required to be produced in a court of law.

The Register is to be made available to a representative of TAHO, when requested. This usually takes place approximately once a year. It is imperative that ALL of the records disposed of by ALL sections of your Agency are recorded in this Register.

The Register must contain the following information:
Schedule reference – being the number of the Retention & Disposal Schedule and the number of the disposal class.
Description – a brief but accurate description of the records

Inclusive date range – the date range covered by the records

Date of destruction – date the records were actually destroyed

Certification of the Relevant Authority – name and signature of the relevant authority or an officer to whom the relevant authority has delegated this authority, certifying that the records have been properly described by the schedule and have been destroyed.

If the register is an electronic record the access, security & validation controls should ensure the entries are acceptable as evidence of this certification process. The process of making entries should be monitored by an officer at an appropriate level of responsibility within the agency.

Records relating to Indigenous people.

As you know in the past records relating to Indigenous people were not covered by Retention & Disposal Schedules and disposal had to be carried out in conjunction with our Office.

We have now tightened up the wording that appears in the coverage section of our Schedules to;

Key recommendations of the Bringing Them Home Report 1997 relate to the need for the identification, preservation, indexing, management and access to records relating to Indigenous individuals, families and/or communities in accordance with established privacy principles.

Records relating to indigenous families and communities or which document links between indigenous people and localities are not to be destroyed and should be the subject of consultation with the Tasmanian Archive & Heritage Office..

So, instead of keeping ALL records relating to Indigenous people, you now have only to keep those that document links between indigenous people, families, communities and localities. You will still need to liaise with us in relation to the disposal of these records.

Deborah Drinkell

Consultant – Government Recordkeeping | Tasmanian Archive and Heritage Office

Community Knowledge Network

91 Murray Street | Hobart Tasmania 7000

Ph (03) 6233 7557 Fax (03) 6233 7471 Email address deborah.drinkell@education.tas.gov.au



Tasmania
Explore the possibilities