A Training Programme

Developing Infrastructures for Records and Archives Services

INTERNATIONAL
COUNCIL ON ARCHIVES

INTERNATIONAL RECORDS
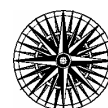MANAGEMENT TRUST

DEVELOPING INFRASTRUCTURES FOR RECORDS AND ARCHIVES SERVICES

MANAGING PUBLIC SECTOR RECORDS

A STUDY PROGRAMME

General Editor, Michael Roper; Managing Editor, Laura Millar

DEVELOPING INFRASTRUCTURES FOR RECORDS AND ARCHIVES SERVICES

Developing Infrastructures for Records and Archives Services

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Developing Infrastructures for Records and Archives Services

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INTRODUCTION TO *DEVELOPING INFRASTRUCTURES FOR RECORDS AND ARCHIVES SERVICES*

Developing Infrastructures for Records and Archives Services is one of a series of three modules that introduces records and archives managers to the executive management issues affecting records and archives systems and services. The other modules are *Strategic Planning for Records* and *Archives Services and Managing Resources for Records and Archives Services.* It is recommended that this module should be studied before embarking on the other two.

These management-oriented modules are rather more practical than theoretical. The theory and philosophy behind the various techniques and approaches advocated are covered more fully in the extensive range of management literature generally available. The focus here is on providing a practical framework for the delivery of an end product, in this particular context the efficient, effective and economical management of public sector records and archives services.

Although this series of modules is primarily concerned with the management of records and archives services within the public sector, much of its language has been taken from the private sector, where the study of management issues originated. Hence, it is important to begin with definitions of key terms used in the series.

> *Mission:* The purpose for which an organisation exists.
>
> *Business:* The core functions of an organisation that contribute to the achievement of its mission.
>
> *Process:* The means whereby an organisation carries out any part its business.
>
> *Input:* Any resource required for the functioning of a process, in the course of which it will be transformed into one or more outputs.
>
> *Output:* The product of the transformation of inputs by a process.
>
> *Customer:* Anyone who needs, uses or benefits from the output of a process.

Thus, the **mission** of the National Records and Archives Institution is the effective life-cycle management of public sector records and archives; the **business** of the institution is to carry out the various functions that contribute to the achievement of that mission. One of the **processes** that supports that business is the enactment of appropriate records and archives legislation; the **inputs** into that process include existing relevant legislation, information about legislation in sister countries, archival and legal staff expertise and parliamentary time. The **outputs** include a National Records and Archives Act and the regulations necessary to implement it. The **customers** benefiting from those outputs will include government agencies, the National Records and Archives Institution and the public.

Activity 1

Think about the records or archives function of your organisation. Choosing an example other than the one provided above, answer the following questions.

What is the mission of the organisation?

What is the organisation's business?

Can you describe two processes followed to fulfil a particular part of your organisation's business?

What are the inputs needed for that process?

What are the outputs of that process?

Who are the customers for the organisation?

Other key terms used throughout this series of modules are efficiency, economy, effectiveness and cost-effectiveness.

> *Effectiveness:* A measure of the ability of a process to produce specified outputs.
>
> *Efficiency:* A measure of the ability of a process to produce more outputs from the same inputs.
>
> *Economy:* A measure of the ability of a process to produce the same outputs from reduced inputs.
>
> *Cost-effectiveness:* The optimum balance between efficiency, economy and effectiveness. Also known as value for money.

The core modules in the Management of Public Sector Records Study Programme have provided guidance in the professional aspects of managing records and archives throughout their life cycle. This module concentrates on equipping managers with the additional knowledge and skills needed to establish and maintain the regulatory framework necessary to provide essential records and archives services. While people

other than managers may certainly study this module, they will find the examples and activities designed to address the needs of management. If students are not in a management position themselves, they may wish to communicate with colleagues in management or to develop hypothetical situations in order to examine some of the concepts introduced here.

In these three modules, the term 'manager' is used to refer to the person responsible for a variety of management decisions. It is understood that many people studying these modules will not be actual 'managers'; however, the information provided will be of value regardless of where a person is within the organisational structure. Therefore, you are encouraged to consider yourself a 'manager' while studying these three management modules and to consider the management issues fully and completely, regardless of your actual position within the agency.

These modules make specific reference to public-sector issues and refer largely to national government activities. Those people based in other jurisdictions should read these and consider the information provided in relation to their own organisations and systems.

Developing Infrastructures for Records and Archives Services consists of five lessons:

Lesson 1:   Infrastructures for Records and Archives Services

Lesson 2:   Legislative Framework

Lesson 3:   Organisational Structures

Lesson 4:   Staffing Structures

Lesson 5:   What to Do Next?

Lesson 2 should be studied in conjunction with the manual *A Model Records and Archives Law*.

Lesson 4 should be studied in conjunction with the manual *A Model Scheme of Service for a Records and Archives Class*.

AIMS AND OUTCOMES

Aims

This module has five primary aims. These are

1. to stress the vital importance of having a strong mandate (through appropriate regulatory structures) for public sector records and archives systems and services

2. to outline the principles and practices involved in establishing a legislative framework to support the life-cycle management of public sector records and archives

3. to outline the principles and practices involved in establishing the organisational structures to support the life-cycle management of public sector records and archives

4. to outline the principles and practices involved in establishing the staffing structures to support the life-cycle management of public sector records and archives

5. to outline sources of additional information about management-related issues.

Outcomes

When you have completed this module, you will be able to

1. justify the need for appropriate regulatory structures to provide a mandate for effective life-cycle records and archives management in your country

2. draft and maintain legislation to support effective life-cycle records and archives management in your country

3. plan and maintain organisational structures to support effective life-cycle records and archives management in your country

4. draft and maintain a scheme of service for a records class to support effective life-cycle records and archives management in your country

5. know where to go for more information on management issues.

METHOD OF STUDY AND ASSESSMENT

This module of five lessons should occupy about 60 hours of your time. You should plan to spend about

12 hours on Lesson 1

15 hours on Lesson 2

12 hours on Lesson 3

15 hours on Lesson 4

 6 hours on Lesson 5.

This includes time spent doing the reading and completing the activities and study questions.

At the end of each lesson there is a summary of the major points. Sources for additional information are provided in Lesson 5.

Throughout each lesson, activities have been included to help you think about the information provided. Each activity is a 'self-assessed' project; there is no 'right' or 'wrong' answer. Rather, the activity is designed to encourage you to explore the ideas presented and relate them to the environment in which you are studying or working. If you are studying these modules independently and are not part of a records or archives management organisation, you should try to complete the activities with a hypothetical situation if possible. If the activity suggests writing something, you should keep this brief and to the point; this is not a marked or graded exercise and you should only spend as much time on the activity as you feel necessary to understand the information being taught. At the end of each lesson are comments on the activities that will help you assess your work.

Following the summary at the end of each lesson are a number of self-study questions. Note that these self-study questions are designed to help you review the material in this module. They are not intended to be graded or marked exercises. You should complete as many of the questions as you feel will help you to understand the concepts presented. External assessments, such as assignments or exams, will be included separately when this module becomes part of a graded educational programme.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

This module assumes that you have access to a records office, records centre or archival institution or that you have some involvement with the management of records. The various activities may ask you to draw on your own experiences and compare those with the information provided in the lessons.

If you do not have access to records or archives facilities within your organisation, you may need to develop a fictitious scenario for your activities. You do not have to be in a senior management position to work through the activities in this module, although you wish to discuss this module with friends or colleagues who are in decision-making positions in the organisation or who are involved with the analysis of the organisation's systems, so that you can discuss principles and concepts with them and compare your understanding with theirs.

Manuals

Two manuals may usefully be referred to in connection with this module: A Model Records and Archives Law and A Model Scheme of Service for a Records and Archives Class.

Case Studies

The following case studies will offer useful additional information.

Case Study:

7:    Andrew Evborokhai, The Gambia, 'Development of a Records Management Programme in The Gambia'

16:    Kathryn Patterson, New Zealand, 'National Archival Authorities and Public Sector Reform: A Case Study of the National Archives of New Zealand'

17:    Charles Gibson, Belize, 'Revising Archival Legislation in Zomora'

33:    Margot Thomas, St. Lucia, 'Reinvigorating the National Archives of Verdant Isle'

ACTIVITIES: COMMENTS

Activity 1

This activity is intended to help you understand the terms introduced in this introduction; these terms will be important as you work through this module. You will want to keep careful notes of the definitions and of the answers to these questions, so that you can refer back from time to time and remember the meaning of the words and their application in your own organisation.

INFRASTRUCTURES FOR RECORDS AND ARCHIVES SERVICES

Lesson 1 introduces managers in the records and archives field to the need to establish coherent infrastructures for the management of public sector records and highlights the issues that they should raise with those senior managers and decision makers within national governments who are concerned for the effective and accountable use of resources within national development programmes.

RECORDS AND ARCHIVES SYSTEMS AS TOOLS FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Imperatives of National Development

As the world moves towards the twenty-first century, the need to address grass-roots concerns, to promote accountability and to ensure sustainability has become crucial to the viability of development programmes.

Development strategies must be geared to achieve economic sustainability but also to meet basic social needs. They must satisfy the interests of all the citizens of a country, not just those of its élites, and promote human dignity, security, justice and equity.

If such strategies are to be successful, political and administrative systems must be responsive and accountable. They must function effectively at all levels of government, national, regional and local, and that requires an administrative capacity capable of sustaining the development process within the constraints of what is affordable.

In many countries the infrastructures of successful development are deficient or lacking altogether. Hence, the increasing reliance on structural adjustment programmes, within which civil service reform is a critical element. Yet such programmes will be unavailing if they do not include the establishment of systems

that can be relied upon to supply timely and reliable information in support of decision making, development planning and accountable government.

Information as a Resource

> *Information is a strategic resource.*

Information is a vital resource for any modern organisation. Without information an organisation cannot function effectively; hence the process of planning, controlling and using information in support of its business (a process known as 'information management') is an important activity, critical to the success or failure of that organisation.

> *Information management is the planning, control and exploitation of information resources.*

It is often assumed that information management concerns only information and data created by or stored in computers. That is not true; the most effective information management systems manage all the information available to the organisation, regardless of its source or whether it has been processed electronically or not. Records and archives are major sources of information and it is important that they should be managed alongside databases and publications within a broader information management programme.

> *The theories and practices of information management are discussed in more detail in* The Management of Public Sector Records Programme: Principles and Context.

Records as Evidence

In this context, it is important to restate that the term 'records' includes all the documents that organisations or individuals create or receive in the course of administrative and executive transactions. The records themselves form a part of or provide evidence of such transactions. As evidence, they are subsequently maintained by or on behalf of those responsible for the transactions for their own future use or for the use of their successors or others with a legitimate interest in the records. They provide a corporate memory and lay an audit trail of evidence of the policies and activities of the organisation.

> *Records provide evidence of administrative transactions.*

Archives as Components of the Cultural and Historical Heritage

> *Archives are records selected for permanent preservation.*
>
> *The National Archives is the archival repository for archives of the central government.*

Those records worth preserving for their enduring value are called 'archives'. Within a national context, the National Archives is the permanent home for them, but they will not reach the National Archives if they are not well managed throughout their life. The authenticity and security of the records and of the information they contain must be respected, obsolete records must be destroyed in a controlled and timely fashion and valuable records must be identified and secured for preservation as archives.

When records become archives they do not necessarily cease to have value for short-term political and financial accountability. They continue to preserve an audit trail of past actions and document the collective and individual rights of the citizens. However, the primary reason for their preservation is to serve as evidence for long-term social accountability, that is for their enduring historical and cultural value.

Archives are accordingly recognised as a basic component of each nation's heritage, part of its collective memory, a testament to its history and an embodiment of its national identity. A programme for the proper management of archives, maintaining their integrity, guaranteeing their safety and thereby providing state, society and citizens with a historical perspective, is the inescapable duty of a civilised state.

Activity 2

Give three examples of how archives are or can be used for heritage or cultural purposes in your country.

The Life-cycle Management of Records and Archives

> *The life-cycle concept is an essential principle of records and archives management.*

The effective management of records throughout their life cycle is a key issue in civil service reform. Unorganised or otherwise poorly managed records mean that government does not have ready access to authoritative sources of administrative, financial and legal information to support sound decision making or the delivery of programmes and services. Nor does the government have the means of holding itself accountable for what it has done or upholding the rights of its citizens. At the same time poor use of people, accommodation and time wastes expensive resources.

Furthermore, if records are not well organised during the earlier stages of their life cycle, those of enduring value as archives will not be readily identified and safeguarded.

Closely allied with the life-cycle principle is the concept of the continuum, which suggests that four actions continue or recur throughout the life of a record: identification of records; intellectual control of them; provision of access to them; and physical control of them. According to the continuum principle, the distinction between records management and archives management need not be rigidly maintained.

The life-cycle principle is referred to in various places in this module; it is assumed throughout that the concept of a continuum of care is closely allied with the idea of life-cycle management.

The life-cycle and continuum concepts are explained in The Management of Public Sector Records Programme: Principles and Context.

Activity 3

Reflect back on the information you have learned in the core modules in this programme. In your own words, explain the concepts of the life cycle and the continuum. Give three reasons why the concept that records follow a life cycle and that their care follows a continuum are important to good records and archives management.

Information Technology and Records and Archives

It is often assumed that the advent of information technology (IT), that is the computer and the communications technologies associated with it, has rendered obsolete not only paper records and archives but also the principles and techniques that were developed to manage paper-based materials. This is not so.

In the past the records of actions were primarily paper based; now those actions are being automated, which means that the records of those actions may exist only in electronic form. However, even in the most developed countries this process of automation is far from complete: some commercial activities have been entirely automated, thus leading to the records being created only in electronic form; other

processes cannot yet be fully automated because of issues such as cost, integrity control and legal admissibility, which mean that records continue to be created in paper form alongside the electronic records. Indeed, paper records have continued to proliferate as source documents for and output from computer systems and the effect of introducing IT has been the creation of mixed-media systems rather than the paperless office. Even where records of important decisions are being created in electronic form, they are often managed (if at all) outside the context of the organisation's record-keeping rules and systems.

Moreover, IT is not evenly available throughout the world or within individual countries; many developing countries do not yet have the technical capacity, management infrastructures, in-country hardware and software support facilities or trained personnel to support the wholesale introduction of computers within the public sector. Where computers have been introduced in the past, many were mainframe systems, especially financial and personnel systems, which are now becoming obsolete and cross-generation migration of data from them is creating major problems.

Consequently, paper-based records systems will continue for many years to be an inescapable feature of public sector administration. Hence, there is a continuing need to apply established records and archives management principles and techniques to such records. At the same time those principles and techniques need to be adapted to the management of electronic records in order to avoid information overload and to identify and maintain adequately records of long-term value.

> *The professional issues involved in the management of electronic records are dealt with in more detail in* Managing Electronic Records.

Activity 4

Briefly describe the state of information technology development in your organisation. Are there a great number of computers throughout various departments? Do only selected agencies have automated systems? Has there been a planned implementation of IT, or has it developed on a more ad hoc basis? How does the organisation manage the output of these systems?

STATUS OF RECORDS AND ARCHIVES MANAGEMENT

A survey of the present state of archival development world wide, undertaken for the Inter-regional Conference on Archival Development (Tunis, 1995), compared the level of provision of records and archives services in 1982 and 1992. The survey

found that over the decade there had been an improvement in the quality of records and archives services both in developing and industrialised countries, but that the rate of advance in developing countries, though often greater than in industrialised countries, had started from a much lower base and so the standard of services there still lagged well behind.

With regard to the provision of records and archives services, particularly in countries with limited resources, several areas of particular concern were identified.

- Many countries are operating such services under out-of-date or incomplete legislation or even without any legislative provision at all.

- Many records and archives services are excluded from the processes of managing the records and archives of major branches and agencies of the state.

- Many records and archives services have been given no role in the management of current and semi-current public sector records.

- There is a lack of top management commitment to records and archives work and consequently records and archives services are assigned a low priority.

- There is an absence or inadequacy of care for the records and archives of regional and local government.

- Many national records and archives systems lack the resources to provide the full range of services expected of them.

- There is a lack of skilled and knowledgeable personnel to support modern records and archives programmes.

The Mission of Records and Archives Management

The mission of records and archives systems and services is to

- preserve records and archives in an accessible, intelligible and usable form for as long as they have continuing utility or value

- make information from records and archives available in the right format, to the right people, at the right time.

The way to ensure the continued availability of records and archives of utility or value to government and to its citizens is to ensure that the management of the records and archives development is tackled as a strategic unity, rather than piecemeal.

Aims of a Records and Archives Management System

The aims of a records and archives management system include

- the creation and maintenance of authoritative and reliable records in an accessible, intelligible and usable form for as long as they are required to support the business and accountability requirements of the organisation

- efficiency and economy in the management of records through eliminating duplication of effort, creating and maintaining only those records that are needed, systematising retention and disposal and so on

- improved access to records and archives, thereby enhancing sound decision making, the effective delivery of government programmes and services, the accountability and transparency of government and the protection of citizens' rights

- the controlled, timely and secure destruction of obsolete records

- the identification of archives of enduring historical and cultural value

- the transfer of such archives to an archival institution

- the preservation of those archives

- the arrangement of archives in accordance with archival principles so as to preserve their contextual information

- the description of archives so as to disclose their content to those who search for information from them.

> *Mission statements, aims and objectives are dealt with in more detail in* Strategic Planning for Records and Archives Services.

Activity 5

For each of the aims identified in the list above, write a brief description of how that work is done in your organisation. If steps could be taken to improve processes, write a brief note outlining one or two key recommendations you might make to strengthen the operations and achieve the aims more fully.

AN INTEGRATED RECORDS AND ARCHIVES MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Although a distinction is often made between 'records management' and 'archives administration', the two are in fact aspects of the same process. Indeed a feature of successful records and archives development initiatives has been the establishment of systems that manage records in a continuum from their creation to their ultimate disposal by destruction or by preservation as archives. This involves embracing the concept of the life-cycle management of records and archives through the establishment of clear linkages between the agencies that create the records and the archival institution that safeguards those selected for preservation as archives.
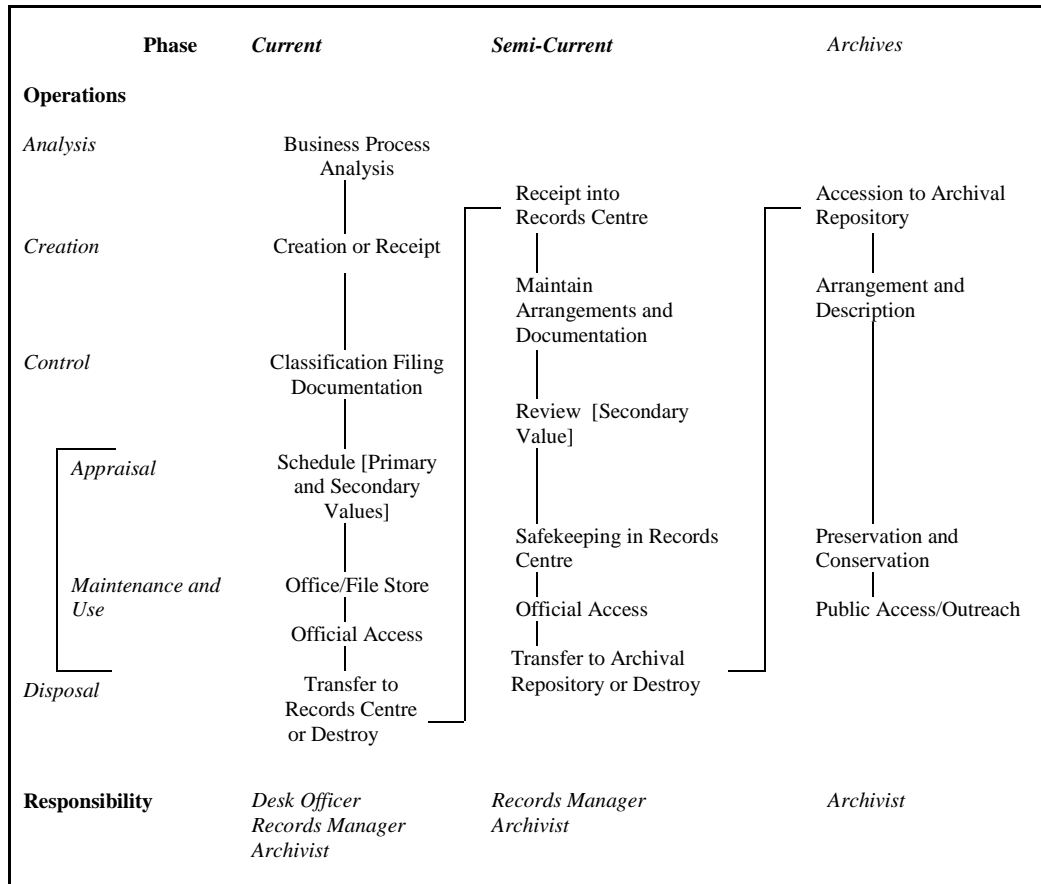
The theories and practices of life-cycle management of records and archives and the concept of the continuum of care are discussed in more detail in Management of Public Sector Records: Principles and Context.

Activity 6

Reflect back on the information you have learned in the core modules in this programme and to the work you did in Activity 1 in this lesson. In your own words, give three reasons why the concept of an integrated programme of records and archives management is important to good records and archives care.

The precise organisational framework of an integrated records and archives management programme will vary from country to country, depending on that country's constitution, legal system and administrative traditions. In some countries, linkage may be achieved through the organisational merger of records management and archives administration functions; in others it may be through the establishment of effective lines of communication and co-ordination between separate institutions, each responsible for records and archives at a particular stage of their life. In some countries, it may be possible to manage all the records and archives of government within a single system. In other countries, the records of the legislative, judicial and executive branches may have to be managed independently, as may those of regional and local government.

Figure 1 is a matrix of roles and responsibilities essential to an adequate records and archives system and this can serve as a high level model for such a system.

Phase	*Current*	*Semi-Current*	*Archives*
Operations			
Analysis	Business Process Analysis		
		Receipt into Records Centre	Accession to Archival Repository
Creation	Creation or Receipt	Maintain Arrangements and Documentation	Arrangement and Description
Control	Classification Filing Documentation	Review [Secondary Value]	
Appraisal	Schedule [Primary and Secondary Values]		
		Safekeeping in Records Centre	Preservation and Conservation
Maintenance and Use	Office/File Store	Official Access	Public Access/Outreach
	Official Access	Transfer to Archival Repository or Destroy	
Disposal	Transfer to Records Centre or Destroy		
Responsibility	*Desk Officer* *Records Manager* *Archivist*	*Records Manager* *Archivist*	*Archivist*

Figure 1: The Continuum Matrix Representation of the Life Cycle of a Record

Establishing an Integrated Records and Archives System

To establish an integrated records and archives management system, it is necessary to do the following.

- Enact and implement comprehensive legislation to regulate the life-cycle management of records and archives, irrespective of medium and format, designating a single authority to oversee the process and assigning to the other authorities involved clear responsibility for their respective actions at each of its stages.

- Develop policies, procedures, systems and structures to ensure the maintenance of an integrated records and archives management programme.

- Prepare long-term strategic plans within the context of the wider strategic planning process of the government and key agencies to determine priorities within that programme.

- Provide and manage adequate resources, including staff, buildings, equipment and funding, to ensure the implementation of those strategic plans and the sustainability of the programme.

- Monitor and evaluate the programme to assess its efficiency and effectiveness ('value for money') and to make any necessary structural readjustments.

These topics are discussed in more detail in the other lessons in this module and in Strategic Planning for Records and Archives Services *and* Managing Resources for Records and Archives Services.

Responsibility for an Integrated Records and Archives System

Establishing an integrated records and archives system will mean major changes to the systems and practices currently operating in a country. At the very least the introduction of new working practices resulting in changes to the way in which current and semi-current records are managed needs careful handling and the support of an appropriate 'sponsor'.

In many countries the National Archives is regarded as primarily a cultural institution, responsible to the minister of culture or his or her equivalent. The thrust of an integrated records and archives management system is to transform the National Archives, centred on archives, into a National Records and Archives Institution with responsibilities for current and semi-current records as well as for archives.

A transformation of this magnitude needs the backing of a sponsor with sufficient power to push through the necessary changes, such as new records and archives

legislation and new organisational and staffing structures, and promote a government-wide change of management attitudes, without which new systems and practices will soon become as inefficient and ineffective as those they have replaced.

The assignment of responsibility for records care is a key issue. Records are crucial to promoting sound administration throughout the civil service and in other public offices. It is essential that those responsible for public records initiatives be given high-level security clearance and maximum authority to act as necessary to protect records. Ideally, responsibility for the national records and archives system should be exercised at the highest level, by the public office taking the central governing role within the country. The office of the president or the prime minister would be the ideal sponsor, but this may be an unachievable goal in some countries. In that event, another senior minister with a strong cross-governmental role may become responsible, such as the minister with responsibility for national development, the civil service, justice or home affairs.

In practice it may not be the minister alone but the senior civil servant within the appropriate ministry who is the key person in driving through records and archives restructuring. However, securing a high-level sponsor does not absolve the director of the National Records and Archives Institution from taking the initiative in promoting the benefits of good records and archives management.

Activity 7

Who is presently responsible for records and archives management in your government or organisation? Are records and archives handled as one unit of activity or managed by two or more separate agencies? In your opinion, who ought to be responsible for records and archives management for your government or organisation? Why?

SUMMARY

This lesson has stressed the importance of information in general and of records and archives in particular in order to

- enhance sound decision making within government

- promote economy and efficiency in the effective delivery of government programmes and services

- ensure the accountability and transparency of government and the protection of citizens' rights.

Managers within the records and archives field should now recognise the contribution that integrated records and archives management systems can make to the effective and accountable use of resources within their national development programmes. Consequently, they should seek to strengthen those development programmes by identifying a sponsor to promote

- the development of policies, procedures, systems and structures to ensure the maintenance of integrated records and archives management systems

- the inclusion within such integrated records and archives management systems of (1) records and archives of regional and local government and (2) electronic records and archives

- the enactment and implementation of comprehensive records and archives legislation and the introduction of appropriate organisational and staffing structures to regulate such systems

- the provision and management of adequate resources, including staff, buildings, equipment and funding, for the development and maintenance of those systems.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What systems need to be responsive and accountable in order to ensure development strategies are successful?

2. Why is information a strategic resource for any modern organisation?

3. What is information management?

4. Why are records considered evidence?

5. What is the life cycle concept of records and archives management?

6. What are archives?

7. Why are archives important to the culture and history of a nation?

8. Give three reasons that information technology is changing the way that records and archives are managed?

9. Name three concerns faced by countries, particularly in the developing world, as they try to provide records and archives services.

10. Describe the two primary purposes of a records and archives system.

11. Name four possible aims of a records and archives management system.

12. What is an integrated records and archives management system?

13. What is the continuum concept?

14. Identify three steps necessary to establishing an integrated records and archives management system.

15. Who should be responsible for records care within a government? Why?

16. Why does the records and archives strategy need to fit into the overall strategic objectives of government?

17. Why is it important to secure a top manager as sponsor?

ACTIVITIES: COMMENTS

Activity 2

This activity will help you examine the many ways in which archives contribute to a society's culture beyond simple government administration and management. Archives are the documentary memory of a society and can and should be used for any purpose members of that society wish.

Activity 3

This activity should help you integrate information you have learned earlier in this programme with important management concepts introduced in this module. It is critical that you be comfortable with the professional issues of records and archives management before embarking on this study of management issues.

Activity 4

The state of information technology development will vary from organisation to organisation and government to government. It is important to have a realistic understanding of the state of development, so that reasonable and achievable actions can be considered. Otherwise, agencies can spend considerable time and resources on new technologies that perhaps do not serve the organisation well because they have not been incorporated in a planned and methodical fashion.

Activity 5

This activity will help you understand the present state of development in your organisation. It is not intended solely to highlight weaknesses, but again it is critical to have a clear and realistic picture of the present situation in an organisation in order to move forward in a planned fashion.

Activity 6

As with Activity 1, this activity should help you integrate information you have learned earlier in this programme with important management concepts introduced in this module.

Activity 7

Again, a clear understanding of the present situation in your government or organisation is critical to determining, even if only as a study exercise, how your organisation might change its structures in order to operate more effectively.

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LESSON 2

RECORDS AND ARCHIVES LEGISLATION

Lesson 2 introduces and explains the components of a framework of national records and archives legislation that will provide a comprehensive code for the management of public sector records throughout their life.

Records and archives legislation is an essential component of the wider legislative base of accountable and effective government. It provides the essential framework that enables a national records and archives service to operate with authority in its dealings with other agencies of the state.

The precise format and language of legislation will be determined by legal draftsmen (such as the Parliamentary Counsel), but it is essential that senior managers in the new National Records and Archives Institution should be able to present a sound professional case for what the legislation should cover.

This lesson should be studied in conjunction with the manual *A Model Records and Archives Law*.

Reference should be made also to the publications listed in Lesson 5.

Activity 8

Before beginning work on this lesson, identify any legislation in your government that directly affects the work of the records or archives service, including records or archives act, document disposal legislation and so on. Obtain copies of this legislation, as you will want to refer to it as you work through this lesson.

COMPONENTS OF LEGISLATION

Records and archives legislation may be composed of both primary and secondary legislation. Primary legislation (such as acts, decrees, ordinances) is enacted by parliament or some other supreme legislative authority. Secondary legislation (such as statutory instruments, rules, regulations) is promulgated, usually by a minister, under powers conferred by the primary legislation. Supporting the legislation will be

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other normative documents, such as national and international standards and procedural guidelines and instructions.

Approaches to Legislation

There are two ways of approaching the framing of national records and archives legislation:

1. detailed prescription in primary legislation

2. a general framework established by primary legislation to which detail is added by secondary legislation and other normative documents.

Prescriptive primary legislation is most appropriate when poorly developed or decayed records and archives services are to be restructured and a life-cycle approach to their management is to be introduced. By establishing detailed practices and procedures for the management of records and archives throughout their life, legislation can give a clear mandate for implementation. On the other hand, it is difficult to make changes to those practices and procedures in the light of changing external circumstances, because such changes require time-consuming amendments to the primary legislation.

Some records and archives legislation establishes only a general framework (like the Public Records Act 1958 of the United Kingdom), leaving the detail to be added in the form of secondary legislation and normative documents. This type of legislation makes revision easy but may appear to lack the authority of the more prescriptive approach, especially in a country where the records and archives system is not well developed and the value of managing records and archives throughout their life is not widely recognised.

In practice, all records and archives legislation will be composed of both primary and secondary texts. It is important point to strike the right balance between the two in the light of the particular circumstances of the country.

The procedures for issuing regulations and other forms of secondary legislation under the primary legislation are normally prescribed in secondary texts. To give these documents maximum impact, regulations may be issued by the president, but it is more normal for regulations to be issued by the minister responsible for public records and archives. Procedures should give a major role to the director of the National Records and Archives Institution and a consultative role to a National Records and Archives Advisory Body, but these procedures must not be so complex and bureaucratic that issuing and changing them becomes difficult. When new primary legislation is being drafted, secondary legislation and normative documents essential for its implementation must be drafted concurrently so that they can be put in place as soon as the primary legislation has been enacted.

Factors Affecting Legislation

The precise form that legislation takes in any individual country will be constrained by a number of factors:

Constitutional: that is both the formal constitution and constitutional conventions, including

- the separation of powers between legislature, executive and judicature

- the respective powers of the head of government and the head of state

- the rules or conventions governing collective cabinet responsibility and the responsibilities of individual ministers

- the rules or conventions governing the relationship between ministers and senior civil servants

- the balance between centralisation and decentralisation and between public and private sectors.

Environmental: that is the general political, economic, social, cultural and administrative context within which the records and archives service will operate.

Legislative: that is not only the forms that legislation can take but also the account that has to be taken of existing legislative provision, not only records and archives legislation but also other legislation that has an impact on records and archives (such as freedom of information, privacy or data protection, official secrets, vital registration).

Professional: that is the general level of records and archives development (such as existing structures and practices, availability of suitable personnel, access to professional education and training).

In the associated manual, *A Model Records and Archives Law*, the approach has been to assume a constitution modelled loosely on the commonwealth norm, a basic level of records and archival development moving towards life-cycle management and a legislative balance that tends towards detailed prescription. As you work through the information in this lesson, you should refer regularly to this associated manual for specific examples of the elements discussed.

CONTENT OF LEGISLATION: PRELIMINARIES

Titles

In the Commonwealth, it is general practice for primary legislation to commence with a long title summarising the effects of the legislation, including the repeal or amendment of any existing legislation. This is sometimes followed by a more detailed preamble setting out the reasons for the new legislation. A short title for citation purposes is included in the text of the legislation.

The title of the legislation and the titles of the bodies it establishes should stress the continuity of care throughout the life of the record. The use of the word 'records' alone (such as National Records Act, National Records Institution, National Records Advisory Board) may be sufficient where existing legislation relates to 'public records' irrespective of the stage within their life (such as in the Public Records Act of the United Kingdom). On the other hand, where there is an established 'national archives' and existing legislation distinguishes between 'records' and 'archives', it may be preferable to use both words (such as National Records and Archives Act, National Records and Archives Institution, National Records and Archives Advisory Board).

Commencement

It is normal to state when the legislation will come into force. This may be a specified date (such as 1 January of the next calendar year) or when specific action has been taken (such as a date appointed by the Minister).

Definition of Terms

If the legislation is to be interpreted correctly, it should define technical terms in accordance with standard international terminology.

> *For records and archives terminology see the* Glossary of Terms *and the sources cited there.*

Records

'Records' should be defined in a way that incorporates all recorded information regardless of form or medium (for example, audio-visual and electronic records are included as well as paper files) created, received and maintained by any institution or individual in the pursuance of its legal obligations or in the transaction of its business. By stressing their evidential nature, records are distinguished from library material or databases, which might be consulted in the process of decision making but which are not records, though information from them might be incorporated into records. One approach is to list the specific types of material that may constitute a record, but this method runs the risk of excluding new forms of record not in the list.

> … 'records' includes not only written records but records conveying information by any other means whatsoever.
>
> *Public Records Act 1958 (UK), s. 10 (1).*

> … 'record' means any medium in or on which information is recorded.
>
> *National Archives of Zimbabwe Act 1985, s. 2.*

> … 'record' means a document (including any written or printed material) or object (including a sound recording, coded storage device, magnetic tape or disc, microform, photograph, film, map, plan or model or a painting or other pictorial or graphic work) that is, or has been, kept by reason of any information or matter that it contains or can be obtained from it or by reason of its connection with any event, person, circumstance or thing.
>
> *Archives Act 1983 (Australia), s. 3 (1).*

The Life Cycle

The three phases of the life-cycle of records -- 'current records', 'semi-current records' and 'archives' -- should be explained.

Archives

'Archives' in the sense of the final stage of the life cycle should be distinguished from the institution responsible for their management ('archival institution') or the building in which they are preserved and made available for consultation ('archival repository').

The exception to the last point is the use of 'National Archives', 'Regional Archives', and so on, as the title of a specific archival repository.

Public Records

There should also be a detailed definition of 'public records' (often placed in a schedule to the legislation) covering the whole of their life cycle and bringing the following unambiguously with the ambit of the legislation:

- all past, present and future agencies or 'public offices' in the executive, judicial and legislative branches of central government and any officer (from the head of state down) of such a public office

> ***Agency*:** A generic title for any public sector institution forming part of the executive, judiciary or legislature, national or local, that creates records and has its own record-keeping system. In legislation the equivalent term may be public office.

- comparable institution and officers within regional and local government

- institutions and officials in the parastatal sector (where appropriate)

- all public records within the meaning of previous archival legislation already in the custody of the national archival institution.

Provision should be made for the future by giving power to add any other body or individual by regulation under the legislation.

Parastatal Bodies

Parastatal bodies come in a wide variety of forms but generally they are of two types:

- nationalised industries, such as the electricity supply industry

- public corporations, such as the state broadcasting corporation or the national airline.

The identification of parastatal bodies may present particular problems in a mixed economy, especially when they are partly or completely privatised. As a general rule so long as fifty-one per cent of the stock of such a body is owned by the government, its records should be public records. Hence it follows that where government ownership of a parastatal body falls below fifty-one per cent, all its records up to that time should be and should remain public records, but any created thereafter will be private records. It may be necessary to write such a specific provision into the legislation.

Other Terms

'Retention and disposal schedule' and 'records centre' are other technical terms that should be defined.

Periods of Time

It is also useful to explain in the definitions the way in which periods of time (such as the 'thirty-year rule') specified in the legislation are to be calculated.

Activity 11

Compare your own legislation with the model legislation and with the information outlined above for the following points and identify for each point whether you feel your legislation could be altered or improved and how:

- titles

- commencement

- definition of terms

- periods of time.

CONTENT OF LEGISLATION: STRUCTURES

Ministerial Responsibility

In many countries, the existing national archival institution is regarded primarily as a cultural institution and is responsible to the minister of culture or his or her equivalent. However, the centrality and significance of records work to sound administration throughout government and the security implications of that work in many sectors make it imperative that ultimate responsibility should rest with a more appropriate sponsor.

> *The issue of selecting the right sponsor for transforming the national records and archives system is discussed in more detail in Lesson 1.*

Hence, it is appropriate for cross-governmental responsibility for public records throughout their life to be assigned specifically to whoever plays the central governing role within the country, such as the president or prime minister. However, this may be an unachievable goal in some countries and another senior minister with a strong cross-governmental role may have to be accepted. In some legislation the designation of the responsible minister is left to the head of state or head of government.

… the Lord Chancellor shall be generally responsible for the execution of this Act and shall supervise the care and preservation of public records.

Public Records Act 1958 (UK), s. 1 (1).

'Minister' means the Minister of Home Affairs or any other Minister to whom the President may from time to time assign the administration of this Act.

National Archives of Zimbabwe Act 1985, s. 2.

'Minister' means such member of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada as is designated by the Governor in Council as the Minister for the purposes of this Act.

National Archives of Canada Act 1987, s. 2.

National Records and Archives Institution

The legislation should establish an institution within the governmental structure with responsibility for records and archives matters and describe its functions, such as

- to contribute to the efficiency, effectiveness and economy of the government by

- ensuring that public offices follow good record-keeping practices

- establishing and implementing procedures for the controlled and timely disposal of public records of no continuing value

- advising on best practices and established standards in record keeping in the public service

- establishing and implementing procedures for the transfer of public records of enduring value for preservation as archives

- to preserve and make available for consultation public records selected for preservation as archives.

For the purpose of this module and the associated *Model Records and Archives Law* the neutral title 'National Records and Archives Institution' is used for this institution, but local practice may prefer a more specific designation, such as 'administration', 'agency', 'authority', 'department' or 'service'. In countries where the UK practice of creating semi-independent 'executive agencies' is followed, it may be appropriate for the National Records and Archives Institution to be such a body.

The Director

The legislation should provide for the appointment of a director of the National Records and Archives Institution in accordance with the general legislation and other rules regulating senior appointments in the civil service. The legislation should establish his or her responsibility for

* implementing general records policy

* the day-to-day management of the Institution

* other matters specified elsewhere in the legislation.

The legislation should also require the publication of an annual report by the director on the work of the Institution.

The title 'director' is used in this lesson and in the associated manuals as a generic term for the head of the National Records and Archives Institution. It does not necessarily indicate the specific grade within the civil service that should be assigned to the post. In countries where the use of director would be taken to indicate a specific grade and that is not intended, either a neutral title (such as 'head') or a title specifying the appropriate grade or status (such as 'director general', 'chief executive') should be used.

Where the title 'national archivist' is well established it may be retained in the interests of continuity, but the widening of the remit of the post should be acknowledged by making the full title 'national archivist and director of the National Records and Archives Institution'.

Records and Archives Staff

It may be desirable to establish a records and archives class (or cadre) within the civil service. Where this is practicable under existing civil service legislation and rules, specific provision in the records and archives legislation will not be necessary. Such a class should have its own scheme of service (to be agreed with the Public Service Commission or its equivalent) and responsibility for its management should be assigned to the director (in consultation with other appropriate bodies and officials). The centrality of records work makes it essential that the class should incorporate not only the staff of the headquarters of the National Records and Archives Institution and the archival facility itself but also records staff in agencies. Establishing such a class is a prime component of a uniform system of care for records throughout their life.

> *More information about schemes of service is given in Lesson 4.*

Local Government Records and Archives

Where appropriate, the provisions of the legislation should be extended to the records of regions and districts (or their equivalents) by extending the responsibilities for

public records of heads of national public offices to heads of local public offices and by establishing a structure of branch offices for the National Records and Archives Institution, including the provision of local records centres and archival repositories.

In a federal or heavily decentralised country this may not be possible, but there may be a provision in national legislation for co-operation between national and local government records and archives institutions, including

- the provision, on request, of services by the National Records and Archives Institution to local government

- the deposit of records and archives created in local offices of national institutions in records centres or archival repositories of local government authorities.

Records and Archives Advisory Body

A National Records and Archives Advisory Body (board, council, committee and so on, as appropriate) should be set up and its membership and powers defined. It should advise the minister generally on policies for the management of public records and archives and support the director of the National Records and Archives Institution. Other specific functions may be assigned to it in the legislation. Such an advisory body can also be influential in furthering the cause of public records and archives, but its role should be clearly advisory and not executive.

The number of members of the advisory body should be kept small and individuals should be selected on grounds of their personal suitability and interest. However, to give it the necessary prestige it may be necessary to specify in the legislation that certain influential officials (such as the heads of the ministries responsible for the civil service, finance, justice and possibly local government) or their deputies should be members ex officio. The director should be an ex officio member. Provision should be made for a secretariat for the advisory body (normally to be provided by the Institution) and for the remuneration of its members.

Activity 12

Compare your own legislation with the model legislation and with the information outlined above for the following points and identify for each point whether you feel your legislation could be altered or improved and how:

- ministerial responsibility

- National Records and Archives Institution

- the director

- records and archives staff

- local government records and archives

- records and archives advisory body.

CONTENT OF LEGISLATION: OPERATIONAL

Responsibility for Records and Archives

The legislation should set out the respective responsibilities of the heads of public offices and of the director of the National Records and Archives Institution for the management of public records and archives at each stage of their life (that is, current records, semi-current records and archives). This part of the legislation should establish the framework within which improvements in records work in public offices would be effected and is, therefore, crucial to the success of the whole records and archives reform initiative.

Of course, it is not anticipated that the heads of public offices will themselves be directly involved in the day-to-day management of the records of their agencies. However, one aspect of their overall responsibility for those records should be the appointment of an agency records manager. This will normally be required of them by a guidance note from the minister responsible for public records and archives rather than by the primary legislation itself.

Current Records

> *Current records*: Records regularly used for the conduct of the current business of an organisation or individual. Also known as active records. Current records will normally be maintained in or near their place of origin or in a registry or records office.

Heads of Public Offices

Primary responsibility for current records and for the establishment and maintenance of good record-keeping practices should rest with the head of each public office. This would involve

- the creation and management of current records within appropriate filing systems

- the implementation of general retention and disposal schedules and the drafting and implementation of retention and disposal schedules relating to records specific to that public office

- the transfer of semi-current records into a records centre (subject to a mechanism for the formal authorisation of deferment of transfer of highly sensitive records).

The Director

At this stage the director would be responsible for

- overseeing records work within public offices, with powers of inspection, and in particular providing professional assistance, advice and guidance on the establishment and management of filing systems

- establishing and ensuring compliance with standards for the management of public records

- advising the heads of public offices on the number and gradings of posts in the records class and making appropriate postings (if not otherwise provided for by a scheme of service under civil service legislation)

- arranging the necessary training of members of the class

- drawing up general retention and disposal schedules and agreeing retention and disposal schedules relating to records specific to each public office

- ensuring that the provisions of retention and disposal schedules are implemented

- authorising the disposal of public records other than as provided for by retention and disposal schedules.

Retention and Disposal Schedules

> *Disposal schedule:* The control document recording appraisal decisions and prescribing disposal action. Also known as disposal list, disposition schedule, records schedule, retention schedule, retention and disposal (or disposition) schedule or transfer schedule.

The mechanism for the drawing up of retention and disposal schedules should involve agreement with the heads of the public offices concerned and with other senior officers of the government best qualified to advise on the continuing administrative, financial and legal value of the records and consultation with the advisory body. Schedules should be issued in such a way as to confer the maximum authority on them. This will normally be done by the minister responsible for public records (hence a preference for the president or prime minister being the responsible person), but procedures should not be so rigid and bureaucratic that the issue or amendment of schedules is unacceptably delayed.

Semi-current Records

> ***Semi-current records:*** Records required only infrequently in the conduct of current business. Also known as semi-active records. Semi-current records will normally be maintained in a records centre or other off-site intermediate storage pending their ultimate disposal.

If a records centre or records centres do not already exist in a country, they should be established under the legislation and such records centres. Any that may already exist should be managed by the National Records and Archives Institution created by that same legislation. Within such a system the primary responsibility for public records should pass to the director once they have become semi-current and he or she has accepted custody of those that have been scheduled for further retention within a records centre.

> ***Records centre:*** A building or part of a building designed or adapted for the low-cost storage, maintenance and communication of semi-current records pending their ultimate disposal.

The Director

In particular, the director should

- implement retention and disposal schedules in respect of records in the records centres

- appraise and dispose appropriately of semi-current records that are in his or her custody and are not covered by retention and disposal schedules

- arrange the transfer of records of permanent value to the National Archives or another archival repository or place of deposit not later than a specified period from their creation, in order to give the National Archives time to arrange and describe them before the expiry of the period after which the public has the right of access to public archives (such as twenty years when the public access period is thirty years)

- return semi-current records temporarily from his or her custody to the public office that created them for the purposes of current administration, subject to safeguards to maintain the integrity of such records while out of archival custody.

Heads of Public Offices

Heads of public offices would continue to be responsible for co-operation with the director in the management of semi-current records and in particular for

- approving access by third parties to semi-current records in the records centres

- maintaining semi-current records whose transfer has been deferred in conditions comparable to those provided by the director in the records centres

- implementing retention and disposal schedules relating to such semi-current records, disposing of those of no further value and transferring records of permanent value to the National Archives or to another archival repository not later than a specified period (such as twenty years) from their creation (subject to a formal mechanism for the further deferment of transfer for a specified period of records of continuing sensitivity).

Archives

> ***Archives*:** Records, usually but not necessarily non-current records, of enduring value selected for permanent preservation. Archives will normally be preserved in an archival repository.

The director should be responsible for safeguarding and providing access to all public records selected for permanent preservation other than any whose transfer may have been formally deferred under the provisions of the legislation or that are held in another place of deposit appointed under it. The director's duties fall under two main headings: those that are mandatory and those that are permissive.

Mandatory Duties of the Director

The mandatory duties are to

- take charge of the National Archives and to provide there and in other archival repositories under his or her control suitable conditions for the preservation of the archives

- arrange and describe those archives so as to facilitate access to them

- arrange for reasonable facilities to be available to the public for inspecting and obtaining copies of archives in the National Archives and other archival repositories under his or her control (insofar as such records are open to public inspection).

Permissive Duties of the Director

The permissive duties include all such things as appear necessary or expedient for maintaining the utility of the National Archives and other archival repositories under his or her control. Such duties may include

- the issue of rules to be observed by those wishing to consult archives in the National Archives and other archival repositories under his or her control

- the exhibition of archives and their loan for exhibition elsewhere subject to conditions that he or she may specify (except that loans outside the country should require the consent of the minister responsible for public records)

- the preparation and sale of publications

- the disposal of archives in the National Archives or any other archival repository under his or her control that are not of permanent value (subject to the agreement of the head of the public office in which they were created and of the minister

- the acceptance of non-public records and archives for safekeeping and the acquisition of non-public records and archives by purchase, gift, bequest or deposit.

The director should also be permitted to enter into arrangements with other institutions (such as National Museum or National Library) for the joint management of conservation and restoration, reprographic or other technical facilities.

Activity 13

Compare your own legislation with the model legislation and with the information outlined above for the following areas of responsibility and identify for each area whether you feel your legislation could be altered or improved and how:

- responsibility for current records

- responsibility for retention and disposal schedules

- responsibility for semi-current records

- responsibility for archives.

CONTENT OF LEGISLATION: MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

Other Places of Deposit for Public Records and Archives

Where appropriate, the legislation should provide for the appointment of places of deposit outside the control of the director of the National Records and Archives Institution, subject to certain conditions and to inspection by the director. This would be intended to be applied primarily to

- the parastatal sector (such as nationalised industries in respect of their own commercial records or the state broadcasting corporation in respect of its audiovisual archives)

or to

- records and archives created in local offices of national institutions deposited in archival repositories of local government authorities.

It should not be used to permit public offices within central government to operate their own independent archival repositories.

Access to Public Records

The access provisions of records and archives legislation should be compatible with any freedom of information or privacy legislation and vice versa. I t is particularly important that there should be legislative provision to ensure that where access to records and archives is restricted by freedom of information and privacy legislation, that restriction is not permanent and will lifted in due course once any sensitivity has evaporated.

In the same way, the security classification of records and archives under official secrets legislation should not be a bar to their management in conformity with records and archives legislation or to their eventual declassification and release into the public domain.

A thirty-year rule for public access to archives in the National Archives (the international norm) is assumed in this lesson and in the associated manual. This would continue the existing provision in most Commonwealth countries. However, there is no reason why a country should not reduce the period to twenty years or even less if it were felt to be appropriate.

Public records to which members of the public had access before transfer to the National Archives or to a place of deposit should continue to be open to public inspection irrespective of their age.

Provision should be made for a closed period longer or shorter than thirty years to be prescribed by regulation under the legislation. However, extended closure or the retention in public offices of records over thirty years old should be limited to specified categories of records, such as

- those relating to national security, the maintenance of public order or safeguarding the revenue

- those containing third-party information received in confidence or otherwise relating to the private affairs of living individuals.

Freedom of Information Legislation

Freedom of information (or access to information) legislation is being introduced in more and more countries as part of the general movement towards greater

accountability and transparency on the part of the state in relation to its citizens. It usually applies only to the public sector, sometimes including parastatal organisations.

Such legislation opens up public records to public scrutiny irrespective of their age, though there are usually exceptions for certain categories of records. These exceptions may be wider than those appropriate when records would otherwise be released under a thirty-year rule in records and archives legislation (that is, those relating to national security, the maintenance of public order or safeguarding the revenue).

Freedom of information legislation usually includes provisions to enforce access within a specified period and to permit appeals against the denial of access. Public offices may be entitled to charge a reasonable fee for access.

Privacy Legislation

The mirror image of freedom of information legislation is privacy legislation, which protects information held by organisations about the private affairs of individual citizens. Sometimes it takes the more limited form of data protection legislation, protecting such personal information only when it is held in computer systems. Unlike freedom of information legislation, privacy legislation usually applies to the private as well as the public sector.

Privacy legislation prohibits the disclosure to third parties of personal information contained in records and provides for the subjects of such information to have access to it to check its accuracy and, if necessary, to correct it. It may also enforce the destruction of the records concerned once their original purpose has been fulfilled. Protection may be extended only to personal information relating to living individuals, but this is not always the case.

Declassification

Sometimes freedom of information legislation supersedes records classification systems, but where this is not so, records and archives legislation should provide appropriate control measures to permit the inspection by the director and his or her staff of records systems for managing confidential and secret records. It is essential that confidential and secret records should not be regarded as falling outside the national records and archives system, though safeguards should be built in to prevent their premature disclosure.

Procedures for declassifying records that have ceased to be sensitive are likely to be specified in official secrets legislation or regulations made under it. However, if no such procedures are prescribed or if the prescribed procedures are unworkable, the records and archives legislation should make appropriate provision. The procedures should provide for the continued need for any confidential or secret marking to be considered shortly before a record becomes thirty years old. Downgrading and transfer to the National Archives for public inspection should then be the norm. Records for which extended closure or retention have been prescribed should be reassessed at regular intervals with a view to declassifying them and opening them to public inspection as soon as possible.

Legal Validity

The issues of legal validity and admissibility of records will normally be covered by rules of evidence under separate legislation. Such rules of evidence should include provision for microfilms and electronic records to be legally admissible, subject to appropriate safeguards against falsification. The records and archives legislation should maintain the legal validity of records transferred to the National Archives and make certified copies of records legally admissible in place of the originals in order to discourage requests to produce original records in court.

Copyright

If there are no equivalent provisions in existing copyright legislation, the records and archives legislation should prescribe special arrangements in respect of copyright in archives in the National Archives. These should permit the director to make records available for inspection and to provide copies of them without breach of any private copyrights that may subsist in them. There should also be arrangements in the legislation to affirm the requirement to obtain the director's consent before publishing facsimiles, transcripts or translations of public records in which copyright belongs to the state.

Statutory Deposit

Where appropriate, it may be necessary to restate the obligation to make certain statutory deposits of published material into the National Archives. In some countries, the National Archives is also the legal deposit library. This is not strictly a records and archives function but if there is no more appropriate body to take it on, appropriate provision for its continuance should be inserted in the records and archives legislation.

Private Records and Archives

If there is no existing legislation that prohibits or regulates the export of materials constituting the national cultural heritage, or if such legislation does not extend to the regulation of the export of private records and archives and other historical documents, appropriate provision for their protection should be made in the records and archives legislation. This could also include procedures for the pre-emption of private records and archives by the state and the establishment of a national register of private records and archives.

Finance

The legislation should establish the financial rules under which the National Records and Archives Institution will operate. The precise content and terminology will vary in accordance with the rules and conventions operating within each country, but the objective should be to give the institution its own budget or at least a discrete subhead within the parent ministry's budget.

Procedures should be prescribed for the fixing of fees for the provision of services (such as the supply of photocopies) by the Institution.

Penalties

It may be desirable to specify penalties for

- the unauthorised removal or destruction or wilful mutilation of public records and archives

- denial of access to public records to an officer duly authorised by the director

- the illegal export of historical documents.

Appropriate legal processes for the recovery of strayed public records and archives may also be specified.

Transitional Provisions

It will be necessary to introduce certain transitional provisions to ensure legal and administrative continuity between the existing and the new records and archives systems.

Repeals and Amendments

The new legislation should repeal existing archival legislation and amend other relevant legislation.

Activity 14

Compare your own legislation with the model legislation and with the information outlined above for the following areas of responsibility:

- other places of deposit for public records and archives

- access to public records

- legal validity

- copyright

- statutory deposit

- private records and archives

- finance

- penalties

- transitional provisions

- repeals and amendments.

For each area, identify whether you feel your legislation could be altered or improved and how.

Activity 15

Summarise the respective responsibilities of creating agencies (in the persons of heads of public offices) and the National Records and Archives Institution (in the person of its director) for the management of current and semi-current records.

Activity 16

Summarise the responsibilities of the National Records and Archives Institution (in the person of its director) for the management of archives, distinguishing mandatory duties from those that are only permissive.

SUMMARY

Lesson 2 has discussed the purpose and nature of records and archives legislation. It has identified the constitutional, environmental, legislative and professional factors that bear on the nature of the legislation of an individual country and particularly on the balance between primary legislation that is prescriptive and detailed and that which provides only a general framework within which the detail is established by secondary legislation and other normative documents.

It has examined the following components of records and archives legislation:

- titles

- definitions

- ministerial responsibility

- records and archives administration

- an advisory body

- relative responsibilities of heads of agencies and the head of the National Records and Archives Institution for current and semi-current records

- the duties of the head of the National Records and Archives Institution in respect of archives

- access

- legal validity

- copyright

- statutory deposit

- private archives

- financial arrangements

- penalties.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Explain the difference between primary and secondary legislation.

2. Explain two ways to approach the framing of national records and archives legislation.

3. Describe four factors that can affect the development of legislation in any country.

4. Briefly describe the purpose of each of the following elements of archival legislation:

   - titles
   - definitions
   - ministerial responsibility
   - records and archives administration
   - an advisory body
   - relative responsibilities of heads of agencies and the head of the National Records and Archives Institution for current and semi-current records
   - the duties of the head of the National Records and Archives Institution in respect of archives
   - access
   - legal validity
   - copyright
   - statutory deposit
   - private archives
   - financial arrangements
   - penalties.

5. Name at least three terms related to archival management that should be clearly defined in legislation and indicate why definitions are important.

6. Give two reasons why the highest official possible in the government should be responsible for the overall management of the National Records and Archives Institution.

7. Briefly describe the role of the director of the National Records and Archives Institution.

8. Why should archival legislation incorporate care of local government records and archives?

9. Explain the role of a records and archives advisory body.

10. Why should archival legislation address all phases of the record's life cycle?

11. What provisions should be included in archival legislation for the deposit of records and archives outside of the National Records and Archives Institution?

12. What provisions need to be addressed in legislation to ensure public access to archival materials?

13. Explain the concept of freedom of information legislation.

14. Explain the concept of privacy legislation.

15. Explain the concept of declassification.

16. Explain the concept of legal validity and indicate why it is important when managing records and archives.

17. What provisions should be included in archival legislation to address copyright issues?

18. What is the concept of statutory deposit?

19. Why should a national records and archives legislation include provisions for the protection of private records and archives?

20. What penalties could be included in archival legislation?

ACTIVITIES: COMMENTS

Activity 8

In subsequent activities in this lesson, you will be asked to refer to your existing legislation and compare it with the model legislation provided with this module. This activity helps you to compile all relevant legislation so that it is easily available for reference.

When reviewing your legislation, it is important to remember that no legislation is perfect and that revisions and amendments are an essential part of the legislative process. It is valuable to look at the positive features of any legislation and not just dwell on areas requiring strengthening. Once you have completed this module, you should look again at your national records and archives legislation and compare it again with the *Model Records and Archives Law* included as a manual in this study programme. Did you identify all the areas where improvement could be made?

Activity 9

You should have identified the constitutional, environmental, legislative and professional factors that apply in your country. If poorly developed or decayed records and archives services are to be re-structured in an environment where the requirements of good record-keeping are not well understood, prescriptive primary legislation is most appropriate. Legislation that provides only a general framework, leaving the detail to secondary legislation and other normative documents would be appropriate only where there is already a well established tradition of good record-keeping.

Activity 10

You should have included records created or received in or by the following:

- the offices of the president and of the cabinet

- all ministries, departments, commissions, committees, offices and other bodies under the government of your country and all ministers and other officers and employees thereof

- all posts representing your government outside the country and all officers serving in such posts

- all formations and units of your armed forces and all officers of such formations or units

- Parliament and its committees and officers

- the high court and other courts and tribunals with jurisdiction within your country and all judges, magistrates and other officers of such courts and tribunals

- regional, district or municipal authorities and their officers

- public corporations and other parastatal organisations and their officials and employees

- companies in which the government or a public corporation or a parastatal organisation owns fifty per cent or more of the issued share capital and their officials and employees.

You should also have included all public archives within the meaning of existing national records and archives legislation already in the custody of the National Archives, including its regional offices.

Activities 11-14

These activities are intended to help you compare the reality of your own situation with the models and recommendations provided in this module. You will want to compare your findings with the information provided in this lesson so see where changes might be needed and why.

Activity 15

Heads of public offices should be responsible for

- establishing and maintaining good records keeping practices

- creating and managing current records within appropriate filing systems

- drafting agency retention and disposal schedules and implementing general and agency retention and disposal schedules

- transferring semi-current records into records centres

- approving access to semi-current records in records centres

- maintaining semi-current records whose transfer has been deferred in conditions comparable to those in records centres

- transferring records of permanent value to the National Archives not later than a specified period (such as thirty years) from their creation.

The director should be responsible for

- overseeing records work within public offices

- establishing and ensuring compliance with standards for the management of public records

- advising heads of public offices on staffing matters in respect of officers employed in records work (if not otherwise provided for by a scheme of service under civil service legislation)

- arranging the necessary training of members of the class

- drawing up general retention and disposal schedules and agreeing agency retention and disposal schedules

- ensuring that retention and disposal schedules are implemented

- authorising the disposal of public records other than as provided for by retention and disposal schedules

- accepting custody of semi-current records scheduled for further retention within records centres

- implementing retention and disposal schedules in respect of records in records centres

- appraising and disposing appropriately of semi-current records in his or her custody that are not covered by retention and disposal schedules

- arranging the transfer of records of permanent value from records centres to the National Archives not later than a specified period (such as thirty years) from their creation

- returning semi-current records temporarily from records centres to office of origin for the purposes of current administration.

Activity 16

The director's mandatory duties are

- safeguarding and providing access to all public records selected for permanent preservation as archives

- providing suitable storage conditions for the preservation of the archives

- ensuring that the archives are properly arranged and described

- providing facilities for members of the public to inspect and obtain copies of archives.

The director's permissive duties are

- issuing rules for the consultation of archives

- mounting exhibitions of archives and lending them for exhibition elsewhere

- preparing and selling publications

- disposing of archives that are not of permanent value

- accepting non-public records for safekeeping and the acquiring non-public records by purchase, gift, bequest or deposit

- entering into arrangements with other institutions (such as National Museum, National Library) for the joint management of technical facilities

- doing anything else that maintains the utility of the National Archives and other archival repositories under his or her control.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES

Lesson 3 introduces and explains the organisational framework necessary to implement the life-cycle concept of records and archives management and establish a continuum of records care. The changes brought about by the new records and archives legislation to the management of current records, semi-current records and archives, including the creation of a National Records and Archives Institution within government (see Lesson 2) and the introduction of a records class to manage the records (see Lesson 4), must be supported by an appropriate sponsor and underpinned by an effective organisational framework.

The final say in what organisational framework is established to deliver effective records and archives services is likely to rest with some other authority (such as the Public Service Commission), but it is essential that senior managers in the National Records and Archives Institution should be able to present a sound professional view of what that organisational framework should be.

The lesson takes a 'best practice' approach to the specific issue of establishing an organisation to implement and manage a records and archives system and includes illustrative structure charts.

> *For more on this topic, see also* Strategic Planning for Records and Archives Services.

As highlighted above, the introduction of a life-cycle approach to records and archives management affects each stage of the life of a record and means that fundamental changes need to be made to the way records are managed across government. This necessitates

- the creation of a headquarters office within the National Records and Archives Institution to take the central lead in the records and archives management process

- changes to the management structure and organisational arrangements in agencies and (where relevant) regions.

> *Agency***:** A generic title for any public sector institution forming part of the executive, judiciary or legislature, national or local, that creates records and has its own record-keeping system. In legislation the equivalent term may be public office.

> *In Lesson 2 and the associated manual the equivalent term for agency is 'public office'.*

This lesson will cover

- the position of the National Records and Archives Institution within government

- an organisational structure for the headquarters office of the National Records and Archives Institution and its components

- organisational structures for the management of current records in agencies.

Activity 17

Before proceeding further with this lesson, define in your own words the concept of organisational structures. What are they and why might they be important to improving records and archives services?

WHY IS AN ORGANISATIONAL FRAMEWORK IMPORTANT?

> Organisational structure is an indispensable means; the wrong structure
> will seriously impair business performance and may even destroy it.
>
> Drucker, Peter, *The Practice of Management*

In the context of the life-cycle approach to records and archives management, the message of the above quotation is clear. The passing of new records legislation, improvements made to systems, change made to procedures and the creation of a records class are all liable to be ineffective, or at worst unworkable, if an appropriate organisational framework is not in place. For example, if a social committee were organising a musical concert it would ensure that each of the various aspects, such as musicians, concert hall, tickets and publicity, were arranged efficiently and effectively. Otherwise the best musicians could be employed to play in front of only twenty people or the concert hall could be booked for the wrong night! The appropriate organisational framework is therefore essential to ensure that all the various factors that make up an organisation are working together towards the same vision and aims.

The term 'organisational framework' refers to both organisational structure and organisational arrangements. Structure covers the way in which work and staff are matched and physically arranged to deliver the aims and objectives of the organisation in the most efficient and cost-effective way. Organisational arrangements cover the key 'enabling' elements allowing the different parts of the structure to relate and interact to ensure a whole, rather than piecemeal, approach.

POSITION OF THE NATIONAL RECORDS AND ARCHIVES INSTITUTION WITHIN GOVERNMENT

The organisational framework discussed in this lesson needs to be considered within the wider context of government. In many countries the National Archives is regarded as primarily a cultural institution, but the thrust of the life-cycle approach to records and archives management is to transform the National Archives, centred on archives alone, into the National Records and Archives Institution protecting and preserving the nation's corporate memory, for the benefit of both the government and its citizens, in the present and in the future, by assuming responsibility (under the new records and archives legislation described in Lesson 2) for current and semi-current records as well as for archives. This needs the backing of an appropriate sponsor with sufficient power to push through necessary changes.

Hence, responsibility for the National Records and Archives Institution should be exercised by a minister with a central governing role within the country. Ideally this might be the president or the prime minister, but if that is not feasible, some other senior minister with cross-governmental authority should be nominated.

The importance of an appropriate sponsor is discussed in more detail in Lesson 1.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE NATIONAL RECORDS AND ARCHIVES INSTITUTION

The organisational structure can be developed and implemented from first principles, matching the needs of the country concerned with the relevant arrangements in the *Model Records and Archives Law* that accompanies this study programme. The likelihood is, however, that an organisational structure will instead be based on existing agency registries or records offices and an existing National Archives, expanded to support a national records and archives system. Whether there is a need in these circumstances for major restructuring will depend on the extent of changes to be made to the current organisation in the light of new legislation and the move to the life-cycle approach to records and archives management. One option is for a staged implementation (that is, in a series of planned changes) moving from a National Archives to a National Records and Archives Institution.

The difficulties and problems that may be faced should not be underestimated. These challenges can be summarised as follows:

- fear of change

- continued influence of other agencies or internal units with records management or archival interests (such as management services)

- agencies and regions fearing a loss of control of their records

- National Archives staff feeling a loss of identity as the broader approach of records and archives management is established

- insufficient budgetary provision

- other resource problems within the National Archives and agency records offices (staff, accommodation, equipment, materials).

> *Ways in which these areas of potential difficulty may be tackled are considered in* Strategic Planning for Records and Archives Services *and* Managing Resources for Records and Archives Services.

Managers must be clear of what they want to achieve (aims and objectives), how they are going to achieve it within the constraints of wider government priorities (strategic planning and management of change) and what they need (resources). The problem areas, of which there will be many, must then be identified and addressed at the earliest possible stage. A positive (proactive), rather than negative (re-active), approach is the essential ingredient to organisational restructuring.

Activity 18

Identify three problems or challenges you think might be encountered in your government or organisation during any organisational restructuring. For each challenge, suggest two actions that could be taken to reduce the chance of conflict and promote a positive approach to the process.

Headquarters

It is important that the National Records and Archives Institution should have in place a professional head (director) and an effective top management team, supported by an appropriate headquarters structure, to provide

- strategic direction in establishing policies, standards and programmes for the implementation and maintenance of the life-cycle approach to records and archives management accross government

- positive support to records and archives staff in the National Records and Archives Institution and in agencies through the professional management of the records class.

It would be possible to restructure records offices in agencies and implement changes to semi-current records in the records centre or archives in the National Archives without having in place a headquarters structure, but the dangers of such a piecemeal approach are a lack of strategic planning and cohesion, duplication of effort and rising costs.

Since the aim is to develop a life-cycle approach to the management of records that draws together the way in which records and archives are managed within agencies and regions, records centres and the National Archives, it is much better to develop the Headquarters Office of the National Records and Archives Institution into a strong organisation capable of providing a firm lead in the restructuring process.

Activity 19

Before reading further, briefly describe the present organisation of the Headquarters office of your archival institution. Can you suggest three changes that could be made to improve the organisation of the headquarters?

The organisation of the Headquarters Office should mirror the broad functions of the National Records and Archives Institution with separate divisions responsible for current records, semi-current records and archives; there should also be a separate division to provide support functions on behalf of the Institution and the records class generally. However, once a records centre has been established, there may not be a justification for a separate semi-current records division and the function might be conveniently placed with the division responsible for archives, especially if the records centre is located with the archival repository.

> **Division:** An upper level administrative unit of an agency. In practice the appropriate designation may be department or directorate.

The director and the heads of these divisions will form the top management team, providing stratetgic direction to records and archives work throughout the public sector.

This organisational approach will

- reflect in the structure and titles the life-cycle approach to records and archives management

- retain flexibility within the organisation to allow for changing roles and expansion or contraction within any of the three main areas

- allow for strong control to be exerted both within the headquarters office and outside (such as in areas such as records office restructuring)

- provide a clear definition of roles and lines of responsibility and accountability

- provide clear areas of work activity.

When linked to an appropriate scheme of service (see Lesson 4), this approach will also provide clear grading levels to enable staff to move within the elements of the records and archives system in the interests of career progression.

National Records and Archives Institution

<u>**Director**</u>

↙	↓	↘
Current Records Division	**General Services Division**	**Archives Division**
DeputyDirector	*Assistant Director*	*Deputy Director*
↓	↓	↓
responsibility for current records	responsibility for support services	responsibility for semi-current records and archives
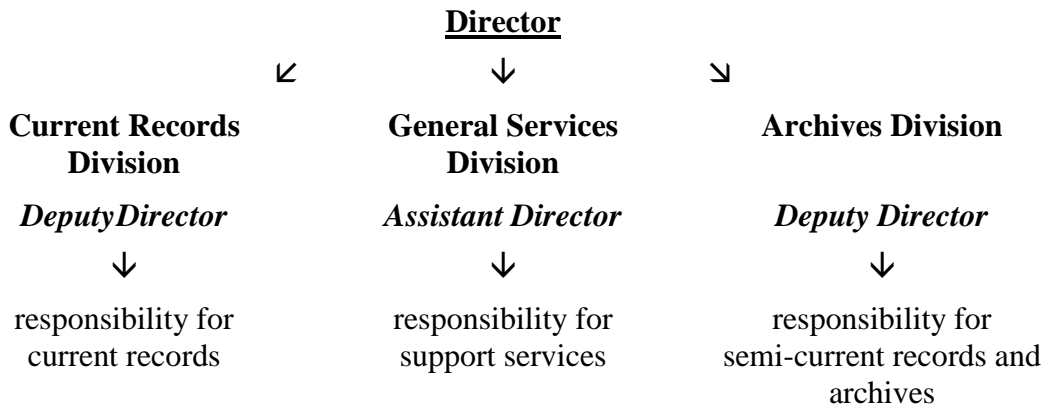
Figure 2: Office of the National Records and Archives Institution - Top Management Structure

A top management structure for the headquarters office is shown in Figure 2. Their organisation has been split into two operational divisions -- current records and archives -- and a general services division. The two operational divisions correspond to the two broad functions of the National Records and Archives Institution: managing current records and managing archives (managing semi-current records is included in the latter on the assumption that the records centre is physically located with the archival repository).

There is nothing sacred about the titles assigned in this structure. The titles can and should change to reflect local needs and changing circumstances. What is important is to ensure that titles reflect the life-cycle approach to records and archives management and provide a clear indication of the respective roles. Previous titles, if now irrelevant, or unclear titles only serve to confuse staff and the public and ultimately send the wrong message about records and archives management.

Regions

> *Region:* The highest level of local government. In practice the appropriate designation may be state, province, district or some other equivalent term.

The organisational structure should also cover the regions, establishing there a network of branch offices of the National Records and Archives Institution, including the provision, where appropriate, of local records centres and archival repositories.

The implementation of record management systems in the regions needs to be highlighted. The development of the headquarters office and restructuring of agency records offices can easily be taken forward at the expense of the regional infrastructure. The organisational arrangements and structure must pay particular attention to ensuring that the regions are not forgotten and that they form part of the development process. A key part of that process will be the replication of the headquarters office structure (at an appropriate lower level) in the regions.

It is important that this regional structure is supported by the headquarters office. Organisationally, this can be handled in various ways. Placing the function in a separate headquarters unit could reflect a particular initiative or push for the regions. On the other hand, this approach may lead to an overlap of operational responsibilities within headquarters. Initially it may be best to establish there of a regional task force, charged with the planning and implementation of a programme for developing a regional structure. But once that structure is fully established, it may be better for each headquarters division to liaise with its equivalents in the regions and thereby provide the link between them and the headquarters office rather than establish a permanent regional division.

Whatever approach to controlling records and archives management work in the regions is adopted, it is vital for

- effective communication systems to be established to ensure that information is be passed from headquarters office to the regions and vice-versa

- early warning to be given of policy changes or problem areas

- strategic planning to take account of both central and regional needs

- effective career and personnel planning to be extended to the regions

- specific recognition to be given to regional needs and problems.

The best way of doing this is to ensure that senior headquarters and regional officers work together within effective consultation and decision-making processes.

Activity 20

Briefly describe the present organisation of the regional offices, if there are any, in relation to your archival institution. Can you suggest three changes that could be made to improve the organisation of the regions? If there are no regional offices, can you explain why not? Should there be? How could they be established?

Current Records

The division responsible for current records will have to manage a large number of the fundamental changes involved in the move towards a life-cycle approach to records and archives management. The effective management of current records across agencies and their proper appraisal and flow into a records centre as semi-current records will be key issues for the division to tackle and maintain.

It will operate within a framework established by

- new records and archives legislation, setting out the respective responsibilities of the National Records and Archives Institution and the heads of agencies and other public bodies for the management of current records (the first stage of their life) (see Lesson 2)

- a records class providing a professional body of staff able to undertake the work (see Lesson 4).

For the purposes of this lesson it is sufficient to highlight a number of major changes that will have to take place if records offices are to be restructured (or where necessary created) to provide a cost-effective service to the agencies they serve. These changes include

- the setting of agency-wide policies and standards for the effective management of each agency's records

- a review of the number of records offices required within each agency

- the development of effective organisational arrangements within records offices

- the determination of appropriate resource levels for each records office

- the identification of security needs and requirements

- the creation of appropriate filing systems

- the establishment and implementation of retention and disposal schedules, especially in areas of work particularly liable to be considered confidential or secret, such as defence, police, foreign affairs

- the establishment of mechanisms for transferring semi-current records into a records centre.

> *The professional aspects of restructuring and decongesting records offices are discussed in more detail in* Organising and Controlling Current Records *and* Building Records Appraisal Systems.

The organisational framework must be able to deliver the restructuring process and then maintain it. To deliver results within a specific time, it needs to mix its various roles:

- inspirational: promoting the change process

- operational: direct involvement in decongestion and restructuring

- consultative: liaison with top management in agencies

- management: professional guidance and advice to staff in the records class

- instructional: training of staff in the records class

- inspectorial: records office inspection.

It must also cope with the pace at which these various roles will develop, interact and merge depending upon progress towards the implementation of the life-cycle approach within individual agencies. The position within the regions will pose particular problems and must be handled as part of the overall process of developing record management systems.
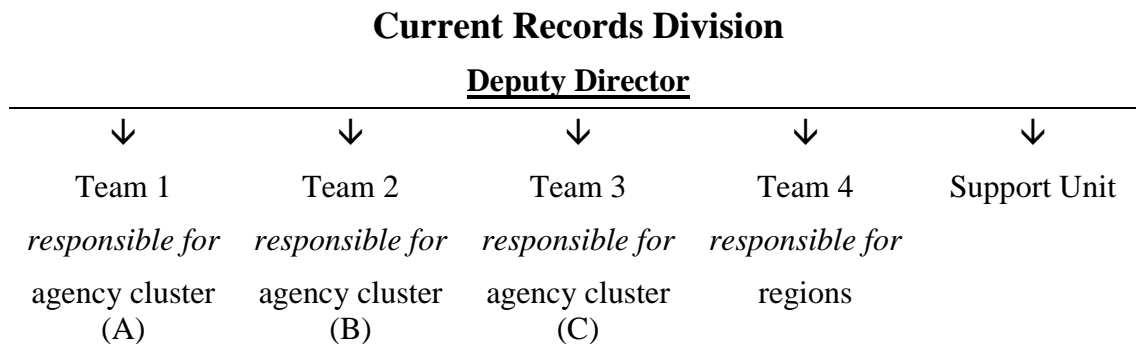

Activity 21

How are staff presently trained to manage current records? Name two steps you could suggest to improve the training procedure. Who is responsible for inspection of records in records offices? What might be done to improve the inspection process?

At the restructuring stage, it will not be possible to deal with all agencies at the same time. Accordingly a project plan covering the whole programme should be drawn up and within it an order of priority should be established.

Project planning and management are discussed in more detail in Strategic Planning for Records and Archives Services.

Once restructuring is complete the inspection of records offices should be undertaken on the basis of a planned programme. This will be a formal inspection covering audits of systems, security, procedures and staffing. The value for money provided by the records office should be assessed and discussed with senior managers. This inspection programme will be in addition to continuing ad hoc support and training.

Figure 3 illustrates how the current records division might be organised.

Current Records Division

Deputy Director

Team 1	Team 2	Team 3	Team 4	Support Unit
↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
responsible for	*responsible for*	*responsible for*	*responsible for*	
agency cluster (A)	agency cluster (B)	agency cluster (C)	regions	

Figure 3: Current Records Division - Specific Areas of Responsibility

Liaison with Agencies

The best way to handle relations between the current records division, representing the National Records and Archives Institution, and agencies responsible for current records is to organise the division into small teams, each dealing with a number of agencies ('agency clusters') through the agency records managers. The groupings should be based on a number of factors. First, the number of clusters and the number of agencies within a cluster must be sufficient for an effective span of control to be exercised by the staff making up the teams. Also, the individual groupings should reflect a common theme, based on organisational linkages or related functions.

Staff of the teams will be drawn from members of the records class with appropriate skills and experience for the task. The staff composition of the teams (that is, numbers and grade levels) will depend upon the size of the agencies in the corresponding clusters; the particular tasks involved (for example, restructuring; monitoring; inspecting); the experience of the staff; and the potential problems to be faced in the clusters concerned.

> *Team building and team management are discussed in more detail in* Strategic Planning for Records and Archives Services.

The teams will play a crucial role in developing a strategy for the change to a life-cycle approach and ensuring that the change is properly planned, implemented and maintained within agencies and in particular in each records office. Tact will be essential in balancing the respective responsibilities and accountabilities of the director of the National Records and Archives Institution, represented by the teams, on the one hand and of ministers and senior staff in agencies, represented by agency records managers, on the other hand. In particular the role of the director as the professional head of the records class will need careful handling to avoid potential conflict between line management (by managers in the agency) and professional management (by the National Records and Archives Institution).

Other common problems to be faced and dealt with by the teams will include

- gaining and maintaining the commitment of ministers and senior managers within the agencies to changes in the handling of their records

- reluctance and resentment by records managers and their staff within agencies at what they see as interference by the National Records and Archives Institution in their affairs

- reluctance of parastatal bodies to accept what they may see as outside interference if the public-records nature of their records is not clearly reinforced by legislation

- maintaining momentum and commitment to change

- logistics (stationery, file covers, transport and so on).

The success of the teams will be judged on the way in which they tackle these issues and how successful they are in solving them.

Methods for tackling such problems are discussed in more detail in Stategic Planning for Records and Archives Services.

Managing Current Records within the Regions

The introduction of the life-cycle concept of records and archives management must not bypass the regions. It is vital that the process of restructuring records offices and establishing effective procedures for managing current records should be implemented regionally, not just nationally.

Just as the regional management structure should replicate that of headquarters, so the structure for liaising with regional agencies should operate in a comparable way, with regional teams establishing effective communications with clusters of regional agencies and developing systems and procedures and agreeing projects and programmes for managing the current records of those agencies that replicate those established for agencies of central government. Inevitably implementation will be dependent upon the availability of resources.

Management Support

Restructuring records offices and developing and maintaining effective processes for managing current records in the agencies and within the regions will require management support for the teams. In the shorter term at least, this might be handled by a separate support unit within the division, working alongside the teams but free from the day-to-day pressures of liaison with the agencies. The key responsibilities of such a unit would be

- policy development in the field of current records

- developing professional standards and guidelines

- providing or arranging training for records staff in and across agencies, in conjunction with local line management

- drafting and maintaining general disposal schedules

- drafting and maintaining model procedural manuals

- collecting and interpreting management information

- administering the division's human, financial and material resources.

Semi-current Records and Archives

The management of semi-current records and the management of archives may be handled separately, but they are often the responsibility of a single division, especially where the records centre is located adjacent to the archival repository. The key responsibilities of such a division would be

- ensuring the continuing flow of semi-current records from agency records offices to the records centre
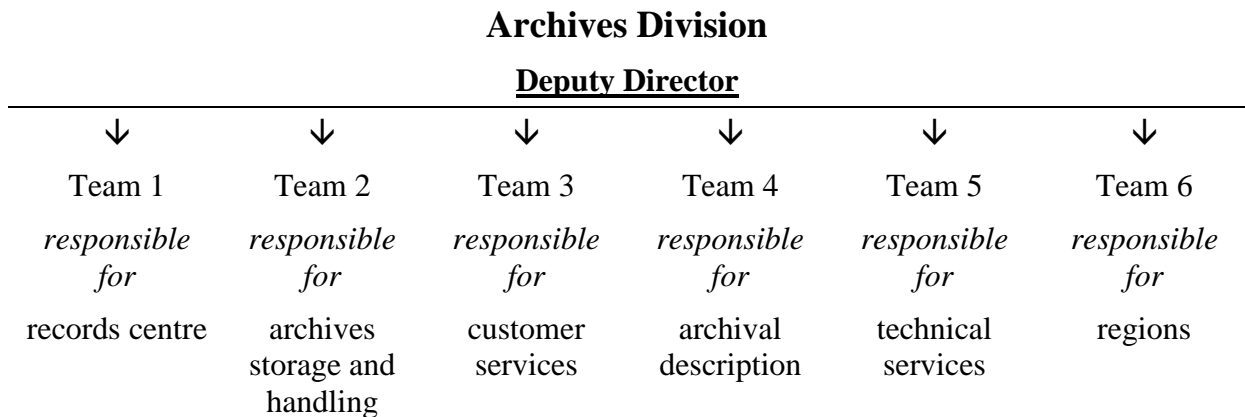
- managing the records centre

- making appropriate arrangements and providing suitable facilities for preserving and providing access to records of enduring value (that is, archives).

The professional issues involved are dealt with in Building Records Appraisal Systems, Managing Records in Records Centres *and* Managing Archives.

Activity 22

Before examining the following figure or reading further in this lesson, briefly describe how you would organise the semi-current records and archives divisions to ensure the requirements outlined above were met. Match your suggested organisation against the chart following and the information provided below and consider the similarities and differences between your proposals and the information in this lesson.

Figure 4 illustrates how the archives division might be organised.

Archives Division

Deputy Director

Team 1	Team 2	Team 3	Team 4	Team 5	Team 6
responsible for	*responsible for*	*responsible for*	*responsible for*	*responsible for*	*responsible for*
records centre	archives storage and handling	customer services	archival description	technical services	regions

Figure 4: Archives Division - Specific Areas of Responsibility

Records and archives legislation will identify how records that have become semi-current should be managed once responsibility has passed to the National Records and Archives Institution (that is, to the records centre). Similarly, it will set out where responsibility lies for archives and the mandatory and permissive duties of the National Records and Archives Institution in relation to their management.

Managers will have to address the following difficulties and problems:

- fear of change

- inadequate provision of resources

- increased workload through the assumption of new responsibilities

- feelings of loss of professional status and identity

- agencies feeling a loss of control of their records.

Managing the Records Centre

The records centre plays a key role in supporting a sound records office system and comprehensive retention and disposal schedules within an effective life-cycle management programme. The use of low cost storage for semi-current records is an essential element of their efficient and economical management. The building could be either purpose built or an adaptation of existing facilities.

The main functions of the management of a records centre are

- ensuring that mechanisms are in place and maintained for the regular transfer of semi-current records from records offices to the records centre

- providing low cost storage for semi-current records in the records centre

- developing and managing control systems for semi-current records within the records centre

- managing the records centre building

- providing facilities for its customers (that is, the agencies that created the semi-current records) to retrieve records or to consult them on site

- implementing retention and disposal schedules in respect of semi-current records

- transferring records of enduring value to an archival repository.

> ***Archival repository:*** A building or part of a building in which archives are preserved and made available for consultation. Also known as an archives.

The organisational framework needed to perform these various record centre functions must be flexible. It will need to cope with fluctuations in workload and customer demand and variations in the quality and quantity of available resources (staff, finance, accommodation, equipment).

In the initial phase of setting up a records centre and putting in place procedures for the transfer and management of semi-current records, it may be appropriate to establish a records centre task force composed largely of professional staff. However, when the records centre is up and running, most of the operations may be performed, under professional direction, by non-professional staff following standard procedures and taking predetermined action.

Given the likely fluctuations in workload as between the functions set out above, it may be advisable to maintain that staff as a general pool rather than divide it into discrete units performing specific functions. What is vital is that the professional

management of the records centre should inspire confidence in both agencies and the headquarters office by establishing and maintaining effective communication channels with records offices and with other units of the National Records and Archives Institution.

Managing Semi-current Records in the Regions

As with other aspects of the organisational structure, it is important to replicate in the regions the structures, systems and procedures for managing semi-current records. However, in countries in which regions are small and numerous, it may not be necessary or economical to establish a separate records centre in each region and joint records centres serving several adjacent regions might be established instead.

Managing Archives

The main functions of that part of the organisational structure concerned with archives (that is, the National Archives) are

- providing suitable facilities for the preservation of archives

- arranging and describing those archives to facilitate easy access

- maintaining and promoting the use of those archives

- managing the associated technical services (IT, conservation, reprographics).

In order to manage the archives effectively, the organisational structure should reflect those separate functions. Ideally it is desirable that each function should be handled by a separate unit, but in practice it may be necessary to link functions, though without losing sight of their individual concerns and requirements.

At the same time the structure must be sufficiently flexible to cope with

- fluctuations in demand

- the development of the life-cycle approach

- the introduction of a records class

- the need to change towards a customer-oriented approach with its emphasis on encouraging and facilitating access to and use of the archives.

Whatever the break down into operational units, the organisational framework will need to ensure that communication channels are maintained between the various units and more widely within the headquarters office structure.

The organisational arrangements will also need to reflect the change from 'self-oriented' to 'customer-oriented'. (In this context, the customer is the user or potential user of archives or the information derived from archives.) This means an approach based on what the customer wants rather than what the organisation thinks the customer wants. The starting point will be identifying actual and potential customers. From an organisational point of view it will mean that structures, staffing and facilities will need to reflect and ultimately be based on customer needs.

The introduction of the life-cycle approach to records and archives management and the gradual transition to a customer-oriented organisation will in time lead to the development of new functions. For example, a higher public profile for the National Records and Archives Institution will require the organisational structure to adapt by making new arrangements for the handling of customer relations, public and media relations and marketing. Organisational structures must be flexible in the face of changing demands, creating new units or developing existing units to meet new responsibilities and disbanding or amalgamating units that do not meet current or future needs.

Technical Services

Technical services, which include information technology, conservation and reprographics, require technically trained staff. However, their work programmes must be in line with the wider needs of the National Records and Archives Institution; technical personnel must not be left to decide their own priorities in isolation. It is particularly important that information technology should be driven by the priority needs of the operational units of the Institution and not the reverse.

> *The professional and technical issues involved are discussed in more detail in* Preserving Records *and* Automating Records Services.

Activity 23

Who in your organisation is presently responsible for overseeing technical work, such as the installation of information technology, the implementation of technical systems and so on? Who should be responsible for these functions? What role does the Archives play in this work? Consider the similarities and differences between your answer and the information provided in this lesson.

Managing Archives in the Regions

As with other aspects of the organisational structure, so also the structures, systems and procedures for managing the archives of central government should be replicated in the regions. However, in countries in which regions are small and numerous, it may not be necessary or economical to establish a separate archival repository in each region and joint archival repositories serving several adjacent regions might be established instead. In very small countries, where there is minimal decentalisation of government and distances from the capital city are not great, it may be appropriate for all public archives, central and local, to be preserved and made available for consultation in the National Archives.

General Services

There will be a need for a high-level unit to provide general support services for whole of the National Records and Archives Institution (headquarters and regional) and to perform certain functions for staff throughout the records class. The role of this unit will be vital in enabling the institution to operate efficiently and effectively and to achieve best value for money.
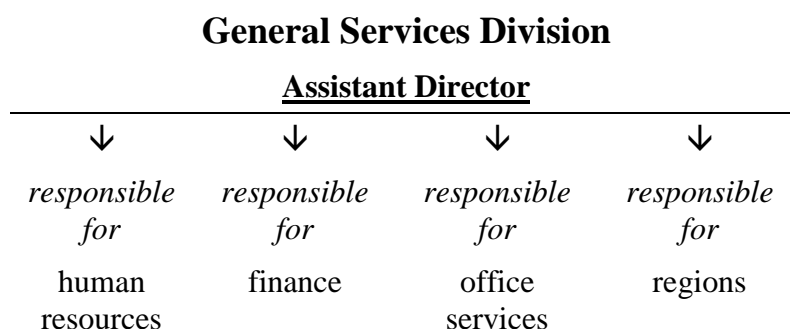

Activity 24

Before examining the following figure or reading further in this lesson, briefly describe how your organisation's general services are administered. How would you change the existing structure to improve the provision of general services to the records and archives divisions? Match the existing situation and your suggestions against the chart that follows and the information provided below and consider the similarities and differences between your situation and the information in this lesson.

The main general support functions will include

- human resources planning

- recruitment to the records class

- personnel and support services

- internal audit

- budgeting and financial control.

Some responsibilities may be shared among divisions, such as training or regional development.

Figure 5 illustrates how the general services division might be organised.

General Services Division

Assistant Director

↓	↓	↓	↓
responsible for	*responsible for*	*responsible for*	*responsible for*
human resources	finance	office services	regions

Figure 5: General Services Division - Specific Areas of Responsibility

To perform these functions effectively, a strong management team is needed, able to handle a wide range of general support tasks in the context of fluctuations in work

load, the introduction of a records class and the need to change towards a customer-oriented approach. In particular, that team must include staff qualified in personnel and finance matters who can free senior management from the details of routine work in those areas. The introduction of the life-cycle concept of records and archives management across government and the regions will only be achieved if it is underpinned by effective staff, personnel and financial systems and planning. To provide that underpinning, the internal organisational structures of the general services unit should reflect the functions identified above.

> *The issues concerning a general services unit are discussed in more detail in* Managing Resources for Records and Archives Services.

MANAGEMENT OF CURRENT RECORDS IN AGENCIES

A particular problem in many countries has been the absence of a records and archives management programme that controls records through the earlier phases of their life cycle. As a result, material of archival value has not been identified and that important component of the national historical heritage has not been safeguarded. Ultimately, the National Archives itself becomes starved of new material, while its role within government becomes less clear and its position seems less relevant. The development of the National Records and Archives Institution is the catalyst for changing this process, providing the impetus and resources to implement the life-cycle approach to records and archives management across government, ensuring a continuum of good records care.

However, reorganisation of the headquarters structure alone will not create the change needed. An equally vital component of change is the introduction of systems to control from the outset all the records created or received in agencies of government, enabling those records to flow through the three stages of their life and providing continuing easy access to information essential to the efficient and effective conduct of government business. The way in which the record is first created and subsequently managed within the agency is, therefore, the vital first stage in implementing the new approach and ensuring that the process is maintained.

Records Office Restructuring

Effecting change to the record-keeping practices within agencies involves a number of steps.

- Ensure top management commitment.

- Persuade staff of the need for change.

- Plan the process of change.

- Establish records management units and convert the old 'registries' into new 'records offices'.

> ***Records management unit:*** The administrative unit of an agency responsible for the life-cycle management of that agency's records.
>
> ***Records office:*** The subunit of a records management unit responsible for the creation, control and maintenance of current records. Also known as a registry.

The method of achieving this change is through records office 'restructuring', in which teams from the current records division of the National Records and Archives Institution co-operate with staff from the agency clusters described earlier in this lesson. This restructuring process will

- place current records within a logical, documented system, enabling them to be retrieved and information from them to be identified and extracted easily

- 'decongest' existing registries, that is identify and separate records that are still current from those that are semi-current or non-current, enabling semi-current records to be transferred to the records centre, those non-current records that are of enduring value (that is, archives) to be transferred to the National Archives and the valueless remainder to be destroyed

- establish procedures for the regular and planned transfer of records from records offices to the records centre as they become semi-current

- establish clear accountability for the records function.

> *The elements of the restructuring process are discussed in more detail in* Organising and Controlling Current Records, Building Records Appraisal Systems *and* Restructuring Current Records Systems: A Procedures Manual.

In order to continue to manage records effectively after the completion of the restructuring process, permanent and effective organisational structures and arrangements must be established within the agencies. Otherwise the approach, which is a key issue in civil service reform in many countries, will soon start to misfire and may ultimately fail.

The Records Class

The introduction of a records class, covering staff in both the National Records and Archives Institution and the agencies, provides an integrated framework of staff performing, within a life-cycle system, different but similar and linked functions, requiring particular staff skills and experience. This will allow agencies, records centres and archival repositories to work together both now and in the future to ensure that records are managed in the most efficient and effective way, as part of a continuum of control.

The introduction of a records class is discussed in more detail in Lesson 4.

The Records Management Unit

The major purpose of the records management unit within an agency is the provision of easy access to records and the information they contain. Achieving that purpose, and incidentally ensuring that the responsibilities of heads of public offices, as set out in the records and archives legislation (see Lesson 2), for the management of current records are fulfilled, requires the effective performance of a number of functions:

- the establishment and management of one or more records offices for controlling current records

- the creation and management of current records within appropriate filing systems

- the drafting of retention and disposal schedules relating to records specific to each agency

- the implementation of general and agency retention and disposal schedules

- the transfer of semi-current records to a records centre.

The tasks and responsibilities of records offices are considered in more detail in Organising and Controlling Current Records.

The head and senior managers of an agency are responsible for the smooth running of all the various divisions and units within that agency and for organising, directing, monitoring and controlling their staff. In the records management unit, this responsibility is exercised through the agency records manager.
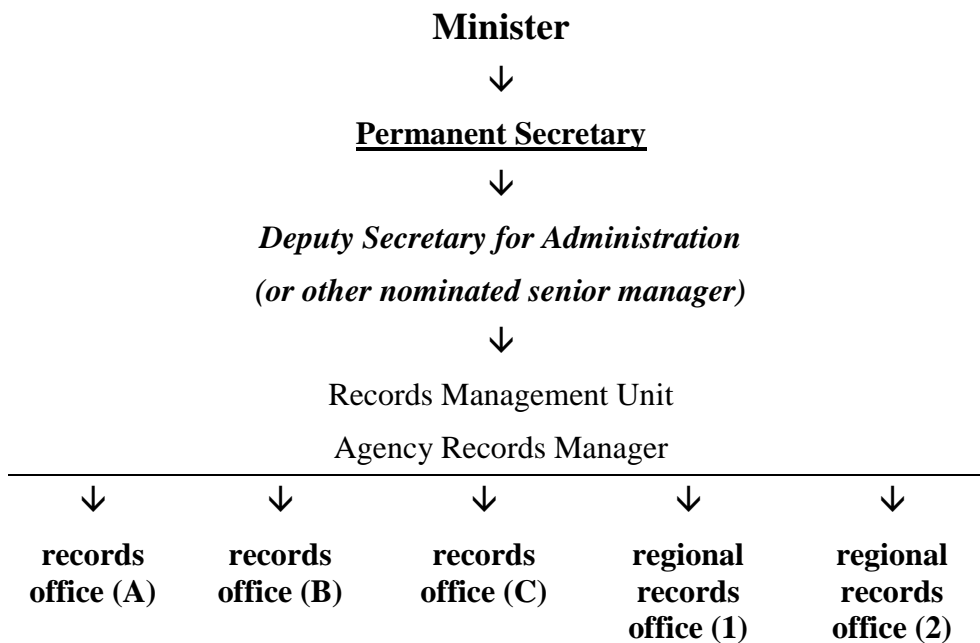

Activity 25

Obtain a written job description for a records manager in your organisation. Based on the information provided in this module, what changes might you suggest to the job description to make the records manager a more effective part of the records management team? Compare your suggestions with the information provided below.

> ***Records manager:*** The person in charge of a records
> management unit.

The records manager will not normally report direct to the head of the agency but will work through a nominated senior manager. He or she will report to that senior manager on the overall management of records work in the agency, monitoring performance and output against agreed targets and accounting for that performance on a regular basis.

Just as it is important that the National Records and Archives Institution should have an appropriate 'sponsor', so it is also vital that the records management unit should be part of a division headed by a senior officer with responsibility for the internal management of the agency (usually with some such title as Director of Administration, Establishment Officer and so on).

Figure 6 illustrates how an agency records management unit might be organised within the structure of the agency.

Minister
↓
Permanent Secretary
↓
Deputy Secretary for Administration
(or other nominated senior manager)
↓

Records Management Unit

Agency Records Manager

↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
records office (A)	**records office (B)**	**records office (C)**	**regional records office (1)**	**regional records office (2)**

Figure 6: Management of Current Records in Agencies

Internally, the records management unit will consist of a small number of staff within the office of the records manager and one or more records offices, which will be the operational arms of the unit. The number of records offices required by an agency and their internal structures will depend upon the size of that agency and local conditions, such as

• the number of divisions and units within the agency

• the geographical dispersal of those divisions and units and of any regional offices and the extent to which responsibility is devolved locally

- the number of new records created each year and the number of record movements

- the respective numbers of action officers and records staff

- the functions of the agency and their political sensitivity.

The Records Manager

The records manager will be accountable for the management of records services within the agency. Therefore, he or she will be responsible for ensuring that

- the aims and objectives of the records offices are clear and regularly reviewed

- performance targets and output measures of records offices and individual staff members are agreed and monitored

- organisational structures, ways of working and management practices remain as flexible as practicable

- consultation takes place regularly with customers (that is, action officers and their managers) in order to measure customer satisfaction and identify changing customer needs

- lines of communication within and between records offices and between them and the records manager are clear and open

- personnel issues are dealt with promptly and effectively and manpower planning is undertaken at appropriate stages.

This last point is an important one, because the records manager will be the line manager for all records staff within the agency. This will involve him or her in such personnel matters as welfare, staff reporting and objective setting and professional development. In this role, the records manager must co-operate with the director of the National Records and Archives Institution, who, as head of the records class, has overall accountability for the effective and efficient employment of members of the class across the whole of government. The records manager provides a vital link with the National Records and Archives Institution in balancing the inevitably competing needs of the agency and of records and archives work generally throughout government.

The difficulties to be faced by the records manager in implementing, delivering and maintaining an effective records management service will include

- initial lack of knowledge on the part of action officers in the agency about the concepts of life-cycle records and archives management and the records class

- uncertainty on the part of records staff of their new career development path within the records class

- potential conflicts of interest arising from a dual responsibility: for line management to the head of the agency and for professional issues to the Director of the National Records and Archives Institution

- the process and speed of change, which will vary from agency to agency.

The responsibilities of the records manager remain the same whatever the size of the agency. What does change with the size of the agency is the grade level of the records manager, reflecting differences in workload, span of control and level of responsibility. The grade of the records manager in a major agency will generally be higher than that of a counterpart in a medium-sizes agency, which again will be senior to that of a records manager of a small agency.

The Records Office

The relationship between the records manager of the agency and its various records offices is the key to the successful management of current records.

The internal arrangements must facilitate the management of current records in the most efficient and effective way. In general, the structure should mirror the functions of a records office. The following activities should be undertaken:

- the handling, registration and filing of correspondence

- the creation, classification and coding of files

- the storage and retrieval of files

- the implementation of retention and disposal schedules.

In larger records offices, the volume of work may determine an internal structure that corresponds fairly rigidly with functions, but in smaller records offices more flexibility will be essential. Even in larger records offices there would be benefits in the form of improved job satisfaction to be gained by rotating staff periodically between functions.

Activity 26

Based on the information provided in this lesson, identify four changes you would make as a high priority to improve the organisational structure of your records and archives operations. For each change, explain what needs to be changed and why, and indicate why this ought to be a high priority.

SUMMARY

Lesson 3 has discussed the position of the National Records and Archives Institution within government, suggesting that responsibility for the institution should be exercised by a minister with a central management role within government.

It has discussed the organisational structure for the headquarters office of the National Records and Archives Institution, based upon functions with three divisions responsible respectively for

- current records

- semi-current records and archives

- general services

- the replication of that structure in the regions.

It has discussed also organisational structures for the management of current records in agencies.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. In your own words, explain the concept of 'organisational framework' and explain why an organisational framework is important.

2. Why should a national archival institution be considered not just a cultural agency but also a key part of the operations of the government?

3. What problems can occur when organisations consider restructuring and change?

4. What is the ideal role of the headquarters of a National Records and Archives Institution?

5. Why should any organisational restructuring also address the regions of a country and not just the headquarters?

6. How can good working relations and efficien operations be established between headquarters and regions?

7. What changes need to take place if records offices are to be restructured to provide a cost-effective service to the agencies they serve?

8. Explain the concept of team liaisons between agencies and the records service.

9. Explain the key responsibilities of a management support unit within a division during the restructuring process.

10. Identify four key functions of the National Archives that must be addressed when examining organisational structures.

11. Explain the concept of 'customer-oriented' management in an archival institution.

12. Explain who should be responsible for determining work programmes for information technology in an archival institution and why.

13. Explain the role of a general support services unit.

14. Why are changes needed in how records are created or received in agencies, in order to ensure effective management of records in archival institutions?

15. What is the concept of records office restructuring? What steps need to take place in the restructuring process?

16. What is the purpose of the records management unit?

17. What is the role of the records manager?

18. Outline five key duties of the records manager.

19. Identify four key activities to be undertaken by the records office.

20. Identify three key points to stress in deciding on the location of the National Records and Archives Institution within government.

ACTIVITIES: COMMENTS

Activities 17-26

All activities in this lesson are designed to help you compare the reality of your organisation's situation, and your own beliefs and knowledge, with the information provided in the lesson. There are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers to any of the questions, but you should think carefully through each one and review the relevant sections of the lesson to compare and contrast your findings and understand better the basis for the suggestions made in this module.

STAFFING STRUCTURES

Lesson 4 introduces and explains the staffing structures necessary to support the life-cycle concept of managing records and archives in the public sector. The legislative changes (see Lesson 2) and organisational structures (see Lesson 3) required to implement a life-cycle approach to records and archives must be underpinned by staff who are

- capable of implementing and maintaining the necessary systems and procedures efficiently and effectively

- appropriately trained

- recognised as professionals in the records and archives management field.

One way of achieving quality in staffing is to bring together all those engaged on records and archives work, both in agencies and in the headquarters and regional offices of the National Records and Archives Institution, into a single staffing structure, known as a records class or records cadre, with its own scheme of service.

The final say in whether there should be a records class and, if so, how it should be structured is likely to rest with some other authority (such as the Public Service Commission), but it is essential that senior managers in the new National Records and Archives Institution should be able to present a sound professional and management view of how the class might be organised.

The lesson will cover

- the establishment of a common records class throughout government

- the development of a scheme of service for the management of that class.

This lesson should be studied in conjunction with the manual *A Model Scheme of Service for a Records and Archives Class*.

> *Some of the issues discussed here are also dealt with in a more general way in* Managing Recources for Records and Archives Services.

WHAT IS A RECORDS CLASS?

The aim of a class or cadre is to bring together in an integrated structure staff performing varying but related functions who need specific skills in order to perform effectively. The skills required need to be clearly defined, in order to identify the required educational standards, training needs, level of experience and, whenever possible, practical expertise.

The life-cycle approach to managing records and archives brings together a range of linked functions relating to current records, semi-current records and archives. The establishment of a records class would create an integrated and flexible structure, enabling records and archives staff in agencies, records centres and archival institutions to work together to ensure that records and archives are managed in the most efficient and effective way.

Activity 27

Is there a specific records class system used in your government or organisation? If so, briefly describe how the class is organised, who is included within the class and how it is administered by the agency.

If not, explain briefly how records work is categorised within your government or organisation.

WHAT IS A SCHEME OF SERVICE?

> *Scheme of service:* A framework document that sets out the specific details of a particular occupational class in the civil service.

Individual schemes may cover the large classes of the clerical and executive grades or may address more specialist areas, such as accountancy, statistics or records and archives management.

A scheme of service establishes a grade structure covering a range of related functions. The scheme defines the competencies of each grade level in terms of its responsibilities, entry qualifications, career progression and training requirements.

> *Competencies:* The levels of knowledge, skills and experience achieved by an individual in relation to the range of jobs he or she may be called upon to perform.

The provisions and procedures for setting up a scheme of service will normally be covered in general legislation such as a Civil Service Act. They will inevitably involve consultation with the Public Service Commission or its equivalent and with senior officials within the agencies concerned.

Activity 28

Is there a specific scheme of service for a records class in your government or organisation? If so, briefly describe how the scheme is organised, who is included within the class and how it is administered by the agency. If not, explain briefly how personnel working with records and archives are classified within your government or organisation.

ESTABLISHING A SCHEME OF SERVICE FOR A RECORDS CLASS

Records and archives management is a vital support function, underpinning all aspects of work across government. It is an area that is often neglected but one that has a critical effect on the efficiency and effectiveness of public-sector work. Yet in many countries the functions of managing current records, semi-current records and archives are undertaken separately, if at all. There may be an established archival tradition, usually represented by the National Archives, but this can undermined if the National Archives is starved of new accessions because of poor or non-existent management of current and semi-current records.

The answer is to develop a life-cycle approach to the management of records and archives, linking together as a continuum of care the ways in which records and archives are handled by agencies, within records centres and in archival institutions. The aims would be

- to transform the National Archives into a National Records and Archives Institution, capable of controlling professional aspects of records and archives management across government

- to introduce efficient and effective systems and procedures for managing current and semi-current records through restructuring (or creating) records offices and records centres.

The creation of a scheme of service for a single records class covering all those involved in the management of records and archives across government would lay the basis for an integrated national records and archives system. Thus, the scheme of service is a key element in a life-cycle approach.

Creating separate schemes of service for staff in records offices and staff in archival institutions would dilute the impact of life-cycle management of records and archives. Control would be divided and responsibility and accountability for particular areas of work would become blurred. Inevitably, specific group interests would take precedence over an integrated approach; the overall efficiency and effectiveness of records and archives management would be affected.

The key features of a single scheme of service for a unified records class would be

- a scheme that covers records and archives staff working in agencies and in the National Records and Archives Institution

- a unified structure embracing all such staff, professional and sub-professional

- a strong staff base for managing records throughout their life cycle

- a range of recruitment, posting and promotion options that would enable staff to move between and within agencies and the National Records and Archives Institution

- opportunities to transfer into and out of the class at certain levels (provided that essential educational and professional requirements are met)

- professional guidance and training.

The development of a records class should ensure strong control of the records and archives management system through the introduction of uniform standards, procedures and quality of work across government. The major benefits should be

- accurate, fast retrieval of records

- improved decision making by action officers

- reduced costs

- increased productivity

- reduction in duplication of staff time and materials

- reduced need for file storage in office accommodation.

Objectives of a Scheme of Service

The key objectives of a scheme of service for the records class would be first to implement and then to deliver an efficient and effective system of managing records and archives across government.

The management of current and semi-current records is often neglected. As a result, papers and files are lost, files are overcrowded in offices and appraisal and disposal processes are inefficient or absent. A scheme of service will not provide easy, immediate answers to these problems. What it will do, in conjunction with other changes to structures and systems, is to provide a framework for managing records efficiently and effectively in future.

The need to attract and retain staff with enthusiasm, drive and vision is essential to the continuing success of a life-cycle approach to managing records and archives. This need will be achieved if clear job specifications, effective and realistic career progression and strong professional guidance are addressed. Underpinning this, it is vital that there should be a clear understanding by line managers in agencies of how the scheme of service operates, what an integrated, life-cycle approach to managing records and archives means in practice and how it can contribute to the achievement of government and agency strategic objectives.

Activity 29

Imagine you are responsible for proposing a new or revised scheme of service for a records class for your government or organisation. Write a brief proposal explaining what a scheme of service is, why it is important to good records management and what steps the organisation should take to implement such a proposal.

The Concepts of a Scheme of Service

There are two fundamental concepts of a scheme of service for the records class.

1. Staff exercising the same levels of responsibility should form part of the same grade.

2. Staff at the same grade level may serve within records offices in agencies (dealing with current records), records centres (dealing with semi-current records), archival repositories (dealing with archives), other branches of the National Records and Archives Institution or their regional equivalents.

It is important that realistic qualification requirements (education, training, skills and experience) are established for each grade. Specific qualifications provide clear indications of

- the respective competencies required for work with current records, semi-current records and archives

- career paths

- promotion criteria.

Introducing a Scheme of Service

Usually the establishment of a new class within the civil service does not require primary legislation. However, the establishment of a new national records and archives system itself will require new or revised legislation, and so an opportunity exists to include the establishment of a records class in that legislation. Including the staffing arrangements in such new legislation may shorten the time required for the

implementation process and signal a complete package of changes. On the other hand, the legislative process can take considerable time; administrative action under existing general legislation may be quicker.

Records and archives legislation is dealt with in more detail in Lesson 2.

Dual Management Role

There needs to be a clear distinction between the management roles of the director of the National Records and Archives Institution and line managers within agencies.

The director acts as the professional head of the class. In consultation with line managers, the director ensures that

- systems and procedures for the efficient and effective management of records are in place across government

- competencies for each grade within the class are reviewed regularly to ensure their continuing precision and relevance

- professional objectives for staff in the records class in agencies, records centres and archival institutions are set and monitored

- all records staff receive appropriate training and are advised on career development and progression within the class

- advice, direction and support is provided on records and archives management duties.

Managers within agencies, in consultation with the director of the National Records and Archives Institution where appropriate, are responsible for general line management duties affecting records staff, including

- releasing staff to undertake appropriate professional, technical and management training

- monitoring performance, discipline and attendance

- making provision for welfare, wider career development and annual leave arrangements

- assisting in the selection and recruitment process.

THE RECORDS CLASS

This section of the lesson should be read in close association with the manual *A Model Scheme of Service for a Records and Archives Class*. Many of the following activities require you to examine both the model scheme and the information provided in this lesson.

Activity 30

Before proceeding further, write down at least six specific responsibilities that should be fulfilled by employees within an ideal records class.

Once you have finished, continue reading this lesson and compare your ideas with the information provided in *A Model Scheme of Service for a Records and Archives Class*.

Functions of a Records Class

The functions of a records class are to manage records and archives effectively and efficiently at every stage of their life. This requires both the technical skills of records and archives work and more general management skills. The importance of linking these skills together is not only because records and archives staff need management skills in their own areas of work, but also because it provides linkages with the wider civil service grade structure. Thus it both allows progression and movement within the records class and allows staff to transfer into and out of the class at certain levels, provided that essential educational and professional requirements are met.

The strength of a scheme of service is that it links together the various responsibilities for current records, semi-current records and archives in a unified grading structure that can be applied throughout the three areas of work, providing and maintaining a uniform structure and uniform standards, procedures and quality of work and thus ensuring that records and archives will be managed efficiently and effectively throughout their life.

Activity 31

Before proceeding further, write down at least four different positions or 'grades' you think should be included in a records class, with a brief description of the key duties of personnel in each grade.

Once you have finished, continue reading this lesson and compare your ideas with the information provided in *A Model Scheme of Service for a Records and Archives Class*.

Composition of a Records Class

For historical reasons, the number of grades within the civil service has often become elongated, so that the distinctions between grades have blurred. Insofar as the general civil service culture will permit it, a records class structure limited to eight grade levels would be sufficient to cover the wide range of duties within records offices in agencies, records centres, archival repositories, other branches of the National Records and Archives Institution and their regional and local equivalents. It is important that the number of grades is maintained at this level, in order to

- avoid duplication and overlap of work and responsibilities

- ensure work is undertaken at the appropriate grade level

- provide satisfactory workloads

- ensure an appropriate number of management grades

- avoid diluting educational and professional requirements

- provide realistic and manageable promotion prospects and career progression.

Grading

The grades within a records class may be identified most easily by numbering them. (In *A Model Scheme of Service for a Records and Archives Class* they are numbered from 1 to 8.) Whether they are numbered in ascending or descending order of seniority will depend upon local practice. It may also be desirable to give a title to each grade, such as 'assistant records and archives officer'. However, for working purposes members of the grade may have more specific job titles related to their area of work, such as 'assistant records officer' for a member of the grade working with current or semi-current records and 'assistant archives officer' for one working with archives.

Records grades should be linked with general service grades in order to integrate the records grades into the existing pay and grading framework of the civil service.

The number of grades will depend to some extent upon local practice, but recent grading studies recognise only five levels of responsibility based upon accountability, authority and freedom to act independently:

Directive: responsible for a whole area of management and policy (such as the director of the National Records and Archives Institution).

Formulative: responsible for planning policies and strategies across a large area of work with the ability to change procedures across that area (the head of a Division in the National Records and Archives Institution).

Adaptive: responsible for devising 'local' strategy and approach (an agency records manager).

Responsive: exercises some initiative in responding to the needs of each new situation (an archivist arranging and describing a series of archives).

Prescribed: actions almost wholly specified with little need for interpretation or the exercise of discretion (a registry clerk).

It can be difficult to fit the long grading structures found in many civil services into such a framework. It may be hard to define the duties of each grades in sufficient specificity. For example, the eight grades proposed in *A Model Scheme of Service for a Records and Archives Class* would fit in as follows:

Level 1 = Grade 1

Level 2 = Grades 2 and 3

Level 3 = Grade4

Level 4 = Grades 5 and 6

Level 5 = Grades 7 and 8.

Duties of a Records Class

It is vital that the range of duties and responsibilities appropriate to each grade in the records class are clearly defined. Within this framework job specifications can then be drawn up for each post, showing the specific responsibilities; relationships within the records class; personnel, discipline and line management arrangements; and performance criteria. This will enable managers and staff (both within and outside the records class) to understand the relationships and equivalence of responsibilities between the records class and other parts of the civil service.

Activity 32

In your opinion, what educational qualifications or experience should personnel in the following positions have in order to do the jobs in question?

- director of records and archives

- records and archives officer

- records and archives clerk

- assistant records and archives clerk.

Once you have finished this activity, continue reading this lesson and compare your ideas with the information provided in *A Model Scheme of Service for a Records and Archives Class*.

Recruitment and Career Progression

An integrated structure provides maximum flexibility in recruiting staff and moving them within the current, semi-current and archival areas of work. Such a structure

also ensures uniform standards, procedures and quality. This approach offers the maximum opportunities for career development and progression, job satisfaction, staff retention and, crucially, building up an experienced, professional base of staff able to handle the full range of records and archives management responsibilities.

A good structure allows for

- entry at different grade levels depending on qualifications

- direct and in-service entry

- the establishment of professional standards

- career development through the provision of both on-the-job and formal training

- fair promotion procedures dependent on ability and performance.

Activity 33

How are people in your organisation presently trained to work with records and archives? Is there different training or education for different levels of activity?

Suggest at least two ways that training could be altered or improved to ensure records personnel are well equipped to fulfil their duties in your organisation.

Once you have finished this activity, finish reading this lesson and compare your ideas with the information provided in *A Model Scheme of Service for a Records and Archives Class*.

Training For a Records Class

It is essential that the various forms of training are established before the scheme of service is introduced. Therefore, the locations and contents of courses need to be agreed well in advance and a rolling three-year training programme developed.

The training of staff must be seen as a continuing process, regularly reviewed with staff as part of their professional improvement and career progression. The nature of the training programme will need to be considered in relation to budgetary and other resource constraints.

SUMMARY

Lesson 4, together with *A Model Scheme of Service for a Records and Archives Class*, has covered

- the establishment of a common records class throughout government

- the development of a scheme of service for the management of that class.

The lesson has outlined the functions, composition, duties, career progression and training of a records class. *A Model Scheme of Service for a Records and Archives Class* has provided specific examples of how those might be defined in practice.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Explain the concept of a records class.

2. What is the key purpose of a records class?

3. Why does a records class help to promote the care of records throughout their life?

4. Explain the concept of a scheme of service.

5. What are 'competencies'?

6. Explain why a single scheme of service for a unified records class is important to managing records throughout their life.

7. Name three benefits of a uniform records class.

8. Why are realistic qualification requirements important for hiring?

9. Identify at least three functions fulfilled by the director of the National Records and Archives Institution.

10. Name at least three functions fulfilled by the managers of agencies responsbile for records care.

11. What are the functions of a records class?

12. Give three reasons that distinct grades should be established within a records class structure.

13. Describe each of the five levels of responsibility that grading studies have identified.

14. Describe four issues related to recruitment and career progression that need to be considered when determining a records class and a scheme of service. Why are these issues important?

15. Explain why a standard process for training is important to the success of a records class.

ACTIVITIES: COMMENTS

Activities 27-33

Each of these activities is designed to help you compare the reality of your own organisation's staffing structures with the suggestions and ideas outlined in this lesson. There are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers to any question, but it is important for you to understand the value of the records class system and the importance of a well-thought-out scheme of service, both of which enhance the care of records throughout their life.

It is hoped that you will be able to understand the ideas presented in this lesson sufficiently well that you can be more aware of possible changes or improvements in your organisation's systems, even if you are not in a position to make changes yourself.

WHAT TO DO NEXT?

Developing Infrastructures for Records and Archives Services has stressed the vital importance of appropriate infrastructures to provide a mandate for public sector records and archives systems and services.

It has also outlined the principles and practices involved in establishing

- the legislative framework

- the organisational structures

- the staffing structures

- needed to support the life-cycle management of public sector records and archives.

ESTABLISHING PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

This module has introduced the infrastructures necessary to provide a mandate for public sector records and archives systems and services. But which tasks should you undertake first? Which are high priority and which are low? Each institution will make different decisions based on its present state of development and its needs and short- and long-term plans. However, it is possible to offer some recommendations for action, to help the institution develop the infrastructures appropriate to its own situation. Complete the activity below then consider the suggestions offered here.

Activity 34

Before proceeding with this lesson, consider the situtation in your institution. Based on your own experience working through this module and within your organisation, what priorities would you establish for alterations or improvements to the organisational structure? Identify at least three priorities and explain why you think those are important to your organisation.

Priority 1: Identify the Existing Infrastructures

This is largely a process of finding out what the situation is in your country.

- What legislation regulates public sector records and archives?

- What institutions are responsible for the management of public sector records and archives? What are their respective responsibilities?

- How are those institutions organised to perform their records and archives functions?

- What sort of staff are employed in those institutions to perform the tasks arisisng from those functions?

Priority 2: Assess the Existing Infrastructures

Test the existing infrastructures against the principles and practices set out in this module and identify any strengths and weaknesses.

- What is the curent level of service in respect of public records and archives? Where are there inadequacies?

- Are there areas of records and archives work where responsibilities overlap?

- Conversely, are there areas of that work for which no institution is responsible?

- How effective are the instutions in performing their respective records and archives functions?

- Do records and archives staff possess the competencies necessary to enable them perform their tasks adequately?

Priority 3: Plan to Establish Appropriate Infrastructures

Once you know the strengths and weaknesses of the existing infrastructures, it is possible to begin to plan to improve or replace them. This involves

- identifying and enlisting the support of a sponsor or sponsors who can see the benefits of the life-cycle approach to the management of public sector records and archives and who will strongly and actively support plans to implement or reinforce that approach

- developing a strategy for managing the consequential changes

- preparing a costed project plan and establishing a planning structure to manage the process of introducing appropriate records and archives systems and services

- determining the priorities for establishing the infractructures to support a life-cycle approach to the management of public sector records and archives,

probably on the assumption that few or no additional resources will be available

- identifying which structures can be transformed and which need to be created from scratch.

> *Project planning and management are dealt with in more detail in* Strategic Planning for Records and Archives Services.

Priority 4: Establish a Mandate For a Public Sector Records And Archives Service

The first step in developing an effective public sector records and archives service is to provide it with a mandate in the form of comprehensive legislation governing the management of records and archives throughout their life cycle. Decide what legislative changes will be needed to achieve this aim and whether this can be done by amending existing legislation or a complete overhaul is necessary.

Priority 5: Develop Organisational and Staffing Structures

On the basis of that records and archives legislation it will then be possible to move towards establishing

- an effective organisational structure for the public sector records and archives service

- an appropriate scheme of service for the staff who will operate that service.

Priority 6: Build on the Records and Archives Infrastructures

Having established appropriate records and archives infrastructures, it is necessary to build upon them by the strategic management of available resources. How to do that is dealt with in two further modules: *Strategic Planning for Records and Archives Services* and *Managing Resources for Records and Archives Services.*

GETTING HELP

Many institutions, particularly in developing countries, have limited access to advice on establishing appropriate records and archives infrastructures. However, there are places you can go to get more information or to obtain assistance.

See the Additional Resources *document for information on other organisations and associations involved with records and archives management generally.*

National Organisations

In each country, the following national organisations will be likely to exist and can give advice on various aspects of infrastructure development:

Attorney General's Office/Parliamentary Draughtsman

- for local requirements for legislation

Ministry responsible for the civil service/Public Service Commission

- for local practices in respect of organisational and staffing structures

National Institute of Public Administration

- for training, advice and literature of management issues.

International Organisations

The following international organisations could be contacted for assistance.

Commonwealth Association for Public Administration and Management (CAPAM)
Suite 402-1075 Bay Street
Toronto, Ontario
Canada, M5S 2B1
Tel: +1 416 920 3337
Fax: +1 416 920 6574

Email: capam@compuserve.com

Website: http://www.comnet.mt/capam/

The aim of CAPAM is to enhance Commonwealth co-operation in improving managerial competence and achieving organisational excellence in government. CAPAM exchanges experiences on new developments and innovations in management in governments by building networks among elected and senior officials, academics and non-governmental organisations. CAPAM provides rapid access to information on best practices in government administration.

International Council on Archives Committee on Archival Legal Matters (ICA/CLM)

60, rue des Francs-Bourgeois

75003 Paris, France

Tel: +33 0 1 40 27 63 06

Fax: +33 0 1 42 72 20 65

email: 100640@compuserve.com

website: http://www.archives.ca/ICA/

The ICA is the primary international agency for archival work around the world; the Committee on Archival Legal Matters undertakes study and research in the area of archival and related legislation, including that related to international law, access, privacy and intellectual property. The Committee also gives professional advice and supplies draft criteria and models and promotes the exchange of views and experiences in this area.

Activity 35

Find out if your institution has any information about any of the agencies listed above. Does your organisation receive publications, participate in conferences or meetings or otherwise work with any of these groups?

In your opinion, which groups should your institution consider communicating with first, if any, and what would you expect to achieve by doing so? How would you go about building a productive relationship?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

There are many publications available about management in general or about particular areas of management theory and practice. Some are more easily obtained than others, and some more up-to-date than others, but older publications also contain valuable information and may be more easily found in libraries in your particular country or region than very new publications that have not yet circulated around the world. However, there is very little literature on the topic of management in the records and archives sector, though the following publications should be noted. Core publications are identified with an asterisk (*).

> *Core publications are also identified in the* Additional Resources *document; refer to that document for information on more general publications on records and archives management.*

Management

* Brasdher, JG, ed. *Managing Archives and Archival Institutions.* Chicago, IL: Society of American Archivists, 1991.

Evans, Frank B and Eric Ketelaar. *A Guide for Surveying Archival and Records Management Systems and Services: A RAMP Study.* (RAMP Study PGI-83/WS/6). Paris, FR: UNESCO, 1983.

Lock, Dennis, ed. *The Gower Handbook of Management.* 4th ed. Aldershot, UK: Gower, 1998.

* Vaughan, Anthony. *International Reader in the Management of Library, Information and Archives Services.* (RAMP Study PGI-87/WS/22). Paris, FR: UNESCO, 1987. Available electronically through the UNESCO website.

Standards

Rhoads, James B. *The Applicability of UNISIST Guidelines and ISO International Standards to Archives Administration and Records Management: A RAMP Study.* (RAMP Study PGI-82/WS/4). Paris, FR: UNESCO, 1982. 95 p. (F), (S)

Roper, Michael. *Directory of National Standards Relating to Archives Administration and Records Management: A RAMP Study.* (RAMP Study PGI-86/WS/16). Paris, UNESCO, 1986.

Standards Australia. *A/NZS 4360 Australian/New Zealand Standard: Risk Management.* Homebush, NSW, AUS: Standards Association of Australia, 1995.

Records and Archives Development

International Council on Archives. 'Pan-African Conference on Archival Policies and Programmes in Africa.' *Janus* 1996, vol. 1.

International Council on Archives. 'Inter-regional Conference on Archival Development, Tunis, 1995.' *Janus* 1996, special issue.

Mazikana, Peter C. *Archives and Records Management for Decision Makers: A RAMP Study.* (RAMP Study PGI-90/WS/8). Paris, FR: UNESCO, 1990. Available electronically through the UNESCO website.

* Rhoads, James B. *The Role of Archives and Records Management in National Information Systems: A RAMP Study.* (RAMP Study PGI-89/WS/6). Paris, FR: UNESCO, 1989. Available electronically through the UNESCO website.

Records and Archives Legislation

International Council on Archives. 'Archival Laws and Regulations since 1970'. *Archivum* 28 (1982).

International Council on Archives. 'Archival Legislation 1981-1994: Albania-Kenya'. *Archivum* 40 (1995).

International Council on Archives. 'Archival Legislation 1981-1994: Latvia-Zimbabwe'. *Archivum* 41 (1996).

International Council on Archives, Committee on Archival Legal Matters. 'Principles for Archival and Current Records Legislation'. *Janus* 1997, vol.1.

* Ketelaar, Eric. *Archival and Records Management Legislation and Regulations: A RAMP Study with Guidelines.* (RAMP Study PGI-85/WS/9). Paris, FR: UNESCO, 1985.

Peterson, Trudy H and Gary Peterson. *Archives and Manuscripts: Law.* Chicago, IL: Society of American Archivists, 1985.

Activity 36

Check your institution's library or resource centre. What books or other resources do you have about infrastructure issues? Are any of the publications listed above available in your institution? If so, examine two or three of them and assess their currency and value to your institution. If not, identify two or three publications you think would be most useful to help develop or expand your preservation library. Devise a plan outlining how you could realistically obtain copies of these.

SUMMARY

This lesson has provided an overview of the entire module, *Developing Infrastructures For Records And Archives Services.* This lesson has then discussed how to establish priorities for action and suggested that the main priorities for action are often as follows:

Priority 1: identify the existing infrastructures

Priority 2: assess the existing infrastructures

Priority 3: plan to establish appropriate infrastructures

Priority 4: establish a mandate for a public sector records and archives service

Priority 5: develop organisational and staffing structures

Priority 6: build on the records and archives infrastructures.

The lesson then outlined ways to find out more information or get help with infrastructure issues.

The lesson concluded with a discussion of valuable information resources relevant to preservation.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. In your own words, explain the reason why the priorities proposed in this lesson are offered in the order they are in.

2. Indicate two of the organisations listed in this lesson that you would choose to contact first and explain why.

3. Indicate two of the publications listed in this lesson that you would choose to purchase first and explain why.

ACTIVITIES: COMMENTS

Activity 34

The priorities chosen by each organisation, government or other agency will be different, depending on the specific needs and concerns in that jurisdiction. However, it is always wise to begin by assessing the situation as a whole and then to determine achievable actions that could be taken, rather than trying to accomplish too much in a short time or taking action without adequately assessing the environment.

Activity 35

If resources are limited, it is wise to communicate with national organisations first, as they can set your requirements in the wider national legislative and administrative context. However, you should also use international organisations to obtain information on best practice elsewhere to set against the national situation. Valuable information can be passed on to your organisation through the international group, which can save resources for all.

Activity 36

It is important to begin with general information and ensure you have a good resource library of introductory and overview publications before developing a more specialised library.