

This Accord was signed in January 1997 by Anne Thurston, Executive Director of IRMT, Charles Kecskemeti, Secretary General of [ICA](#), and Christine Ardern, President of [ARMA](#).

1 Introduction

1.1 The Association of Records Managers and Administrators (ARMA), the International Council on Archives (ICA), and the International Records Management Trust (IRMT), as “partner organisations”, agree to sign the following accord which is intended to establish closer links between them and to provide a framework for joint initiatives.

1.2 The partner organisations recognise that:

1.2.1 they share a common set of values regarding the role and importance of modern records in meeting the business and accountability requirements of modern organisations;

1.2.2 they share a common concern about the ability of organisations to maintain authoritative and reliable records through time;

1.2.3 the key to a democratic society is the ability of governing bodies to be held accountable. One of the most important instruments of accountability are the records generated by these governing bodies in the course of conducting their business;

1.2.4 although general approaches to record keeping can be established internationally, record keeping laws, policies, standards and practices will vary in accordance with differences in administrative philosophies and culture across countries as well as organisations;

1.2.5 the absence of record keeping specialists with the skills, knowledge, and abilities required to establish record keeping infrastructures in modern organisations is one of the major factors inhibiting progress in this field; and

1.2.6 there are many areas in which collaboration could take place among the partner organisations, the first priority being closer co-operation in education and training initiatives.

2 Principles of the Accord

2.1 Based on the recognition of the factors above, the parties agreed that the following principles should guide the nature and extent of co-operative initiatives among themselves:

2.1.1 Co-operative initiatives will be designed and carried out in a spirit of openness, trust and mutual respect;

2.1.2 Co-operation will be based on needs recognised by all three parties and not on the individual agendas of the parties or on commercial gain;

2.1.3 Co-operation may extend to advocacy where it is determined that the mutual interest of the parties would benefit from the development of a joint position statement and advocacy strategy;

2.1.4 The determination of when and in what manner common positions and/or statements will be established with respect to particular issues, particularly in the area of standards, will be made on a case by case basis;

2.1.5 Common positions and/or statements on particular issues, especially in the area of standards, will be made on a case by case basis and whenever possible existing standards and best practices will be used in collaborative initiatives;

2.1.6 Collaboration may take many different forms (eg ARMA working on joint projects with regional branches of the ICA; the Trust working with a selected ICA section or committee and an ARMA action committee; etc.);

2.1.7 Collaboration may extend below the international level to the national and local level through co-operation with national professional organisations;

2.1.8 Information shared between the partner organisations under this accord will be without charge, except where all the organisations concerned agree otherwise; and

2.1.9 Other organisations may be invited to sign the Accord, but not until at least 12 months after the initial signature by the three partner organisations.

3 Areas for Co-operation under this Accord

3.1 Identification of best practices and relevant standards and their dissemination, particularly in the fields of records management and of electronic record keeping. This will be carried out through circulation of relevant products developed by each partner organisation and by holding common meetings and through common publications.

3.2 Reviewing, testing and dissemination of teaching materials in fields relevant to the partner organisations.

3.3 Mutual exchange of articles, news items etc. between the periodicals of the partner organisations.

3.4 Development of joint field projects, either bi-lateral or tri-lateral.

3.5 Invitation of representatives of the other partner organisations to annual conferences and congresses without imposing registration fees.

3.6 Tri-partite meetings of the partner organisations should be held at least once a year and more often if one of the partners so requires. Each partner organisation shall be entitled to send up to three representatives to the meetings. The responsibility for calling and chairing the meetings will rotate among the organisations annually, following alphabetic order: ie ARMA 1997, ICA 1998, IRMT 1999.