IMS 5047 – MANAGING BUSINESS RECORDS

TOPIC 2 - Analysis

Week Six: Recordkeeping evidence and corporate memory - Appraisal, Archives and Organisational Knowledge

Reading:

Introductory reading:
AS ISO 15489, Part 1, s.9.2; & Part 2, s.4.2.4 & 4.3.6.
Paper by Frank Upward & Barbara Reed, “Methods of Formation of the Archive”, 06/09/02 (provided)
Paper by Frank Upward, “Archiving and Corporate Memory”, 06/09/02 (provided)

Reading to be discussed in tutorial:

Optional Reading – on how electronic archives are to be preserved:
Definitions

Archives
1. Those records that are appraised as having continuing value. (Australian Standard AS 4390-1996, Part 1. Clause 4.5) Traditionally the term has been used to describe records no longer required for current use which have been selected for permanent preservation. Also referred to as permanent records.
2. The place (building/room/storage area) where archival material is kept.
3. An organisation (or part of an organisation) responsible for appraising, acquiring, preserving and making available archival material.
   Ellis, Judith (ed), Keeping Archives, Australian Society of Archivists, p. 463

Appraisal
The process of evaluating business activities to determine which records need to be captured and how long the records need to be kept, to meet business needs, the requirements of organisational accountability and community expectations. (State Records NSW)

Informational value
The value for reference or research deriving from the information the records contain, as distinct from their evidential value. Records and archives often contain information that has reference or research uses not envisaged by its creators. Also referred to as secondary value.
   Ellis, Judith (ed), Keeping Archives, Australian Society of Archivists, p. 462

Disposal
A range of processes associated with implementing appraisal decisions. These include retention, deletion or destruction of records in or from recordkeeping systems. They may also include the migration or transmission of records between recordkeeping systems, and the transfer of custody or ownership of records. (Australian Standard AS4390--1996, Records Management, Part 1, General, Clause 4.9).

Disposal authority/ schedule/policy
A tool which provides for the authorised destruction or other disposal of records under the terms of the relevant jurisdiction.

A systematic listing of records created by an organisation or agency which plans the life of these records from the time of their creation to their disposal. A disposal schedule is a continuing authority for implementing decisions on the value of records specified in the schedule. A disposal schedule lists:

- the records created by the agency
- the retention period for each series or class of records
- the disposal sentence for each series or class of records, specifying whether the records are to be retained as archives or destroyed
- the custody arrangements for each series or class of records, specifying when the records are to be transferred to intermediate storage and/or to archives. (State Records NSW)
1. General disposal schedules cover functions common to a number of agencies, typically used by government archival authorities to cover functional areas such as Personnel, Finance and Stores.

2. A recent development in appraisal methodology is the view that functional analysis is more efficient than records analysis in producing disposal schedules. The resultant disposal schedules are based on function or within function, either across a range of related organisations or to provide a specific disposal schedule for a particular agency. 

**Ellis, Judith (ed), Keeping Archives, Australian Society of Archivists, p. 468**

**Retention periods**

A disposal authority generally specifies retention periods, that is, how long records are to be retained in the organisation’s premises or offsite storage, before being destroyed or transferred to an archives.

Retention periods set down are minimum periods only and an organisation may keep records for a longer period if necessary. However, the organisation must obtain specific authorisation from the relevant authority (internal or external) to dispose of records earlier than the minimum retention period. Reasons for longer retention can include legal requirements, administrative need, and government directives. An organisation should not dispose of any records where it is aware of possible legal action for which the records may be required as evidence. *(State Records NSW)*

**Sentencing**

The activity of applying disposal decisions to records; it involves the process of identifying and classifying records according to a disposal authority and applying the disposal actions specified in it. Essentially, it is about identifying the appropriate disposal classes within the disposal authority and applying them to the right records, thus ensuring that records are retained for as long as required, the correct disposal decision is applied and the right disposal action occurs. *(State Records NSW)*

**Disposal Trigger**

Each disposal action includes a disposal trigger. The trigger is the point from which the disposal action should be implemented. For example “destroy after action completed” or “destroy after last action”. A specific disposal action might be “Destroy 7 years after expiry of contract”.

**Survey**

The process of gathering information in a systematic and consistent way about records in their administrative context. The most common uses of a survey are:

1. an examination of archives to ascertain their provenance, original order and interrelationships prior to commencing full arrangement and description processes
2. an examination of active or intermediate records noting briefly their nature, systems of arrangements, date ranges, quantities, function, physical condition, reference activity and rates of accumulation. This information is used to develop disposal schedules, plan conservation, or project space requirements, among other users. Also referred to as record survey.

**Ellis, Judith (ed), Keeping Archives, Australian Society of Archivists, p. 468**

**Series**

A group of records that document a particular function or activity, which are generally created in a like format and maintained in an identifiable sequence. The disposal classes listed in this authority may consist of one series, several series or part of a series. *(State Records NSW)*

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Week 6 Lecture Notes
Description
The process of recording information about the nature and content of records in archival custody. The description identifies such features as provenance, arrangement, format and contents, and presents them in standardised form. 
Ellis, Judith (ed), Keeping Archives, Australian Society of Archivists, p. 467

Appraisal and Disposal

Appraisal:
• An analytical process
• Determines which records should be captured into a records system
• Determines how long the records should be maintained.
• Determines records of “enduring” value, the Archives.

Disposal:
Is the implementation of appraisal decisions, eg.
• retention, deletion, destruction of records
• or - migration of records between records systems
• or - transfer of custody or ownership of records

Responsibilities need to be assigned for this process – Why?
• required at all levels of an organisation - because all people generate & keep records
• legislative and accountability requirements to be met
• appraisal & disposal processes to be carried out by person with appropriate skills
• decisions to be recorded, and authorised
• actions to be recorded.

Key = Decisions about disposal of a record should be incorporated into the design and management of a records system from Day 1. (See notes on continuum theory, Weeks 1 & 3).
For example:
1. Design a system for capturing records of the Board of Mgt of a charity
2. Records will include: minutes, agenda, agenda papers, policy files, instructions/policies, budgets, annual reports etc.
3. Determine at the outset how these records are to be controlled, managed and what their ongoing value is - to the charity, its partners/sponsors, its clients, the community, researchers, etc.

Why is this especially relevant for computer based systems or ED/RMS?
• Data is deleted from these systems daily (through updating individual records), or totally (eg. when the system gets full).
• It is impossible to make retrospective appraisal and disposal decisions about distributed stores of electronic records.
The Appraisal Process – Step 1 – Research & Analysis

1. **Do an organisational analysis (see Week 3)**
   - legal framework
   - internal & external stakeholders
   - business, social & ethical standards expected by the community

2. **Identify the organisation’s business & political context (see Week 3)**

3. **Do a functional analysis (see Week 4)**
   - goals, strategies
   - functions, and recurring actions
   - results in a “functional analysis” ie, parts of an orgn and the functions & activities they perform

4. **Develop a business classification scheme (see Week 4)**

The Appraisal Process – Step 2 – How long to keep the records?
Think of a pharmaceutical company when answering the following questions:

1. **What are the uses of the records?**
   Eg. Records produced from a specific production run of ventolin
   Destroy them immediately? After one year? Later if a problem?

2. **What are the links between these records & other systems?**
   Eg. keep summary production records for each day, week, month, year.

3. **What are the potential future uses of the records?**
   Eg. to look at output for a particular period, to investigate that batch production if a problem with a customer, audits.

4. **What are the appropriate retention periods?**
   Eg. for at least as long as the drugs resulting from that batch are past their “use by” date. **eg.**
   - production date of Jan 1997
   - “use by” date of Jan 1999
   - how long would you recommend retention of the production record?

Also need a clear **statement** of retention period, eg. “Destroy 1 year after batch “use by” date”, or accounting records - “Destroy 7 years after end of financial year and audit”

You must document
1. How the appraisal decision was make, ie. reasons for the policy
2. Issues that may require its review, eg change in legislation
3. Compulsory review dates, eg. in 5-10 years time

Handouts in class – from PROV schedules – DE students can look up any of these on the PROV website: http://www.prov.vic.gov.au
**The Appraisal Process - A good example:**


See how it has incorporated the concepts of continuum theory, organisational analysis, functional analysis and business-based classification into the development of its disposal authorities. It gives the following background.

**Functional analysis:** “The general disposal authority was developed using functional analysis to identify local government functions and activities, and identify recordkeeping requirements....

“A business classification scheme was developed as part of the project and has been used as the basis of this disposal authority. It was designed to describe and arrange in groups all of the business activities performed by councils, including specific council business and general administrative activities. The business classification scheme was developed after consultation with a number of representative councils.

The classification scheme describes common business functions and activities undertaken by councils and records created or received by a council in the course of its business. The classification scheme is hierarchical, that is moving from the broad to the more specific....

It has a hierarchical structure that is reflected in its arrangement according to functions and business activities, rather than by subject. The hierarchical model represents a business classification scheme which reflects the functions and activities of local government. The disposal authority is designed to apply to all records regardless of titling conventions used.”

An example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4.10.1</th>
<th>Function</th>
<th>CORPORATE MANAGEMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Performance Management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disposal Class</td>
<td>Records relating to the implementation of performance management in the council.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Stakeholder interests:** “The project was supervised by a Steering Committee administered by the State Records Authority. The membership of the Steering Committee was designed to represent key stakeholders and included:

- City of Sydney
- Records Management Association of Australia - Local Government Chapter
- Australian Society of Archivists - Local Government Special Interest Group
- Holroyd Council
- Lithgow Council
- Local Government and Shires Associations
- State Records Authority
- State Records Authority.”
Records of significance to the local community

“In a number of instances this disposal authority requires records which provide information about significant events or matters in relation to the council and to the local community to be retained as State archives. For example, disposal class 1.4.1 requires as State archives "Summary records and final reports of innovative projects or major projects of significance to the council or to the community".

Records of significance to a council would include those that document events or matters that had a large impact on the organization, or reflected major planning and resource commitment by the council. Records of significance to the community may be those that show a major impact of a decision, policy, program, service or activity of council on the local community, as well as the reactions of those communities. Records of significance to the community may also be those that show clearly the unique nature or special aspects of the local community, including records that document critical points of change or development.”

The Disposal Process - 6 steps

1. Identify the records and the related activities.
2. Are the records completely finished with - once on the back of a truck they are gone....
3. Match the records with the disposal authority
4. Allocate a retention period, or a destruction date
5. Get sign off for the decision, eg. from the head of the business unit, the archivist
6. Dispose of the records:
   - destruction, how? - pulping, shredding, burning in industrial facilities
   - reformatting, overwriting - electronic records
   - keep a record of everything destroyed
   - store for a further period
   - transfer ownership or custody of the records (eg. to another Department, to another company)

Example for discussion in tutorial

From National Archives of Australia Policy on Archiving Web Resources – Revised Jan 2001

- Is a website, as a whole, a publication or a record?
- If web resources are records, how can they be captured into a recordkeeping system, described and preserved, and how long should it be kept?
- Should changes to the content of Commonwealth web resources be tracked and, if so, how?
- Can an agency be held accountable for something it had on its website six months or a year ago?
- Are there any technical solutions for managing web resources as records over time?
- If individual records exist only on a website, how should they be managed?
- Should the strategies used to capture records of static web resources be different from those used to capture records of dynamically generated web resources and the delivery of web-based transactional services?
- For recordkeeping purposes, is it better to conceive of a website as an organic whole or as a series of interrelated items/resources?
Archives

See: Paper by Frank Upward & Barbara Reed, “Methods of Formation of the Archive”, 06/09/02

Also remember our reading on the recordkeeping continuum.
(Sue McKemmish, Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow: A Continuum of Responsibility, 1997

“…recordkeeping regimes capture, manage, preserve and re-present records as evidence of social
and business activity for business, social and cultural purposes for as long as they are of value,
whether that be for a nanosecond or a millenium…. Records continuum thinking and practice are
underpinned by a concept of records which is inclusive of, not exclusive to, records of continuing
value (archives)”

“…the Records Continuum Model embraces the view that records function simultaneously as
organisational and collective memory from the time of their creation. The organisation has a
particular interest in the way they function as corporate memory.”

Assuming we have the Appraisal processes (above) in place to identify the archives of the future,
how do we ensure their ongoing availability, access, integrity, readability – for the business & for
the community?

Storage facility:
• building (external hazards, location, fabric, space)
• internal environment - what sorts of safeguards?
  (light, air, humidity, fire protection, security, dust/dirt, vermin, power, OH&S, )
• shelving/housing - what might need special, non standard storage? (maps, electronic media)
• record containers - boxes, packaging, handling, transportation.
• other - eg. storage provider, expansion, disaster preparedness, viewing/access, destruction
  service

Records:
• retention period
• vital record status (any special requirements?)
• security and control (access)
• physical formats - paper, non paper (photos, film, microforms, magnetic, optical, plastics)

Preservation
NAA standards for use by Aust Govt: environmental conditions and safety standards.

Services (external or internal)
• retrieval requirements - immediate, frequency
• cost effectiveness of the service
Preservation in the Digital Environment?


Organisational Knowledge

See Paper by Frank Upward, “Archiving and Corporate Memory”, 06/09/02 (provided)
This relates to the concepts and practice of Knowledge Management.

What is knowledge?

• A capacity to act. (K-E.Sveiby, 1997).
• ANZ (Geoff Beckworth) Capturing the “know how” of the organisation and using it to work smarter”.
• “the leveraging of collective wisdom to increase responsiveness and innovation”. (T.M. Koulopoulos and C.Frappaolo (1999).)

Will/must differ depending on your organisation & its context. For example:

• Eg - 3M - knowledge = technical innovation, capability to invent. Objective is to create unique knowledge that provides a strategic capability. KM = the mgt of technical personnel, systems, facilities & admin processes to enable inventions to occur. (Includes: research, prototyping, experimentation, joint ventures, lab-based activities)
• Eg.- Bank – knowledge is equated with competitive intelligence. KM =acquisition, capture, analysis & exploitation of intelligence (data) on customers, competitors & stakeholders (includes: system based data collection, data warehousing & mining, targeted marketing &market testing.)
• Eg. Local Council - knowledge is equated with tacit & explicit understanding of customers & stakeholders. KM = framework (of people, systems and processes) for achieving business and community benefits. (includes: core system integration, e-doc mgt, internal communities of practice, internal/external feedback loops)

Context = paramount to how you define what knowledge and KM means to your organisation, what your strategy is to be, & how it will make a difference to the bottom line ($ or other).

Who is interested in this?

• IT = concerned with infrastructure for computing & communications - internally and with the outside world.
• IM = effective generation, capture, use and re-use of information, using standards, systems, processes. F.Upward talks about moving away from the evidential issues of records to their part of a larger resource as an organisation’s memory.
• KM = uses the ITC infrastructure & the IM disciplines & combines this with new cultural and behavioural processes to capture the know how of the organisation.
• Business/Competitive Intelligence – a systematic process of gathering, managing, and analysing vast amounts of data to gain insights that can be used to drive business decisions.
KM involves:

- Systems (technology)
- People management
- Communication & collaboration
- **Information management**
- Governance