

Territory Records Advisory Council Minutes

MEETING No.3 of 2013/14

12:00-2:00pm 13 February 2014

Board Room
Canberra Museum and Gallery
London Circuit, Civic

Present

TRAC: Steve Stuckey (Chair), Anne Buttsworth, David Headon, Andrew Whale, Rebecca Stubbs, Nicholas Swain, Alyssa Blackburn, Dani Wickman (Director), Megan Robinson (observer)

Meeting opened: 12:05pm. Alyssa Blackburn departed at 1:30pm. David Headon departed at 1:35pm.

Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, including Megan Robinson. The Territory Records Office has appointed Ms Robinson under the graduate program. Ms Robinson's degree is in justice and policing, and she has completed studies in governance and corruption with the Queensland University of Technology.

Agenda Item 1. – Agenda and Apologies

The Agenda was amended; Item 6 (Report on Agency Records Management) was moved to be discussed after Item 4. There were two apologies: Michael Chisnall and Amanda Harris.

Agenda Item 2. – Minutes of previous meetings and business arising

The minutes were accepted.

Business Arising matters which were discussed are:

The draft Archives ACT Marketing and Promotion Strategy: The Director advised that the two page Executive Summary will be sent out to agencies shortly.

Proposed Age Cut-Off Policy: The Director advised that after consultation with agencies 1930 is the agreed threshold. The date was also agreed to because of its specific reference to the ACT, with the appointment of the first ACT Advisory Council, and its relevance to records management trends at that time. The Director advised that a disposal schedule will be developed to help agencies implement and document the age cut-off, and the TRO will also provide advice supporting the schedule.

Records Disposal Schedule – Student Administration: The Director advised that she followed up the Council's concern regarding Entry (No.171.033.001) on page 30 relating to "records documenting allegations into misconduct which are investigated, either by the agency or an external authority, and where allegations are proved to be unfounded and the person has requested the retention of the records". The relevant Directorate agreed that an anomaly exists relating to this schedule and that this will be addressed during the Directorate's review of all of its disposal coverage.

Resolution Number 1 of Meeting No.3 2013-14: Council approved the Minutes of Meeting No.2 2013/14.

Agenda Item 3- Director's Update (no papers)

The Chairman announced that the Minister has appointed Ms Anne Buttsworth as Deputy Chair of Council. All Council members congratulated Ms Buttsworth on her appointment.

Director's update: ACT Coat of Arms -The Director advised that the Territory Records Office is anticipating that the Chief Minister will make a public comment concerning the City of Canberra Coat of Arms. The Director advised the Coat of Arms exhibition would continue at the Canberra Museum and Gallery until the 14th of March taking in Canberra Day. The exhibition cannot be extended beyond that date for preservation reasons, but it would be possible to repeat the display in the future.

Annual Records Release -The Director advised that the next event was the public release of 10 year old Cabinet documents and 20 year old general records on Canberra Day. She advised that the Territory Records Office has experimented with lots of different models, but the Office does not generate the same level of interest as the National Archives. The Chief Minister and Treasury Directorate have been delayed in preparing the Cabinet records for release for the 10 year initiative and this has prevented the TRO from coordinating a strategy for the release day. The Territory Records Office is seeking to be more proactive next year and to try and produce a more sophisticated strategy for the event.

Yarralumla Nursery Open Day -The Director reported that there will be an open day on 6 April 2014 at Yarralumla Nursery as part of their centenary celebrations. The Director advised that the Nursery has sought professional advice and has heritage consultants assisting them to put some of their heritage-listed plant ledgers on display during the open day. Dr Headon has requested that the Director advise him of the final details relevant to this event as he is currently working on a piece relating to Charles Weston.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders issues - The Director advised that the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies and the Territory Records Office have signed an agreement that gives the Institute priority access and research assistance for clients of Link-Up family reunion services. The TRO has also flagged with the ACT's Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs that there is scope for providing greater access under the Freedom of Information Act.

ESDD has conducted an internal audit of its recordkeeping which showed that the Directorate is generally performing well. The report recommended that ESDD provide assistance to staff concerning the identification and management of records of significance to Indigenous people. TRO staff and the ESDD records manager met with Rebecca Stubbs to discuss the guidance available to ESDD. Ms Stubbs suggested that relationships be fostered with the community to advise on what is sensitive material.

Records management program, agency compliance -The Director advised that in relation to the records management programs, which the Territory Records Act requires Directorates to have in place, five of the ten Directorates have been identified as compliant. JACS, Capital Metro, CWD and ETD are all currently working on their programs. Whilst the Canberra Hospital has a Records Management Program in place, the TRO is a bit concerned that the program for the Directorate is out of date. The Records Manager for the Directorate is highly efficient, and was seconded to other duties for a period of time. She has recently returned to

her records management role. The TRO is satisfied for now that the Directorate will revisit its records management program soon.

Council said they appreciated of the work done in this area and the progress that has been made by the Territory Records Office to ensure that so many Directorates are working towards compliance with records management program responsibilities.

Budget Estimates Hearings -The Director advised that she appeared at the Budget Estimates Hearings. She addressed the Committee's questions relating to digital record keeping, impact of the Centenary of Canberra on the Office and records storage. The Director and Council were pleased to note that MLAs were interested in records issues.

Agenda Item 4 – Report on Archives ACT

It was agreed at Council's last meeting that the Territory Records Office provide additional analysis in its reports. Overall, Council agreed that the ArchivesACT report is a tighter and more accessible document. Members discussed the purpose of the reports, and agreed that the ArchivesACT report would be further improved if outcomes of each activity were included in the report. Members were interested to know the reasons why they were being provided with the information and how it was influencing the work of the Office.

All Council members considered the new format of the Report on Territory Records Office Activities well drafted. Members appreciated the headings, purpose and outcome relating to each of the agency's issues. Members also agreed that the new ArchivesACT report was a good improvement. They asked that the staff contributing to both reports be thanked for their work.

Action: A further redraft of the Report on Archives ACT report be prepared taking into consideration Council's advice concerning analysis and inclusion of outcome information.

Agenda Item 5 – Volunteers Program

The Director advised that the program was a particular initiative of the ACT Government Reference Archivist. Such a program could make more material accessible to researchers and help to cultivate new relationships. Council agreed that it would be a good initiative, but offered the following advice to the Territory Records Office in developing this program further:

- volunteers must be given every opportunity to be busy and to have a job which engages them.
- It assists if you can create a task around a volunteer's interest or something they are keen on.
- The volunteer has to see an identifiable reward and know what they are doing.
- Ensure that you have the capacity to manage the volunteers within the team.
- Structure the program with a trial period, e.g. 3 months, built into the placement. You need to be able to politely terminate volunteer placements.
- Seek the National Library's and National Archives' advice given their experience with volunteer programs.
- Identify and prepare selection criteria for the volunteer roles. If individuals were passionate for the role they would be prepared to spend time to apply for the position, which could deliver more committed people.
- Ensure that you clear the proposed program and process with current staff and management all up the line.
- Start out small with the recruitment.

<p>Agenda Item 6 – Report on Agency Records Management See comments relating to this item under Item 4.</p>
<p>Agenda Item 7 – Records Disposal Schedule – Elections & Referendums for the ACT Legislative Assembly</p> <p>The Director advised that all the draft schedules at items 7-11 will be tabled a second time for Council consideration.</p> <p>The Director noted that the Elections schedules were a significant improvement on the previous ones for Elections ACT and would provide much simpler file classification for the agency. The Electoral Commissioner is keen to have the new schedule in place before he becomes an Officer of the Assembly on 1 July 2014.</p>
<p>Agenda Item 8 – Records Disposal Schedule – Elections & Referendum Services to Other Agencies See abovementioned comments in item 7.</p>
<p>Agenda Item 9 – Records Disposal Schedule - Youth Services The Chair's comment was that of the draft schedules before Council, the only one he had concerns with was item 9, the records disposal schedule relating to Youth Services. It was agreed that Mr Knudson, Records Manager from Community Services Directorate be invited to attend Council's next meeting to discuss some of the sensitive issues relating to some of the classes in the youth services schedules. The Chair stated that this is a group of records requiring careful accountability.</p> <p>Action: The Director is to invite Mr Knudsen, Records Manager from Community Services Directorate to attend Council's next meeting in May to discuss these sensitive schedules.</p>
<p>Agenda Item 10 – Records Disposal Schedule - Sewerage Management ACTEW have agreed with the sewerage and water management schedules. Ms Buttsworth and Mr Swain had comments and queries which they would email the Director concerning these schedules.</p>
<p>Agenda Item 11 – Records Disposal Schedule – Water Management See abovementioned comments in item 9</p> <p>Action: Ms Buttsworth and Mr Swain to email comments to the Director concerning the sewerage and water management schedules.</p>
<p>Other Business – Viewing of the City of Canberra Coat of Arms Council Members present at the conclusion of the meeting attended the viewing of the Canberra Coat of Arms in CMAG.</p>
<p>Next meeting:</p>

The Director advised that the next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, 1 May 2014 at 12pm. The venue will be notified to Council Members closer to the date.

Meeting closed: 1.40pm (Council Members then attended the viewing of the City of Canberra Coat of Arms in the CMAG.)

Minutes confirmed on: / /2014 _____ Steve Stuckey (Chair)