

Territory Records Advisory Council Minutes

MEETING No.2 of 2013/14

12:00 – 2:00pm 10 October 2013

Board Room,
Records Services, ACT, Building 6, 9 Sandford Street
MITCHELL

Present

TRAC: Steve Stuckey (Chair), Anne Buttsworth, Amanda Harris, David Headon, Rebecca Stubbs, Nicholas Swain, Alyssa Blackburn, Dani Wickman (Director).

Meeting opened: 12.15pm. David Headon departed at 1.10pm. Amanda Harris departed at 1.45pm.

Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, including Suzan Secko from Effective People who will minute the meeting.

Agenda Item 1. – Agenda and Apologies

The Agenda was amended; Item 5 (Draft Archives ACT Marketing and Promotion Strategy) was moved to be discussed after Item 3. This was done to allow time for discussion and for David Headon to be able to leave at 1.10pm due to other commitments. There was one apology, Michael Chisnall.

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

The minutes were accepted. No Business arising matters were discussed.

Resolution Number 1 of Meeting No. 2 2013-14: Council approved the Minutes of Meeting No.4 2012-13.

Agenda Item 3. – TRO Updates for Council information – Director's Update (no papers)

- The Director expressed that there was not much to update Council Members on, but that there was lots of activity and lots of movement in the intervening three month period.
- The Director noted that the most significant matter was progress relating to the ACT Coat of Arms exhibition. CMAG have agreed to exhibit the Coat of Arms for three months. The Gallery are flexible to the timing. The Director stated that the first week of November is the proposed timing for the opening of the display. The Director also stated that the Territory Records Office is proposing to establish a facebook page to allow for community involvement and acknowledgement of the Coat of Arms. The Office will be seeking to promote discussion about the symbolism of the Coat of Arms and the Government is hoping to obtain some real interaction with the public on this issue.
- Some Council Members had not received their invitation for the launch of the Guide to Government Records. The Director stated that the launch is scheduled for Wednesday, 16 October at the Albert Hall and Mr Paul Daley was to launch the book. The Director also indicated that CMAG are intending to sell the hard copies of the Guide. All Council

Members were invited to the function.

- The Director advised that there had been another meeting of the Storage Services Working Group. The Working Group is examining the standards of service and value for money the ACT is receiving from storage providers around Canberra. The Director stated that current services in the ACT are very patchy. Government organisations are entering into individual arrangements, paying different prices for the same services. The Working Group has acknowledged that there has been poor contract management in place in the past and that now is the opportunity to ensure that fair and satisfactory services are obtained for the whole of Government under a whole of Government umbrella. The Director acknowledged Council's concerns that the Working Group should ensure that there are no negative impacts if trying to move providers in terms of costs, etc.

Action: Ms Blackburn advised that her organisation has just undertaken this process. It was agreed that she would provide Ms Wickman with copies of relevant information relating to providers, etc.

- The Director advised that she has been invited to join a new ICT governance committee being established within the Commerce and Works Directorate. Other members include the Head of ICT for the Territory, who is also responsible for ICT for the Directorate, and this provides a useful opportunity for the Territory Records Office to interact with officers in this area. The Director also advised that the Director-General of Commerce and Works has requested a monthly one-on-one meeting. The Director-General has been interested in a number of initiatives of the Territory Records Office, and has referred staff dealing with other projects such as cloud computing and data management to the Director for consultation
- The Director advised that she and Elizabeth Estbergs would be presenting papers at the Australian Society of Archivists conference. Ms Wickman would be talking about the development of the Territory Records Act. Mr Steve Stuckey is to Chair the final plenary session.
- The Director stated that the Territory Records Office would be appointing a graduate in February next year from Queensland. Her name is Megan Robinson. Megan's degree is in justice and policing, and she has completed studies in governance and corruption which are interesting and relevant to the work of the Territory Records Office.

Agenda Item 5. – Draft Archives ACT Marketing and Promotion Strategy

The Director noted that another draft version of the ArchivesACT Marketing and Promotion Strategy Paper has been tabled with Council Members (dated 1 October 2013). The Director advised that in addition to the Strategy Paper which has been prepared for internal use for the Territory Records Office a two page Executive Summary has also been prepared.

Council Members considered the Executive Summary to be very useful and read well, given that the extended document was lengthy.

Ms Buttsworth and Mr Swain suggested that the four key strategies could be made clearer and Mr Headon suggested that page 1 of the Executive Summary relating to the strategy dot points be amended in terms of the verb endings i.e. "attracting" to "attract"; "making" to "make"; "helping" to "help" and "working" to "work".

Ms Blackburn acknowledged that the paper read well, however, she reiterated that there are no measurable outcomes or evaluation built into the document. The Director acknowledged that they needed to build some reasonable measures into the strategy. Mr Stuckey advised that in a marketing strategy you can become too successful and therefore you need to be careful of

responsibility shifting.

Mr Swain highlighted amendments for page six of the document, noting that the Regional Studies Group is a separate entity from the Canberra and District Historical Society.

Once the minor amendments have been completed, Council Members agreed that the document and the two page Executive Summary could be sent out to agencies for suggestions.

Agenda Item 4. – Report on Archives ACT

The Director advised that she attended the workshop “Building an archival memory of Canberra” led by Professor Jeannette Bastian. The Director advised that it was an excellent discussion with an emphasis on how archives represent the community.

The Council then discussed the regular ArchivesACT report. Ms Blackburn noted that “Flickr” is referred to as an online tool to allow public access. She also suggested that the Director consider “Pinterest”. Ms Blackburn also stated that the overall document tabled provided a lot of data, but not sufficient analysis. Whilst some of the information is considered interesting, for Council purposes information relating to the number of “boxes pulled” could be deleted or restructured. Perhaps some sentences could be written providing analysis as to why, for example, nothing happened in May/June?. Mr Stuckey suggested that the Director prepares the document in terms of what is the Office learning from this process.

Agenda Item 6. – Proposed Age Cut-off policy

A paper was tabled with the Council relating to a “Proposal to Develop an Age cut-off for Legacy Records”. The Territory Records Office would consider such a policy useful so that their decisions are based on firmer ground on which to make demands on agency resources to retain records. Application of an age cut-off would also remove the need for agencies or the Territory Records Office to individually examine older files for retention or disposal.

After considerable Council discussion pre 1939 records was identified as the threshold. However, Council members agreed that the Territory Records Office required a “get out clause” if necessary.

Action: The Council suggested that a proposal be prepared to Directorates for consideration.

Agenda Item 7. – Report on Agency Records Management

A paper was tabled with Council on this matter. The Council agreed that the staff of the Territory Records Office should be commended for all their efforts in meeting with relevant clientele and providing advice and reviewing agency management practices. However, Ms Blackburn stated that the report needed a change in format. More analysis was required as opposed to a list of initiated meetings and the relevant agencies being identified. The Council agreed that a paper which identifies the “successes and challenges” of the group would be more useful. The paragraph on “Thesaurus management” was considered as a good example of the kind of information which would be useful to Council. Ms Buttsworth suggested that the information relating to the numbers of meetings conducted within the three month period should still be identified, particularly if one agency required the Territory Records Office services frequently. It was also agreed by Council that the Director provide advice for Council’s February meeting relating to the agencies which do not initiate discussion.

Agenda Item 8. – Records Disposal Schedule – Student Administration

Council considered the draft Records Disposal Schedule, Student Administration Records. The Director noted that this was Council’s second consideration of the schedule. Due to an

administrative error, the Schedule had already been notified and approved, but the notification process is not a difficult one, and it is a simple matter to amend the Schedule further if Council has any concerns.

Ms Buttsworth raised an 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”. Her concern is that the current “disposal action” is to “destroy 7 years after action completed”. It was agreed by Council that the Director should investigate with the relevant Directorate as to the circumstances and background concerning this entry. Does the individual know that the documents pertaining to the alleged misconduct are going to be destroyed? It was the Council’s view that it may be important to individuals and/or organisations to ensure that records are kept, particularly if the person(s) are not guilty of the offence.

Action: The Director is to seek feedback from the relevant Directorate concerning Entry No.171.033.001 and the proposed disposal action. Further discussion also to be had concerning the current policy relating to retaining of records when a person(s) are not guilty of an offence, and other such sensitive matters.

Other Business. – Tour of Records Services Repository

Council members attended a brief tour of the facility at the conclusion of the meeting.

Next meetings

- The Director advised that the next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, 13 February 2014 at 12pm. The venue will be notified to Council Members closer to the date.

Meeting closed: 2:00 pm

Minutes confirmed on: 13/02/2014

Steve Stuckey (Chair)