

TERRITORY RECORDS ADVISORY COUNCIL MINUTES

MEETING No.3 of 2016/17

12.00pm-1.30pm 16 February 2017

RED HILL ROOM

LEVEL 4, NARA HOUSE, 1 CONSTITUTION AVENUE, CIVIC

Present

TRAC: Ms Anne Buttsworth (Chair), Mr Michael Piggott, Mr Nick Swain, Prof Chris Aulich, Mr David Brumby, Mr Geoffrey Rutledge.

Visitors: , Mr James Adamson (Minutes)

TRO: Mr Danielle Wickman (TRO Director)

Meeting opened: 12 noon

Agenda Item 1. – Welcome, Apologies, Agenda.

Before the formal meeting commenced, the TRO Director Ms Wickman introduced to Council members Ms Leesa Croke, the new Deputy Director General Policy and Cabinet. The Director outlined the background and role of TRAC, and the Chair identified some current TRAC issues. Ms Croke spoke about her background in various ACT and Commonwealth government roles prior to her appointment as Deputy Director General. Ms Croke left the meeting at 12:15 PM.

There were no apologies. Ms Roslyn Brown was not in attendance.

There were no changes to the Agenda.

Agenda Item 2. - Minutes of the previous meeting and business arising

The Minutes of the previous meeting were amended to correct the spelling of the Chair's surname. There were no other amendments and the Minutes were accepted.

Matters arising:

At the November 2016 meeting Ms Harris asked if the Australian Government Security Vetting Agency's (AGSVA) change to the period for security vetting would impact on the disposal triggers for records of security vetting checks. The Director reported that she had not yet investigated this matter

Action:

The Director will update the Council on this matter at the next meeting.

Other matters arising were addressed in the Director's report (Agenda Item 3)

Agenda Item 3. – Director’s Update (verbal)

The Director provided the Council with a status report on the work of the TRO and on each of the Action items from the previous Minutes. The following is a summary of her report:

- The Director reported that staffing had been an issue for the office in recent times principally due to illness. She detailed changes at the Woden and Civic offices to accommodate the absence of key staff including Ms Lynda Weller and Mr Wayne Finlaison, and noted that Mr Mark Dawson was retiring. She commended Ms Meg Robinson for the work she had done in covering some of the absences. The Director said that the TRO was planning to recruit additional staff. The Council agreed to Mr Swain’s suggestion that the Council record its appreciation for Mark Dawson’s work at the TRO.
- The Electronic Documents Records Management System (EDRMS) project has been completed and passed to Record Services. A Governing Board has now been established for the whole of government system. Early in the pilot project the TRO determined that cloud services for EDRMS were not yet sufficiently mature but that the market is changing and this may be a question for the governing board in the future. The Chair asked if this would require more funding. The Director suggested some transitional funding might be required. She added that a final funding model for the system that the TRO has developed is being worked on in consultation with Treasury.
- At the November meeting Mr Swain asked the Director to enquire whether a transcript of the Chief Minister’s Governance Lecture was available. The Director reported that the Speaker, Dr Tim Williams is yet to clear the transcript for release, and she will continue to follow up on this matter. Prof Aulich suggested that public release of the transcript be standard procedure for the Governance Lecture in future.

Action:

The Director will update the Council on this matter at the next meeting.

- The Director informed the Council that she would be attending the Records and Information Management Professionals’ Australasia Conference in September 2017. She will present a paper on the EDRMS project, which had won an award. Her paper will elaborate on how the case was made to business on the importance of transitioning to digital recordkeeping.

Agenda Item 4. – Section 28 declarations (verbal)

The Director reported that there were no section 28 declarations.

Agenda Item 5. – Records Disposal Schedule - Pre-1931 Records

In relation to Records Disposal Schedules generally, Prof Aulich asked whether the introductory material in the various schedules is the same. The Director confirmed that this is the case.

The Director explained that the Pre-1931 Schedule was intended to remove the need to consider each time whether records before that date should be retained. They are now able to be retained without further examination. Mr Swain suggested that New South Wales should be added to the Commonwealth (as mentioned on page 10), as some records from that period were in fact created by the NSW Government.

Mr Piggott suggested that the use of the words ‘maintained’ and ‘created’ be considered for their appropriateness.

Action:

The Director will update the Council on these matters at the next meeting.

Agenda Item 6. – Records Disposal Schedule - Public Sector Commissioner

Mr Piggott queried whether the references at pages 17 and 20 to the Commissioner for Public Administration and the Public Service Commissioner meant there was more than one Commissioner.

Mr Piggott asked about the meaning of the word ‘close date’ on page 21.

The Director noted that the TRO was increasingly conscious of the need to express disposal triggers that can be calculated by business systems, and this might account for the wording on page 21. Mr Rutledge suggested that closure should perhaps be seven years after the last action.

Action:

The Director will examine each of these matters and report at the next meeting.

Agenda Item 7. – Records Disposal Schedule - Public Service Management

Mr Swain asked where *Canberra 100* would be covered in Events on page 18. The Director said it would be covered under the Community Relations function.

Mr Piggott queried the appropriateness of the title ‘Public Service Management’ when the matters covered seem to go beyond the management of personnel. The Director explained that the agency itself preferred that terminology. Mr Rutledge said that the *Public Service Management Act 1994* was the relevant legislation and that the apparent confusion highlighted by Mr Piggott might be resolved by referring to the legislation in definitions.

Action:

The Director and Mr Rutledge will examine this matter and report at the next meeting.

The Chair referred to ‘Destroy five years after last’ on page 20 and said there was a word missing after ‘last.’

Action:

The Director will correct this.

Agenda Item 8. – Records Disposal Schedule - Remuneration Tribunal

Prof Aulich noted the five-year period on page 15 and thought it should be longer. Mr Brumby said that five years was commonly used.

Mr Piggott, referring to page 16, asked whether the decisions of the Tribunal might be lost with the seven-year period. The Chair also thought Tribunal appointments could be retained longer. Prof Aulich thought that five years was too short for policy statements. The Director said Tribunal decisions would be published as Instruments on a register, and should also be in the

annual reports of the Tribunal.

Action:

The Director will review these matters and report to the next meeting.

Agenda Item 9. – Records Disposal Schedule - Family Services

Mr Swain said that on page 18 locations are listed and suggested that these were likely to change overtime.

The Chair also noted that the use of the phrase ‘do not support government priorities etc’ on p16 was confusing, and that that wording on page 17 could be improved.

Action:

The Director will review these matters and report to the next meeting.

Agenda Item 10. – Records Disposal Schedule - Public and Community Accommodation

The Chair and Mr Piggott sought clarification on whether this schedule was a combination of two functions, and members discussed whether schedules that are being reissued required as much attention as new schedules. The Chair suggested that all schedules should be treated as new schedules.

At page 19 the phrase ‘do not support government priorities’ is used again.

Prof Aulich asked whether there was a risk that records created by third parties who were contracted by agencies might not be retained. He asked whether the contracting agency had a responsibility to ensure that the records were kept. The Director said this matter was covered by the overarching standards applying to all agencies, in particular the Protect standard.

The Chair referred to the phrase ‘to or by government’ on page 25 and asked if the distinction could be made clearer. Mr Piggott noted this was a common issue across the schedules.

Prof Aulich commented that the reference to the FOI Act will need to be updated with the upcoming changes to the Act.

The chair referred to page 33 where ‘management of’ has been repeated and should be deleted.

Action:

The Director will consider these matters and report to the next meeting.

Records Disposal Schedules -- second consideration.

No action.

Agenda Item 11. – Appointments to ACT Boards and Committees

Prof Aulich said that he thought the changes to the nomination process were excellent but the appointment process should also be transparent. He mentioned the Canadian system where appointments are made by an independent appointments board. The Chair suggested that the Directorates would still need to provide criteria to ensure suitable appointments.

There was general discussion around this matter and the Council noted the paper.

Agenda Item 12. – Territory Records Office Business Plan 2016/17

The Director informed the Council that the Business Plan presented at this meeting was a copy of the Plan previously submitted, not a progress report. At the November 2016 meeting the Council asked that the TRO consider whether the Plan's Strategic Priorities might be expanded to include the TRO's strategic partnerships and leadership role in ACT public administration. The Director recommended and the Council agreed that this be considered in the context of the 2017/8 Plan when it is developed.

Action:

The TRO to consider whether the Plan's Strategic Priorities in the 2017/8 Plan might be expanded to include the TRO's strategic partnerships and leadership role in ACT public administration.

Mr Piggott asked whether the Council should assume that the deadlines in the Plan have been met. The Director said that was not the case but that she was moderately confident that all of the items in the Plan would be completed this year, even if not strictly in accordance with the deadlines. The Council agreed that the plan should be kept on the agenda and progress regularly updated.

Action:

The Director will update the Council on progress with the Plan at future meetings.

Agenda Item 13. – Report on ArchivesACT

The issue of the 'year to date totals' mentioned at the previous meeting was discussed. It transpired that the totals were in fact in the Report. The Director suggested that the Report could be improved with respect to the use of statistical data and the inclusion of graphs. She noted that The Council of Australasian Archives and Records Authorities is revisiting statistical issues and this was an opportunity to take a 'back to basics' review of the use of statistics in the Report. The Chair cautioned the need to ensure continuity was not lost when changes were being considered. The Council noted the Report.

Agenda Item 14. – Report on Agency Records Management

The Director said the Report was brief as repetitive items have been removed. The Council noted the Report.

Other Business

There was no other business. The Chair thanked Council members and staff for their attendance and contributions.

Next meetings

Meeting number 4 of 2016–2017 is proposed for Thursday 18 May 2017

Meeting number 1 of 2017–2018 is proposed for Thursday 17 August 2017

Note: A new Council will be in place for the 17 August meeting.

Meeting closed: 1.30 pm