

THE DIRECTOR OF TERRITORY RECORDS

In carrying out the broad range of functions listed in the *Territory Records Act 2002*, the director works closely with each ACT government agency's chief executive and nominated records manager.

The Territory Records Office (TRO), led by the director of Territory Records:

- provides advice to agencies and monitors agency compliance with the Act
- maintains the whole-of-government records management thesaurus which makes sure names are consistent across the ACT Government
- provides support for the Territory Records Advisory Council
- helps members of the public to find records
- develops standards and guides for record management
- advises on record management.

The Territory Records Advisory Council met four times during 2009–10. Membership of the council at 30 June 2010 was

- Mr Steve Stuckey (chair)
- Ms Veronica Pumpa (deputy chair)
- Ms Jill Caldwell
- Dr David Headon
- Mr Andrew Kefford
- Ms June Penny
- Ms Rebecca Stubbs
- Mr Greg Wood (Mr Wood resigned during the year because of other commitments)
- Mr David Wardle.

For the first time since records were opened to public access in July 2008, records management in ACT Government agencies was reviewed, as were the recommendations in a report by the ACT Auditor-General into *Records Management in ACT Government Agencies* (No. 3/2008). The review found the records management regime in the ACT to be comprehensive and effective.

During 2009–10 each agency was surveyed about:

- how up-to-date their records management plan (RMP) was
- procedures and training that support the program
- the role of the agency's records manager
- the extent and location of paper records
- how to manage digital records.

The director then used the survey data as the basis for a number of more detailed agency-based assessments.

The number of records made available for public access grew steadily over the year, and the range of research guides and finding aids was expanded. The 'Find of the Month', which publicises an interesting piece of information that has come to light, became increasingly popular and featured on local ABC radio.

100TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS IN 2013

The director is considering the proposal to set up an ACT archives and heritage centre to celebrate the centenary of Canberra in 2013. The centre would house significant records and objects held by ACT Government agencies, and help ensure their preservation.

COUNCIL OF AUSTRALASIAN ARCHIVES AND RECORDS AUTHORITIES

The director represents the ACT at the biannual meeting of the Council of Australasian Archives and Records Authorities to ensure that ACT records management is consistent with other Australian jurisdictions and Australian best practice. Ongoing issues include the increasing importance of digital records, the recordkeeping practices of contractors, and providing public access to records.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

The Public Accounts Committee of the Legislative Assembly is currently inquiring into the ACT Auditor-General's performance audit report *Records Management in ACT Government Agencies* (No. 3/2008).

In its response to the committee, the government recognised that recordkeeping must not be compromised by the daily pressures of service delivery. It restated its commitment to improving records management as part of the transparency and accountability of government and the documentary heritage of the community.

To help agencies in an increasingly digital environment, TRO will develop a standard to allow the eventual disposal of some source records after digital copies are made.

The director monitors agencies' compliance with their own RMPs. As recommended in the Auditor-General's report, the director increased the monitoring of agency compliance.

REVIEW OF THE *TERRITORY RECORDS ACT 2002*

Section 58 of the *Territory Records Act 2002* required the minister to review the operation of the Act as soon as possible after 1 July 2009 and report to the Assembly within a year. Mr Paul Macpherson, the Manager of Records and Archives at the University of NSW, undertook an independent review in 2009. He consulted widely with agencies, professional organisations, community organisations, the Territory Records Advisory Council and the public. His review built on reviews of the standards and guidelines for records management completed in the previous financial year. Mr Macpherson's report was tabled in the Legislative Assembly. Issues raised in the review included:

- updating the name, definitions and functioning of the Act
- broadening the ACT to include executive documents, Territory health records, legal practice records of the Legal Aid Commission, and complaints records of the Human Rights Commission
- recognising a greater role for the director in managing digital records
- enabling the transfer of ACT records to another jurisdiction when necessary
- introducing an annual date for the release of records to the public
- clarifying relations with other Acts.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Each year the director, the chair of the Territory Records Advisory Council and the TRO hold a joint planning day to establish the work program for the year. This program establishes the TRO's priorities for the year.

Two priorities have been set for 2010–11. The first is completing legislative amendments to the *Territory Records Act 2002* in response to the Act's review. The second is to implement changes in response to the Auditor-General's report, so that the TRO's day-to-day operations reflect the government's commitment to a rigorous and robust records management regime. This will involve liaison with all stakeholders, including the Territory Records Advisory Council.

For more information

The Director of Territory Records

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