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Left to right:
Chris Field, Colin Murphy (Chair), Justine McDermott and Sven Bluemmel
(photograph courtesy of State Records Office)

On the cover:
Premier’s Department file, Consignment 1476, item 1925/0573
Annual Report 2011-12  •  State Records Commission of WA

In an environment in which government is creating increasing volumes of information in both hard copy and digital form, the Commission is pleased to note the continuing development of Sector and General Disposal Authorities to support agencies' efficient management of information. This program has already produced significant benefits for government agencies with the introduction of standardised provisions, where possible, to enable consistency throughout government for the legal disposal of information in all formats and avoid the need for duplication of effort. Government recordkeeping will benefit from the recent publication of the revised General Disposal Authority for Human Resource Management Records. In addition, the Commission approved two Sector Disposal Authorities: one for the nine Regional Development Commissions and the other, for the four government Universities in WA. The Commission can also report that the Sector and General Disposal Authorities are now complemented by the Online Retention and Disposal Application (ORDA), which became operational this year.

Events during the year have once again highlighted the vulnerability of State records. There were a number of cases of accidental destruction, loss of, and damage to, government information across local and State government organisations. The State Records Office was involved in assisting or advising eight government agencies and a commercial storage provider on records recovery following various incidents, detailed elsewhere in this report. These incidents highlight the risk of not transferring State archives to an appropriate facility.

Coupled with sudden disasters, which may be unavoidable, there are those which often go unnoticed for a period of time and should be avoidable. I refer to the risks associated with the rapidity of technological change and the manner in which it impacts on almost every component of our business environment. There is a growing awareness of the risks associated with data storage and security, data sovereignty, legal discovery and business continuity for government digital assets. We have already experienced the obsolescence of tapes; DAT tapes; cassettes; cartridges; zip discs; floppy discs; and others and the loss of information on changing mediums is likely to continue without effective planning and migration strategies to minimise such risks.

The Commission acknowledges the continuing inability of the State Archivist and Executive Director State Records to accept custody of State archives in both hard copy and digital form due to the lack of archival storage. The Commission regrets the financial and physical burden this places on all government organizations having to store and manage their own archives. The State's archives remain at risk without a purpose-built State archive facility for the twenty-first century.

The Commission is acutely aware of its statutory obligation to monitor agency compliance with the State Records Act 2000. To some extent, monitoring is achieved by self-evaluation undertaken by government agencies as well as investigations into suspected breaches of the Act. However, the Commission is of the view that a more effective compliance monitoring regime is necessary to foster public confidence that State records are being created, managed and utilised to best meet each agency's business imperatives and the needs of the community. Planning and development of a methodology for a comprehensive monitoring regime has been conducted. However, resourcing limitations have delayed implementation.

I wish to thank my fellow Commissioners for their support during the eleventh year of the Commission's operations. We are grateful to Cathrin Cassarchis, State Archivist and Executive Director State Records, and her staff, for supporting the Commission this year. My colleagues and I also acknowledge the efforts of government agencies and their recordkeeping staff in improving their information management practices.

Colin Murphy
Chairperson, State Records Commission
October 2012
This Annual Report is submitted to Parliament in accordance with the obligations of the State Records Commission (hereafter called the Commission) under section 64(1) of the State Records Act 2000 (hereafter called the Act).

The Report outlines the activities of the Commission during 2011-12 and comments on matters that pertain to the operations of the State Records Office (hereafter called the SRO).

Note: The Commission is not an accountable agency with respect to the requirements of the Financial Management Act 2006.

Compliance Reporting Award
This year’s Commission Award, for Excellence in Reporting by State government organizations on compliance with their recordkeeping plans, was presented to the Disability Services Commission at the Lonnie Awards presentation ceremony on 23 March 2012. A special commendation was also awarded to Main Roads Western Australia.

General Disposal Authorities
In June 2012 the SRO published a fully revised General Disposal Authority for Human Resource Management Records, along with supporting documentation to assist with its implementation across government. This is the first full revision of this Authority since the implementation of the Act and positive feedback has been received from initial users.

Sector Disposal Authorities
In 2010 – 11 the Commission reported on a new program to develop and publish Sector Disposal Authorities (SDAs): the objective of the program being to provide consistent coverage for the legal disposal of functional records created by State government organizations with similar business functions, e.g. Port Authorities or Cemetery Boards. The program was funded for a five month period during 2011–12. Whilst the project funding was limited, the SRO was able to produce four SDAs within the funded period. These four SDAs cover the legal disposal activities of 30 government agencies – a highly successful initiative for which the Commission commends the SRO. Whilst further funding to continue SDA development is necessary, it is our hope that the more of these SDAs produced, the less work agencies will be required to perform.

Margaret Medcalf Award
This award recognises excellence in referencing and research by the author(s) of a published work, where they have acknowledged use of the State archives collection. This year there were two Awards presentations scheduled for works published in 2010 and 2011 respectively:

Awards were presented on:
• 3 August 2011 to Professor Anna Haebich for her book, ‘Murdering stepmothers: the execution of Martha Rendell’, and
• 13 June 2012 to Fiona Skyring for her book, ‘Justice: a history of the Aboriginal Legal Service of Western Australia’.

FIGURE 1. Representation of the Commission’s role in the reporting framework established by the Act.
In a rapidly changing business environment, government organizations are faced with significant issues affecting information continuity.

With government agencies' increasing reliance on digital technology, issues of data storage and security, data sovereignty, business continuity, legal discovery and risk management are becoming exponentially more significant. The pace of technological development requires a commensurate response if government information is to be protected in the short, medium and long term. While government agencies may be applying good business principles to the short-term management of current data, little work is being done to ensure that data is created on compatible platforms to ensure interoperability and the migration to new formats for both medium and long-term retention. The Commission considers that Standards and Guidelines are required in this area to support government in efficient information management, with the aim of reducing data migration costs and helping to mitigate the risk of costly data loss.

There is a clear need for government agencies to achieve greater business efficiencies. Digital continuity for government information is a universal issue and government's ability to address and achieve economic, financial and social outcomes is dependent on its ability to protect and exploit its information assets.

The inability of the SRO to accept transfers of State archives since 2001 has resulted in over 45 linear kilometres of hard copy government archives remaining in agency custody where they are inaccessible to the public and can be at risk of loss. The Commission was concerned to note that a number of disaster recovery matters impacted on government records in 2011-12. These included monitoring salvage operations and resolving issues with Main Roads Western Australia and the Town of Claremont; water damage to the records of the Public Sector Commission in December 2011 and the Mandurah Court in January 2012; and records treated for water damage in 2011 following an incident at a contracted commercial provider for the storage of temporary State records, affecting the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, the Department of Health, the Department of Agriculture and Food and the Central Institute of Technology, among others. These incidents highlighted the time and resources expended on disaster recovery and the potential loss to the State of critical government information.

Whilst the Town of Claremont implemented effective salvage operations directly following the November 2010 fire, the extent of loss only came to light this year, highlighting the critical need for off-site backup mechanisms and effective systems to capture and manage all forms of government information from the point of creation and receipt. The Commission is thankful that the Town's loss was restricted to a very small group of records and commends the Town for the prompt salvage operation.

As a result of damage to hundreds of Main Roads records during the Carnarvon floods in December 2010, many of the damaged boxes, which contained irreplaceable archival records, could not be salvaged and due to the health risk from mould, had to be destroyed.

As in previous years, the SRO received a number of requests from agencies to accept transfers of archives. Requests for transfer were received from the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency, the Department of Housing, Perth Children’s Court, the Shire of York, the City of Armadale, Kalgoorlie Hospital, the Water Corporation and Parliament House. These requests for transfer, made notwithstanding advice from the State Archivist and Executive Director State Records to agencies that they retain archives awaiting transfer due to the lack of an appropriate archives facility, reflect an increasing demand pressure for a State Archive solution. Similarly, a number of agencies have requested information from the SRO about proposed formats for transfer of digital archives, which they must retain in agency due to a lack of a suitable State Archive facility.
The Commission was established in July 2001, in accordance with Part 8 of the Act. The Commission consists of four members: the Auditor General; the Information Commissioner; the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administrative Investigations (Ombudsman); and an appointee with recordkeeping experience from outside government. The Governor appoints the fourth Commissioner for a three-year term.

During 2011 – 12 the Commissioners were:

- Mr Colin Murphy, Auditor General, and Chair of the Commission.
- Mr Chris Field, Parliamentary Commissioner for Administrative Investigations.
- Mr Sven Bluemmel, Information Commissioner.
- Ms Justine McDermott, Governor’s Appointee to the Commission.

On 21 February 2012 the Executive Council approved Ms McDermott’s reappointment as Commissioner, pursuant to section 58 of the Act. Ms McDermott’s appointment will expire on 23 March 2015. A notice to this effect was published in the Government Gazette of 16 March 2012.

There were no changes to the Commission’s membership during 2011 - 12. The Commissioners’ personal profiles can be viewed on the SRO website at www.sro.wa.gov.au

The Commission’s functions are set out in Part 8 of the Act and include:

- approving government organizations’ recordkeeping plans;
- approving the legal disposal of government records;
- monitoring the operation of and compliance with the Act;
- monitoring compliance by government organizations with their respective recordkeeping plans;
- inquiring into breaches, or possible breaches, of the Act;
- establishing principles and standards for the governance of recordkeeping by State organizations; and
- determining the access status of certain State archives.

The Commission held three formal meetings during 2011 - 12. The meeting dates were: 5 August & 2 December 2011, and 7 March 2012. Two meetings were held in Perth while the August 2011 meeting was hosted by the Department of Education’s Wheatbelt Regional Office in Northam.

Once approved, the minutes of each meeting may be viewed on the SRO’s website at www.sro.wa.gov.au.
In performing its functions the Commission is responsible for ensuring that, as far as possible, a standard of recordkeeping that best serves the interests of the people of Western Australia is maintained in over 300 government agencies and statutory organizations (including 138 local governments).

Altogether these agencies employ well over 100,000 people who produce records relevant to business activities in a variety of formats, including conventional paper files, microfilm, cartographic plans, photographs, audio recordings and digital records.

Technical advice and administrative support is provided to the Commission by the State Archivist and Executive Director State Records and the staff of the SRO.

The Commission’s approach is to establish a framework that gives effect to the Act, placing a primary responsibility on government organizations, with support from the SRO, to comply with effective recordkeeping requirements.

The Commission’s clients consist of:

- State Parliament;
- Western Australian public sector agencies;
- local government authorities and elected members;
- a range of statutory offices, including the Governor’s Establishment, Ministerial offices, Commissions and Committees of Inquiry; and
- the people of Western Australia, who are able to access records in the State archives collection and ultimately benefit from the principles and standards by which State archives are selected.
Part 9 of the Act establishes the entity called the State Records Office and prescribes the functions and role of the head of the Office, the State Archivist and Executive Director State Records (hereafter called the Executive Director). In addition to other functions under the Act, the Executive Director is the Commission's Executive Officer, providing advice and support to the Commission; and along with the Deputy Director State Recordkeeping form the Executive Secretariat to the Commission. These positions host and support the Commission’s meetings, functions and activities, providing advice as necessary with the Executive Director reporting to the Commission on matters relating to the operation of the Act.

A cornerstone compliance requirement of the Act is the mandate for each government organization to produce a Recordkeeping Plan (hereafter called the RKP). The RKP must identify all records created and received by the organization; explain how those records are managed in the context of the organization’s functions; specify a retention period for each class of record; and describe the management, security, and disposal procedures for all recorded information.

Draft RKPs are submitted by government organizations to the Executive Director for evaluation by SRO staff, before the RKPs are submitted to the Commission for approval. The Executive Director and staff of the SRO provide advice, assistance and training to government organizations, concerning the management of government information, in all formats.

In addition, the SRO provides government and the community with information about, and public access to, archives held in the State Archive. The status of the State archives collection is supported by the requirement for the Executive Director to create and maintain a register of all State archives, including those not in the State archives collection.

The Commission continues to report to Parliament on progress and achievements against the requirements of the Act, including those to ensure that:

(a) State recordkeeping is of a standard that best serves the interests of the people of this State; and
(b) subject to the law, government records are accessible to the public.

The Commission contributes to the strategic planning processes of the SRO and in this context, supports the SRO’s priorities in the following areas:

**Empowering Government to achieve good recordkeeping**
During the first decade of the Act’s operation the primary focus has been on ensuring that all State organizations have approved RKPs and Retention and Disposal Schedules, which are now subject to cyclical reviews. Last year the SRO introduced new systems and tools such as Sector-based Disposal Authorities and as mentioned earlier, four SDAs have already been produced. Supporting guidelines have also been produced to assist with the implementation of fully revised General Disposal Authorities and agency training is conducted where necessary.

**Ensuring State archives are preserved and well managed**
The SRO has been unable to accept transfers of State archives since 2001. Securing a purpose built State Archive (incorporating a Digital Archive) remains a priority for the SRO and the Commission.

**Enabling appropriate access to the State archives**
The SRO is concurrently investigating online service models to provide access to State archives for a broader client base, regardless of their location; and developing an Access Strategy ready for implementation in the new Collection Management System.
KEY PERFORMANCE AREAS

Activities carried out by the Commission during 2011-12 in meeting the requirements of the Act.

1. GOVERNMENT RECORDKEEPING

Evaluation and approval of Recordkeeping Plans

Under section 61 of the Act the Commission must establish principles and standards for the governance of recordkeeping by State organizations; and guidelines for the compilation of RKPs by those organizations. An RKP describes an agency's recordkeeping systems, disposal arrangements, policies and practices. The RKP indicates whether records are to be retained permanently as State archives and whether these records are to be transferred to the State archives collection. It also contains recommendations about records that are to be treated as restricted access archives.

Under the Act, all government organizations are required to submit RKPs for approval by the Commission. As part of a continuous cyclical process, an RKP must be reviewed within five years of its approval date (or last review), and a report of the review submitted to the Commission. This year 36 agencies were required to review their RKPs.

During 2011–12 the Commission approved 33 new or amended RKPs, and the continuation of four RKPs requiring no amendment (see Figure 2).

Appendix 1 of this Report identifies the status of those RKPs due for review or submission to the Executive Director during 2011–12.

Appendix 2 identifies new organizations required to submit RKPs during 2011–12.
Retention and Disposal Schedules

The disposal plan for an organization’s records is commonly referred to as a Retention and Disposal Schedule (hereafter called an R&D). This document is an integral part of an organization’s RKP. Unless the disposal of records is covered by a General Disposal Authority or Sector Disposal Authority developed by the SRO, State government organizations are required to develop R&Ds that are unique to their particular functional activities. RKPs can only be approved by the Commission once the R&D has been given final approval.

Following advice from the SRO and the State Records Advisory Committee (see page 16) the Commission approved 22 R&Ds during 2011-12.

Online Retention & Disposal Application (ORDA)

In February 2012, the SRO completed the development of ORDA: a web based system designed to enable government organizations to draft and submit their disposal authorities online.

The production version of ORDA is now operating and government agencies are beginning to populate the system as they review their R&Ds.

Working closely with colleagues across Australasia while developing this initiative, the SRO established a demonstration environment, enabling other archival institutions to test and assess the product for suitability within their jurisdictions. The Public Records Office of Victoria is preparing to implement ORDA in 2012-13.

FIGURE 2. Recordkeeping Plans and Retention and Disposal Schedules actioned in 2011-12.
Commencing in January and concluding in June 2012, the SRO implemented an initiative to develop SDAs to cover the legal disposal of the records of a number of State government organizations with similar functional activities. The aim of the project was to identify synergistic clusters of like records across wide sectors of State government and produce suitable SDAs to allow for the legal disposal of those records; thus eliminating the need for many individual organizations to produce individual R&Ds for their functional records.

### Sector Disposal Authorities

Within the project period, four clusters were chosen:

- Regional Development Commissions;
- University Student Guilds;
- Cemetery Boards; and
- Port Authorities.

An SDA for the functional records of each of the following were either finalised or developed during 2011 – 12:

- nine Regional Development Commissions, approved at the August 2011 Commission meeting. This SDA can be viewed on the SRO’s website.
- eight Port Authorities, as defined in Schedule 1 of the *Port Authorities Act 1999*, finalised for approval;
- four University Student Guilds, finalised for approval; and
- nine Cemetery Boards, finalised for approval.

With minimal input from the SRO, a further SDA was developed by a Working Group consisting of representation from the four government universities in metropolitan Perth. The Commission highly commends the initiative which covers the functional records of Curtin, Edith Cowan and Murdoch Universities along with those of the University of Western Australia.

### General Disposal Authority Review Program

General Disposal Authorities (GDAs) are documents which specify how to dispose of particular series of records common to State and local government agencies. GDAs are continuing authorities for the legal disposal of records documenting the routine internal operations within government organizations. Produced by the SRO, they provide consistent disposal decisions throughout the State and eliminate the necessity for each government organization to prepare individual disposal authorities for those records.

At present, the SRO publishes GDAs for *Financial and Accounting Records; Human Resource Management Records; and Administrative Records* of State government agencies. Local government organizations are catered for via the GDA for *Local Government Records* which provides for the legal disposal of functional and administrative records for the whole of local government.

All GDAs must be reviewed every five years in accordance with the Act.

#### General Disposal Authority for Human Resource Management Records

A complete revision of the General Disposal Authority for Human Resource Management Records (GDAHR) was completed during 2011-12. This project resulted in a fully revised GDAHR being approved by the Commission and published in June 2012 for use throughout government.
Monitoring Compliance under the State Records Act

The Commission is required under section 60(1) of the Act to monitor the operation of, and compliance with, the Act and compliance by government organizations with their RKPs.

In its 2010-11 Report the Commission outlined the introduction of a formal monitoring program during 2011-12. Regrettably this program has yet to commence due to SRO budget constraints. Therefore, the Commission must rely on the RKP review cycle, and the investigation of suspected breaches (see page 20), as the chief mechanisms for ensuring agency compliance with the Act.

During 2011–12, 36 government organizations were required to complete an RKP review and report to the Commission. Five of these agencies reported no significant change in the status of their recordkeeping practices, whilst the remaining 31 agencies undertook to develop and submit amended RKPs.

State Records Commission Award for Excellence in Compliance Reporting

The Institute of Public Administration Australia (IPAA) recognizes excellence in annual reporting by the public sector through its W. S. Lonnie Awards. In 2006, the IPAA introduced a new Commission award for Excellence in Annual Reporting on Recordkeeping in collaboration with the Commission and the SRO.

As in previous years, all State government organizations’ annual reports were assessed for the award. The initial shortlist yielded the annual reports of 40 organizations. Those reports were evaluated further and reduced to a final shortlist of 18 reports for consideration by a judging panel of industry representatives and SRO officers. The judging panel evaluated the reports according to how well certain criteria had been addressed, including:

- the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization’s recordkeeping systems are evaluated, not less than once every five years;
- the organization conducts a recordkeeping training program;
- the efficiency and effectiveness of the recordkeeping training program are reviewed from time to time; and
- the organization’s induction program addressed employees’ roles and responsibilities in regard to their compliance with the organization’s RKP.

At the W.S. Lonnie Awards function on 23 March 2012, the Disability Services Commission was presented with the State Records Commission Award for Excellence in Compliance Reporting. The panel found that the organization had clearly demonstrated a strong commitment to improve its recordkeeping and meet the compliance requirements of the Act. The judging panel also commended Main Roads Western Australia for a high standard of reporting.
The Commission remains concerned that the integrity and security of government information (both hard copy and digital) is at risk, particularly long term data assets that must be maintained for continued use. The Commission has previously reported on the inability of the SRO to accept custody of State archives from government organizations. Archives in hard copy remain scattered throughout the State due to the State Archive being at capacity, a situation that has prevailed since 2001. Archives in digital format are similarly locked within business systems, applications and recordkeeping systems in government agencies.

Last year, the Commission expressed its full support for the SRO business case, titled "Future proofing the State’s Information Assets: Business Case - Archive Repository and Supporting Initiatives". This document was submitted to Government in December 2010, and its proposals were described in the Commission’s 2010-11 Report. The Government allocated $100,000 in the 2011-12 budget for the identification of possible sites, but no commitment has been made for a new building to house the State Archives. The protection of long term government information assets therefore remains a significant risk for government.

The condition of archives in the custody of the SRO is also of concern. State archives are stored at the Alexander Library Building and Dianella repositories. Humidity and temperature conditions have at times not been able to be maintained consistently at either repository due to the age of plant, leaving the collections in both locations at risk of mould development over several months. The State Library has committed to a replacement of the roof and a chiller unit at the Alexander Library Building during 2012 – 13. A capital project to replace airconditioning in the Dianella repository has been included in the Department of Culture and the Arts Portfolio Strategic Asset Management Plan.
User Friendly Accessibility to State Archives

Margaret Medcalf Award

This award honours Margaret Medcalf, who served as State Archivist of Western Australia from 1974 to 1989. The award is given for excellence in research and referencing by a writer who has used the State archives collection. All publications submitted for the award must be published within a prescribed calendar year.

This year there were two presentations of the award for works published in 2010 and 2011 respectively. Miss Medcalf attended and participated in both award ceremonies.

On 3 August 2011 Commissioner Colin Murphy presented the 2010 Award to Professor Anna Haebich for her book 'Murdering Step Mothers: the execution of Martha Rendell'. A Special Commendation certificate was also presented to Mr Paul Dench and Ms Alison Gregg for their book 'Carnarvon and Apollo: one giant leap for a small Australian town'.

On 13 June 2012 the Hon John Day MLA, Minister for Culture and the Arts, presented the 2011 Award to Dr Fiona Skyring for her book 'Justice: A history of the Aboriginal Legal Service of Western Australia'. A Special Commendation certificate was also presented to Mr Jeremy Martens for his book 'Government House and Western Australian Society, 1829-2010'.
Restricted Access Archives

Under Part 6 of the Act all State archives should be open access archives after 75 years unless they contain exceptionally sensitive information or information about a person's medical condition or disability – in which case they may be restricted for up to 100 years.

Sections 37 and 38 of the Act require the Commission to rule on applications by government organizations to restrict access to certain State archives and set the age at which these records cease to be restricted, or open previously restricted archives. During 2011-12 the Commission approved an application submitted by the Department of Health to restrict access to an item in the State archives collection due to confidential patient information held on the file.

Five yearly review of restricted access decisions

Under section 37(5) of the Act the Commission must review a direction it made under section 37(2)(b) of the Act to restrict access to an archive after it has been transferred to the State archives collection; at least once in the five years after the direction was made or at least once in the five years after any review.

Under section 48(4) of the Act, the Commission must review a direction it made under section 48(1) that an archive is an exceptionally sensitive archive, at least once in the five years after the direction was made, or at least once in the five years after any review.

A five yearly review of Commission directions regarding restricted access items in the State archives collection was completed in November 2011. A report on this review was considered and approved by the Commission at the December 2011 meeting. In addition, the Commission approved the public release of the register of Commission directions on restricted access archives. The register is available on the Accessing Restricted Records page of the SRO's website.
During the reporting year only one Committee was extant under section 62 of the Act: the State Records Advisory Committee, which examines retention and disposal recommendations prior to their referral to the Commission for approval. The SRO continues to lead and provide administrative support to this Committee.

The State Records Advisory Committee (the Committee) is established to provide advice regarding:

- State records that should be State archives;
- retention periods for those State records that are not to be State archives; and
- associated matters (as prescribed by the Commission).

The Committee meets regularly to consider the retention and disposal components of RKPs, a critical element of the comprehensive records management framework established by the Act. Recommendations are presented to the Commission following each Committee meeting.

During 2011-12 the Committee met on three occasions: 2 November 2011, 29 February and 27 June 2012.

The Committee includes representatives from the Public Service and bodies concerned with recordkeeping. Members and deputy members are appointed for three-year terms by the Commission.
Membership of the State Records Advisory Committee as at 30 June 2012

Chair of the Committee
Ms Isabel Smith – Deputy Director State Recordkeeping, SRO

Executive Secretary
Mr Martin Fordham – Recordkeeping Consultant, SRO

Australian Society of Archivists (WA) Inc
Dr Roberta Cowan (Deputy: Vacant)

Department of Indigenous Affairs
Ms Tanya Butler (Deputy: Ms Rebecca Bairnsfather-Scott)

Historical Interests representative
Ms Jennie Carter (Deputy: Vacant)

Law Society of Western Australia
Mr Robert O’Connor QC (Deputy: Ms Anne Seghezzi)

Local Government Records Management Group
Ms Julie Mathieson (Deputy: Ms Rita Edwards)

Local Government CEO Representative
Ms Anne Banks-McAllister (Deputy: Vacant)

State Government CEO Representative
Ms Cheryl Gwilliam (Deputy: Vacant)

Records and Information Management Professionals Australasia
Dr Kerry Smith (Deputy: Vacant)

Minutes Secretary
Ms Gillian Hodson – Administrative Assistant, SRO

Members of the Committee who retired during 2011-12 and the bodies represented

State Government CEO representative
Mr Brian Bradley (member)

The Commission acknowledges the valuable contribution Committee representatives (including those retired this year) provide to the work of the Commission and in the identification of archival records to be kept for posterity.
Part 3 Division 2

Section 20(2) – gazette orders prescribing timing for submission of organizations’ record keeping plans
No orders were issued during 2011-12.

Section 23(1) – approve or refuse to approve record keeping plans
During 2011-12 the Commission approved 33 RKPs, comprising six RKPs from new organizations; amendments to 23 existing RKPs; and the continuation of four RKPs requiring no amendment.

Section 23(2) – give reasons for refusal to approve record keeping plans
The Commission did not refuse to approve any RKPs submitted during 2011-12.

Part 3 Division 3

Section 25 – Commission to have a plan
The Commission’s amended RKP was approved by the Minister for Culture and the Arts in February 2008. The RKP was fully reviewed during the reporting period with a view to submitting an amended RKP by May 2013.

Section 26 – State Records Office to have a plan
The SRO’s amended RKP was approved by the Commission in December 2007. This RKP is currently under review and expected to be finalised by the end of the calendar year.

Section 27 – Schedule 3 organizations to have plans
No action was required with respect to the RKPs of four of the five Schedule 3 organizations during 2011-12.

The Commission endorsed Horizon Power’s amended RKP at the August 2011 meeting and it was subsequently approved by the Minister for Energy on 29 November 2011.

Part 3 Division 4

Section 28(3) – the Commission may require an agency to review its record keeping plan (discretionary)
The Commission required no discretionary reviews in 2011-12.
Section 28(5) – five yearly review of all record keeping plans
The recordkeeping plans of 36 organizations were due for review during 2011-12. Although one agency was a late submission, all organizations complied with this requirement (see Appendix 1).

Section 29(1) – give directions as to intervals for periodic reporting on recordkeeping plans (discretionary)
No new directions were given in 2011-12.

Section 30(1) – give Parliament copies of reports to Commission received under section 29
No reports were referred to Parliament during 2011-12.

Part 4

Section 32 - State archives to be transferred to the State archives collection
The Commission is advised that the Executive Director received eight formal requests from agencies to transfer archives at risk during the year. Unfortunately, the Executive Director was unable to accept transfer and custody of archives from State organizations during 2011-12 due to the State Archives having been at capacity since 2001. Several queries were received regarding proposed formats for transfer of digital archives.

FIGURE 4. Table indicating number of requests to Executive Director to transfer archives, following advice in 2009 that agencies retain archives awaiting transfer.

Part 5 Division 2

Section 37(2)(b) – restricted access archives identified
In March 2012 the Commission approved an application to restrict access to one previously open access file held in the State archives collection. The Commission determined that this record merits a restricted access status under section 49 of the Act.

Section 37(5) - Review of archives restricted under 37(2)(b)
A report on the five yearly review of records in the State archives collection that are restricted access records under section 37(2)(b) of the Act, was submitted to the Commission in December 2011.

Section 38 – when archives cease to be restricted access archives
During 2011-12 no applications were submitted by the Executive Director under this section.

Part 5 Division 3

Section 40(2) – approve or refuse to approve the archives keeping plan
At its December 2008 meeting the Commission approved the SRO's revised archives keeping plan. No further action was required during 2011-12.

Section 40(3) – give reasons for refusal to approve the archives keeping plan
Not required.

Section 40(4) – direct time for resubmission of the archives keeping plan refused approval under section 40(3)
Not required.

Section 41 – archives keeping plan to be reviewed
The archives keeping plan, approved in December 2008, will be reviewed by the Executive Director in 2013 for submission to the Commission.

Part 5 Division 4

Section 43(3), (4) & (5) – deal with applications from the Director to destroy archives
No applications were received from the Executive Director in 2011-12.
Part 6

Section 48(1) & (2) – direct that a State archive is an "exceptionally sensitive archive" and set age of cessation (on application)
No directions were given under this section in 2011-12.

Section 48(4) – review direction given under section 48(1)
The status of all records, noted as restricted access records under this section, was reviewed in 2011. The Commission approved the review’s findings in December 2011.

Part 8 Division 1

Section 60(1)(a) – monitor the operation of and compliance with the Act
In the absence of a formalized program, the RKP review cycle required under the Act formed the major compliance focus for the Commission during 2011-12. During this period 36 government organizations were required to complete an RKP review and report to the Commission.

Section 60(1)(b) – monitor compliance by government organizations with record keeping plans
During 2011-12, all 36 government organizations, required to review their RKPs during this period, complied with the requirement. The SRO evaluated the reports and amended RKPs; analysing current reported practice against previous RKPs submitted.

Section 60(1)(c) – inquire into breaches or possible breaches of this Act
In meeting its obligation to inquire into breaches or possible breaches of the Act, the Commission and the SRO take the opportunity to address any avenues for improvement in agency recordkeeping identified during this process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2011-12</th>
<th>2010-11</th>
<th>2009-10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allegations Opened</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allegations Resolved</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Balga Senior High School – In May 2008 the Estimates and Financial Operations Committee of the Legislative Council reported on an investigation into the Balga Works Program at Balga Senior High School.

At the August 2011 meeting the Commission determined a breach had occurred. The Department of Education was subsequently asked to monitor the School’s implementation of its revised Student Attendance Policy.

Department of the Attorney General – In early 2010 a Corruption and Crime Commission report tabled in Parliament found that a Judge’s associate at the District Court had obtained access to information in departmental databases and passed the information to a third party.

At the August 2011 meeting the Commission determined a breach had occurred and noted the advice from the Department that improved information security procedures were being implemented and closed the investigation.

Challenger TAFE – In May 2010 the parent of a student attending the TAFE alleged that inadequate records had been kept of dealings with that agency regarding the student’s education. At the August 2011 meeting the Commission could not determine a breach had occurred and closed the investigation.

Shire of Halls Creek – The Shire advised the Executive Director in July 2010 that it could not locate minutes of two specific Council meetings, held in 1994 and 2000. At the August 2011 meeting the Commission could not determine a breach had occurred. Whilst the records have not been located, the Shire continues to monitor the situation.

Department of Housing – The Auditor General submitted a report to Parliament in August 2010 on Fitting and Maintaining Safety Devices in Public Housing. This report found that the Department’s property management system had not been kept in a manner which ensured current and accurate information being available to staff. The Executive Director and the Department subsequently discussed the implementation of corrective measures necessary for improving staff compliance with
the Act. At the August 2011 meeting the Commission could not determine a breach had occurred and closed the investigation.

Training Accreditation Council - In September 2010 a member of the public alleged that the Council does not maintain the current addresses of holders of qualifications, as required by the Vocational Education and Training (General) Regulations 2009. At the August 2011 meeting the Commission determined a breach had occurred and requested that the Council afford a high priority to amending relevant documentation to ensure consistency between the Regulations and current data collection practices.

Department of Education: Autism Education Service - In October 2010 the parent of a client of the Service alleged that adequate records concerning a student had not been created and kept. At the August 2011 meeting the Commission could not determine a breach had occurred. The Service was reminded of the importance of creating and keeping proper and adequate records in accordance with the Act.

Challenger Institute of Technology – A member of the public alleged, in February 2011, that the Institute could not produce certain emails and meeting notes sought via a Freedom of Information request. At the August 2011 meeting the Commission could not determine a breach had occurred. The agency was reminded of the importance of good recordkeeping practices.

Department of Housing – In May 2011, an anonymous correspondent alleged that the Department had not employed adequate measures to ensure its records could be tracked and located. At the December 2011 meeting the Commission could not determine a breach had occurred. The agency was reminded of the importance of good recordkeeping practices.

Department of Health: Health Information Network – The Auditor General submitted a report to Parliament on ICT Procurement in Health and Training in October 2010. This report found that adequate recordkeeping processes were not in place in the Health Information Network. The Executive Director is communicating with senior management at the Department, and SRO representatives have assisted that agency with recruiting officers to key positions responsible for information management. The Department’s improved practices are being monitored by the Commission.

2. The following alleged breaches were reported and resolved during 2011-12.

Department of Education - The Commission was advised in August 2011 of the outcome of a Public Sector Commission inquiry into the drafting and release of the Department’s report on Carson Street School. At its December 2011 meeting the Commission could not determine a breach had occurred. The Department’s improved practices will be monitored via the RKP process.

Department of Mines and Petroleum - In September 2011 the Auditor General released a report on public sector management of mining compliance requirements, titled 'Ensuring Compliance with Conditions on Mining'. This report identified weaknesses in the Department’s information systems. The SRO subsequently sought a response from the Department to the matters raised in this report. At the March 2012 meeting the Commission determined a breach had not occurred and considered the Department’s response had adequately addressed the matters raised and no further action was required.

Department of Housing - In November 2011 a report of a review into Departmental tenancy management was tabled in State Parliament. The report identified instances where records of tenancy management and inspections were found to be incorrect and unreliable. At the March 2012 meeting the Commission could not determine a breach had occurred. The Department agreed to provide progress updates relevant to the replacement of core business systems to improve processes.

Department of Housing and Works – The Auditor General’s report on the Planning and Management of Perth Arena, released in March 2010, found instances of poor recordkeeping by the former Department of Housing and Works (the works function is now undertaken by the Department of Finance, and strategic projects function is undertaken by the Department of Treasury), in connection with the Perth Arena project. SRO staff have been in contact with representatives of the Auditor General’s Office, and the Departments of Treasury and Finance, in order to establish improved practices which are being monitored via the RKP process.
3. The following alleged breaches were reported to the Commission in 2011-12 and remain under investigation by the SRO.

**Department of the Attorney General** - In November 2011 the Executive Director was notified by the Department that a client file of the Mentally Impaired Accused Review Board had allegedly been tampered with. In April 2012 the Department advised the Executive Director that all information thought to be missing from the file had been accounted for. The matter will be considered by the Commission in the second half of 2012.

**Western Power** - In January 2012 a report of the Standing Committee on Public Administration referred to reviews and audits by other regulatory agencies which identify inadequate recordkeeping by Western Power, in regard to wood pole management. A government response to the report, including measures to improve recordkeeping for asset management by Western Power, was tabled in the Legislative Council on 15 June 2012. The SRO is assessing this documentation.

**School Curriculum and Standards Authority** - In June 2012 a letter was received from a member of the public alleging that the Authority had destroyed records of a 2011 exam which was under appeal. The SRO is investigating the matter.

**Department of the Attorney General** - In June 2012 advice was received from the Department that records of an original decision of the Indefinite Sentences Review Board (a decision subsequently overturned) were requested to be destroyed. The SRO is investigating the matter.

**Section 61 – establish principles and standards**
A fully revised *General Disposal Authority for Human Resource Management Records* was developed by the State Records Office in 2011-12, and published in June 2012.

**Section 62 – establish committees**
The State Records Advisory Committee was established in December 2001 in accordance with sections 62(1) and (2) of the Act. The current membership structure of the Committee was approved by the Commission in December 2008. The Committee met on three occasions during 2011-12.

No new Committees were established during this period.
The SRO manages the Commission’s records, and therefore its compliance with SRC Standard 2 Principle 6 is linked to the compliance of the SRO.

The following action was taken this year to ensure that the Commission complies with SRC Standard 2 Principle 6:

• Although the RKP is not due for review until 2013, the SRO established an internal working group to review the Commission’s RKP and R&D and subsequently compile a review report. This report will be submitted to the Minister in the latter half of 2012;
• A listing of time expired Commission records, identified for destruction in accordance with relevant disposal authorities, was compiled for the Commission’s authorisation; and
• The Commissioners have continued to develop their knowledge of current recordkeeping issues through their active participation in the work of industry associations and interaction with government clients.

**SPREADING THE MESSAGE**

The Commissioners attended and/or participated in the following events and activities during 2011-12, with the aim of enhancing public sector and community awareness of the work of the Commission and the benefits of the Act.

3 August 2011  Commissioner Murphy presented the 2010 Margaret Medcalf Award. Commissioners Bluemmel and McDermott also attended this event

5 August 2011  The Commission hosted an informal lunch and media opportunity at Northam for government officers in the Avon valley region

21 November 2011  All Commissioners attended the Geoffrey Bolton Lecture, delivered by Professor Alan Robson at UWA

20 March 2012  Commissioner Bluemmel spoke at a seminar hosted by Records & Information Professionals Australia (RIMPA)

13 June 2012  Commissioners McDermott and Bluemmel represented the Commission at the 2011 Margaret Medcalf Award
The State Records Commission operates through the State Records Office of Western Australia. All enquiries for the Commission, whether in person, by telephone, fax, email, or in writing, should be directed through the State Records Office.

How to Contact the State Records Commission

State Records Commission of Western Australia
c/- State Records Office of Western Australia

Ground Floor
Alexander Library Building
James St (West entrance)
Perth Cultural Centre
Perth WA 6000

Phone: (08) 9427 3636
Fax: (08) 9427 3638
Email: sro@sro.wa.gov.au
Website: www.sro.wa.gov.au

Chairperson: State Records Commission

Mr Colin Murphy
Auditor General

State Archivist and Executive Director State Records
(and Executive Officer to the State Records Commission)

Ms Cathrin Cassarchis
Phone: (08) 9427 3636
Fax: (08) 9427 3638
Email: sro@sro.wa.gov.au
Website: www.sro.wa.gov.au
### APPENDIX I

Record keeping plans required for review in 2011-12 Status Register

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency Name</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Next Review Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aqwest (Bunbury Water Board)</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>18 Jun 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architects Board of WA</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>2 Apr 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bunbury Port Authority</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>8 Mar 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Busselton Water Board</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>8 Mar 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Corrective Services</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>8 Mar 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Education</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>7 Mar 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Health</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>8 Mar 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Planning (includes Western Australian Planning Commission)</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>7 Apr 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Regional Development and Lands</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>7 Apr 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of the Attorney General</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>8 Mar 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Training and Workforce Development</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>2 Dec 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Transport</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>7 Apr 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Water</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>2 Dec 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esperance Port Authority</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>8 Mar 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire and Emergency Services Authority of Western Australia</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>3 Jul 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heritage Council of Western Australia</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>5 Oct 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Aid Western Australia</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>2 Apr 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lotteries Commission of WA (Lotterywest)</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>7 Mar 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metropolitan Cemeteries Board</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>5 Oct 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murdoch University</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>8 Mar 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Trust of Australia (WA)</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>2 Apr 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational Therapists' Registration Board of WA</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NB: Agency abolished as of 1 July 2012.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Records managed in accordance with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polytechnic West</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>5 Oct 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Transport Authority</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>8 Mar 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shire of Dandaragan</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>3 Jul 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shire of Dumbleyung</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>18 Jun 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shire of Gingin</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>18 Jun 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shire of Mingenew</td>
<td>L*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shire of Morawa</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>18 Jun 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shire of Narembeen</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>5 Oct 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shire of West Arthur</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>5 Oct 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Training Providers (formerly TAFE Colleges)</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>5 Oct 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Western Australia</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>8 Mar 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WA College of Teaching</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>8 Mar 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WA Greyhound Racing Association</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>8 Mar 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WA Meat Industry Authority</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>8 Mar 2017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* submitted 15 August 2012
Record keeping Plans for submission by new Organizations on or before 30 June 2012
Status Register

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency Name</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Submission Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City of Greater Geraldton</td>
<td>1 January 2012</td>
<td>3 January 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Treasury</td>
<td>1 January 2012</td>
<td>9 December 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Finance</td>
<td>1 January 2012</td>
<td>20 December 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Services Board</td>
<td>29 February 2012</td>
<td>29 February 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Andrews Hostel Inquiry (Blaxell Inquiry)</td>
<td>17 May 2012</td>
<td>8 May 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority</td>
<td>29 June 2012</td>
<td>21 June 2012</td>
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</table>
Acronyms and Terms Used in this Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronyms and Terms</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commission</td>
<td>State Records Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committee</td>
<td>State Records Advisory Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disposal Authority</td>
<td>A term used to incorporate GDAs, SDAs and R&amp;Ds for the legal disposal of government records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDA</td>
<td>General Disposal Authority for the legal disposal of records common across government (developed by the SRO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R&amp;D</td>
<td>Retention and Disposal Schedule for the legal disposal of the functional records of government organizations (developed by individual agencies with SRO advice and assistance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RKP</td>
<td>Recordkeeping Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDA</td>
<td>Sector Disposal Authority for the legal disposal of functional records of like sectors of government (developed by the SRO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRO</td>
<td>State Records Office</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>