



State Records

NSW digital State archives

Australian Society of Archivists NSW Branch

25 May 2011

What I'll cover

- State Records' Future Proof strategy
- Our digital State archives proposal
- Strategies for getting it funded
- Vision for the Digital Archives project
- How we'll deliver it
- The 2011 environment & opportunities



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U.S. Archivist worried about White House Tweets:

May 6, 2011

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Recordkeeping in the social media grey zone

At a recent House Oversight and Government Reform Committee hearing in Washington DC, Archivist of the United States, David Ferriero raised some concerns about the adequacy of the current archives legislation and whether it has kept pace with the way the US Government does business using technology. In particular, Ferriero pointed to the use of cloud based social media applications and personal devices such as iPads by White House staff for generating and keeping content that may relate to official business.

Ferriero told the hearing that official communications sent from a presidential employee's personal device, using personal accounts, must be preserved under the law, but that it is up to the individual staff member to determine what is official and take steps to capture this content into an official system. Asked whether he was comfortable with a voluntary system, he replied, "Any time there is human intervention, then I'm not comfortable."



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Digital archives proposal

- To give State Records the capacity to accept, preserve and make available digital State archives of the NSW Government
- First business case 2003
- Budget Committee of Cabinet decision in 2006 that a digital archive should be funded
- 2007: issued preservation policy, new business case

Business case

- Based on examination our requirements and other archives' strategies, here and overseas
- Detailed options analysis – 4 options
- Recommended following a similar preservation model to NAA and adopting their tools eg Xena
- Cost / benefit analysis. Financial benefits derived from avoiding storage more paper and preventing agencies from establishing their own digital repositories
- Lots of intangible benefits!

Getting the funding: strategies (formal)

- From 2003-2010: many submissions, bids, Cabinet minutes, D-G's briefing notes, enhancement of effort proposals, maintenance of effort proposals
- Various funding models proposed; land sale, grant, cost recovery, straight Treasury funding
- Changes to the amount we sought: capital + recurrent, just capital, adjustments for the CPI
- Advice from the Auditor General that we were in breach of our Act

Getting the funding: strategies (informal)

- Researching and talking about specific digital archives at risk
- Agency testimonials
- Linking into open govt / gov 2.0 movement eg NSW public sphere event 2008 – support from Penny Sharpe MLC
- Political popularity of shared services initiatives
- Letter writing by SAG, RAHS, History Council
- Writing articles, giving presentations
- Personal persuasion

The project

- Three year project; full operation from year four
- \$3.62m in funding; 6 person team
- Located at Western Sydney Records Centre
- Approach based on our *Policy on the preservation of digital records (2007)*
- Adopting best and most appropriate tools from Australia and internationally
- Limited pilot transfers working with a range of record formats and agencies

Challenges

- Archival description: our current implementation of the series system is not a comfortable fit with many forms of digital recordkeeping
- Access: for staff / agencies / the public - while still maintaining high security standards
- Changing paper mindsets
- Encouraging transfer
- Recurrent government funding from year 4

Opportunities

- ADRI, next generation digital archives
- New developments in digital archives preservation internationally:
 - New tools, techniques
 - For preservation processes
 - For preservation planning
 - For making archival information more appropriate, useable and powerful in an online environment
 - What not to do
 - ..see ERA

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The 20th Century Called. It Wants Its Relational Database Back.


[\[IT >> Government Policy \]](#)

Stripped-down digital records archive set to debut

By NICOLE BLAKE JOHNSON | Last Updated: March 8, 2011



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The National Archives and Records Administration's Electronic Records Archive (ERA), after years of delays, will launch at three agencies this month, but will have fewer capabilities than originally planned.

The State, Justice and Health and Human Services departments will be the first to fully access the system to transfer electronic documents to NARA for preservation. Some of the records will be accessible to the public through an existing online portal.

Use of the system will be mandatory for all agencies by October 2012.

However, the Office of Management and Budget has ordered NARA to end development of the troubled information technology program by October of this year and then to move into the operations and maintenance phase of the project.

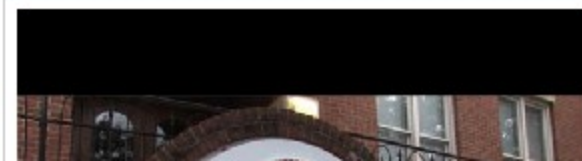
So far, contractor Lockheed Martin has met only a fraction — between 60 percent and 70 percent — of the 850 requirements in its 2003 requirements documents to develop the electronic system, said ERA communications manager David Lake. User capabilities, such as an online chat and account registration, "were put aside in order to concentrate on the core functions required to deploy the system to the entire federal government by the end of 2012."

In August, OMB identified the program as high-risk after a series of delays, cost overruns and mismanagement by the agency and Lockheed. A Jan. 13 report by the Government Accountability Office projected full operational capability of the system would be "at least 67 months behind schedule (in March 2017) and that the total life cycle



The National Archives building in Washington, D.C., is seen. The agency will launch its Electronic Records Archive at the State, Justice, and Health and Human Services departments after years of delays. (DENNY GAINER / USA TODAY)

Federal Times Video



Opportunities

- *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*
- Partnerships; e.g. with SLNSW
- Open data movement – State Records’ Open Data Project <http://data.records.nsw.gov.au> – exciting opportunities for discovering and repurposing contextual information, disposal and access rules and delivering digital archives

Opening the catalogue

STATE RECORDS NSW'S OPEN DATA PROJECT

about

Datasets

Mar
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2011

Opening the catalogue

About

No Responses »

This is the project site for State Records NSW's Open Data Project.

The aim of this project is to identify datasets relating to the NSW State Archives collection and publish them in accessible ways.

Data published by this project could spark new interfaces to the collection, create new possibilities for federated searching, or allow creative re-purposing such as in visualisations or in applications such as [The History Wall](#).

As a first step, State Records NSW is publishing data from its online catalogue, [Archives Investigator](#). This data is in a raw form and can be downloaded from the [Datasets page](#).

Future steps might involve the use of standardised formats (e.g. [EAC-CPF](#)) or the development of an API to the catalogue. We will also investigate the use of linked data principles (e.g. a persistent URI addressing scheme) and microformats (such as the inclusion of RDFa data into the existing catalogue pages).

If you have ideas or suggestions about future directions for this project please participate by joining the discussions on this site.

About the Header image: The image used for the header of this blog is a remix of an image in State Records NSW's flickr stream, [Model of Shells \(Sydney Opera House\)](#). This image is part of the series *Sydney Opera House – "The Red book" NRS 12707*. More images from "The Red Book" are available in [State](#)

Our Linked Data Rating



Available as machine-readable structured data; plus non-proprietary format (e.g. CSV instead of excel)

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Descriptive standards

- Encoded Archival Context: Corporate Bodies, Persons, and Families
- Metadata guidelines for the UK Resource Discovery Taskforce

Linked data

- data.nsw: NSW data catalogue
- Designing URIs for the UK Public

Thank you

- Future Proof blog:
<http://futureproof.records.nsw.gov.au/>
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