



# **STATE RECORDS COMMISSION**

**Perth, Western Australia**

**Annual Report**

**2010 / 2011**



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## CHAIRPERSON'S FOREWORD

I am pleased to present the State Records Commission's tenth annual report.

From the Commission's perspective the most significant feature of the reporting year was the completion and submission to government of a business case for a replacement State Archive repository. The final version, called "*Future Proofing the State's Information Assets*", was submitted to the Minister in early December 2010. The Commission congratulates the State Records Office (SRO) and external consultants on the production of an excellent document.

In my Introduction to the business case I observed that Western Australia is the only Australian state that does not have the capacity to accept Government archives into central control. The Commission believes that the current situation presents a series of risks to the State government in terms of the potential damage or loss of the government's corporate memory. These risks are likely to be magnified as the volume of State archives held by individual organizations accumulates beyond the current estimate of 45 linear kilometres. This year's Report mentions some examples reported to the Commission during 2010-11 of risks to State records in agency custody.

The Commission was also pleased that the business case, as well as providing for a central repository, also provides for recurrent funding for two separate digital initiatives. One envisages the digitization of, and provision of web access to, heavily used records in the State archives collection. The other provides for ongoing development of policies and strategies to improve digital recordkeeping capacity across government. The latter initiative is a prerequisite for establishing a workable digital archive solution for government records in Western Australia.

Government recordkeeping will benefit from the recent publication of the revised General Disposal Authority for Local Government Records, and the anticipated release of a similar disposal authority for Human Resource records in late 2011. The Commission is pleased that work on these and other general disposal authorities will soon be complemented by the Online Retention and Disposal Application, which the SRO expects to launch late in 2011.

I wish to thank my fellow Commissioners for their support during the tenth year of the Commission's operations. All of us are grateful to Cathrin Cassarchis, Director of State Records, and her staff for supporting the Commission's operations during an eventful year. My colleagues and I also acknowledge our principal clientele, the government record keepers of Western Australia for their unstinting efforts to promote and maintain quality recordkeeping within their respective organizations.

Colin Murphy  
Chairperson, State Records Commission  
October 2011



*THE STATE RECORDS COMMISSION*

*Left to right: Sven Bluemmel, Colin Murphy (seated), Chris Field, and Justine McDermott.*



*Albany Meeting: Commissioner Murphy, with Mr Milton Evans, Mayor, City of Albany, after the Commission meeting, 19 November 2010.*



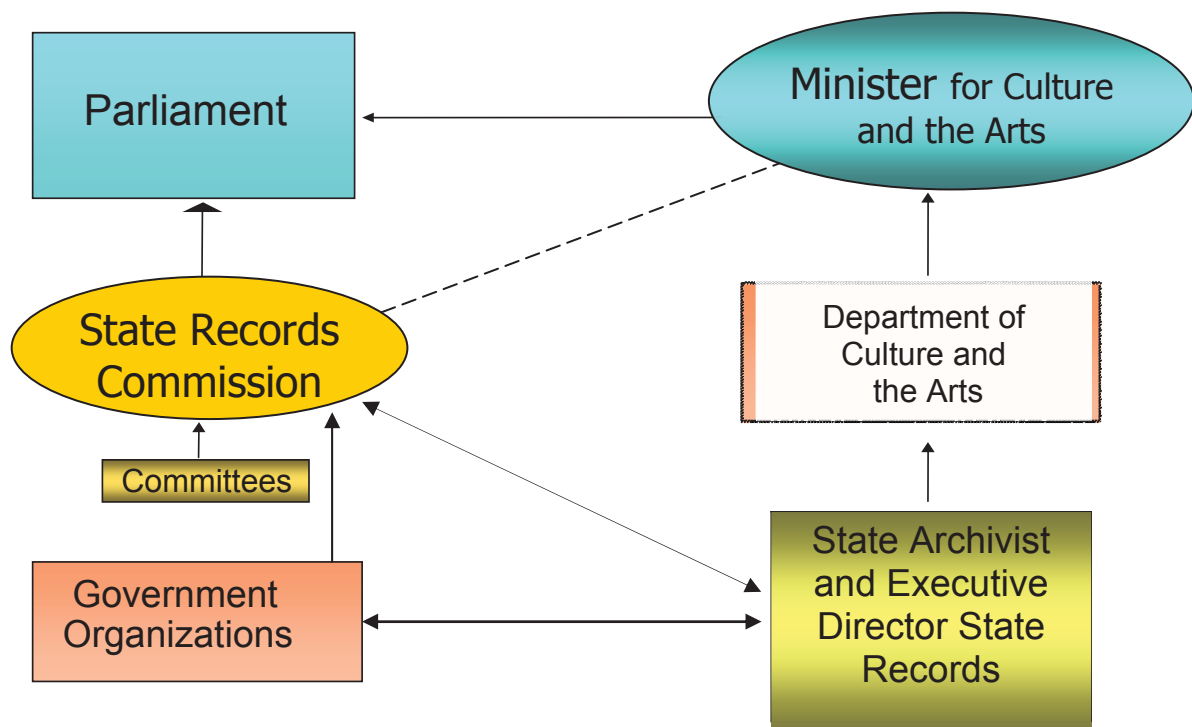
## INTRODUCTION

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 2010-11 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*.

**FIGURE 1.** Representation of the Commission's role in the reporting framework established by the Act.



**NB:** During the course of the reporting period, the Director of State Records' title was changed to State Archivist and Executive Director State Records, see page 8 for more information. For the purpose of this report, the new title will be used throughout.



## HIGHLIGHTS 2010 – 2011

**Archives Business Case** – A business case for a new archival storage facility, *Future Proofing the State's Information Assets*, was submitted to the State government in December 2010. The case provides for the storage and preservation in a central repository of those government archives which are currently dispersed throughout the State. The business case also includes a digital recordkeeping component and a digitization for access program. The Commission looks forward to a positive response to the business case from Government during 2011-12.

**Compliance Reporting Award** – This year's Lonnie Award for Excellence in Annual Reporting by State government organizations on their recordkeeping obligations was presented to the Western Australia Police on 7 April 2011. According to the award citation, the winning organization demonstrated a commitment to best practice with a thorough description of initiatives established to evaluate its systems and raise awareness of recordkeeping responsibilities throughout the organization.

**General Disposal Authorities** – In December 2010 the SRO published a fully revised General Disposal Authority for Local Government Records, along with supporting documentation to assist with its implementation by individual organizations. The Commission anticipates that a revised General Disposal Authority for Human Resource Management Records will be ready for publication in late 2011. This will be the first full revision of this General Disposal Authority since the implementation of the Act.

**Sector Disposal Authorities** – During the reporting period a program was designed to develop and publish Sector Disposal Authorities (SDAs). The project is designed to provide coverage for the legal disposal of government information through the introduction of a suite of SDAs relevant to the functional records of State government. A large range of government sectors will be targeted for inclusion into the program thus eliminating the need for individual organizations to produce such documents other than by exception (i.e. where specific categories of records fall outside the scope of a SDA). The first of the SDAs, covering nine Regional Development Commissions throughout the State, was produced ready for publication in the latter half of 2011.

In time, the SDAs are expected to form an important component of the Online Retention and Disposal Application project, which is being conducted simultaneously.



## ABOUT US

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 2010-11 the Commissioners were:

**Mr Colin Murphy**, Auditor General, and **Chair of the Commission**.

**Mr Sven Bluemmel**, Information Commissioner.

**Mr Chris Field**, Parliamentary Commissioner for Administrative Investigations.

**Ms Justine McDermott**, Governor's Appointee to the Commission.

There were no changes to the Commission's membership during 2010-11.

## WHAT WE DO

The Commission's functions are set out in the Act and include:

- approving government organizations' recordkeeping plans;
- monitoring the operation of and compliance with the Act;
- monitoring compliance by government organizations with their recordkeeping plans;
- inquiring into breaches, or possible breaches, of the Act; and
- establishing principles and standards for the governance of recordkeeping by State organizations.

The Commission held two formal meetings and one out of session meeting during 2010-11. The meeting dates were: **15 September, 19 November 2010, and 8 April 2011**. The September meeting was held out of session, the November meeting was hosted by the City of Albany, while the April 2011 meeting was held in central Perth.

Once approved, the minutes of each meeting may be viewed on the SRO's website at [www.sro.wa.gov.au](http://www.sro.wa.gov.au) .



## **OUR OPERATING ENVIRONMENT**

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

## **OUR CLIENTS**

The Commission's clients consist of:

- 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;
- State Parliament;
- Western Australian public sector agencies;
- local government authorities and elected members; and
- a range of statutory offices, including the Governor's Establishment, Ministerial offices, Commissions and Committees of Inquiry.

## **OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE STATE RECORDS OFFICE**

Part 9 of the Act establishes the position of Director of State Records, and the entity called the State Records Office. As well as having other functions under the Act, the Director is the Commission's Executive Officer and provides advice and support to the Commission, with the Deputy Director State Recordkeeping providing the Executive Secretariat to the Commission. These positions host and support the Commission's meetings, functions and activities, providing advice as necessary. In particular, the Director reports to the Commission on matters relating to the operation of the Act.

Section 70(1) of the Act states that the Director of State Records is to be known by that title, "or by any such name as the Minister from time to time directs". To better reflect the responsibility of the position heading the State Archives, the Minister responsible for the Act approved a change in the Director's official title to "State Archivist and Executive Director State Records". The Director's title change, in April 2011, is in keeping with comparable roles in archival authorities within Australasian jurisdictions.



A cornerstone of the Act is the Recordkeeping Plan (hereafter called the RKP), which is a compliance requirement for each government organization. The RKP must identify all records created 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 obsolete records.

Draft RKPs are submitted by government organizations to the State Archivist and Executive Director (hereafter called 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 records, in all formats, by those agencies. The SRO also provides information about, and public access to, records held in the State archives collection. The Executive Director is required, under the Act, to create and maintain a register of all State archives, including those not in the State archives collection.

## **FUTURE FOCUS**

The Commission continues to report progress and achievement against the requirements of the Act, including the requirement 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 also contributes to the strategic planning processes of the SRO. In this context the Commission supports the SRO's priorities in the following areas over the next three years:

### ***Empowering Government to achieve good recordkeeping***

During the first decade of the Act's operation the primary focus has been on ensuring that every State organization has an approved RKP and retention and disposal schedule. These RKPs are now subject to cyclical reviews. The SRO is now focussing on introducing new systems and tools such as sector based disposal authorities, guidelines and training to assist government recordkeeping staff with these processes.

### ***Ensuring State archives are preserved and well managed***

The SRO has been unable to accept transfers of State archives since 2001. Therefore, securing the implementation of the 2010 business case remains the SRO's and the Commission's highest priority.

The business case also identifies the need for a Digital Preservation Action Plan to be developed and implemented throughout the public sector. This should be developed in tandem with a digital archives capability – to enable the preservation of and access to all digital records of permanent value.



### ***Enabling Access to State archives***

The SRO plans to investigate online service models to provide access for a broader client base, regardless of their location. The development of an Access Strategy will be the first step in this process.

## **KEY PERFORMANCE AREAS**

The following outlines activities carried out by the Commission during 2010-11 in meeting the requirements of the Act.

### **1. Government Recordkeeping**

#### **Evaluation, approval and review 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. A 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 when the records are to be transferred to the SRO. 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 an RKP for approval by the Commission. The first stage of the RKP approval process was completed by March 2004; by then the RKP of almost every organization (that was extant when the process commenced in March 2002) had been approved or cleared by the Commission.

In addition, the Act requires a government organization to review its RKP, and submit a report of that review to the Commission within five years of its approval date (or last review). This year 19 agencies were required to review their RKPs and all 19 agencies complied.

During 2010-11 the Commission approved 50 RKPs, comprising RKPs from new organizations; amendments to existing RKPs; and the continuation of 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 2010-11.

**Appendix 2** identifies new organizations required to submit an RKP during 2010-11.

#### **Retention and Disposal Schedules**

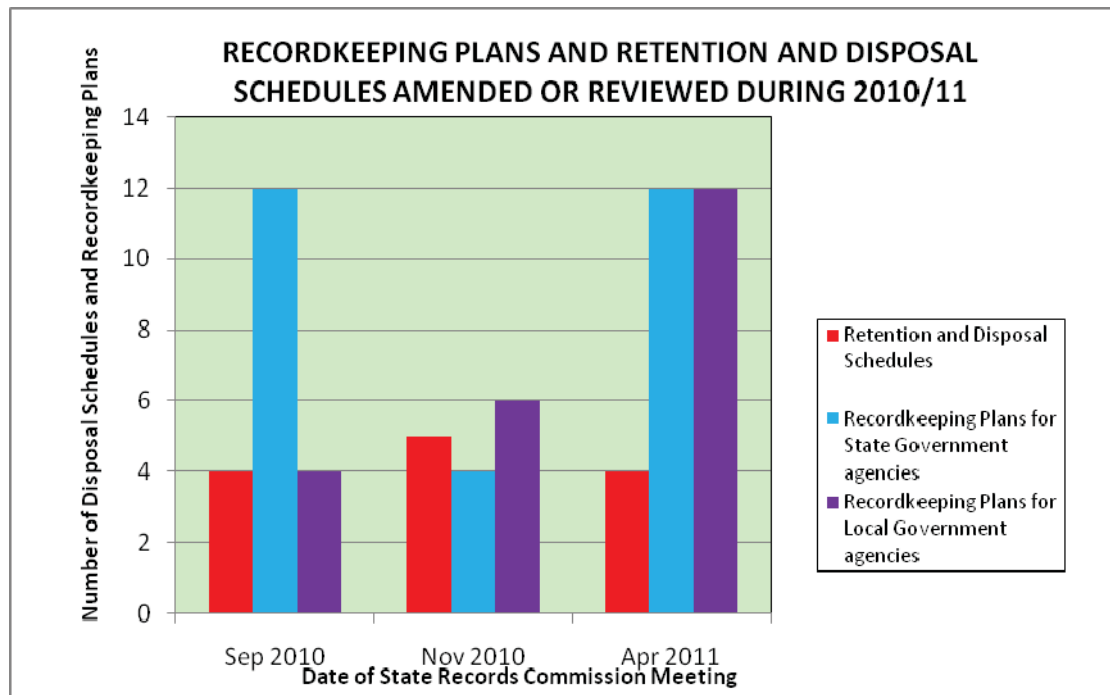
The disposal plan for an organization's records is commonly referred to as a records Retention and Disposal Schedule (hereafter called an R&D). This document is an integral part of an organization's RKP, and is used to describe and identify the disposal recommendations for government records. Unless records are covered by a General Disposal Authority (GDA) or a Sector Disposal Authority, State government organizations are required to develop



R&Ds that are unique to the functional records of their organizations. An organization's RKP can only be approved by the Commission after its R&D component has been given final approval.

Following advice from the SRO and the State Records Advisory Committee, the Commission approved 13 R&Ds during 2010-11.

**FIGURE 2. Recordkeeping Plans and Retention and Disposal Schedules actioned in 2010-11.**



### Online Retention & Disposal Authority Program (ORDA)

The SRO is leading the development of ORDA, a new web based system that will enable government organizations to compile and submit their R&Ds online. At present most State government organizations' R&Ds are received and assessed by the SRO in hard copy format, with manual evaluations proving to be very labour intensive. The Executive Director has advised the Commission that ORDA will provide greater flexibility and efficiencies in SRO internal operations and importantly, pertinent operations throughout the whole of government.

External consultants were engaged in February 2011 to build the system, which will be hosted centrally by the SRO. The system will allow government organizations and relevant consultants, engaged by government organizations, to log onto ORDA remotely to draft their R&Ds, research existing disposal precedents across WA government and to submit their documentation for SRO review. SRO staff will be able to conduct the evaluation processes online and provide timely comment and advice to clients. Full workflow, tracking and reporting capability, along with cross government mapping of precedents, will be of great benefit to the business processes of both the SRO and government organizations alike.



The SRO has been working closely with colleagues across Australasia, particularly with State Records NSW, as part of this initiative. Development of the system is nearing completion and ORDA is expected to be in production by the end of 2011.

## **Sector Disposal Authority Program**

### **Sector Disposal Authorities**

In its 2009-10 Report the Commission noted an SRO project to develop General Disposal Authorities (now changed to Sector Disposal Authorities or SDAs) for large sectors within State government, such as Development Commissions, Port Authorities, Universities, and Redevelopment Authorities. This program is designed to target groups of like-records across large sectors of State government thus eliminating the need for individual organizations to produce individual R&Ds, other than by exception. In time, the SDAs are expected to form an important component of the ORDA project, mentioned previously.

During 2010-11:

- one SDA was developed to incorporate the functional records of all nine Regional Development Commissions, which will be submitted to the Commission for final approval in August 2011;
- preliminary research has commenced on an SDA for Port Authorities. This SDA will cover the functional records of the eight Port Authorities throughout the State; and
- the WA Universities Sector Disposal Authority Working Group has progressed its work on the development of an SDA for the four government Universities (Curtin, Edith Cowan, Murdoch, and UWA). SRO staff are assisting and advising this Working Group as required.

## **General Disposal Authority Review Program**

### **General Disposal Authority for Local Government Records**

- In December 2010, the fully revised General Disposal Authority for Local Government Records (GDALG) was published along with supporting documentation to assist agencies with the implementation.
- The fully revised GDALG was the culmination of the efforts of a Working Group established by the SRO. Metropolitan and regional local government officers participated on the Working Group, meeting monthly during 2009-10. The project included the systematic review and revision of progressive sections of the GDA, ensuring that the end product was a fully revised GDALG reflective of current local government operational needs.
- A Guideline titled *“Resentencing Records: Implementing a revised General Disposal Authority”* and a *“Linking Table”* were also published



to provide maximum assistance to local government organizations with the implementation of the new GDALG.

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

- The revision of the General Disposal Authority for Human Resource Management Records (GDAHR) began in January 2011.
- A target group of State government organizations has been canvassed on the use and applicability of the current GDAHR. The results of that survey are being incorporated into a revised draft of the GDA, which will be circulated to relevant stakeholders for comment during August 2011.
- The Commission anticipates publication of a fully revised GDAHR by December 2011.

### **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.

Resourcing constraints, during the reporting period, inhibited the introduction of a comprehensive monitoring program to complement the compliance surveys conducted to date. Those surveys comprised the tertiary education sector in 2005-06; 112 State and local government agencies in 2008-09; and 35 State and local government agencies in 2009-10.

In the absence of a formalized program the RKP review cycle, required under the Act, formed the major compliance focus for the Commission during 2010-11. During this period 19 government organizations were required to complete a review and report to the Commission. Of the 19, four agencies reported no significant change in the status of their recordkeeping practices whilst the remaining 15 agencies reported that amended RKPs would be developed and submitted.

Cognizant of section 60(1)(a), the Commission is planning the introduction of a formal monitoring program during 2011-12. This program is intended to incorporate agency surveys complemented by SRO analysis and auditing of specific practices. Ultimately, the program is expected to inform and assist agencies with cyclic reviews of RKPs mandated under the Act.

### **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 a new award for excellence in annual reporting on recordkeeping was introduced by the IPAA, in collaboration with the Commission and the SRO.

This year all State government organizations' annual reports were assessed for the award. The initial short listing yielded the annual reports of 32 organizations. Those reports were evaluated further and reduced to a final



short list of 17 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 recordkeeping plan.

At the Lonnie Awards function on 7 April 2011, the Western Australia Police was presented with the *State Records Commission Award* for excellence in compliance reporting. The judging panel also commended Main Roads Western Australia for a high standard of reporting.



*Mick de Mamiel, right, Director of Finance, Western Australia Police, accepts the State Records Commission Award from Cathrin Cassarchis, Executive Director State Records.  
(Photograph courtesy of IPAA WA)*

## **2. Preservation & management of the State's archives**

### **Business case for an archives storage solution**

In previous reports the Commission has expressed concern that the Executive Director cannot accept custody of conventional archives from government organizations because of the lack of appropriate archival storage. In 2010-11 the Executive Director again could not comply with her statutory obligation to accept custody of archives from government organizations, when those archives become 25 years old. This situation has prevailed since July 2001.

Last year the Commission reported on the work of an interdisciplinary Project Evaluation Group, chaired by the Executive Director, in developing a business case for a storage solution for State archives. The Commission wrote to the



Minister in support of the business case on 2 November 2010. The Chairman also supplied the foreword for the final version of the document that was submitted to the Minister a month later. The final version is titled “*Future proofing the State’s Information Assets: Business Case – Replacement Archive Repository and Supporting Initiatives*”.

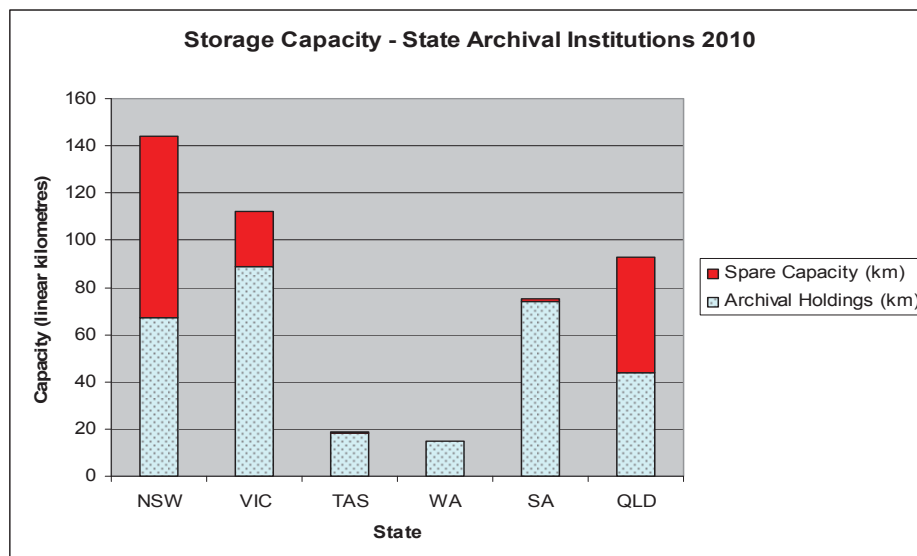
The business case contains four key recommendations for consideration by government. These provide for:

1. a replacement 65,000 square metre archival repository and associated administrative facility;
2. additional SRO staff to manage the transfer and ongoing processing of additions to the State archives collection;
3. a digitization program to ensure that the most frequently used items in the State archives collection are accessible online; and
4. the development of digital recordkeeping policies and implementation strategies across government.

In early 2011 the Commission was informed that the SRO has been allocated funding during 2011-12 to undertake potential site assessments for a new storage facility. The Commission is pleased to note this allocation and looks forward to a positive response from Government to the business case.

Meanwhile, the accumulation of State archives (including digital archives) awaiting transfer to the SRO continues. Many government organizations are utilizing commercial storage facilities to accommodate their government records. While these facilities may be suitable for the storage of temporary records they are a costly and unsuitable option for storing State archives. The Commission anticipates that the current rationalization of government office space will result in more State archives being sent to commercial storage facilities for an indefinite period, and individual government organizations will be expected to meet the recurrent storage costs.

**FIGURE 3. Comparison of storage capacity available within Australian State archival repositories.**



**NB:** Graph based on data currently available from the Council of Australasian Archives and Records Authorities (CAARA).



## Threats to State records in 2010-11

The Director notified the Commission that during 2010-11 there were several incidents which had the potential to result in significant damage to State records. One event that attracted considerable media attention was the fire in the Municipal Chambers at the Town of Claremont on the evening of 18 November 2010. As is often the case with building fires, most of the damage to council records was caused by water ingress. On the morning after the fire the SRO was able to provide the Council with a copy of its disaster recovery plan, held as part of the RKP, to assist their recovery processes. SRO archivists and State Library preservation staff have since been actively advising Council staff on the salvage of the records.

SRO staff also provided advice to Main Roads following flood damage to records held in that agency's Carnarvon office in late December 2010.

In December 2010 SRO staff inspected water damage at a commercial storage facility operating under a Common Use Arrangement contract. The State Records Office and the Department of Treasury and Finance liaised with the storage provider to ensure that all relevant steps were being taken to ensure the recovery, security and long term accessibility of the records. As with the Claremont records, the SRO is working with State Library conservation staff to ensure that all damage is identified and treated appropriately.



*Fire at Town of Claremont Council offices 18 November 2010*  
(Photograph courtesy of Tom Vinnicombe)



## Digital Archives Pilot

In its Report for 2009-10 the Commission anticipated the further development of a digital archives pilot by the SRO in 2010-11.

The Executive Director informed the Commission in November 2010 that further reporting on this program would be discontinued pending the outcome of the repository business case, which includes digital storage and access components. The Commission is further advised that the outcomes of the initial project showed areas that need to be further researched and these will be pursued as time and resources permit.

## 3. User Friendly Accessibility to State Archives

### 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.

SRC Standard 4, Principle 1 requires government organizations to identify restricted access archives in their RKPs. During 2010-11 the Commission approved restricted access applications submitted by one organization.

A five yearly review of Commission directions regarding restricted access items in the State archives collection falls due in November 2011. The results of a review conducted by the SRO will be presented to the Commission for consideration at its December 2011 meeting.

## COMMITTEES OF THE COMMISSION

Section 62(1) of the Act requires the Commission to establish a committee to assist the Commission with the selection of records as State archives, and propose retention periods for all State records. Section 62(3) allows the Commission to establish other committees to assist it in the performance of its functions.

During the reporting year 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.



## State Records Advisory Committee

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

- State records that should be archives;
- retention periods for those State records that are not to be State archives; and
- associated matters.

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 2010-11 the Committee met on three occasions to consider agency disposal decisions and make recommendations to the Commission for approval. The Committee's meeting dates were: 19 October 2010, 6 May and 15 June 2011.

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 2011

#### **Chair of the Committee – SRO**

Ms Isabel Smith – Deputy Director State Recordkeeping

#### **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)

#### **Institute for Information Management Ltd (WA)**

Vacant (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**

Mr Brian Bradley (Deputy: Ms Cheryl Gwilliam)

**Records and Information Management Professionals Australasia**

Vacant (Deputy: Vacant)

**Minutes Secretary**

Ms Amanda Casselton – Recordkeeping Advisory Officer, SRO

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.

**Members of the Committee who retired during 2009-10 and the bodies represented**

Mr Jonathon Throssell	Local Government CEO representative (member)
Mr Gary Evershed	Local Government CEO representative (deputy)

**COMPLIANCE REPORT – STATE RECORDS ACT 2000**

Part 8 of the Act establishes the Commission. The Commission’s duties are set out there and elsewhere in the legislation. A compliance statement on the Commission’s activities in 2010-11 is presented below.

**Part 3 Division 2**

**Section 20(2) – gazette orders prescribing timing for submission of organizations’ record keeping plans**

No orders were issued during 2010-11.

**Section 23(1) – approve or refuse to approve record keeping plans**

During 2010-11 the Commission approved 50 RKPs, comprising two RKPs from new organizations; amendments to 47 existing RKPs; and the continuation of one RKP 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 2010-11.



### **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. No further action was required during 2010-11.

#### **Section 26 – State Records Office to have a plan**

The SRO's amended RKP was approved by the Commission in December 2007. No further action was required during 2010-11.

#### **Section 27 – Schedule 3 organizations to have plans**

The Commission was notified by the Executive Director during the reporting year that the Minister for Energy had approved amended RKPs for:

- Synergy in October 2009 and no action was required in the 2010-11 reporting period;
- Verve Energy in December 2010 and no action was required in during the reporting period; and
- Western Power in February 2010 and therefore no action was required during 2010-11.

At the completion of the reporting period Horizon Power's draft amended RKP was awaiting approval by the Minister for Energy.

### **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 2010-11.

#### **Section 28(5) – five yearly review of all record keeping plans**

The recordkeeping plans of 19 organizations were due for review during 2010-11. All 19 organizations complied with this requirement (see Appendix 1).

#### **Section 29(1) – give directions as to intervals for periodic reporting on recordkeeping plans (discretionary)**

No directions were given in 2010-11.

#### **Section 30(1) – give Parliament copies of reports to Commission under section 29**

No reports were referred to Parliament during 2010-11.

### **Part 5 Division 2**

#### **Section 37 – restricted access archives identified**

The Commission approved restricted access applications submitted by one government organization during 2010-11.



## **Section 38 – when archives cease to be restricted access archives**

During 2010-11 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 2010-11.

#### **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**

Following approval of the fully revised archives keeping plan in December 2008, the Executive Director is required to conduct a review of the archives keeping plan within five years of the approval date.

### **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 2010-11.

### **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 by the Director in 2010-11.

#### **Section 48(4) – review direction given under section 48(1)**

No directions required review in 2010-11.

### **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 2010-11. During this period 19 government organizations were required to complete a review and report to the Commission.



## **Section 60(1)(b) – monitor compliance by government organizations with record keeping plans**

During 2010-11, all 19 government organizations required to review their RKPs during this period complied with the requirement. The SRO evaluated the reports and amended RKPs against previous plans submitted and current agency practice.

## **Section 60(1)(c) – inquire into breaches or possible breaches of this Act**

1. Progress with the investigation of alleged breaches of the Act, which were previously mentioned in the Commission's 2008-09 and/or 2009-10 Reports:

- **Balga Senior High School** – In May 2008 the Estimates and Financial Operations Committee (the Committee) of the Legislative Council reported on an investigation into the Balga Works Program at Balga Senior High School. The Committee found that the Department of Education and Training (the DET), now the Department of Education, had failed to ensure that a record was kept of any meeting between the DET and the relevant Minister regarding the program. The Estimates Committee also noted anomalies in the recording of program enrolment and attendance figures.

The Department of Education (the Department) delayed finalizing the draft policy for the keeping of student attendance records to ensure that matters raised in an Office of the Auditor General report, released in August 2009, had been fully addressed. However, the Department did implement appropriate mechanisms for the recording of business related meetings.

Following a number of delays regarding the development and publication of a fully revised Student Attendance Policy, the Department advised that the Policy has been finalized and distributed to schools via the organization's website. The inquiry is expected to be finalized and reported to the August 2011 meeting of the Commission.

- **Department of the Attorney General (DotAG)** – A Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission report tabled in Parliament in March 2010 found that a Judge's associate at the District Court had obtained access to information in departmental databases and passed the information to third parties. In April 2011 the Executive Director advised that the SRO had received details of improved information security measures and effective recordkeeping training undertaken by DotAG staff and court officials.



- **Challenger TAFE** (TAFE) – In May 2010 the parent of a student attending the TAFE alleged that inadequate records had been kept of his dealings with that agency regarding his son’s education. During 2010–11 the Executive Director and Challenger TAFE have been in dialogue regarding practices for the documentation of meetings and conversations relating to students and their legal guardians.
2. The following alleged breach was reported during 2009-10, and subsequently resolved in 2010-11.
- **Town of Bassendean** (the Town) – In February 2010 the Town reported the theft of State records from the residence of an employee, where the records were being used without authorization. In July and August 2010 the Town provided the Director with further information confirming that the Police had not been able to recover the missing records. The Town has subsequently strengthened the Policy for off-site use of records and raised awareness throughout the organization. At its April 2011 meeting the Commission considered that whilst correct protocols may not have been followed by the Town’s employee, a breach could not be determined and the Town’s corrective action was appropriate.
3. Alleged Breaches of the Act reported to the Commission in 2010-11, for which the Executive Director’s final report will be presented to the Commission’s August 2011 meeting, include the following:
- **Shire of Halls Creek** (the Shire) – The Shire advised the Executive Director in July 2010 that they could not locate minutes of two specific Council meetings, held in 1994 and 2000. During 2010–11, sources beyond the Shire have been explored to discover whether copies of the agenda or minutes exist elsewhere.
  - **Department of Housing** (the Department) – 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. During 2010-11 the Executive Director and the Department have been in dialogue regarding corrective measures necessary for improving staff compliance with appropriate records management procedures.
  - **Training Accreditation Council** (the 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*. Following an SRO investigation the Council advised that it hopes to resolve this matter and report accordingly to the Executive Director.



- **Department of Education: Autism Education Service** (the 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. The Executive Director is in dialogue with the Department.
  - **Challenger Institute of Technology** (the Institute) – 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. The Executive Director is in dialogue with the Institute.
  - **Department of the Attorney General: Public Trust Office** (PTO) – In October 2010 a member of the public claimed that records of his employment with the PTO in the 1970s, had not been retained. Following dialogue with DoTAG and investigation of government policy and legislative requirements relevant to that era, the Executive Director advised the Commission that it was reasonable to expect that such records were disposed of under accepted government practice of the day.
4. The following alleged breaches have been reported and remain under investigation by the SRO.
- **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 Treasury and Finance), in connection with the Perth Arena project. SRO staff have been in dialogue with representatives of the Auditor General’s office and the Department of Treasury and Finance to establish improved practices.
  - **Department of Health: Health Information Network** (the Department) – The Auditor General submitted a report to Parliament on *ICT Procurement in Health and Training* in October 2010. This report found that adequate record keeping processes were not in place in the Health Information Network (HIN). The Executive Director is in dialogue with the Department and SRO representatives have assisted the Department with recruitment of officers to key positions responsible for improved information management.
  - **Department of Housing** (the Department) – In May 2011, an anonymous correspondent alleged that the Department had not employed adequate measures to ensure its records could be tracked and located. The Executive Director is in dialogue with the Department.

## **Section 61 – establish principles and standards**

A fully revised *General Disposal Authority for Local Government Records* was developed by the State Records Office in 2009-10, and published in December 2010 along with resentencing guidelines and a linking table (see General Disposal Authority Review Program section of this report).



The General Disposal Authority for Human Resource Management Records is currently under review (see General Disposal Authority Review Program section of this report).

The Commission notes that one existing GDA remains due for review and the Executive Director is exploring available resource options to complete this review.

### **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 2010-11.

No new Committees were established during this period.

### **Section 64(1) and (3) – submit annual report to Parliament by 1 November each year**

The Commission's ninth Annual Report (2009-10) was submitted to both Houses of the State Parliament on 20 September 2010. Copies of the Report were tabled in both the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council on 21 September 2010.

### **Section 64(2) and (3) – submit reports to Parliament re contraventions of the Act (discretionary)**

No special reports were submitted to Parliament in 2010-11.

### **Section 64(4) – give the Minister a copy of any report submitted to Parliament**

A copy of the Commission's Annual Report (2009-10) was given to the Minister for Culture and the Arts on 20 September 2010.

## **Part 8 Division 2**

### **Section 65(4) – include in annual report any policy directions given by the Minister**

The Minister for Culture and the Arts issued no general policy directions to the Commission in 2010-11.

### **Section 66(4) – comply with requests by Minister for information and make facilities available**

During 2010-11 neither the Commission nor the Executive Director received any specific request as per this section of the Act.



## **Part 8 Division 3**

### **Section 68 – Commission may request a government organization to report about its record keeping or an aspect of its record keeping**

In previous Annual Reports the Commission has referred to ongoing issues with the Department of Health's (the Department's) Recordkeeping Plan. These included the provision of six monthly progress reports on matters relevant to the implementation of the Plan. The Department continues to comply with the reporting requirements and is maintaining contact and liaison with the SRO.

### **COMPLIANCE WITH SRC STANDARD 2, PRINCIPLE 6**

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 evaluated relevant recordkeeping systems and practices and assessed the efficiency and effectiveness of current systems and two comprehensive file audits were conducted;
- A fully revised suite of Recordkeeping Policies and Procedures was developed and published for internal use;
- The induction pack for Commissioners was reviewed and will be updated to include the revised policies and procedures; 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 2010-11, with the aim of enhancing public sector and community awareness of the work of the Commission and the benefits of the Act.

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| 20 September 2010 | Commissioners Murphy, Bluemmel, Field and McDermott attended the SRO's Geoffrey Bolton Lecture at Government House. |
| 19 November 2010  | Hosted an informal lunch and media opportunity for government officers in Albany and the Great Southern region.     |



## HOW TO CONTACT THE STATE RECORDS COMMISSION

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.

### **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 3360

Fax: (08) 9427 3368

Email: [sro@sro.wa.gov.au](mailto:sro@sro.wa.gov.au)

Website: [www.sro.wa.gov.au](http://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 3426

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Website: [www.sro.wa.gov.au](http://www.sro.wa.gov.au)



## Appendix 1

### Record keeping plans required for review on or before 30 June 2011

#### Status Register

Agency Name	Status R = Received O = Overdue	Next Review Date
Albany Port Authority	R	27 Mar 2016
Armadale Redevelopment Authority	R	27 Mar 2016
Burswood Park Board	R	27 Mar 2016
City of Cockburn	R	8 Apr 2016
Department of Sport and Recreation (includes WA Professional Combat Sports Commission)	R	15 Sep 2015
Department of Treasury and Finance	R	8 Apr 2016
Edith Cowan University	R	8 Apr 2016
Great Southern Development Commission	R	15 Sep 2015
Mindarie Regional Council	R	8 Apr 2016
Parliamentary Commissioner for Administrative Investigations (Ombudsman)	R	15 Sep 2015
Rottnest Island Authority	R	8 Apr 2016
Shire of Boyup Brook	R	14 Jul 2015
Shire of Dundas	R	2 Apr 2015
Shire of Williams	R	8 Apr 2016
Swan River Trust	R	27 Mar 2016
Town of Kwinana	R	19 Nov 2015
Western Australian Boxing Commission – renamed <b>Western Australian Professional Combat Sports Commission</b> . (now covered in the Department of Sport and Recreation Recordkeeping Plan)	R	15 Sep 2015
Western Australian Electoral Commission	R	8 Apr 2016
Western Australian Land Authority (Landcorp)	R	27 Mar 2016



## Appendix 2

### Record keeping Plans required for new Organizations on or before 30 June 2011

#### Status Register

Organization Name	Due Date	Submission Date
Mental Health Commission	8 September 2010	8 September 2010
Western Australian Regional Development Trust	17 January 2011	18 January 2011
Pharmacy Registration Board	18 April 2011	24 January 2011
Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (WA)	18 April 2011	13 April 2011



## Acronyms and Terms Used in this Report

Acronyms and Terms	Definition
Disposal Authority	= A term used to incorporate GDAs, SDAs and R&Ds for the legal disposal of government records
GDA	= General Disposal Authority for the legal disposal of government records (developed by the SRO)
R&D	= Retention and Disposal Schedule for the legal disposal of the functional records of government organizations (developed by individual agencies with SRO advice and assistance)
RKP	= Recordkeeping Plan
SDA	= Sector Disposal Authority for the legal disposal of functional records of like sectors of government (developed by the SRO)
SRC	= State Records Commission
SRO	= State Records Office