

ARMAil

Central New York

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SURVEYING & SCHEDULING

by David E. Horn, CA, CRM, MIT
Burns Library, Boston College

PREPARATION

A thorough records survey is time consuming and difficult. For a large company, the survey can be a major undertaking. To survey the records of all offices, the records manager needs the cooperation of the people in all those offices - and we all know that it is not easy to obtain 100% cooperation.

An essential component of preparation must be obtaining the support of senior management. Ideally, an organization that has established a records management program has already stated its support for a survey of all organizational records. In practice, an RM program is often approved only semi-officially ("Why don't you have somebody see if they can organize the records in the store room?"). Thus the bid for support must be done backwards: instead of receiving full support at the beginning of the program, the records manager must determine what the program needs, one step at a time, and propose the implementation of that step.

This is, in my opinion, a form of "managing up," which I think does not work well in the long run, but in the short run it is often the only way to run the records program. (I also think that "managing down" does not work well, but that is a subject for another essay.)

How do you, the records manager, obtain the support for the survey? The answer depends on the culture of your organization. If your company always re-



In practice, an RM program is often approved only semi-officially ("Why don't you have somebody see if they can organize the records in the store room?").

quires several layers of review, then follow that process. It might be hard and drawn out, but it is an opportunity to describe the process, to show that it is

This article is the second half of a two-part article by David Horn. The first appeared in the February 2002 issue of Boston Bits, the second in the August 2002 issue. Both issues are available on the website of the Boston ARMA Chapter at <http://www.armaboston.org/chapter/newsletter.html>

useful and necessary, and thus to increase support at all levels. One advantage of this system is that a top administrator might issue a decree (send a memo) to assure cooperation by all managers.

In some institutions, the culture is less formal. The records manager simply contacts each office and arranges for a visit. A survey often requires two visits: the first is with the manager or department head, to describe the survey and explain how it helps each office to fulfill its legal and company requirements for records creation, retention, and availability; the second is to conduct the survey. The manager or department head will designate one or more people to work with the records manager.

EARLY STAGES

Be sure to know what information you want on a survey, and be sure to have forms that are easy to use. It is not necessary to reinvent this wheel: there are forms available in standard books on records management. When I gave the presentation on which this article is based, I passed out copies of forms. I can provide them to any reader who will contact me (horndc@bc.edu) and give me a fax number or a mailing address.

The forms identify the office you are surveying, that is, the office that creates or receives the records that will be listed. Thus the top of the form will have spaces for the levels of management in your organization: perhaps the vice-president

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**Message from the President
Eileen Keating**

Do I have a Plan? – Setting Goals

By the time you read this article it will be 2003; for those of you interested, it is the Year of the Goat. A new year affords us the opportunity to reflect on the past, but it also gives us the chance to set new goals for ourselves, personally and professionally. I am fortunate that there is much variety in my work and no two days are the same. I often have ideas for new projects and for the most part I have the encouragement of those around me to develop my ideas and act upon them. That kind of support enables me, with perseverance, to achieve the goals I set, but the question is, am I setting good goals?

In my job I have to create a list of goals every year for the annual report that I submit. Although I usually need a shove to do them, I am always glad when they are done. I know I could improve upon my list and I think the suggestions below will help.

Gene Donohue of Marlborough New Hampshire founded Top Achievement in 1998. Top Achievement supplies articles, coaching services, daily motivators, internet radio broadcasts, and a discussion board to its members. Gene Donohue has suggested seven steps for setting goals that are simple, but good advice.

First, make sure the goal you are working for is something you really want, not just something that sounds good. Your goal can not contradict any of your other goals. He suggests we develop goals in the 6 areas of life:

- * Family and Home
- * Financial and Career
- * Spiritual and Ethical
- * Physical and Health
- * Social and Cultural
- * Mental and Educational

He suggests we write goals in the positive instead of the negative and that we write our goals in complete detail. He reminds us to be sure our goals are high

enough, in other words challenge ourselves, but I would add that we should not make our goals too lofty or we will never attain them. When that happens we will stop setting goals, which is never a good idea. Finally and most important we need to write our goals down. In this way we can review what we have written and determine if we are making progress or not.

Because the nature of our jobs involves doing myriad tasks, I think a list of goals can help keep us focused. I am a big believer in positive thinking and I think reminding ourselves throughout the year of the positive goals that we want to achieve can only help to motivate us each day.

Talking about positives, our next meeting can only be described as such. Ed Galvin and Mary Ann Hess are just two of the people who make Syracuse University's Records Center run. On February 11th, they will share their experiences in doing a records audit and they will give us a tour of their new facility. We could all learn much from their work and weather permitting, I will see you next month.

**ARMA2003:
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Converging Technology,
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Information Management
October 19-22, 2003



Meeting in Review
November 12, 2002
Holiday Inn, Cortland

by Edward MacKenzie II

Disaster and Security Recovery and Planning

The Fall CNY ARMA meeting was held on November 12, 2002 at the Holiday Inn in Cortland, N.Y. The meeting consisted of a panel discussion on Disaster and Security Recovery and Planning. We had four people knowledgeable in this area participating in the discussion providing some of their experiences and tips in disaster planning and recovery.

First to speak was **Vic Ladd-DeGraff** from Niagara Mohawk, a National Grid company, where she is responsible for coordinating Emergency Planning. Vic discussed how important it is to have your records management program supported by upper management, as well as knowing where your priorities lie and what you need to protect in the event of a disaster. She also stressed the importance of building a good support team with contingency plans in place for items you will need to have in an emergency, as well as identifying available resources, such as the local fire chief who can provide you with a wealth of information in times of crisis.

Maria Holden, the Preservation Administrator of the New York State Archives was next. Maria discussed a disaster she personally experienced when the Armory garage in Albany, which stored some Civil War artifacts, flooded in 1995. Approximately 8000 cubic feet of records were stored on 250 pallets in the armory and, unfortunately, some of the information was destroyed. However, the flood did have some positive results. The disaster forced them to look at what plans they had in place and changes were made for the better. The disaster plan in place prior to the flood was based on a conservation effort and wasn't very useful as opposed to what is in place now. An emergency response team was developed that involved coordination among all departments, as well as the creation of conservation brochures outlining these

responsibilities. Criteria were developed for offsite storage with minimal standards in place.

John Dean, the Director of the Department of Preservation and Conservation at Cornell University spoke next about some of his experiences and the importance of having back-ups in place. He stressed the importance of being prepared for a disaster using cautionary steps, including making sure you are ready with check lists for such things as an exit plan, first aid, and insurance needs. John also discussed the importance of needing a solid core of well-trained people to manage your volunteers responding to an emergency crisis. In addition, knowing what condition the building that stores your records is in and decentralizing records and keeping them at least 6 inches off the floor are all useful disaster planning ideas.

The last person on the panel to speak was **Richard Strassberg**, the Associate Director of the Martin P. Catherwood Library at Cornell University. He also stressed using all resources at your disposal and emphasized how important it is that you're aware of your volunteers in an emergency response. This includes getting a copy of some form of identification such as a driver's license for all volunteers involved in a response. Preplan and have phone trees of all potential contacts for an emergency, such as fire departments and utility people, ready for use. Richard also discussed having the proper equipment to handle the task



John, Vic, Maria, and Richard — our expert panel at the November 12 meeting!



Carla MacDonald, Deanna Gugger, and President Eileen Keating at the November 12 meeting.

you're dealing with and minimizing the danger to volunteers. As he stated, "Individuals are more important than records." Knowing the situation you're getting into and trying to keep your wits about you, such as making sure the power is turned off before venturing into a flooded basement, will save lives.

After the four panelists finished with their presentations, the meeting was open up for discussion. The members in attendance had some questions on topics relevant to their own experiences and the ones discussed. It was a very informative meeting and was enjoyed by all those who attended.

RECORDS

by Holly Murphy, CRM

It's a brand new year! Some people mark the start of a new year with resolutions and goals. A good resolution is to be the most knowledgeable records manager you can be. One step towards that goal is easy. By taking the CRM Corner Quiz in every AIRMAIL you can't help but learn more about records management. Another step is to seriously consider taking the CRM examinations and becoming a Certified Records Manager. If you are interested in pursuing a CRM professional designation, or you just have questions go to www.icrm.org. Now for this month's questions.

Part 1 Management Principles and The Records & Information Management Program

1. Span of control:
 - a. is defined by a formula based upon a ration of 12:1
 - b. is most satisfactory when the chain of command is lengthened as much as possible.
 - c. has been lessened as a result of modern computerized management information systems.
 - d. is determined independently of the interlocking of the work of subordinates.
 - e. refers to the number of employees who are directly supervised by one person.

Part 2 Records Creation and Use

2. The master reference file for directives:
 - a. contains those directives affecting current organization policy.
 - b. contains a copy of all current and superseded directives.
 - c. is needed for permanent directives.
 - d. replaces the directive history file after directives have been superseded.
 - e. should be maintained in all departments of the organization.

Part 3 Records Systems, Storage, and Retrieval


3. A document filing system can best be defined as:
 - a. the indexing recall in a file.
 - b. the usage of different types of equipment and devices.
 - c. records required for documentary evidence.
 - d. an orderly, planned method of arrangement of papers and similar items
 - e. none of the above.

Part 4 Records Appraisal, Retention, Protection and Disposition

4. Production schedules and budget reports are examples of:
 - a. future information
 - b. historical information
 - c. internal information
 - d. non-recurring information
 - e. all of the above.

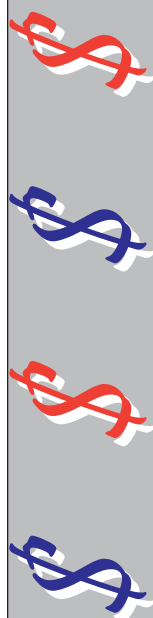
Part 5 Facilities, Equipment, Supplies, and Technology

5. The number of frames of 35 mm microfilm usually mounted in a aperture card is/are:
 - a. 1
 - b. 4
 - c. 6
 - d. 8
 - e. 10

 *Answers on page 7*

TREASURER'S REPORT

*Submitted by Susan D. MacLeod, CRM
12/31/02*



BALANCE as of 09/30/02: \$1903.68

INCOME:

11/18/02 November Meeting Revenue	\$ 465.00
11/18/02 September Meeting Sponsor Payment	\$ 300.00
11/22/02 November Meeting Sponsor Payment	\$ 300.00
11/30/02 Escrow Direct Deposits - Sept., Oct., Nov.	\$ 150.00
11/30/02 Account Interest - Sept., Oct., Nov.	\$.06
Total Income:	\$ 1215.06

EXPENSES:

11/12/02 Retirement Gift	\$ 27.00
11/12/02 Holiday Inn Cortland - November Meeting-	\$ 535.89
11/22/02 November Newsletter Payment	\$ 413.59
11/22/02 Speaker Mileage Reimbursement	\$ 68.62
11/30/02 Bank Charges October, November	\$ 10.00
Total Expenses:	(\$1055.10)

BALANCE as of 12/31/02: \$ 2063.64

Looking for a new records management job in the area?

Check out job postings on the CNY ARMA web site
<http://archives.syr.edu/cnyarma/>



■ **Surveying and Scheduling**

Continued from page 1

level, then department, division, and office. Before I survey an office, I fill in this information. I also key in the name and telephone number of my contact, the person who will walk with me through the office to list the records. I put this information in bold type, to emphasize that this visit is unique to each office.

The form lists all the information required to identify each kind of record and to determine its retention: record series (that is, the kind of record), volume (in file drawers or cubic feet or shelf feet), years, frequency of use. We also ask the following questions:

Is this a vital record (absolutely necessary to continue the functions of this office)? Does it have historical (archival)

Can I simplify the process by shortening the form? The nice people in each office want to understand what I am doing, but they also want me to finish and leave.

value? Is this office the originating office for this record? What are the retention requirements? Is this record available in an electronic format?

People in the office might not know the answers to all of these questions, but they can help with some of them, and they should realize the importance of all this information in the retention program.

BEGINNING

Begin small. I always start a survey with my own office, and then I move on to the offices of other people in my department. This gives me a chance to try out the form by asking such questions as, is it clear and complete? Can I simplify the process by shortening the form? Also, starting with a few small offices and with

people I know lets me practice my explanations and requests. I also practice keeping my instructions brief. The nice people in each office want to understand what I am doing, but they also want me to finish and leave.

SEQUENCE

As I said above, I start with my own office and then survey the other offices in my department. Then I do the departments that are connected with mine (that is, report to the same vice president). Then I do the offices under another vice president in the same systematic way. Thus, I do each functional area in a relatively short time, surveying similar records, and taking advantage of the informal communication that precedes the survey (this might be positive or negative!). In this way I work across the company's organization chart.

VOLUME

I have listed the kinds of information needed for each kind of record. It is important to remember that I must complete a different form for every series, that is, every kind of record in each office. The average office has 12 to 15 different kinds of records. For example, an office in finance or accounting might have: purchase orders, price agreements, billing and payment agreements, invoices, packing lists, certification of receipt of materials, payment vouchers, lists of checks, canceled checks, etc.

Yes! I need one form for each kind of record!

At the (former) Boston Edison Company, there were about 210 offices, that is about 210 separate records-creating units. I made 210 or so office visits to do the survey. And I completed over 3,000 forms.

HELP!

You might very well ask for help, and your request for assistance from inside or outside the company must be part of your initial proposal to undertake the records survey. Providing help means allocating resources or spending money, so it will not be granted easily. In your original proposal, you must be clear (and your

immediate manager must clearly support you) about the advantages of the records survey. They include meeting legal requirements (no little advantage in these perilous times), destroying outdated records (and thus making space available for other uses), and — with the proper follow-up — simplifying office work to save time and money.

In one of my surveys I was fortunate to receive support in the form of a contractor, an experienced records manager with expertise in engineering and scientific records. I was also allowed to use interns from a Records Management class and to pay some support staff.

In the two universities where I surveyed records (not my present employer), I was unable to have additional staff. I could not survey all the offices in a reasonable time, so I visited all the department heads, explained the procedures, and left with them enough copies of the forms. I did survey the core offices: president, controller, vice presidents, registrar, and deans. I also spent much time "chasing" the forms, which entailed calling people to encourage them to complete the survey.

NOW WHAT?

Now the fun begins! With the survey forms of an office in hand, the records manager determines the retention period for each kind of record. Again, it is not necessary to reinvent the wheel, as most records are listed in easily available resources. Some records management (off-site storage) companies have standard lists. You may use these for general guidelines, but be sure to ask for the sources of these recommendations.

Federal and state agencies issue lists of records and their retention periods, and some professional organizations have lists. The book *Recordkeeping Requirements*, by Donald Skupsky has a good basic list. Every organization has legal and business reasons for retaining each record as long as is required, and, as the records manager, you lead and coordinate the effort to meet those requirements. Your legal department, or the law firm used by your organization, will sup-

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Chapter Newsletter of the Year 2002

by Dianne Liuzzi Hagan

Congratulations to CNY ARMA for its second win for Chapter Newsletter of the Year in the Medium Chapter Category! This prestigious award is coveted by many and won by the few, the elite. CNY ARMA is one of those few! We won in 1998 and now, again, in 2002!

I'm proud of our newsletter. I was editor back in 1998 when we won the first time, but a single editor could easily get burned-out being responsible for every issue of the newsletter, so I recommended a committee approach to newsletter production. There were some skeptics, but our newsletter continues to be one of the best out there, and we proved it with the 2002 award! To my



knowledge, we are the only chapter that does its newsletter by rotating committee! It is a testament to the commitment and dedication of our Board of Directors who want us all to have access to the right information and the best educa-

tional sessions! Now that we have gone electronic with our newsletter, it is just one more way we keep relevant information at your fingertips!

I was the proud recipient of the award at the Awards Banquet in New Orleans, but a few moments in time different, and the whole story would have changed! Carol Compton and I had just minutes before excused ourselves from the New Orleans sound of Charmaine Neville singing Zydeco and R&B, in order to freshen up in the Ladies' Room. From past experience, I knew there was usually a respite between the dinner and the start of the awards presentation, but not this time!

Just as we were about to re-enter the darkened ballroom upon our return, I heard 'Central New York ARMA' over the loudspeaker. Carol was bent on another mission – don't forget the hurricane was raging overhead, and Carol needed just a drop of courage by way of a glass of wine — and never heard a word over the din, not even my calling out to her that our chapter had just been called. Then I heard my name! I was looking around wildly trying to figure out what we had won as I literally ran the length of the ballroom in my heels and sparkly evening attire — thank God for the Carrier Wellness Center! Then I looked at the large screens, and I realized it was the newsletter, just as I bounded up the steps to the stage. I thanked the presenter and whispered in her ear that I just happened into the room at the right time after a trip to the Ladies' Room, and she laughed and told me to take a bow, which I did indeed!

Back at the table, Carol had to admit she was lost in Oz till she saw my 30' image on the two large screens. That could wake anyone up in a hurry, especially someone steeped in hurricane-mania — it may have reminded her of a certain scene from *The Wizard of Oz* in which Dorothy finds herself face to face with a huge image of the witch on a similar screen that moments before showed her good-hearted Auntie Em calling her name. There's no place like home.

Disaster Queen leaves trail of contaminated boxes, exploding toilets and sewer gas behind

by Dianne Liuzzi Hagan

Our favorite, lovable and thoroughly outspoken Disaster Queen, Carla MacDonald, is hanging up her Bright Eyes (TM) (safety glasses with sidelights) and her latex gloves and heading for the greener fields of retirement. Carla retired 12/20/02 as the Records Manager for Onondaga County Department of Social Services. Lest she forget the long list of disasters she took on during her 28 year tenure, she was faced with one last disaster before she parted. Two days before her retirement, a tailpipe with couplings was tossed through a double-paned window at her records center, contaminating several linear feet of records with glass shards. Of course, as the resident disaster expert, she quickly abated the contamination. Her boss also was concerned she might not remember the good old days, so for her retirement party, he boxed up a piece of pipe from another well-known disaster.

We will miss Carla and all her disaster stories shared in high dramatic tenor! Her contributions as a colleague, an officer and a board member will also not be forgotten. But most of all, we will miss Carla's uncanny ability to laugh at herself and life's trials and tribulations. Carla, best wishes to you on your retirement and all the respect, friendship and love we can give in return for all you have given us.



Carla MacDonald has retired after 28 years with the Onondaga County Department of Social Services.

■ Surveying and Scheduling

Continued from page 5

port this effort (or else!).

Example: you have found bill payment records in the Accounts Payable Department. One of these records is the series Canceled Checks. Some lists of retention requirements give 6 years for this record, and some say 7 years. If there is any doubt about retention, keep the records for the longer period. An increasing number of companies are doing business with other countries and even have offices there. If a foreign country has a longer retention period, you might have to observe that for all company records.

The retention periods are sometimes common sense, sometimes completely puzzling, and sometimes based on the statutes of limitations. If a customer has a 6-year period to claim she has overpaid a bill, or if your company has a 6-year period to claim the bill was never paid, then the law (and common sense) require a 6-year retention period.

You must keep the checks for 6 years, but you do not have to keep them in the office or in an expensive location. You may store them off site on company premises or with a vendor. When are the records moved out of the office? That depends on the office's need for each kind of record. With checks, they might be retained by the office for 2 years and then stored in a records center for 4 years.

With this information, you can now give to each office a Retention Schedule, that is, a list of all its records (the 12 to 15 series as I mentioned above) with the period for retention in the office, the time in the records center, and the total retention time.

Many records are not listed in any retention requirements. Therefore, there is no need to keep them beyond their immediate office use. Be sure to work with each office to agree on how long to keep these records, and make sure they destroy them regularly.

DISPOSITION

For many years this handy list was called a "Retention and Disposition Schedule."

The word Disposition does not refer to the mood of the records manager after doing all this work; rather, it refers to the final fate of each record.

Most records in most organizations may — and should — be destroyed at the end of the legally required retention period. As the records manager, you lead the effort to have the final disposition agreed on and properly authorized, and you implement it. There are many ways to do this. When offices are transferring records to the records center, be sure that each box contains only one kind of record, and that the destruction date for that box is clear. If checks created in July 2002 have a 6-year retention, then they may and should be destroyed on August 1, 2008, or within a few days of that date.

Some records have a very long retention value, for administrative, legal, financial or historical reasons. These records are archives and must be designated for "permanent" retention. Sadly, there are many organizations that have not established their own archives or even designated a home for their archives. Nonetheless, the archives must be retained permanently in the company's records center.

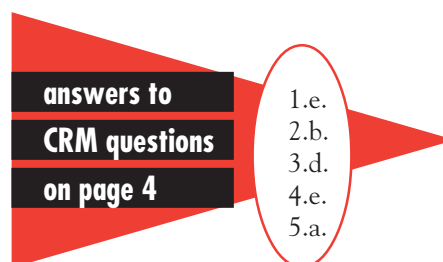
Will people appreciate all the hard work and significant contributions of a records survey?

No.

Is this everything i need to know about surveys & schedules?

No.

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