

FOR THE RECORD

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2007

MANAGING MESSAGES AS RECORDS

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By statute the “official correspondence” of governors is deposited with the State Archives. The Archives carefully arranges the correspondence on the basis of the size and type of the envelope (legal, letter, postcard, “pink” mail, etc.).

Okay, that is a lie; of course we don’t focus on the envelope. We are concerned with the content of communications and the functions and business activities addressed by that content. We are only concerned with the envelopes if they contain metadata (who sent it, when) not found in the content.

Thus it is with e-messages. E-mail, like letters, is a communications, not a recordkeeping, system. What needs to be managed is not “e-mail” per se but the content of the messages. As with envelopes if the communication system contains metadata that is not embedded in the content then strategies must be employed for its capture.

E-messages underscore the need to blend record and information management with technology.

1. Are there legal mandates governing the accessibility or retention of the content?
2. What functions or business activities are supported by the e-messages?
3. How do I file the e-message so it is associated with other records supporting those functions and activities?
4. How do I handle attachments or hyperlinks?

iSTART has engaged a sub-committee comprised of State employees responsible for business, legal, records, and information technology management to assist in the development of an e-message policy. As always, we welcome any questions on managing e-messages or related policy or guideline development.

STRIKING A BALANCE: FINDING PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS

The e-mail retention practices of several Federal, State, and local public agencies from across the country have been publicly scrutinized in recent months.

In all cases, public officials have been accused of treating their e-mail different from other electronic or paper recorded information produced or acquired in the course of government business.

What ties all these cases to-

gether is not only that they relate to e-mail, but that they also relate to government accountability: the obligation to meet the expectations of those we serve. Frankly, people expect public agencies to do a better job managing e-mail.

Few people realize that e-mail systems are designed as collaborative tools to enhance communication among two or more people: they are not designed to manage or store ex-

changed messages for any significant length of time.

As a result, performance is negatively impacted if e-mail storage thresholds are not managed properly. When systems are down, so is productivity. So what is agency expected to do?

iSTART is hoping to strike a balance among the IT, legal, records, and business communities. See page 3 for more!

VERMONT HIGHLIGHTS

Congratulations to the Office of Professional Regulation (OPR)!

With the assistance of iSTART members and their respective agencies, OPR is not only getting a new licensing system but also a new records management program!

VERMONT STATE ARCHIVES



When Europeans first encountered zebras they saw a white animal with black stripes. To Africans, however, the zebra was a black animal with white stripes. That is precisely why managing records and information should be approached from the enterprise level.

The Vermont State Archives

is one of the few units of government that must look across organizational, spatial, and temporal boundaries on a daily basis.

Citizens and agencies contacting us for information often do not know what agencies create the records or information that they seek or who creates similar or complementary records or information. *They don't know how to describe the zebra.*

The State Archives is developing common terminologies for describing business domains, activities, and record types. The goal is to apply these vocabularies across agencies to identify and enhance access to related activities and records.

This ongoing project can be viewed on the Archives website at: <http://vermont-archives.org/records/vclas/>.

Did You Know?

The Vermont Functional Classification System (VCLAS) has been recognized by the Records Management Roundtable of the Society of American Archivists. VCLAS terms will be integrated in a national functional thesaurus.

DII'S ENTERPRISE PROJECT MANAGEMENT OFFICE

Traditional approaches to archiving e-mail and capacity planning are no longer suitable for our State; it has become increasingly necessary to view and manage e-mail as recorded evidence of agency business.

DII is in the planning phase of implementing an upgraded e-mail system. This enhancement will include tools to

help with organizational, legal, and regulatory compliance; business continuity; and message protection.

Microsoft Exchange 2007 Server, coupled with a suite of Symantec products, will offer State agencies using DII's system the ability to automate many of the e-mail management actions; automation would support sound

records management, compliance and e-discovery needs.

As always, *the primary challenge will be people.* Business managers, IT professionals, lawyers, archivists, funding decision makers, and spenders all must take the time to collaborate and affect change.

"...the primary challenge will be people ... all must take the time to collaborate and affect change."

BGS' DIVISION OF PUBLIC RECORDS



Over the next several months, the BGS Microfilm and Imaging Section is embarking on an ambitious technology upgrade.

Currently Microfilm and Imaging consists of an aging group of 6 Kodak Imagelink cameras, 3 large overhead Bell and Howell planetary

cameras and 2 Fujitsu scanners.

Our plan is to replace the cameras and scanners with newer, upgraded scanners and add an Archive Writer to the system.

The Archive Writer is a piece of equipment that converts digital images to microfilm. Our goal with this upgrade is

to create an electronic reference version of records while still creating a microfilm security version.

The upgraded system will also allow us to perform back file conversions for departments that are transitioning to electronic systems. Stay tuned for more information as we go forward.

DISTRICT RUN

Wednesday, Dec. 19th

Paperwork Due:
December 5th

LOCATIONS:

- Barre
- Morrisville
- Newport
- St. Johnsbury

FILE FORMATS POLICY ADOPTED

The State Archives, Department of Information and Innovation, and Department of Buildings and General Services have adopted a joint policy on file formats for interoperability and preservation. The policy can be found at: <http://vermont-archives.org/records/iSTART/policies/>

The policy establishes guiding principles that will help agencies maintain accurate

and authentic records at all times. This means:

1. The record's content and structure are protected and immutable;
2. The record can be reliably accessed for as long as the record is required to be retained; and
3. There is a trustworthy practice or system of recordkeeping in place.

The file formats policy is just one building block of many that iSTART is embracing to help agencies, and the State, in keeping viable and accessible records.

iSTART has also issued a brief guideline to help agencies select appropriate file formats for their records. The guideline is also available at: <http://vermont-archives.org/records/iSTART/policies/>



Manuals for obsolete word processing programs.

E-MESSAGES SUB-COMMITTEE MEETS FOR 1ST TIME

On November 15, 2007, iSTART's electronic messages sub-committee met for the first time at the Secretary of State's Office in Montpelier.

The thought of creating a sub-committee was introduced by member Darwin Thompson, who found himself discussing e-mail issues with various agency IT managers.

Other members were also

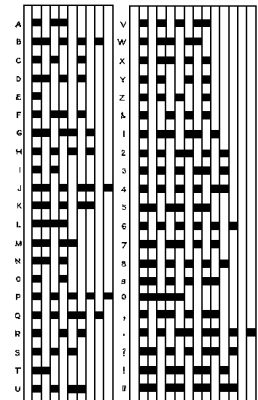
discussing e-mail issues, but instead with agency business managers, records officers, and legal advisors. Thus, the idea to bring everyone together was born.

The sub-committee is comprised of subject matter experts (SMEs) from the Agency of Natural Resources, Department of Education, Agency of Transportation, Department of Information and Innova-

tion, and the Secretary of State's Office.

After introductions, the group launched into an open discussion of e-mail issues from the legal, IT, business, and records perspectives.

With the pending upgrade to the State e-mail system, the sub-committee will be assisting iSTART with drafting state policies and guidelines for electronic messages.



Telegraphs were the first electronic communication systems. [Morse Code Key.]

VIEW FROM THE VILLAGE BY DICK PECOR



Interview with Al Voegele, Town Manager of Colchester, Vermont.

Al Voegele understands the often conflicting nature of governing. His approach to Records Management recognizes that since there is no "Home Rule" in Vermont, the municipality is essentially an extension of the State, gathering and storing public information. Town Clerks, by statute, preserve and provide access to those records.

Digital media and tools, however, allow for searching and combining vast amounts of data, raising issues about government's responsibility to protect citizens from the misuses of their personal information. How do we alleviate fears of identity and property theft via online access? Where do we now draw the line between open government and personal privacy?

Al contends that Vermont requires a "comprehensive, systematic consideration of our records retention policies", with safeguards for the protection of our citizens.

What do you think? Comments to: rpecor@town.colchester.vt.us



MEMBERS

Gregory Sanford, State Archives
Tanya Marshall, State Archives
Darwin Thompson, DII
Amy Boulanger, DII
Angela Leclerc, BGS
Mark Reaves, BGS
Dick Pecor, Town of Colchester

Christine Hetzel, Project Manager

About iSTART

Information Strategies: Taskforce on Archives, Records, & Technology (iSTART) is a volunteer collaborative group drawn from three public agencies with broad, cross-government responsibilities for the management of records and information technologies.

iSTART

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Department of Buildings & General Services
802-828-1005
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FOR THE RECORD will return in January 2008. Happy New Year!

RIGHT INFORMATION. RIGHT PEOPLE.
RIGHT TIME. EVERY TIME.

IN THE NEWS

- **NASCIO released Part III of its series *Electronic Records Management and Digital Preservation*.** The report, *Management Leads and Technology Follows — But Collaboration is King*, highlights how everyone plays a part in managing the digital assets. The report is available at: <http://www.nascio.org/publications/>
- ***Do You Know Where Your Records Are?*** Security procedures to protect the identity and private information of 25 million individuals and 7.25 million families in the United Kingdom were ignored by junior officials, who downloaded the data to discs and transmitted the information by unregistered mail to National Auditing Office. The breach would have gone unnoticed had the records not been lost in mail, causing one of the largest fraud alerts. Read more at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/7103566.stm
- **White House Ordered to Preserve E-mails.** On November 12, 2007, United States District Judge Henry H. Kennedy, Jr. ordered that the Executive Office of the President stop destroying e-mail after organizations alleged that more than 5 million White House e-mails have disappeared. For more details, see: <http://www.cnn.com/2007/POLITICS/11/12/white.house.email.ap/>

