

**AN OVERVIEW OF PUBLIC
RECORDS MANAGEMENT AND
THE ROLE OF PUBLIC OFFICERS**

**INDUCTION PROGRAMME FOR NEWLY
RECRUITED OFFICERS IN THE CIVIL
SERVICE**

PRAAD PRESENTATION, AUGUST 2020

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Presentation Overview

- Brief Background of PRAAD and the Records Class
- The Concept of Records
- The Relevance of the Records Life Cycle
- Responsibilities in Recordkeeping
- Ethical Issues in Records Management
- The Future of Public Records Management

INTRODUCTION

- Information is a critical resource required for to the effective functioning of any public organisation.
- Information required for government business is known as a Public Record.
- No government business can be well executed without making records of its activities.
- No office can operate successfully if it has to rely on undocumented memory to keep track of every transaction.

OBJECTIVE

It is hoped that at the end of this presentation there will be a clear understanding of:

- The role of PRAAD as a Department and the Records Class in the Public service
- An Overview to managing records for good governance.
- The responsibilities in Recordkeeping

BRIEF HISTORY ABOUT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES (Before PRAAD)

□ Its Establishment

- Started by Miss Marjorie Harris(1946), a British Librarian by profession and taken over by Mr. J. M. Akita (1949).
- Archives Ordinance promulgated in 1955 followed by Regulations in 1958
- This institution existed to solely manage ARCHIVAL DOCUMENTS

A GLANCE AT THE RMIP

- July/August 1990-A review of Registry organization and management in the Ghana Civil undertaken by the IRMT under British Aid arrangements.
- Aimed at introducing "a fully comprehensive records service that will cover every aspect and all stages of records creation and keeping"
- Two Records Office Re-Structuring Teams were formed in 1992; installed the New Keyword System in registries of 19 ministries.

A GLANCE AT THE RMIP contd.

- Fully functional Records Centre constructed 1994, completed and occupied 1996 and commissioned by the President on April 8th 1998.
- New legislations to cover all facets of the records cycle were established -
- Legislative Instrument No. 1628 of 1996 which established PRAAD; Also gave birth to the RECORDS CLASS.
- The PRAAD law , Act 535 of August 1997 defines the functions of PRAAD

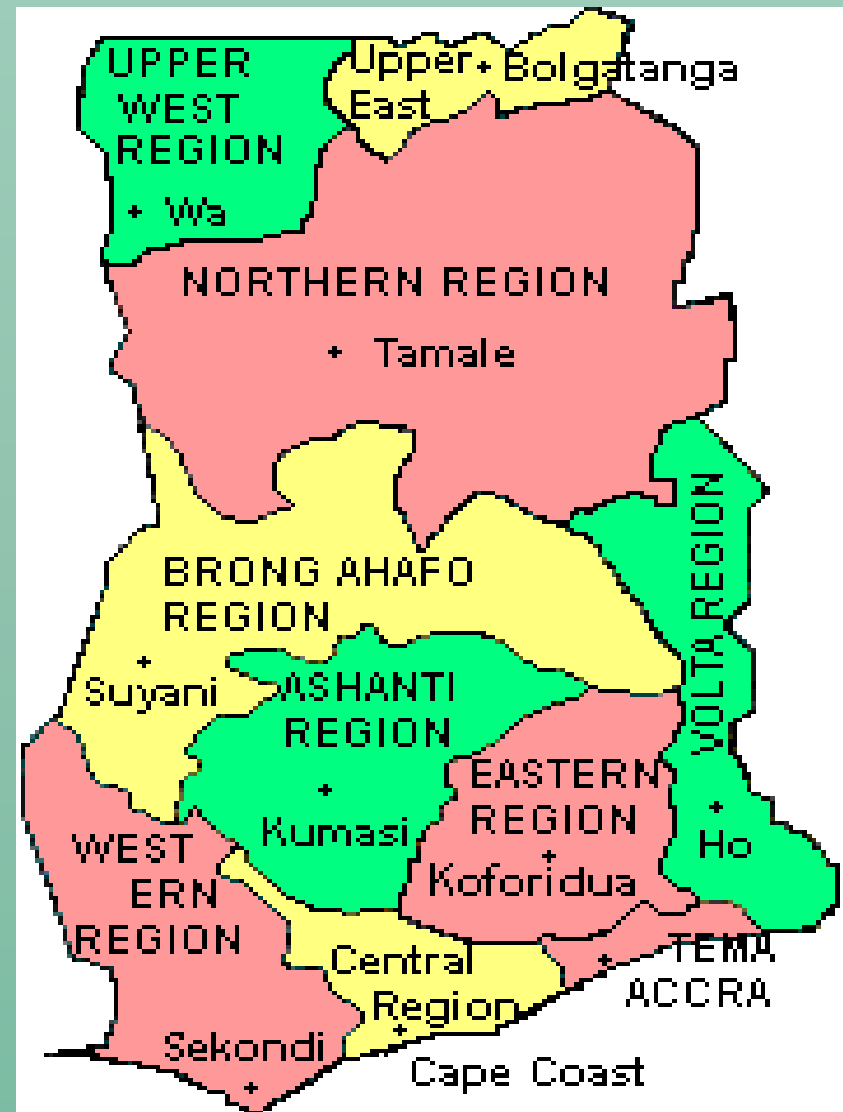
Public Records and Archives Administration Department (PRAAD)

In summary:

- The Public Records and Archives Administration Act, 535 of 1997 is the fundamental law that regulates how records created in public organizations should be managed.
- The Records Class is one of many classes in the Civil Service set apart from the others as the **ONLY** class with the task to efficiently and effectively manage public records in the MDAs.
- The Public Records and Archives Administration Department (PRAAD) is a Department under the Office of the Head of Civil Service (OHCS).

Regional-Capital Offices

1. Kumasi
2. Tamale
3. Sunyani
4. Koforidua
5. Sekondi-Takoradi
6. Cape Coast
7. Ho



THE ROLE OF PRAAD

For the proper and effective management of records in public institutions of government", the Department plays many roles:

- Ensure that public offices follow good record keeping practices
- Establish procedures for the timely disposal of public records of no continuing value
- Advise on best practices and establish national standards in records keeping in the public services

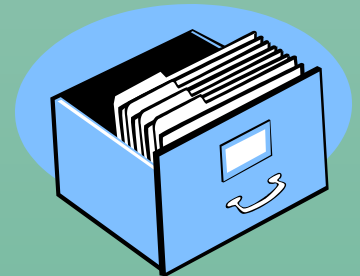
THE ROLE OF PRAAD contd.

- Establish and implement procedures for the transfer of public records of permanent value for preservation
- To establish effective records management systems in the MDAs throughout the country.
- To ensure the development of well trained and committed human resources for the records management activities.

WHAT ARE RECORDS? Contd.

The PRAAD ACT 535,1997.

- Defines "records" as "recorded information regardless of form or medium created, received and maintained by any institution or individual in the pursuance of ...legal obligations or in the transaction of ...business".
- They take the form of papers, book, photograph, microfilm, drawing, chart, magnetic tape, any information captured in a reproducible form etc.



PUBLIC RECORDS

-the Creation Process

Records:

- Documents providing evidence of business.
- Some emails and attachments.
- Versions, if needed to verify whether or why changes were made.
- Exchanges of information.

Non-Records:

- Convenience copies for personal use.
- Personal emails.
- Documents being worked on.
- Duplicates.

BASIC PURPOSES FOR CREATING RECORDS

- For activities such as:
 1. For reference
 2. For evidence
 3. For compliance

THE VALUE IN RECORDS

The decision to hold on to the records we create are based on the intrinsic value they contain. These are two distinct values:

- PRIMARY -these are the Legal, Administrative and Fiscal values
- SECONDARY- these are Informational and Evidential values

RECORDS LIFE CYCLE

-Why it is relevant

The concept of the records life cycle model is likened to that of a biological organism. They go through three main *stages*:

- Born- this is the creation phase.
- Live- this is the maintenance and usage phase.
- Expires- at this phase they are considered to die or are disposed of.
- The life cycle stages: **ACTIVE**, **SEMI-ACTIVE** and **INACTIVE** stage.

RECORDS MANAGEMENT

- Why it is relevant to know

- As a result of their Life Cycle they need to be well managed for good governance and accountability.
- Hence, Records Management is an *Administrative Activity* which seeks to control the creation, distribution, use, retrieval, storage and disposal of records.
- Thus, from creation to disposition, records must be properly organized, arranged and stored, movement controlled to facilitate information retrieval for effective decision making.

RECORDS MANAGEMENT RATIONALE

-Why Records Management

Broadly, as public officers we need to understand that records are created to:

- Support accountability and transparency
- Reduce costs and time wasting associated with poor records keeping.
- Promote information sharing and re-use.

BENEFITS OF RECORDS MANAGEMENT

-Outcome of the rationale

- Allows for smooth conduct of business.
- Protects the interest of organization and the rights of employees , clients and present as well as future stakeholders.
- Support and documents policy formulation and managerial decision making .
- Provide consistency and continuity
- Enhances productivity in management and administration.

THE RECORDS OFFICE

- The Records Office/Registry exists to support information needs of an organization be it small or big.
- It is the central point for managing records in an organization.
- It is first point of entry and exit point for records and informational services.
- The primary purpose: to provide service for its assigned users, action officers who are usually *operational or administrative staff*.
- Therefore, they are the pivot around which all activities revolve within and outside of an agency.

RECORDS OFFICE ACTIVITIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Below are 10 main activities of the records office

1. Receive mails
2. Dispatch mails
3. Record mails
4. Identify Records
5. Classify records

RECORDS OFFICE ACTIVITIES & RESPONSIBILITIES contd.

Below are 11 main activities of the records office

1. Open and close files
2. Undertake Filing
3. Circulate floats
4. Circulate files
5. Store files
6. Protect Records etc.

Key Skills For Records Managers

- Patience
- Meticulousness (showing extreme care)
- Capable of prioritising (deal with order of importance)
- Good problem-solving skills
- Analytical skills (logical reasoning)
- Administrative skills (task completing skills)

Key Skills For Records Managers contd.

- Organizational skills (use of time, energy, physical, mental capacity etc.)
- Communication and influencing skills, especially when requiring colleagues to hand over records or to use the systems correctly
- Confidence with using bespoke and standard information, databases, software and operating systems.

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES FOR RECORDS

As officers:

- We must read and pass on mail circulation folders as soon as you can.
- We must not hold on to files over if you are out of the office.
- We must return files promptly to the Records Office when you have completed work on them.
- We have to cooperate fully with all legitimate records checks, particularly, file searches and censuses.
- We need to inform the head of the Records Office or the Records Office line manager of any unsatisfactory service delivery.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR RECORDS

Management must ensure that:

1. The Records office is placed under a line management staff or the Head Department
2. The Records Office is adequately resourced-files, registers, protective clothing etc. are readily available and the office given a face-lift.
3. Staff are provided with the necessary skills/ knowledge and other motivation for their job.
4. The Head of the Records office is invited to staff meetings whenever possible so that he/she understands the work of the Institution.

INTRODUCTION TO LEGAL FRAMEWORKS FOR RECORDS

- As Civil Servants we must be guided by existing laws that control the records being created in our institutions. These include:
 - PRAAD Act, 1997, Act 535
 - Data Protection Act, 2012, Act 843
 - RTI Act, 2019, Act 989
 - State Secrets Act, 1962, Act 101
 - Civil Service Act, 1993 (PNDC Law 327)
 - Electronic Transaction Act, 2008, Act 772 etc.

INTRODUCTION TO LEGAL FRAMEWORKS FOR RECORDS contd

- PRAAD ACT, 1997, ACT 535:

1. AUTHORITY (Section 1, Section 7, Section 11, Section 12);

2. DESTRUCTION Of Records (Section 24) And DENIAL Of Access (Section 25).

- DATA PROTECTION ACT, 2012, ACT 843: it covers PRIVACY matters, an individual or organization's *right* to control or demand control of what *others* wish to know.

- RTI ACT 2019, ACT 989 (SS. 5-17) : we should be mindful of the EXEMPTIONS of information that can be released to the public.

INTRODUCTION TO LEGAL FRAMEWORKS FOR RECORDS contd.

- **STATE SECRETS ACT, 1962, ACT 101, Civil Service law (PNDC Law 327), section 76**

You are not to release confidential information you have come by during your tenure of office to unauthorized people when you are out of office unless authorized by law.

- **ELECTRONIC TRANSACTION ACT, 2008, ACT 772:**

Sections 7,8 and 9: (Admissibility and evidential weight of electronic records, Retention of electronic records, Security of electronic records)

Sections 25 & 26: Acceptance of electronic filing and issuing; public agencies and electronic records

EXEMPTIONS IN THE RTI ACT, 2019, ACT 989 (SS. 5-17)

However, there are exemptions in the RTI Act as follows:

- Information for the President or the Vice President
- Information for consideration (opinions etc.)
- Information relating to Cabinet
- Information relating to law enforcement and public safety
- Information affecting International relations
- Information that Affects the Security of the State

EXEMPTIONS IN THE RTI ACT, 2019, ACT 989 (SS. 5-17) contd.

- Economic and any other interests
- Economic information on third parties
- Information relating to tax
- Internal working information of public institutions
- Privileged information
- Disclosure of personal matters
- Disclosure for the protection of public interest

ETHICS IN PUBLIC SERVICE

Definition

Ethics are "standards of professional conduct applicable to members of an organization",

OR

"A set of principles that provide a framework for right action, which an individual acts in accordance with".

Ethical issues are distinct from political, legal or social matters. They are concerned with right and wrong actions and outcomes for both individuals and the organizations they work for.

ETHICS AND PUBLIC RECORDS

For public service, ethics in records bother around the following:

1. The Oaths we swear
2. To ensure effective controls for information dissemination
3. For good governance
4. To ensure adherence to prescribed principles
5. To serve organizational interests
6. For our own good etc.

ETHICAL VALUES IN RECORDKEEPING

- Responsiveness and efficiency:

This is very key to avoiding clashes between managers of public records and action officers or the public we serve.

- Confidentiality:

This is also key to avoiding leakages likely to breed a lot of mistrust for officers handling records from top to bottom.

- Respect For Rules:

We must have high respect for rules and regulations covering the keeping of the records

- Privacy:

We must ensure privacy on behalf those whose records are being managed.

THE FUTURE OF PUBLIC RECORDS MANAGEMENT

We must also be aware of changing trends and best practices in the field of records management in our various institutions and embrace them. These include:

1. Information Technologies (IT) as a supporting tool for enhancing productivity E.g. Desktop Computing, Mobile Computing, Cloud Computing & Big Data, Social Media etc.
2. Records Digitization e.g. Scanning
3. Electronic Document and Records Management Systems (EDRMS)

THANKS FOR YOUR TIME!!!



THANKS FOR BEING GOOD INDUCTEES!

For more information on Records Management,

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