

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

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

Presentation Overview

- Brief Background of PRAAD
- What are Records and by extension Public Records?
- The Records Life Cycle versus the Continuum Model
- What is Records Management?
 - ✓ Activities and Tools for Good Records Keeping
 - ✓ Roles and Responsibilities
 - ✓ Records Security and Access
 - ✓ Ethical issues bothering on Records Management
 - ✓ Legislative and Regulatory Context
- The Future of Public Records Management
 - ✓ E-Records

INTRODUCTION

- Information is a critical resource required for to the effective functioning of any public organisation.
- No government business can be well executed without making records of its activities.
- No office could operate successfully if it had to rely on undocumented memory to keep track of every transaction.
- PRAAD ACT 535 of 1997, sections 1 (1) and 9 places the “responsibility for the proper and effective management of records in public institutions of government’ on PRAAD and Heads of department.

OBJECTIVE

It is hoped that at the end of this presentation:

- There will be a clear understanding concerning the role of PRAAD as a Department.
- There will also be an understanding of how records should be managed for good governance.
- Finally, we will be able to establish the link between public records management and the role of public officers.

BRIEF HISTORY ABOUT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

□ 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 in1955 followed by Regulations in 1958

Public Records and Archives Administration Department (PRAAD)

- The Public Records and Archives Administration Department (PRAAD) came into existence by Legislative Instrument No. 1628 of 1996.
- The Law (Act 535) defining the functions of the Department was passed by Parliament and assented to by the President in August 1997.

Public Records and Archives Administration Department (PRAAD)

- The Public Records and Archives Administration Act, 535 of 1997 is, therefore, the fundamental law that regulates how records created in public organizations should be managed.

THE ROLE OF PRAAD

FUNCTIONS

- As contained in sub section I, section (1) of the Act, PRAAD is "responsible for the proper and effective management of records in public institutions of government".

In consonance with this, the Department has to: -

- Ensure that public offices, institutions and individuals who create and maintain public records follow good record keeping practices;

THE ROLE OF PRAAD contd.

- Establish and implement 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;
- Establish and implement procedures for the transfer of public records of permanent value for preservation in the national archives or other archival repository as may be designated under the act; and
- Perform any function conferred on the national Archives under any other existing enactment.

PRAAD'S OBJECTIVES

- To establish effective records management systems in the MDAs throughout the country.
- To ensure quality services to users of records through the development of well trained and committed human resources for the records management activities.

PRAAD'S OBJECTIVES contd.

- To ensure quality services to users through the provision of effective support systems.
- To preserve, conserve, and develop archives and to prepare Finding Aids of records in custody.
- To enhance PRAAD's capacity to deliver services in the regions by establishing fully functional regional offices.

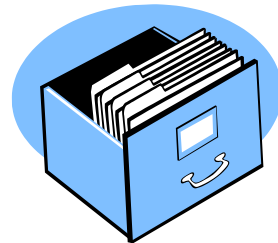
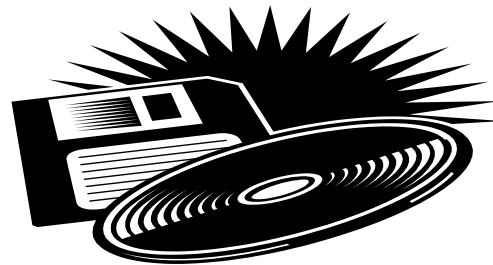
WHAT ARE RECORDS?

- Any information captured on paper, book, photograph, microfilm, drawing, chart, magnetic tape or any copy of a printout that has been generated or received by an organization and has been used by the organization in the course of transacting its business.
- A record may also be defined as any information captured in a reproducible form that is required for conducting business; that is any information recorded on any physical form or medium.

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 ofbusiness”.



BASIC PURPOSES FOR CREATING RECORDS.

1. For reference
2. For evidence
3. For compliance

RECORDS HAVE TWO BASIC VALUES

- PRIMARY -Why it was created ?
- SECONDARY- Satisfy other requirements

PRIMARY VALUE OF RECORDS

Administrative

The value a record has to the original creating or receiving office. Its use by the office and its importance relative to performing the organization assigned functions.

Legal

The value a record has in documenting business transactions and in providing proof of compliance with regulatory requirements.

Fiscal

The value the records has with regard to the use or receipt of funds

SECONDARY VALUE OF RECORDS

Informational (Historical, Archival etc.).

Evidential - Historical value which exists long after the records cease to be in current use.

WHAT ARE PUBLIC RECORDS?

- Public records are documents or information managed and maintained for the conduct of government business.
- It is also a record required by law to be made and kept by a public officer in the course of performing an assigned duty.
- Once created, they belong to the state.

RECORDS LIFE CYCLE

The concept of the records life cycle model is based on the idea that; recorded information has life that 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.

THE CONTINUUM MODEL

- It is a model that emphasizes overlapping characteristics from creation to use, maintenance and disposition in one system.
- It de-emphasizes the time-bound stages in the life cycle model.
- It is based on an integrated design of the recordkeeping system.
- It is the direction of E-Recordkeeping system.

RECORDS MANAGEMENT...

- Is an Administrative Activity which seeks to control the creation, distribution, use, retrieval, storage and disposal of records.
- It also ensures that throughout their Life Cycle i.e. from creation to disposition; records are properly organized, arranged and stored, movement controlled to facilitate information retrieval for effective decision making.

RECORDS MANAGEMENT PROCESSES

- ❖ Capture: Documents created or received in the course of official business are filed in a record keeping system.
- ❖ Classification: Record are classified to provide linkage between related documents ,assist in retrieval and enable retention rules to be applied.
- ❖ Storage and Preservation: records are stored and safe guarded to ensure their reliability, authenticity and usability for as long as they are needed.

RECORDS MANAGEMENT PROCESSES

contd.

- ❖ Access And Use: Access to records is controlled by policies and procedures regulating who is permitted access to which records and in what circumstances.
- ❖ Tracking: the movement and use of records
 - is tracked,
 - outstanding action is identified
 - and an auditable trail of actions and use is maintained.
- ❖ Disposition: Retention and disposition rules applied to all records, governing their removal from operational systems, transfer to storage, destruction, or transfer

RECORDS MANAGEMENT RATIONALE

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

BENEFITS OF RECORDS MANAGEMENT

- Allows the conduct of business in an orderly, efficient and accountable manner.
- Deliver services in a consistent and equitable manner.
- 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, continuity and 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 also the entry and exit point of an organization where records are received, processed and their movement controlled from creation to disposition.

NB: The primary purpose of the registry is,

RECORDS OFFICE ACTIVITIES

- ▣ Receive mails
- ▣ Dispatch mails
- ▣ Record mails
- ▣ Identify Records
- ▣ Classify records
- ▣ Open and close files
- ▣ Undertake Filing
- ▣ Circulate floats
- ▣ Circulate files
- ▣ Store files etc.

RECORDS OFFICE TOOLS

- ▣ Cabinets, stamps, perforators, file jackets etc.
- ▣ Inward Register
- ▣ Outward Register
- ▣ File Movement Book/Slip
- ▣ File Census Book
- ▣ The Bring-up (B.U)system
- ▣ File Diary
- ▣ Keyword System
- ▣ Retention and Disposition Schedule
- ▣ Records Policy Etc.

WHAT IS SECURITY?

- It is the combination of technical and administrative controls to deter, detect, delay and respond to an intentional event with unacceptable consequences.

What to Secure in an Organization

Resources including **information, property, materials, human and other resources** must be properly protected to ensure organizational safety and business continuity

WHAT IS INFORMATION SECURITY?

Information Security (infosec) deals with several different "trust" aspects of information and its protection.

■ The U.S. Government's National Information Assurance Glossary defines INFOSEC as:

“Protection of information systems against unauthorized access to or modification of information, whether in storage, processing or transit, and against the denial of service to authorized users or the provision of service to unauthorized users, including those measures necessary to detect, document, and counter such threats.”

RECORDS SECURITY

- In effect, records security is an application of any of the above InfoSec standard activities to secure records belonging to an organization.
- The tools used are classification, codification accessibility, disclosure and disposition/destruction controls.

THE 4 SECURITY CLASSIFICATIONS FOR RECORDS

- TOP SECRET
- SECRET
- CONFIDENTIAL
- RESTRICTED

...often dependent on organizational specific functions and policy definitions.

ACCESS CONTROL AND OPENING OF MAIL

- Top Secret or Secret letters must be addressed to an officer by name and opened by the addressee personally.
 - In his absence, they should be opened by an officer performing his duties.
- All other classified letters should be opened by an officer nominated by the Head of Organization.

DISCLOSURE OF CLASSIFIED RECORDS

“A Public Servant should continue to maintain the culture of confidentiality even after they have left office. In other words, they should not release confidential information they have come by during their tenure of office to unauthorized people when they are out of office. State Secrets Act, 1962, Act 101”. Civil Service law (PNDC Law 327), section 76.

PRAAD ACT, 1997 (ACT 535)

-DESTRUCTION OF PUBLIC RECORDS.

COMPLIANCE

The **PRAAD Act Section 24** spells out the penalty for willful mutilation or destruction of Public Records whilst in:

- (a) a public office;
- (b) the National Archives;
- (c) an archival repository under the control of the Director;

ETHICS IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Definition

“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.

WHY ETHICS IN MANAGING PUBLIC RECORDS?

- ▣ For the Law, State security and the Oaths we swear
- ▣ To ensure effective controls
- ▣ For good governance
- ▣ To ensure adherence to prescribed principles
- ▣ For serve organizational interests
- ▣ For our own good etc.

ETHICAL VALUES IN RECORDKEEPING

- ❑ **Responsiveness and efficiency:** very key to avoiding clashes between managers of public records and action officers.
- ❑ **Confidentiality:** key to avoiding leakages likely to breed a lot of mistrust for officers handling records from top to bottom.
- ❑ **Respect For Rules:** high respect for rules and regulations covering the keeping of the records
- ❑ **Privacy:** there is the need for handlers of records to ensure privacy on behalf those whose records are being managed

LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY CONTEXT

Several laws exist to control the records being created by various institutions but here are a few key ones that are needed to fulfill basic records management activities in the public service:

- 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)
- THE CIVIL SERVICE CODE OF CONDUCT
- ELECTRONIC TRANSACTION ACT, 2008, ACT 772

DATA PROTECTION ACT, 2012, ACT 843.

- The case of Data Protection largely focusses how to guarantee individual rights to privacy concerning their personnel data and how they are used with or without their consent.
- Observance of an individual or organization's *right* to control or demand control of what *others* wish to know about them in Ghana is placed under the **Data Protection Act, 2012, Act 843.**

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

THE FUTURE OF PUBLIC RECORDS MANAGEMENT

- IT as a supporting tool NOT an E-Records system
- The case for E-Records
- Electronic Document and Records Management Systems (EDRMS)

UP NEXT

THE END

THANKS FOR YOUR TIME!

For more information on records management,

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