EDRMS BULLETIN

Electronic Documents and Records Management System (EDRMS) for the Public Service: Project Update

Key Project milestones: Second stage

3rd June 2009	: EDRMS Project Office went live to test the E-Office System
29th October 2009	: Second intake of OMAs launched – see further inside
18th November 2009	:Office of the Prime Minister went live to test the E-Office System
26 November 2009	: 4th Progress Report submitted & Steering Committee Meeting
8th December 2009	: Office of the President went live to test the E-Office System
May-December	2009: +- 80 Training/ Demonstration sessions provided to users
25-29 January 2010	:Records Management Practice Training–Second intake

BREAKING NEWS

Mr. Junfeng Qin, the Chief Executive Officer of CS&S-CA Beijing and Mrs. Nangula Mbako OPM Permanent Secretary met on the 2nd of February 2010 to share updates on the project. Mr. Qin invited the Public Service to send more delegates to China for training and to expand EDRMS collaboration in future. Watch this space…
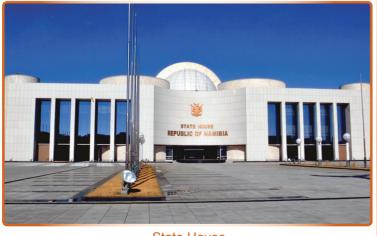
The Office of the President (OP) and the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) progress to 'go-live stage' using the EDRMS

The Permanent Secretaries in the Office of the President (State House – Dr. Angolo) and the Office of the Prime Minister (Advocate Mbako) officially authorized the use of the EDRMS on the 18th November and the 8th of December 2009, respectively. These Offices were assessed as having reached a satisfactory stage of readiness and it is appropriate at this stage for them to switch over to adopt the electronic-based records management system on a more formal basis.

The following activities were carried out and implemented successfully in both Offices: the software underlying the EDRMS, namely, E-Office© has been set-up in about 80% of the desktops in use and it has been deployed on the OP and OPM local area networks. Furthermore, the same software has been successfully migrated to the wide area network and included as part of the upgraded Information Technology infrastructure of the Department of Public Service Information Technology Management (DPSITM).

The E-Office© has been sufficiently customized to OP and OPM's records management requirements to allow for general usage for official records management purposes and the Master Copy of the OP and OPM Filing Systems have been comprehensively revised (with departmental consultations), and provisionally released for use on the E-Office© system. The revised Filing Systems are expected to be approved by the National Archives soon.

Consideration then will be given to switch-over to 'cut-over stage' and this would mean official deployment for daily office use. At this stage also, both Offices are busy with documents scanning and uploading paper records, archiving E-mail records and E-document records and researching/retrieving/borrowing of records. The EDRMS Project Office congratulates both these leading Offices in the Public Service for this achievement. The two Offices are encouraged to identify issues/questions/comments and direct them to the EDRMS Project Office for attention. We hope that users already feel comfortable using the system and the EDRMS Project Office will continue to provide support at this critical phase of the project development.

State House

OPM Head Quarter

Second intake of Ministries for EDRMS project execution approved

Given the commendable progress made so far in the first piloted Offices/Ministries/Agencies (OMAs), the EDRMS Project Office, in consultation with the National Archives, identified the second intake of OMAs, namely: the Ministry of Veterans Affairs, Ministry of Regional, Local Government, Housing and Rural Development, National Archives in the Ministry of Education, Anti-Corruption Commission, Ministry of Safety & Security, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the National Planning Commission. The EDRMS Project Office is busy conducting orientation sessions, records and information technology compliance surveys for project kick-off. We wish the focal teams of these ministries all the best in this important endeavour!

A Note: EDRMS Key Issue

"It is not possible to achieve control simply by automating inadequate and incomplete paper-based information systems: Records management policies and controls should be strengthened before Information Communication Technology (ICT) systems are introduced. Unless sufficient attention is paid to the quality of the source data on which successful ICT implementations depend, the systems will fail to deliver their intended benefits. Introducing an electronic system for managing documents and records without introducing records management controls will inevitably results in long-term difficulties in terms of integrity, reliability and accuracy of the records and of the ability to preserve them over time" **International Records Management Trust (IMRT) quoted in Commonwealth Innovations (CAPAM), Sept 2009 (Vol. 15/3**

The experience of the benefits of implementing and using EDRMS: by Ms. Sarah Negumbo – EDRMS Project Manager

Ms. Sarah Negumbo

What is EDRMS?
The EDRMS is based on a software application that manages all types of records in all formats such as the paper-based format and the electronic format, during their entire life cycle (i.e. creation, preserve, retrieving, retention and disposal).

Once the EDRMS is properly implemented and configured to work with the ministry's line of business, it will ensure that the institution's records are handled efficiently, consistently and in accordance with the Archives Act 12 of 1992 and its codified instructions. However, it requires that, staff members at all levels are trained in its usage and also provided that the institution develops or maintains its records and information management culture.

The benefits of implementing and using EDRMS:
EDRMS benefits will not come from deploying the software alone, but will also need a well planned and well-resourced project that effectively addresses the associated change management and training issues for staff. The benefits of the EDRMS could be recognized by the most three key users, namely; the employees, the institution and the stakeholders (society);

Employees: They will perceive and experience that service will be quicker and more convenient whereas discovery and access to required information will ensure improved administrative efficiency and effectiveness. At the same time the need for secure evidence and informed decision making will be realized. Underlying all this should be the realization that avoidance of **'reinventing the wheel'** when developing documentation systems is part of best practice. In ministries EDRMS focal teams play a major role in this respect.

Institution: The list of benefits in this regard is virtually endless: secure and systematic management of unstructured data such as e-mails, documents and spreadsheets, efficiency gains with improved quality and consistency of organizational processes, reduced risk of loss of records, reduced legal liability exposure, ability to integrate core business applications with EDRMS enabling improved records capture through automation, and facilitation of compliance with legislative obligations and standards.

Stakeholders (i.e. societal benefits): improved accountability and transparency of government administration, improved customer service (i.e. to investors, international agencies, etc.) and serve as evidence of the authenticity, integrity and reliability of electronic public records. In most cases, older paper records are hard to search, frequently redundant and often inconsistent, whereas electronic records can be easily searched, shared and managed in an efficient way. Storing paper is very expensive, whereas storing electronic data is very cheap and getting cheaper by the day.

Another benefit of using EDRMS is that once all data are captured electronically, they can also be accessed remotely on a 24/7 basis whereas the paper records are only accessed at their physical location.

Finally, in view of increasing electronics usage by staff because of desktop availability linked to local area networks, it is in the interest of every Offices/Ministries and Agency (including regional councils and local authorities) to maximize the usage of electronic records and minimize the use of papers, so that users are provided with the right information at the right time. This is a modern and unique challenge for all as we continue pursuing the noble objectives of Vision 2030 and NDP3.

EDRMS presents orientation session to the Senior Secretaries of the Parliament of Ghana: by Mr. Nestor Nambala - Chief Archivist Advisor

Mr. Nestor Nambala

A group of five Senior Secretaries from the Parliament of Ghana visited the EDRMS Project Office on the 3rd of December 2009 as part of an orientation to the Parliament of Namibia.

One of the aspects featuring on their programme was to learn about developments on the electronic filing practices in the Public Service of Namibia. A demonstration was therefore delivered to a group at the EDRMS Project Office.

Senior secrataries of the Parliament of Ghana

Ms. Sarah Negumbo briefed them on how the EDRMS Project was established; she touched on the milestones achieved and the implementation stages and improvements being observed in the first sites that are already using the system.

Mr. Nestor Nambala delivered a presentation on the proposal for best practices of electronic filing in the Public Service of Namibia. He stressed the importance of records management, stating that before implementing an electronic records management system, it is imperative first to start streamlining the manual system.

Mr. Gordon Elliott, as Chairperson of the EDRMS Steering Committee, addressed the group on the challenges faced by the project team and about strategies now being followed to overcome such challenges. This included providing them with an overview of the E-Office software application developments and plans to mainstream EDRMS in standard administrative operations of the Public Service.

The Ghanaian delegates expressed appreciation for this exposure. They find the EDRMS system interesting, and they were also quick to point out that such a system is non-existent in Ghana; thus, they were looking forward to learn more about possible future collaboration with Namibia in this area. They also commented that the system has the ability not only to improve management of electronic records, but it will improve accountability, transparency and good governance in the public service once implemented.

Records and Archives Management by Dr. C.T. Nengomasha (Department of Information & Communication Studies - Unam)

Introduction

Managing records has always been challenging particularly where organizations, due to various factors, have tried to manage their records without the necessary records management skills. Records management becomes more complex in the e-environment and constitutes a strategic issue for all organisations because Information Technology (IT) systems shape business operations and the nature and management of the records they generate. A key factor in meeting both the challenge and addressing strategic management is the provision of education and/or training for employees and potential employees (students).

Training offered by the University of Namibia, Department of Information and Communication Studies (DCIS)

DICS offers a two-year Diploma in Records and Archives Management. This provides formal qualification and improves skills to those already working with records in any situation such as offices, and registries; those managing specific types of records such as financial, medical, human resources and stores or stock control records; or managing small archival collections and manuscripts in any library or information centre. Content covers the records life cycle; and the use of new technologies and includes: records management; management of registries or records offices; records centers management; archives management; introduction to information and communication technologies; computerized records management systems and management of electronic records; information storage and retrieval software.

Short Courses

Records managers, Information Technology (IT) personnel, administrators, archivists, and records creators, must work in partnership to ensure the authenticity, reliability, integrity, and ongoing usability of records. To achieve this everyone needs a macro-level understanding, combined with micro-level knowledge and practical skills, determined by their role, responsibility and level of systems interface. DICS therefore also offers upon request, short courses for orgnisations, tailored to individual's records keeping role.

For more information, please contact the University of Namibia - Department of Information and Communication Studies at the following contact details; Tel. +264 61 2063641; Fax +264 61 2063806

EDRMS PROJECT TEAM EXPANDS

Ms. Josephine Mukalele is a holder of a Diploma in Information Studies and a B.A. Degree of Bachelor of Art in Library Science and Record Management from Unam. Ms. Mukalele joined the EDRMS team on the 1st of November 2009, as an Administration Advisor. She confirmed her readiness by saying "I am ready to share my knowledge in record management practice and grow in the profession of records management practice".

Ms. Petrina Kandume possesses both a National Diploma and Bachelor of Technology Degree in Business Administration. Ms Kandume joined the EDRMS team on the 1st of December 2009. She has experience in recording data on the system and administration skills. In her own words she stated the following "I would like to bring efficient and deliver highest quality of service in a respectful and professional manner, in order ensure that all stakeholders and taxpayers are indeed satisfied with my services".

Ms. Helena Shifindi is a holder of a Diploma in Information Studies, Certificate in Business Administration and a Certificate in ICDL (International Computer Driver License). She acquired ample experience in record keeping practices during her eight years of working at SchoolNet Namibia as Office Administrator. Ms. Shifindi joined the EDRMS team on the 1st of February 2010 as an Administration Advisor. She stated that she would deliver quality services and valuable contribution towards the successful implementation of the EDRMS.

Steering Committee meeting on the 14th of September 2009:

Recommendations - Project Office should

1. Investigate integration of electronic records management in OMA operations

2. Establish a records management cadre – for the Public Service

3. Link EDRMS training to Namibia Institute of Public Administration and Management (NIPAM

OPM scanning & Uploading team

EDRMS Project Office: Structure

1. Ms. Sarah Negumbo – EDRMS Project Manager
Tel: 061–2872924 Email: snegumbo@opm.gov.na

2. Mr. Nestor Nambala – Chief Archivist Advisor
Tel: 061–2872913 E-mail: nnambala@opm.gov.na

3. Mr. Kallie Nel – IT Advisor
Tel: 061–2872910 E-mail: knel@opm.gov.na

4. Ms. Helen Siamwanda – Administration Advisor
Tel: 061–2872917 E-mail: hsiamwanda@opm.gov.na

5. Mr. Rathwynn Feris – IT Advisor
Tel: 061–2892922 E-mail: rferis@opm.gov.na

6. Ms. Irene Naruses – Archivist Advisor
Tel: 061 - 2872915 E-mail: inaruses@opm.gov.na

7. Ms. Josephine Mukalele - Administration Advisor
Tel: 061 – 2872916 E-mail: jmukalele@opm.gov.na

8. Ms. Petrina Kandume –Chief Clerk
Tel: 061 – 2872921 E-mail: pkandume@opm.gov.na

9. Ms. Helena Shifindi – Administration Advisor
Tel: 061 – 2872911 E-mail: hshifindi@opm.gov.na

10. Ms. Benitha Biwa - Office Assistant
Tel: 061–2872918 E-mail: bbiwa@opm.gov.na