

RECORDS SECTION REPORT FOR 1994

Central Records is the area of Central Administration where many of the University's activities and operations begin, and is the final repository for post action information. Records is the repository for all the ANU's vital, personal, operational and private collections; it protects private and confidential information and provides a link with Australian Archives.

Records operations are conducted in five sections and contact staff are listed below

RECORDS OFFICER Ms.Z.Struik

ARCHIVES SECTION

Archives Officer	Ms.K.Slusser
Collections Officer	Mr. J Waldron
Asst.Archives Officer	Ms L.Parr
Inactivating Clerk	Mr.Dat Hoang

PERSONAL SECTION

Deputy Records Officer	Ms J.Reynolds
Personal Assistant	Ms.C.Slack
Personal/Subject Clerk	Ms.K.Davison
Personal Assistant	Ms.J Mellowship

SUBJECT SECTION

Subject File Clerk	Ms.S.Taylor
Assistant Clerk	Ms G.McKinlay

POST ACTION SECTION

Post Action Clerk	Ms T.Kajalainen
Clerical Assistant	Ms G.Wind
Filing/Resubmit Clerks	Mr.G.Trutwein
	Ms P.French
	Ms.K.Ciechan

MAIL/COUNTER GROUP

Acting Mail Clerk	Ms K Wintle
Counter Clerk	Vacant
Rounds Clerk	Vacant

Records is assisted by 2 part time staff job sharing to assist in the vacant posts on a temporary basis.

During 1994 a number of new initiatives were undertaken:

- new innovations to the Central Records computer system to allow users to record resubmit requests was put into operation, and all general users were given the capacity to record file movements from user to user without passing the files through Records. Feedback from users has been positive, and users report greater flexibility in passing records and information to one another and feel they have more

control over the resubmit processes. A very much appreciated side effect will be the lessened workload on the overburdened Records staff. The old transfer system has been deleted after a short test of the newer systems proved so satisfactory.

- new initiatives in the archiving of records have been undertaken to facilitate the final disposal of Records which are no longer regularly used. One of these was the introduction of a disposal date for each file at the time of its creation.. This information allows a printout to be produced listing all files needing disposal by date, thus speeding the process of disposal. ACR's have been written to allow for the printouts and the results are awaited for testing before the new processes can be fully undertaken. Preparations are under way to draw up new disposal schedules for those records still not listed with Australian Archives for special consideration. Discussions will be held with users during 1995.
- transfer of personnel records from ITA to Central Administration for use within the Personnel and Superannuation areas, is continuing although the volume is contributing to the space problems already being experienced by the section. The first steps towards the transfer of ITA subject and operational records to the Central System have been taken and will continue throughout 1995.
- upgrading of the Acton Tunnel to allow more space and better conditions for the storage of growing volumes of inactive records and personal collections of academic staff is sorely needed. As greater numbers of academic staff request the holding of working and personal papers generated during their time with ANU, the situation will worsen dramatically. It is unfortunate that Australian Archives will refuse to store such work until the Academic is nationally or internationally renowned.
- Central Records was connected to the E-mail system in the second half of 1994 to facilitate the transfer and recording of incoming and outgoing information. As yet users have not been making a great use of this facility so information is entering and leaving the University without being recorded in the Central Records system. This will lead in future to a loss of much of the University's information and vital records base which will be unavailable for use in future decision making activities.
- visits to User areas have continued as a means of familiarising University staff with Record keeping, and Archiving policies and procedures and will continue during 1995. The requests for the Records Handbook have been constant and may soon put it into the best seller list.
- the Section has taken over tasks from other areas to assist the workflows in other areas. These include the transfer of ITA records mentioned above, the holding of TOEFL scores for all students other than undergraduates, and the collation of old records from other campus offices which have been held because the areas concerned did not know what to do with old records. More and more assistance is given to staff needing research done for information. (the files would normally have been sent for the officers to do their own research but pressure of work for them brings the research work home th the Records staff.)

The devolution of certain staffing functions to areas outside Central Administration, have resulted in a great influx of enquiries from these areas as they search for assistance with unfamiliar processes and policies.

The continued lack of staff is causing backlogs of work to build up, which causes inconvenience to users searching for information awaiting records action. We would like to thank the staff who have been inconvenienced by this situation, for their patience and assistance extended to the Records personnel at such times. We will try to rectify the problem during 1995.

The Section has 3 representatives on the Consultative Committee, 1 member on the Staff Amenities Committee and the Records Officer holds the position of Education Officer on the council of the ACT Branch of the Records Management Association of Australia. All of these activities bring healthy discussion and learning experiences for the staff and increase feelings of involvement and self esteem in what is becoming an important career path in a close knit University community.

Various staff members undertook training during the year, mostly in computer-based areas and one course was held in house in the Records office. These sessions were of great benefit to the participating staff and have increased the confidence and aptitude of the staff when approaching the use of new introductions to the Records systems.