

Archives and Administrative Change —

Some Methods and Approaches (Part 5)*

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Australian Archives

*This part could not have been completed without the assistance of Ms Hilary Rowell in checking points of detail. Material for Figure 3 was provided by Mr Clive Smith

This final part deals with series which have been split or re-organized as a result of administrative change and summarizes methods of recording changes to record series, concluding our treatment of aspects of archives administration affected by change.

Treatment of Re-arranged/Re-organized Series

In Part 2¹, we have mentioned that as a result of transmission and splitting of series at times of administrative change, record series can be re-registered ('topnumbered') or re-arranged, in whole or in part, ostensibly to facilitate reference by the successor agency.

In simple cases, where whole series or portions of series have been informally re-arranged for reference (the case of Trade Customs files quoted earlier², taken out of their registry file number sequence and re-arranged by tariff item number), our general principle has been eventually to restore the records to their original order and filing system, provided such action is appropriately recorded in our accession registers and lists.³

However, where items (whether constituting whole series or portions of series), have been re-registered, re-numbered or bound into new volumes, then conversely our practice has generally been to leave the items in their new context, thus observing Jenkinson's dictum: "An Archive belongs to the last Administration in which it played an active part".⁴ There is, nonetheless, a very great need to show clearly what has happened to the records. In Part 2⁵, we have pointed to the need for all re-registrations ("top-numberings") to be properly recorded by

departments, so that items can always be traced. Archival recording is also of importance, and three methods have been developed in the Australian Archives:⁶

1. *registration of series no longer or only partly extant:*

Where a series has been totally or partly “cannibalized” into a later series, it may be resurrected by having a series registration prepared, with a descriptive note detailing the series’ fate and its present location, and entries for “subsequent series” to which material has been lost.

2. *notes on registration sheet and inventory of items for successor series:*

Details of the previous series from which a later series has been constructed can be shown in the “description” entry or under “previous series”, as a cross-reference. On the inventory of items for the series, descriptive notes on the items concerned can show their provenance.

3. *listing of series no longer extant in inventories of series:*

From either 1 or 2, information can be transmitted to and listed, in some cases as a “phantom” entry, on the inventory of series for the historic agency concerned, so that records, although now in a new context, will still be findable from their original historic context.

In this, we are again following Dutch precepts:

S.12 If it is difficult to reconstitute a dismembered archival [fonds], the various parts of that [fonds], wherever they may be deposited, should nevertheless be described by a single official in a single inventory, with mention of where the documents are located⁷.

Three examples may be of interest. The first concerns the transcripts of evidence and exhibits of the Royal Commission on the Affray at Goaribari Island, British New Guinea, 1904 (CA 977). These papers are now attached to External Affairs file 05/3780 (CRS A1). They obviously need to be listed under the Royal Commission itself (see Figure 1).

The Library Series, 1922 + (CRS A1194) of the Commonwealth Department of Defence [II] (CA 19) and its successors includes many records of previous series, some being from the pre-Federation period, such as volumes of original Orders in Council, 1883-1901 from the Victorian Department of Defence (CA 1340), which are now items 13182-13198 of CRS A1194. These important records need to be listed in the inventory for CA 1340, Victoria, Department of Defence.

The so-called “Piesse Volumes” are a further interesting example. CRS A1108, Volumes of correspondence and papers relating to External Affairs, consists of papers dating from 1901 to 1921, with earlier printed material, collected and bound into volumes in c. 1920-1921 by Major E. L. Piesse, Director of the Pacific Branch in the Prime Minister’s Department (CA 12). In his consolidation of papers, Major Piesse drew from a number of sources, principally the files (CRS A1) of the first Department of External Affairs, 1901-1916 (CA 7). The files of the latter department are thus deficient in many respects, although some material of significance is still left behind and appears to have been overlooked by

Figure 1 — A sample inventory of series showing re-arranged records.

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE AFFRAY AT GOARIBARI ISLAND
 BRITISH NEW GUINEA ON 6 MARCH 1904

CANCP 977

(25 Jul. - Sep. 7) 1904

Inventory of Series

Entry No.	Series Title	Date Range	Series No.
1.	The Commission was established by Letters Patent on 25 July 1904.		
2.	The Commission was "To inquire into and report upon all the circumstances attending upon or incidental to the occurrence at Goaribari Island, British New Guinea, on 6 March 1904, when a collision occurred between the natives and the Government party on the ss. "Merrie England".		
3.	The report of the Royal Commission was dated 7 September 1904.		
4.	The Department of External Affairs [I] (CA 7) was responsible for Royal Commissions at this time.		

NOTE: There do not appear to be any separate records of the Commission itself extant. However some records are included in External Affairs (CA 7) series as follows:-

1.	Transcripts of Evidence [see CRS A1, Correspondence files, annual single number series, file 05/3780; the file also contains External Affairs correspondence relating to the Inquiry]	1904	A1 (05/3780)
2.	Exhibits	1904	A1 (05/3780)

Major Piesse in his project. The volumes of CRS A1108 as they now exist were assembled by the Prime Minister's Department (CA 12); but there is again a need for a cross-reference under External Affairs (CA 7) and under CRS A1 to the fate of so many important files.

Treatment of Split Series

"S.11 It is desirable, when it can be done without excessive difficulty, to reassemble archival [fonds] which have been split up".

— Muller, Feith and Fruin⁸

In general, the Australian Archives follows the practice recommended by the Dutch Archivists in re-integrating records that have been split up back into their original record series,⁹ thus restoring the original record-keeping systems as far as practicable and reflecting the organic nature of archives to the best of our ability¹⁰.

In the preceding section, we have already treated the problem of split portions of series which have been re-arranged or re-registered. The following other types of splitting have now to be discussed — cases where items have been left by the successor agency under their original numeration or in their original arrangement¹¹:

1 *Items used for reference only by the successor agency:*

Records from the one original series provenance may be transferred to archival custody from many varied successor agencies. This was certainly true of the CRS A1, Correspondence files, 1903-1938, of the first Department of External Affairs (CA 7) and its principal successors, the series being received from five major sources (Departments of the Interior [II] (CA 31), Territories (CA 60), Immigration (CA 51), External Affairs [II] (CA 18), and Prime Minister's Department (CA 12)) and a number of minor transfers. All these split portions have now been re-integrated and the original series restored to the extent this is feasible.

2 *Papers added to items by the successor agency ("multiple-provenance" items):*

Three possible methods of treatment have been considered where papers have been added to files while retaining their original numeration:-

- re-integration of split portions received from successor agencies, the attachment of later papers being recorded on the series registration sheet (the agency adding papers being shown as creating a split portion of the series) and on the inventory of items (particular items being shown as transferred to a successor agency). This has been done with portions of CRS A431 (Interior files), added to by the Department of Territories (CA 60) — see Figure 2 for inventory of items; on the series registration sheet the split portions appear as:

Agency recording:

(a) 1946-1972 (Dec.): CA 31, Department of the Interior [II]

1972-

: CA 1477, Department of the Capital Territory

Figure 2 — A sample inventory showing multiple-provenance items.

NAS27 (Rev. Appr. 1976)

RECORD SERIES:

Agency/person recording: CA 31, Department of the Interior [II] -

Series title: Correspondence files, annual single number series

1946 -

CRSA431

(please quote)

CRS A431

Inventory of Record Items

Item control symbol	Item title/description	Date range	Quantity (folios, cm.)
49/2260	Employment of Barmaids in A.C.T. Hotels.	1940 - 1950	
49/2267	H. Ellis - re Establishment of Brewery in the N.T. [TO CA 60, DEPARTMENT OF TERRITORIES, 1951]	1949 - 1954	
49/2269	P. McD. Smith - Licence to Celebrate Marriages, N.T.	1947 - 1949	
49/2296	Memorial at El Alamein to Eighth Army.	1947 - 1949	
49/2301	Mrs M. Hanford - Request for Transfer of Son's Remains to Rookwood Cemetery from N. Qld.	1949 - 1956	
49/2303	Freight Subsidy on N.T. Stud Stock - Policy Part I. [TO CA 60, 1951]	1936 - 1954	
49/2310	Testing of Herd Bulls, N.T.	1944 - 1949	
49/2340	Town of Darwin - Boundaries of. [TO CA 60, 1951] [Earlier papers are from CA 15, Department of Home and Territories (CRS A3, A1) and CA 24, Department of Home Affairs [II] (CRS A1)].	1918 - 1955	
49/2342	Mrs Matilda Koop - Application for Freehold Town Lease No. 512, Sect. 146, Alice Springs.	1949 - 1950	
49/2344	National Library Canberra and Roosevelt Memorial Canberra, A.C.T.	1949 - 1967	
49/2350	Directory of Brands, N.T. Part II. [TO CA 60, 1951]	1949 - 1953	
49/2355	Quodling Bros. - Registration of Vehicles in A.C.T.	1949 - 1950	
49/2364	Fulbright Agreement - Signing of - re Exchange of Students U.S.A. and Australia.	1949	
49/2374	Oenpelli Mission Station. [Earlier papers are from CA 24, Department of Home Affairs [II] (CRS A1)].	1928 - 1949	

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(b) *portion 1946-1951 relating to the administration of the Northern Territory*
 1951-1955 : CA 60, Department of Territories

- the split portions may be held physically separately as “sets” of the one original series, likewise recorded on the series registration sheet, but with separate inventories of items for each set.
- the split portions may be treated as separate series, but cross-referenced — the later split portion being shown as a subsequent series to the original series. This has been done with CRS A518 (Territories Branch files) which took over portions of CRS A458 (Prime Minister’s Department files) and developed a life of its own.

The method to be used will naturally depend on the degree to which split portions have been continued by a successor agency.

With efforts to minimize the splitting of records, as detailed in Part 2¹², increasingly records more than five years’ old are already in archival custody and do not need to be split, just “shared” between the successor agencies with “drawing” rights when records are required for reference. Rather than physically splitting a series, one can compile lists of records in that series that document particular functions, and the functional lists can be used by successor agencies for reference.

Recording Changes to Record Series

As will have been gathered from the foregoing and from previous papers¹³, the Australian Archives and its predecessors have over the years developed methods of recording series affected by administrative changes.

These approaches include:

1 *Surveys*: Although a major programme of records surveys was instituted by Mr I. Maclean in 1950 in conjunction with the Public Service Board, more systematic record surveys may be said to date from the appointment of Miss M. I. Wheeler and Mr R. Gordon as “field officers” in 1965. These two officers in Canberra developed our knowledge of records held by departments — “what was where when” — and learned at first-hand from departmental staff how the record-keeping functioned¹⁴. Other survey work was undertaken in Victoria (by Mr F. H. Leslie) and in N.S.W. (by Mr R. N. Britton). Attention was also given both to agencies undergoing administrative changes and to areas not then serviced by Commonwealth archival repositories (Hobart, Darwin and other Territories). A special survey schedule form (CAO 81) was developed by Miss Wheeler in 1968.

All these records survey reports and schedules represent a precious historical source in their own right of information on the record systems and record holdings of departments at particular points of time. Had we similar survey reports for earlier times, then so much easier would be our arrangement and description tasks of today.

2 *Register of Record Series*: The “series identification sheet” (form CA 17), introduced in 1953, by Mr I. Maclean, while it conformed to American convention in showing only the *last* creating agency, had provision under “description” and “history of series” (on verso) to record multiple provenances. Its Canberra replacement in 1963, the series “history sheet” (form CAO 6), devised by Dr K. Penny, provided important new features of diachronic links (*previous series, subsequent series*) and related legislation.

A slightly revised “series registration sheet” (form CAO 23) was introduced by P. J. Scott in 1965, complemented by a “series registration sheet” (form CAO 39) in 1966; the two sheets were combined into a revised “record series registration sheet” (form CAO 39) in 1971¹⁵, a sample of which is at Figure 3 (CRS A1). Their major innovation was to list *all* the creating agencies of a multiple-provenance series (even if this means “resurrecting” some long-defunct agencies), and all the current controlling agencies for a series. With each subsequent administrative change, the series registration sheet could simply be revised and updated to show a new creating agency (if a continuing series) and new controlling agency/ agencies as they occurred.

Copies of the record series registration sheets have been filed since 1966 by *all* creating agencies to produce “agency guides” progressively — in a very real sense, a *catalogue to series by provenance*. The filing of series sheets by provenance had already been indicated in our revised accessioning system in 1953, with the “series identification sheet” (form CA 17) mentioned above. In Maclean’s words:

The fifth copy is placed in a central classified “catalogue”, where, when combined with other [series] identification sheets from the same department or office, it becomes part of a kind of expanding preliminary inventory.¹⁶

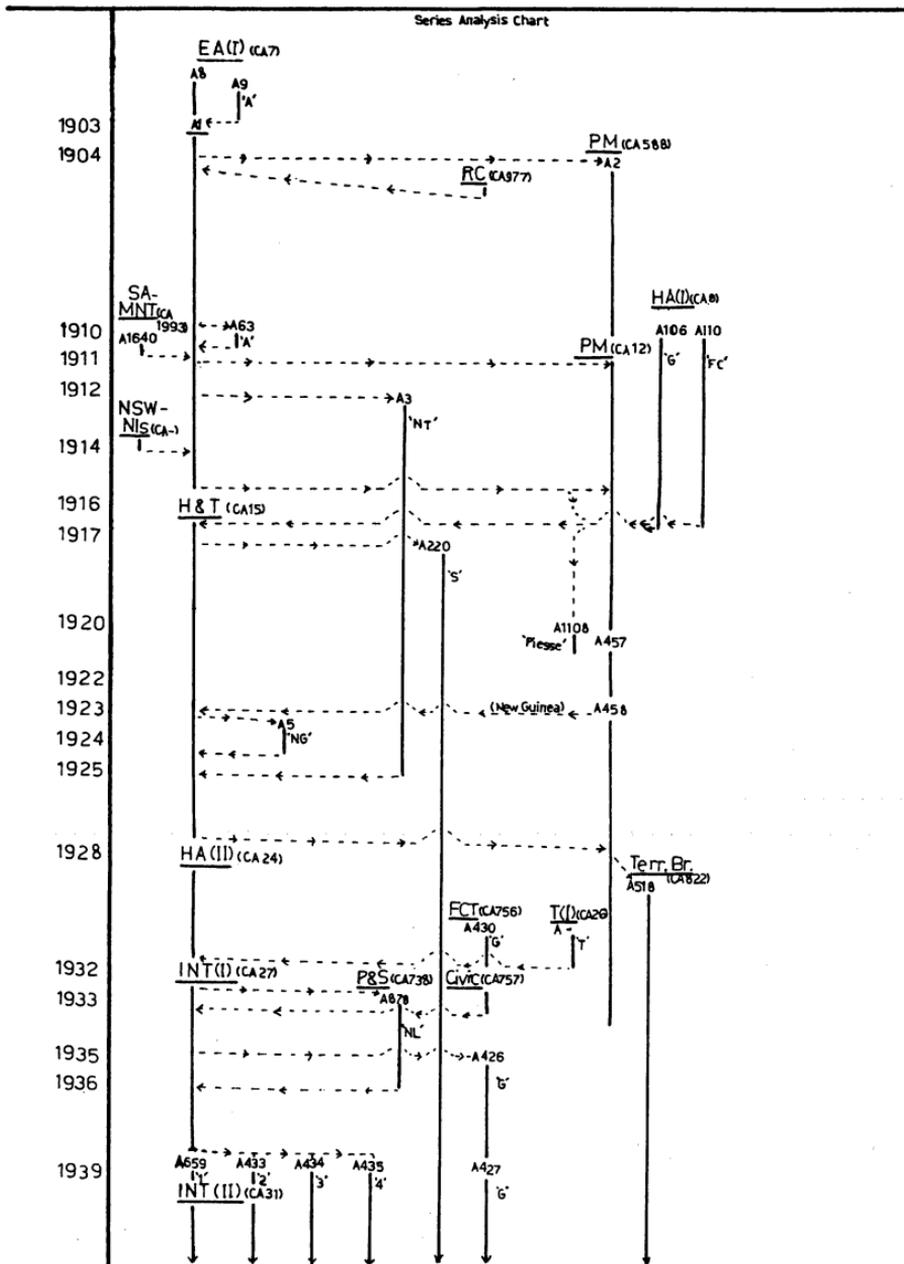
The subsequent forms (CAO 39) have clearly built on this practice, but with the difference that they are filed under *all* creating agencies, not merely the last — as with the CA 17 — and that they provide a basis for compilation of inventories of a series (see (4) below).

While the approach to archives by provenance remains fundamental, one may well ask whether with the increasing fluidity of administrative bodies such structural approaches will fully serve reference and research needs. In our revision of the series registration sheet (form CAO 39) in 1971, we specifically added a section for “subject entries” (to cover subjects found in a series but not clearly indicated in the series title) and expanded the section on “related legislation” to cover “related function” in addition (to link a series to legislation and functions in the Administrative Arrangements Order, described in Part 1¹⁷). The intention was to file further copies of the series sheets by subject, function and legislation to produce a *subject/function catalogue*, but we have not had the resources to develop this. The Queensland State Archives, however, has shown the way with its subject catalogue,

Figure 3 — A sample series registration sheet.

Record Series: EA(I), H&T, HA(II), INT(I)-

Files of papers, annual single number series 1903-1938 CRS A1



compiled first on cards and since 1974 with series registration sheets.¹⁸ The Florida Bureau of Archives and Records Management has also coded record series by government function.¹⁹

A further innovation in 1966 in the then Commonwealth Archives Office was the concept of *Commonwealth Record Series*, that is, all records of the Commonwealth Government, whether held by the Archives or whether still in departments or agencies, could be registered by the Archives. Information about series out in departments, gathered through surveys (see (1) above), could be incorporated in finding aids (of great value, if open-period material was involved) and build up a history of each series, with additions whenever changes took place. The Register of Commonwealth Record Series can also form an invaluable base of management information systems.

3 Record Series Files: As with agencies, we have had since 1965 a file on each record series, where information about a series is collected (e.g. extracts from survey schedules, copies of departmental forms), analysed (e.g. registration sheets — a copy of each revision is kept on file) and other action taken (accessioning, appraisal and disposal, arrangement and description). Series files are held in the relevant regional office of the Australian Archives — series files now held in the A.C.T. total 5196, in Victoria 2584, in the Northern Territory 1504, in Tasmania 901. Other regional offices (N.S.W., QLD, S.A., W.A.) are gradually phasing in the new system.

4 Inventories of Series: The use of inventories of series to replace the record group on paper has already been briefly treated in a previous article in 1966.²⁰ Having tried the traditional record group inventories from 1953 to 1960 and having made some experimental listings of series in the late 1950's²¹, we commenced multiple — listing of series in 1963, as described in Part 4²², and published two "summary inventories" in 1964-1965²³. The "inventory of series" (form CAO 28) was introduced in 1965.

As previously indicated in Part 4²⁴, a multiple — provenance series affected by administrative change is listed on the inventory or series for each agency which created it. The transmission of a series from/to a predecessor/successor agency is simply shown, as in the sample for CRS A1 in Part 4 from the inventory of series for the Department of Home and Territories (CA 15), 1916-1928:

FROM CA 7, DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS [I], 1916:

General "Files of papers", annual single number series

1903-1938 A1

[TO CA 24, DEPARTMENT OF HOME AFFAIRS [II], 1928]

If affected by subsequent administrative change, inventories may be readily updated with information from surveys (see (1) above) and registration sheets (2). Inventories of series are included in our *Summary*

Guide, available to the public in all regional offices and eventually to be published.

5 Series Analysis Charts: A useful method for documenting administrative change and showing the inter-relationships between record series over time is what has been termed the “series analysis chart”, in use since 1966. The series chart takes its origin in the chart included by Sir Hilary Jenkinson in Appendix V of his *Manual of Archive Administration* (1922)²⁵, despite the reservations of the Dutch Archivists²⁶. While charts may result in over-simplification, they are undoubtedly an aid to gaining a clearer overview of changes both to the records of an agency as a whole or to an individual series. A sample chart for CRS A1 is at Figure 4.

6 Inventories of Record Items: As indicated above in the sections dealing with the treatment of re-arranged/re-organized series and split series, the inventory of record items (form CAO 27 — introduced in 1965, revised 1971, replacing the “list of file titles” recommended in the 1954 *Instructions for the Preparation of Inventories*) may be used to show —

- items transmitted from a predecessor agency and incorporated in a subsequent series (a descriptive note can indicate the provenance);
- items transmitted to a subsequent agency with papers added but not re-registered (after the item concerned, transmission may be shown, e.g.

[TO CA 60, DEPARTMENT OF TERRITORIES, 1951]).

An example is at Figure 2 (CRS A431). This method avoids the need for physical breaking-up of items, as contemplated by K. A. Polden²⁷.

Some Conclusions

From the foregoing and our previous four parts, there are a number of conclusions which we as archivists need to draw:

1 Facing the reality of administrative change: In an environment of near-constant change, archivists must be prepared to face the challenges arising from the effects of administrative change on records and archives. The traditional “fonds” is now often only a short-lived administrative grouping of series, which have a life-span of their own often longer than the administrative entity which commenced the series. There is a need to develop archives theory and practice to cope with administrative change. In the Australian Archives, we have endeavoured to provide a theoretical and practical framework for coping with change and much else besides.

Some of our methods are still projected rather than operational, through lack of resources. This is particularly true in the development of complementary intellectual approaches to records by function and subject. Additional finding aids which would materially assist our work

Figure 4 — A sample series analysis chart.

RECORD SERIES: CRS A1
 Agency/Person recording:
 1903-1916 (Nov.14): CA 7, Department of External Affairs [I]
 (14 Nov.) 1916-1928 (Dec.10): CA15, Department of Home and Territories
 (10 Dec.) 1928-1932 (Apr.12): CA24, Department of Home Affairs [II], [Central Office
 (12 Apr.) 1932-1938 : CA27, Department of the Interior [I], Central Admin.
 (see also entry 4)
 Series Title:
 General 'Files of papers', annual single number series
 (see also entry 4)

-
1. Date range (series): (Jan.) 1903 - 1938 **Record Series Registration Sheet** (Contents): c. 1856 - c. 1939
 (see also entry 4)
2. Quantity and 184.92 m. (1040 boxes), held by CA 1720, Australian Archives, Canberra
 custodian:
3. Size of record item: 34.5 x 22 cm.
-
4. Description This series was the general filing system of the agencies concerned (see continuation sheet). It incorporates the following series, which are not otherwise extant:
CA 977, Royal Commission on the Affray at Goaribari Island: Transcripts of evidence, 1904; exhibits, 1904 (now in item 05/3780).
CA 26, Department of Transport [I]: Correspondence files, T single number series c.1930-1932 (see 1932 inventory).
5. Subject entries: Immigration; naturalization; Papua; Pacific Islands(see continuation)
6. System of arrangement/control: Annual single number - originally each letter received was registered (and top-numbered when later correspondence on the same subject was received), from the late 1920's the system became one of file registration.
7. Range of control symbols: 1903/1 - 1938/34000 [1903/11 - 1938/33973 (with gaps) extant]
-
8. Related legislation, function, form:
 Commonwealth Act no. 17 of 1901+ : Immigration Restriction Act, 1901+
 Commonwealth Act no. 11 of 1903+ : Naturalization Act, 1903+ (see continuation)
- INTRA-ELEMENT LINKS
- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>9. Previous record series:
 1903: CRS A8, Files of papers, folio system, 1901-1902
 CRS A9, Files of papers, A series (Immigration, New Guinea, New Hebrides, 1902
 (see continuation sheet)</p> | <p>10. Subsequent record series:
 1904: CRS A2, [CA 588, Prime Minister's Office], Files of papers, annual single number series, 1904-1920
 1910: CRS A63, Files of papers, A series, 1910
 (see continuation sheet)</p> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
-
11. Related, controlling or controlled series:
 1903-1910: CRS A30, 'Record books' for general files of papers, 1903-1910
 CRS A31, Index books for general files of papers, 1903-1910
 1911-1938: CRS A69, Number registers for general files of papers, 1911-1938
 CRS A70, Subject index cards, Miscellaneous cabinet, 1911-1952
 CRS A71, Subject index cards, Immigration cabinet, 1911-1956
 CRS A72, Subject index cards, Papua/New Guinea cabinet, 1911-1928
 (see continuation sheet)
-
12. Agency/Person controlling:
 (a) CA 1477, Department of the Capital Territory (for matters relating to the Seat of Government)
 (b) CA 1955, Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs (for immigration, naturalization, aliens registration) (see continuation sheet)
13. Vital records classification:
 Subject to appraisal
14. Retention/disposal:
 Residue to be retained permanently
15. Access classification:
 Subject to clearance under the terms of current access policy.

and provide necessary guidance to researchers through the maze of administrative change are:

- annual digest of administrative changes, with cumulative indexes, based on the *Administrative History Chronicle*;²⁸
- functions, legislation and departmental approach to the *Administrative Arrangements Order*;²⁹
- functions approach to agencies or listing of agencies by function, with an overall classification of agencies by industry/activity/function;³⁰
 - A preliminary functional listing of agencies represented in the NSW holdings of the Australian Archives was prepared by P. J. Scott in May 1980, as a trial application of the approach.³¹
- subject/function/media approach to record series, as indicated in recording method (2) above.

2 *Keeping-up with current records*: Apart from greater knowledge at first-hand of the functioning of record-keeping systems, which facilitates arrangement and description, archival involvement with current records is essential in times of change —

- if one is to reduce the effects of splitting of record series;
- if one is to reduce the risk of irregular disposal, re-arrangement and re-registration;

all of which have long-term implications for research, not to mention the short-term needs of Government business.

The needs of newly created agencies must not be neglected. Apart from advice on record-keeping systems, archival liaison should be developed with educational programs, records management seminars, archives handbooks and the like, to counteract the likely lack of continuity in record-keeping and archival experience amongst agency staff. Archives handbooks for agencies should include advice on the procedures to be followed at times of administrative change, as recently has been done in the ACT.

3 *Coping with phenomenal rates of change*: If we in the Australian Archives had found it necessary by 1964 to adopt methods and procedures appropriate for the administrative changes in the Commonwealth Government to that point, then our experience of the tumultuous and unprecedented period of change from 1972 served to confirm the absolute necessity for such measures.

In the decade 1971-1980, there have now been a total of 123 changes (abolitions, creations) to departments of state. To equal this number of changes, one would have to go back from 1970 to (in N.S.W.) the inception of responsible government in 1856 i.e. *115 year's changes have been compressed into 10 years*, as in the following table:

Period	Number of Changes (creations, abolitions)	Average Rate of Change (depart- ments per year)	Average Number of Departments existing
N.S.W.			
1856-1860	10	2.0	5.4
1861-1870	1	0.1	6.6
1871-1880	4	0.4	7.9
1881-1890	1	0.1	9.1
1891-1900	1	0.1	10.6
1901	1 [P.M.G.]	0.1	10.0
Sub-Total:	18		
Commonwealth			
1901-1910	7	0.7	7.0
1911-1920	7	0.7	9.0
1921-1930	16	1.6	12.0
1931-1940	22	2.2	13.9
1941-1950	31	3.1	25.3
1951-1960	13	1.3	24.2
1961-1970	9	0.9	25.6
Sub-Total:	105		
1971-1980	123	12.3	28.7
Total:	246		

The accelerated rate of change has been a severe test of our system, which has weathered the tempests of administrative change and proven its basic soundness. This is not to imply that we have not had problems. The Royal Commission on Australian Government Administration pointed to problems in implementing change in an appendix to its report:

Even relatively uncomplicated and clear-cut changes still require attention to many "housekeeping" matters and can involve a considerable amount of work in planning and carrying out the transfer [of functions]. To an outsider and no doubt from a minister's point of view, much of this is mere administrative detail but to those directly affected even minor matters mean additional demands on available time and staff. This has consequences for the people involved (extra work, more pressure) and for the department's normal work (shortcuts, delays). The greater pace of work and the increase in the number of matters requiring attention are problems in the sense of an extra strain on resources that, from a managerial point of view, are normally already stretched to full capacity. When a department is also involved in other government initiatives such pressures can become real difficulties.³²

At the same time as the huge workload caused by the increased tempo of change, the Australian Archives was involved in new government initiatives for a national archives system, and the most experienced members of staff in Canberra were seconded for varying periods to the abortive National Archives Task Force Technical Support Group from 1974. It is no mean feat that the staff who remained coped so with extraordinary demands placed upon them, and it is not before time that

they be given public tribute for their accomplishment of so much in so short a time.

While some-cuts, such as "preliminary" or "provisional" agency and series registrations, could be used, the problem of updating records has been acute and only subsequently has it been possible to begin to streamline and automate some procedures. The revision of registration sheets and inventories of series is ideally suited to a word processor, in use in Canberra since May 1978. An ADP feasibility study, projected since 1969, was commenced by Mr C. Hurley in 1976-77 in conjunction with the Department of Administrative Services Computer Systems Officer, but was brought to a halt with our transfer to the new Department of Home Affairs in 1977.

The use of automated techniques has been seen overseas as an answer to some of the problems of change. The West German Bundesarchiv has developed an automated index to functions of departments³³. The United Kingdom Public Records Office has through its PROSPEC system produced finding aids from a class (i.e. series) data capture sheet.³⁴

4 *Preserving archival principles*: In all our approaches to administrative change we have endeavoured to preserve basic archival principles, to the extent feasible. The Dutch archivists — Muller, Feith and Fruin — have been a source of advice and inspiration throughout. As described in Part 4³⁵, the increasing conflict between the cardinal archival principles of respect for provenance and respect for original order has had to be resolved by according primacy to original order for purposes of physical arrangement, while provenance is fully respected in descriptive media, such as inventories of series.

After all our experience of administrative change, we continue to hold firmly to the value of provenance in providing a meaningful context for the understanding of records, just as we acknowledge the usefulness of complementary descriptive approaches by function and by subject.

FOOTNOTES

1. *Archives and Manuscripts*, Vol. 7, No. 4 (April 1979) [hereafter Part 2], pp. 156-8.
2. Part 2, p. 158.
3. cf. Muller, Feith and Fruin, *Arrangement and Description of Archives* (1940), sections 23, 24, pp. 75-78.
4. Jenkinson, *A Manual of Archive Administration* (1937), p. 104.
5. Part 2, pp. 158, 162.
6. These methods were developed in 1970 (Summary of Record Control System) and November 1971 (Note by P. J. Scott re treatment of top-numbered items and series).
7. Muller, Feith and Fruin, *op.cit* p. 41.
8. Muller, Feith and Fruin, *op.cit* pp. 38-41.
9. See Commonwealth National Library, Archives Division, *Staff Information Paper No. 1*, November 1953, p.3 " . . . if they have become disarranged, the original series will be reconstructed as far as possible".
10. Muller, Feith and Fruin, *op.cit.*, p.19. S.2. "An archival fonds is an organic whole".
11. Part 2, pp. 158-159.
12. Part 2, pp. 159-163, particularly pp. 161-162.

13. Principally, P. J. Scott, "The Record Group Concept: A Case for Abandonment" in *The American Archivist*, Vol. 29, No. 4 (Oct. 1966), pp. 493-504.
14. Already in November 1953, I. Maclean had indicated the objective thus: "Because the circumstances, in which series may have been created, terminated, divided or transferred from office to office, vary tremendously in a very short time, it is essential that the process of investigation should commence at the earliest possible moment while there are departmental officers available to provide the necessary information" (Staff Information Paper No. 1, p.2 (iv)).
15. The 1971 revision included comments made by a number of members of staff, particularly Miss T. M. Exley, as well as a full review of similar forms in use in other institutions in Australia and overseas, including archives "cataloguing".
16. I. Maclean, "An analysis of Jenkinson's Manual of Archives Administration in the Light of Australian Experience" in A. J. Hollender (ed), *Essays in Memory of Sir Hilary Jenkinson* (1962), p. 139. For further comments on archives cataloguing, see P. J. Scott, "Archives Finding Aids — Towards an Australian Consensus" in Australian Society of Archivists, *Archives Conference 1979 — Supplementary Volume* (1979), pp. 27-28.
17. Part 1, *Archives and Manuscripts*, Vol. 7 No. 3 (Aug. 1978), pp. 120-122. See also p. 123 and note 2 in Part 2, p. 163.
18. J. Carroll, "To catalogue or not to catalogue: The subject form catalogue of the Queensland State Archives" in *Archives and Manuscripts*, Vol. 4 No. 1 (Nov. 1969). See also Lee McGregor, "Arrangement and Description of Records at Queensland State Archives" in *Archives and Manuscripts*, Vol. 6 No. 5, (Nov. 1975), pp. 151-152
19. For a brief mention of codified government functions (PPBS — Programming, Planning and Budgeting System), see remarks by Mr E. N. Johnson in Public Record Office, *Proceedings of an International Seminar on Automatic Data Processing in Archives, 1974* (H.M.S.O., 1975), p.118.
20. See P. J. Scott, *loc.cit.* (1966), p. 499-500.
21. Experimental classification and listing by Mr H. J. Gibbney — see Archives Division Circular on "Arrangement and Description of Archives", 25 June 1959, Attachment B, p.4.
22. Part 4, *Archives and Manuscripts*, Vol. 8, No. 2, (December 1980), p. 56.
23. *Summary Inventory No. 1* (1964) — Minister of State for External Affairs (I), 1901-1916; *Summary Inventory No. 2* (1965) — Minister of State for Home Affairs (I), 1901-1916.
24. Part 4, pp. 58-61. Sample inventories of series are at pp. 59-60.
25. The page references in the 1937 edition are pp. 239-241.
26. Muller, Feith and Fruin, *op.cit.*, s. 40, p. 106.
27. K. A. Polden, "Preserving the Principle of Provenance: Archives Practices at Reserve Bank of Australia" in *Archives and Manuscripts*, Vol. 4, No. 4 (May 1971), pp. 13-14.
28. Part 1, p. 120 (1).
29. Part 1, p. 122 (2).
30. Part 1, p. 123, Table 3; Part 2, note 2, p.163.
31. The functional listing has been published in Australia 1788-1988: A Bicentennial History, *Australian Historical Bibliography Bulletin*, No. 3 (February 1981), pp. 28-37.
32. Royal Commission on Australian Government Administration, *Appendix I. M.: Changes in Administrative Arrangements* (1976) — report of consultant, R. Van Munster, p. 422.
33. See comments by W. Buchmann, Bundesarchiv, in Public Record Office, *Proceedings of an International Seminar on Automatic Data Processing in Archives, 1974* (H.M.S.O. 1975), pp. 118, 224-227.
34. See P. Simmons, L. Bell and M. Roper, "PROSPEC: A computer application for the Public Record Office" in *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, Vol. 4, No. 5 (April

1972), pp. 423-427. Also, M. Roper "Computers for Archives Management in the PRO" in Public Record Office, *op. cit.* (197). pp. 14-23.

35. Part 4, pp. 56-61.