

STATE RECORDS

of South Australia



Front cover image: George Pitt in the Stacks, courtesy of State Library of South Australia, B-10196, 1930s

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The Hon Vickie Chapman MP Deputy Premier Attorney-General

Dear Attorney-General

I have the pleasure in providing you with the twenty-third report on the administration of the *State Records Act 1997* for you to present to both Houses of Parliament.

Yours sincerely

Simon Froude

Director and State Archivist State Records of South Australia

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30 September 2019

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Director's Message

In 2019 State Records of South Australia (State Records) celebrates its 100 year anniversary.

The 2018-19 State Records of South Australia Annual Report is a chance to reflect and celebrate what has been achieved in the last century as well as the challenges faced by State Records, from legislative and administrative changes, to the preservation and conservation of South Australia's enduring memory, to the introduction of digitisation.

Our centenary year is also a time to look forward and establish the foundations that will see State Records and the Archive prosper for the next 100 years.

To ensure this, State Records has published a strategic plan as well as a strategy for the Archive.

The <u>Strategic Plan 2019-2022</u> establishes a series of goals and strategies for State Records and outlines how our vision and purpose will be met to improve the integrity and accessibility of information for the benefit of South Australia over the next four years.

Building on this, the <u>Archive Strategy 2019-2022</u> (Archive Strategy) recognises known challenges and opportunities and outlines a broad direction for the Archive. As the agency responsible for setting the information management direction for government, the Archive Strategy reflects, at a high level, the aspirations and directions for the future identification, preservation and accessibility of government records of enduring (permanent) value.

Both documents acknowledge that a continuing challenge for public sector agencies is treating information as an agency asset. We need to understand that information can have a value beyond that for which it was created and that official government records have importance not just for successive governments of South Australia but for the community as well. For some people, such as Aboriginal South Australians, former child migrants and care leavers, official records can hold the key to their identity and their family. It is critical that we acknowledge the value government records hold and facilitate access.

State Records will continue to work with South Australians to improve access to official records, where permissible, while supporting agencies in determining the value of the information they create.

While all information has value not all information needs to be kept indefinitely. In an era where born digital records are becoming more commonplace, State Records will continue to play a key role in helping agencies understand how best to make the transition to digital record keeping and make available digital records of endearing value.

Meeting these challenges is important to safeguard the Archive for future generations.

Simon Froude

Director and State Archivist

Soul

About State Records of South Australia

Our Vision

Illuminating the past and present to shape our future.

Our Purpose

Improving the integrity and accessibility of information to benefit government and the community.

Who we are

State Records is the government Archive of South Australia and holds a large part of the state's official documentary heritage.

Established in 1919, South Australia's State Archives Department was the first state Archive in Australia and an early leader in the preservation of the corporate memory of an Australian state.

State Records is responsible for managing records covering almost every facet of state and local government, including thousands of documents dating from the earliest days of European settlement in Australia to recent times. As a result, our records provide valuable insight and knowledge about the lives of South Australians.

What we do

State Records supports state and local government in their management of information through the administration of the *State Records Act 1997* (the SR Act), the *Freedom of Information Act 1991* and the *Information Privacy Principles Instruction* (PC012). State Records also manages the State's copyright commitment.

State Records achieves these responsibilities through setting of standards and provision of assistance to agencies in the management of their information assets, by preserving and providing access to historical records of government, supporting improved access to government information and protecting personal information privacy.

How we do it

State Records' operational activities can be broken into three key functions:

» Archive

Responsible for archival advice and assistance to agencies, receiving official records in to the Archive and the provision of access to those records, the arrangement and description, preservation and conservation of the Archive.

Provides a digitisation service and manages third party digitisation agreements, the development of finding aids to improve accessibility to the Archive, and delivers public programs to targeted audiences to enhance knowledge of State Records and its collection.

» Information Governance

Provides advice, policies and education to South Australian agencies on records and information management and the SR Act and assists Ministers, agencies and the public on the Freedom of Information legislation and the *Information Privacy Principles Instruction*.

Supports the activities of the State Records Council and the Privacy Committee of South Australia.

» Operations and Improvement

Provides a diverse range of business support services including the administration of State Records' ICT systems; auditing; corporate reporting; human recourses, facility and financial management. Responsible for driving business process improvement.

Our Stakeholders

» Members of the Public

State Records is responsible for storing, managing, protecting and providing public access to the State's official records.

» South Australian Public Sector Government

State Records provides advice and assistance to South Australian state and local government agencies regarding advice about records and archival management, freedom of information and privacy information.

» Consultants/Vendors

State Records liaises with consultants and vendors in order to better support agencies and to ensure third parties are aware of the policies which regulate the management of government information in South Australia.

» Professional Bodies/Societies

State Records engages with professional industry bodies and societies, including Records and Information Management Professionals Australasia (RIMPA), Australian Society of Archivists (ASA) and Genealogy SA, to advocate for and enhance the industry, and to provide improved services for our mutual customers.

State Records Centenary

100 years in the making

State Records, or the Archives Department as it was originally known, was established in 1919 and was the first government archive in Australia.

One hundred years later, State Records continues to identify, preserve and make accessible the government's official records. Since its inception many changes to the Archive have occurred, including legislative developments and re-locations of repositories and Research Centres.

Digitisation of official records and the creation of born-digital records has also changed the way the South Australian government manages, preserves and accesses records.

The significance of a central repository for historical documents

The need for a central repository of historical documents was identified in the early twentieth century by Professor George Cockburn Henderson, Chair of Modern History and English language at the University of Adelaide. His study of colonial administrator Sir George Grey contributed to his interest in the importance of 'imperial and colonial history'.

At the University of Adelaide, Henderson supervised students undertaking the Tinline Scholarship, which required original research into colonial or imperial history. He saw the difficulties of accessing materials held in separate locations, such as the Public Library, government offices and private collections.

As a member of the Board of Governors of the Public Library, Museum and Art Gallery, Henderson advocated for a Department of Historical Records to fulfil this need and provide a central archive for future South Australians. In 1919 George Pitt and Mabel Hardy started to assess the manuscript collection of the Public Library and organised transfers of records from government offices around Adelaide.

The Archives first home was at what is now the Radford Auditorium, behind the Art Gallery of South Australia on North Terrace.



Government Archive

Based on a Report written by Professor G. C. Henderson on the Collection, Storage and Preservation of Archives in Europe, the Government approved the establishment of Australia's first Government Archive.



World War One was made by the Archives Department.

These records were amongst the first collected by the Archive after it opened, and State Records now holds over 3000 photographs of South Australian soldiers, sailors and nurses.

The first Archivists

On 2nd February 1919 George Henry Pitt and Mabel Hardy were appointed in the newly established Archives Department, making them the first professional Government archivists in Australia.

George Henry Pitt

George Pitt was hand-picked by Professor Henderson as he believed Pitt could determine which historical records were worthy of permanent retention in the Archives. Prior to his 1919 appointment in the Archives, Pitt worked as a Senior Cataloguer in the Public Library. He received his Bachelor of Arts from the University of Adelaide in 1920, and worked part-time between the Archives and the Library for most of his career. Pitt left the Archives in 1948 when he was appointed as the Principal Librarian of the Public Library.





Mabel Hardy

Mabel Hardy was appointed Assistant Archivist alongside Pitt in 1919. She had graduated with a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Adelaide in 1914, where she had also completed the Tinline Scholarship and was likely a student of Professor Henderson. Hardy maintained strong ties to the University, being the inaugural editor of the Adelaide University Magazine in 1918. Hardy left the Archives in 1920 to pursue a teaching career.

Miss Mabel Hardy, B.A.

1920





The first Archives Department building opens to researchers (now the Radford Auditorium of the Art Gallery of SA)

The Board of Governors of the Public Library, the Museum and Art Gallery of South Australia established the Archives Department to undertake the assembly and preservation of State archives and historical records and, in particular, records of state and local government.

The original readers' tickets from this time show that many of the first researchers were students studying for the Tinline Scholarship.

Tinline Scholarship

In 1908, Mr (later Sir) George Murray, Kings Counsel, gifted £1000 to the University of Adelaide to establish the 'Tinline Scholarship' for history students, worth £30 per annum for two years.

Scholarship recipients were required to prepare an original thesis on history, based on the study of original documents. Two early recipients, Mabel Hardy and Bessie Threadgill, would later work for the Archives.

Celebrating 100 Years

Centenary Celebrations

To celebrate our centenary, State Records organised or participated in a range of events in the first half of 2019:

- » Sponsorship of South Australia's History Festival;
- » An Open Day at the Gepps Cross repository and Research Centre which attracted more than 70 guests who enjoyed behind the scenes tours, talks on family history research from State Records, the State Library and Genealogy SA, digitisation demonstrations and a sausage sizzle:
- » Public talks on the early history of the Archive at the Radford Auditorium, the original home of the Archive, in collaboration with the University of Adelaide, and on criminal records and animals in the Archive in collaboration with the Adelaide Office of the National Archives of Australia.

The financial year 2018-19 also saw significant investment in the development of an exhibition, *Professor Henderson's Department of Historical Records* - the largest public celebration planned for the centenary. The exhibition, launched on 1st July 2019 at the Institute Building on North Terrace, Adelaide, explores the history of the Archive and the work of the pioneering archivists. It runs until the 31st December 2019.

1925 1936 1939-1945





In 1936 South Australia celebrated its centenary, resulting in an increased interest in South Australian history and an unprecedented demand upon the Archives Department. With just one staff member, George Henry Pitt, working twelve-hour days to keep up with research requests, John McLellan, a library clerk, is transferred to the Archives Department in September.

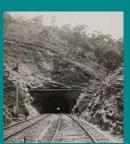
Enactment of the *Public Library, Museum, Art Gallery and Institutes Act 1925*

The *Public Library, Museum, Art Gallery and Institutes Act 1925* was passed in December 1925, following a report by George Pitt about government records being sold privately.

This Act enabled the Archives to determine the historical value of government records, requiring Government officials to give 30 days' notice of their intention to destroy records and the Archives the right to inspect any condemned records. It also gave the Archives Department the legal standing to recover government records in private hands.

This Act was the first of its kind in Australia and gave South Australia the unique legal right to acquire government records and to prevent their destruction. However, it did not require Government offices to transfer their records to the Archives if they did not want to.

Preservation of official records during WWII



ial records during WWII
The advent of World War
Il prompted the need for
valuable government
documents, artifacts and
artworks to be protected
from a bombing attack
on the city. Many records
from the Archives

Department were moved

to safe storage locations, including the Sleep's Hill tunnels in the Adelaide Hills, where watchmen were hired to guard the collection.

Strategic Focus

In 2018 State Records developed our four-year strategic plan. The *Strategic Plan 2019-*2022 establishes a series of goals and strategies for our organisation and outlines how State Records will meet its vision and purpose over this time. Key strategies undertaken during 2018-19 to help achieve the goals include:

Building our Profile

Goal: Our customers are at the centre of everything we do

Customer service standards and service delivery timeframes reviewed

During 2018-19 we published our Customer Service Charter and our service delivery timeframes. Together these documents formalise our commitment to providing a professional and responsible customer-oriented service.

We actively encourage feedback on both our Customer Service Charter and service delivery timeframes; both documents are available on our website and in our Research Centre. Feedback can be provided on either document via our website or in person at our Research Centre.

iApply form implemented

In November 2018 we launched an online form that assists customers to locate specific content on our website. The online form also allows customers to send State Records an enquiry if they require further information or assistance.

1960-1961 1975 1982

The Corbett Report into the Public Service

The 1975 Corbett Report into the Public Service identified many issues within the public service, in particular the need for an increased awareness of the importance of the management of information.

"Unless a Records Management Service division introduces new methods to departments, gains the confidence of management and establish good working relations, we can expect the recordkeeping of some South Australian departments to remain in the Dickensian era."

The Corbett Report recommended that Government archives should be separate from private archives, with the latter remaining the responsibility of the State Library.

Major administrative changes made in the State Library of South Australia



The Archives Department collection is moved into a modern repository in the new State Library building basement. General archival principals start to be applied to the Archive and records are arranged into Record Groups.

Libraries Act 1982 comes into operation

The Libraries Act 1982 was assented to on 1 July. This law defined what an "official record" was, and which government agencies and Departments were subject to the Act (e.g. created official records).

It was now an offence, under Section 32(1) to sell, destroy or otherwise dispose of public records, unless the Library Board was given notice.

Goal: State Records' identity is defined, understood and valued

Promoting the Archive and our services through social media

State Records continues to use social media to promote the Archive and our role and functions to the public.

Engagement on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Flickr are designed to create awareness of items in the Archives and our services, and to engage with new and existing audiences.

Weekly #triviaTuesday, #throwbackThursday and #fashionFriday series are combined with images of events and communities from around South Australia. State Records' Facebook followers have increased by 18% during this period, and tweets have captured an average of 30,000 views each month.

During April, State Records took part in the popular #Archive30 challenge on Twitter which allowed us to share a range of records from the Archive and other content for researchers.

State Records has also featured in more traditional media formats this financial year, promoting the Archive collection and our services across radio, print and online. State Records staff spoke on ABC North and West radio in October and November 2018 and in February 2019, discussing our centenary and interesting stories and topics from the Archives, such as the adventurer John Horrocks and his camel, Harry, and soldier settlement. State Records also appeared on ABC Radio Adelaide's Afternoon program to discuss events planned for South Australia's History Festival.

In April an article in *SA Life magazine* featured State Records' collection of glass negatives created by photographer Frank Hurley for South Australia's centenary in the 1930s. Further, local Messenger newspapers throughout the metropolitan area featured stories covering the experiences of four researchers and their reflections on the importance of the Archive.



Archival Collection

Goal: A quality archival collection that supports individual rights and documents our history and culture

Archive Strategy

State Records developed the Archive Strategy to ensure that the State's Archive is actively preserved, readily accessible and managed efficiently and sustainably. The Archive Strategy was finalised in early 2019 following consultation with government and public stakeholders and was published in May 2019.

The Archive Strategy addresses the challenges of managing a collection comprising 85 linear kilometres of documents, maps, plans, photographs, and films. It addresses issues of preservation and accessibility, the physical environment required to house the archival collection and the need for a centralised digital archive to manage the increasing volume of records in digital format. The Archive Strategy outlines proposed policy changes and operational actions needed to achieve this.

Movement of consignments from Gepps Cross to Collinswood

To help reduce delays in the processing of transfer requests, work was undertaken to identify records which were suitable for relocation from our primary repository at Gepps Cross to our secondary repository at Collinswood. Prior to the move, the Gepps Cross repository was at 98% capacity.

Increasing the available storage capacity at our Gepps Cross repository has resulted in transfers of records being accepted five days a week at this site, leading to reduced delays in the processing of agency transfer requests. This has allowed for an additional three years collection growth at Gepps Cross, on the assumption that 1000lm will be transferred annually.

The records identified for relocation to Collinswood were from large consignments, closed to public access, and unlikely to be subject to agency loan requests. The relocation was completed in November 2018 and consisted of 3,500 linear metres of records.

1988-1991 1990s 1997

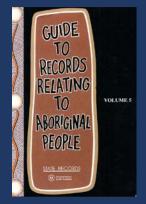


Researching Aboriginal family histories

A Guide to Records Relating to Aboriginal People was published over five volumes. These resources provide reference to thousands of individual documents held by State Records that relate to Aboriginal people.

The value of those records led to the permanent appointment of an Aboriginal Project Officer (now Senior Aboriginal Access Officer).

From the late 1980s this role has provided expert support and advice about records relating to Aboriginal people to assist with family and community research.



State Records replaces PROSA

In November 1990 PROSA is renamed State Records.

Commercial financial charter, a customer first philosophy, total quality management and computerisation of systems are all adopted. Information policy, Freedom of Information and Privacy are added to State Records functions.



The State Records Act 1997 is assented on 20 March and comes into operation on 31 October. This Act establishes the State Records Council, which replaced the Libraries Board as the authority overseeing disposal of official records.

One of State Records core functions is to produce standards to improve the consistency of records management across government.

Transfer of Official Records Standard

In May 2019 State Records issued its *Transfer of Official Records Standard* to help reduce delays in accepting transfers from agencies.

This standard establishes that State Records will only accept transfers of official records of enduring value (permanent records) that are 15 years (or older) from agencies, and are no longer required for current administrative use by the agency.

State Records will give highest priority to records which are open to public access, are at risk of loss or damage, or date from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

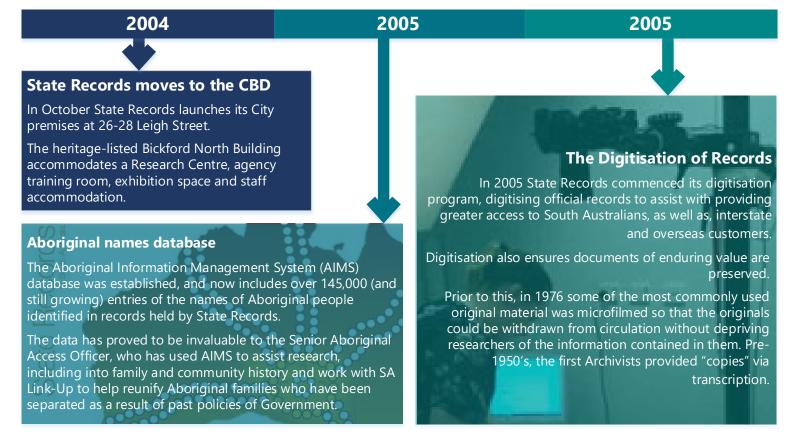
Agencies still remain responsible for managing their records until they are no longer needed and can either be legally destroyed or transferred into State Records' custody if they are permanent records.

Family Search Digitisation Partnership

In 2015, State Records entered into a partnership with FamilySearch, a not-for-profit organisation focused on helping people connect with their ancestors through easy to access historical records. The agreement with FamilySearch enables records in the Archive, which are open and are of interest to the public, to be digitised and published freely on the FamilySearch website.

This work has enabled the collection to be viewed by a broader customer base including those who live in regional South Australia, interstate and overseas.

In 2018-19, the partnership with FamilySearch saw 182,500 images digitised. Since 2015, approximately 500,000 images have been digitised through this partnership.



Public Sector Information Management

Goal: Drive information management maturity; enabling government services and community interactions

Policy review

Under the SR Act, State Records is responsible for providing advice and assistance to agencies and the issuing of standards (policies).

Since 2004 State Records has released a range of policies concerning the management of official government records, increasing in scope and complexity over time.

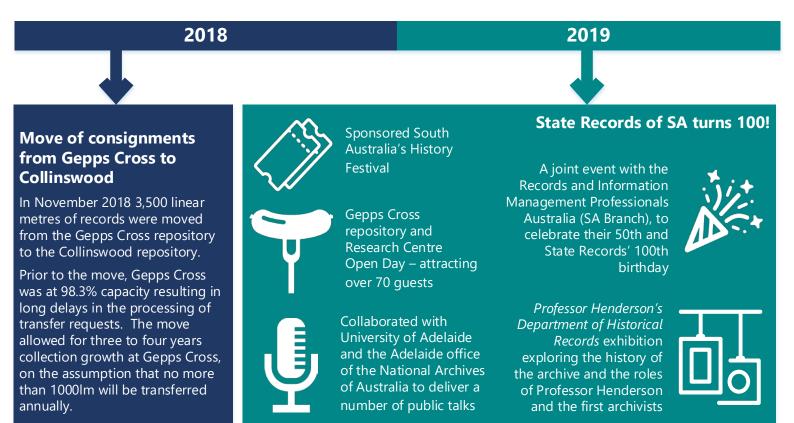
During 2018-19 we began a revision of these policies with the aim to reduce the number of standards and guidelines issued, make them more principles based and to ensure that our advice is current, clearly understood and easy to implement for agencies.

Future policies will take a broad approach to the management of government information and support relevant initiatives such as the government's Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Strategy and the transition to digital service delivery.

Public Sector brochure

During 2018-19 State Records released a brochure outlining the responsibilities of public officers under the SR Act, the *Freedom of Information Act 1991* and Information Privacy Principles Instruction.

This brochure summarises the responsibilities of agencies, public officers and State Records in relation to the above legislation and policies.



State Records Council

Message from the Chair

It gives me great pleasure to contribute to State Records' Annual Report for the financial year ended 30 June 2019. It has been a significant year for State Records – represented by the refresh of its brand, its new look and the continuation and implementation of its reform initiatives it began in 2016.

A priority for the State Records Council (Council) is providing input to State Records' management of responsibilities and risks relating to government recordkeeping. Council, with its diversity of membership, responds with agility to emerging change, and advises the Minister and the Director of State Records as matters arise. Significant matters considered by Council including those considered at our strategy meetings during 2018-2019 have included:

- » Transfer of government functions to non-government service providers and implications for official records
- » Legislative and policy reviews
- » Preservation of evidence in all formats
- » Input to State Records Archive Strategy 2019-2022
- » Matters relating to Royal Commissions
- » State Records Service and Research Centre changes, and
- » Considerations of retention for records of evidence across government.

It has also been a significant year for Council renewal. I am delighted that process enabled us to appoint several strong members.

David Rathman AM has been appointed as a person nominated by Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation to consider matters on behalf of the Aboriginal community. David has deep experience and knowledge in matters affecting our first peoples, and significantly strengthens Council skills.

Karen White was also appointed during the past year. Karen's significant knowledge and experience in business management and technology is of great value as we increasingly deal with digital considerations in policy and operational matters and their implications for government.

Our most recent appointment, **Megan Webster-Bradman**, provides Council with extensive governance, courts and legal expertise. We are delighted to have the calibre and experience of Megan on Council.

Council continues to review its collective skills and experience in order to provide strong governance necessary to deal with the challenges of policy and stakeholder priorities affecting State Records.

In conclusion, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Councillors for their collective efforts and input during the year, and the Director of State Records for the opportunity to have served as Chair 2016-2019. We all look forward to State Records Centenary celebrations – the first public records office to be established in Australia, in 1919.

Helen Onopko B.A., M.A., ARIM

Disposal Schedules

Established under section 9 of the SR Act, the Council is responsible for approving determinations (disposal schedules) relating to the disposal of official records. Although independent of State Records, our staff provide administrative support to the Council.

During the financial year the Council held six regular meetings and three strategy meetings.

The Council approved 18 Agency Operational Records Disposals (RDS) and four General Disposal Schedules (GDS).

General Disposal Schedule freezes – Royal Commissions

In response to the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety and the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability, State Records issued (with the approval of the State Records Council) the following two disposal freezes to prevent the destruction of records that may be of relevance to these Commissions:

- » General Disposal Schedule 37: Records of Relevance in relation to the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety (GDS37), and
- » General Disposal Schedule 38: Records of Relevance in relation to the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (GDS38).

Amendments to the State Records Regulations 2013

Fees and charges prescribed by Regulations under the SR Act increased as of 1 July 2018, in line with the 2.2% Consumer Price Index.

Acknowledgement of images

Front cover

- » State Library of South Australia, B-10196 George Pitt in the Stacks, c.1930s Page 8
 - » State Records of South Australia, GRS 1061/1/B17754-1 The first Archives Building, c. 1936
 - » State Library of South Australia, B-6708 George Henry Pitt, 1935

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- » State Records of South Australia, GRG26/5/4/1 John Christian Fiegert, 32nd Battalion C, c.1918
- » State Library of South Australia, B-11108 George Henry Pitt, 1948
- » Miss Mabel Hardy, B.A, The News (Adelaide), 6 September 1926, p.5
- » State Records of South Australia, GRG56/27/0/1 Image of an original readers ticket, 1921

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- » State Records of South Australia, GRG2/55/1683/1925 Picture of the front cover of the Public Library, Museum, Art Gallery and Institutes Act 1925
- » State Records of South Australia, GRG7/71/197 South Australian Centenary Celebrations, 1936
- » State Records of South Australia, GRS 13684/1/67/17 Sleep's Hill tunnel entrance, c. 1940

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» State Records of South Australia, GRS 1061/1 The entrance to the new State Library building, c.1988

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» State Records of South Australia, GRS 1061/1/2/59 Inside the Gepps Cross repository, 1987

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Suide to Records relating to Aboriginal People, Vol 5, State Records of South Australia, c. 1991

Page 14

- » The Aboriginal Information Management System (AIMS), State Records of South Australia, c. 2005
- » State Records employee digitising a record, State Records of South Australia, c. 2005

Performance Summary

Repository Data

Activity	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17
Consignments transferred	445	273	330
Total linear metres transferred	1,065	1,014	1,218
Total holdings (shelf metres)	85,530lm	84,461lm	83,450lm
Total holdings (items)	13,513,740 items	13,344,838 items	13,185,100 items
Repository storage area (m2)	7,749	7,749	7,749
Total shelving capacity (metres)	100,133	100,133	100,133

Service Data

Activ	ity	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17
New	government agencies created	137	59	40
News	series registered	313	204	239
New i	tems created	140,469	61,156	100,074
Visits	by the public to the research centre	1,587	1,600	1,526
New	oublic registered users	1,133	1,681	1,309
	rds retrieved for viewing in the research e (agency and public)	4,947	6,700	5,258
Reco	rds retrieved by agency to view in agency	4,869	4,300	6,159
Publi	c Enquiries			
	Access	1,435	1,900	3,052
	FOI	151	555	487
	Privacy	59	90	77
	Records Management	10	13	20
Agency Enquiries				
	Archival Services Note: In 2018-19, follow-up emails were not counted as a separate transaction.	707	1,957	1,901
	FOI	556	897	802
	Privacy	36	111	93
	Records Management	1,329	1,543	1,859

Education and Training

Course type	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17
Online Records Management Training	237	292	352
Online FOI Training	77	57	12
Classroom FOI Training	116	73	78

Digitisation Data

Activity	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17
Images digitised by State Records	2,232	6,500	28,538
Images digitised by third parties	187,631	110,000	110,000
Total images digitised	487,239	296,376	179,876

Social Media

Platform	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17
Facebook followers	3,933	3,306	2,285
Twitter followers	3,158	2,943	NA

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