STATE RECORDS OF SA
ANNUAL ACTIVITY STATEMENT 2022-23

Government of South Australia
Attorney-General's Department

Contents

About Us

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

Since 1919, the archive has undergone many changes administratively and is now referred to as State Records of South Australia (State Records).

Our Value to South Australia

Our advice and services facilitate information governance maturity that supports a modern and trusted government by improving the integrity and accessibility of information assets.

We preserve records of enduring value and share the state's recorded history.

Our Vision

Information assets of the State are created, preserved and accessible.

Who We Are

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

State Records is the custodian of records covering almost every facet of state and local government, including thousands of documents dating from the earliest days of European settlement in South Australia to recent times. As a result, our records provide valuable insight and knowledge about the history and culture of South Australia and the lives of the people who lived and worked there.

What we do

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

State Records achieves these responsibilities through setting standards and assisting 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 broad functions:

Archive

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

Provides an on-demand digitisation service for the public and manages third party digitisation agreements, develops finding aids to improve accessibility to the archival collection, and delivers public programs to targeted audiences to enhance knowledge of State Records and its collection.

Information Governance

Provides advice, policies, and education to agencies on records and information management and assists Ministers, agencies, and the public on administering and interpreting the FOI Act and PC012.

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. State Records assists the public regarding the FOI Act and the protection of information privacy in South Australia.

South Australian Public Sector Government

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

Consultants/Vendors

State Records liaises with consultants and vendors so they can 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.

Highlights

Information Management Strategy

The Information Management Strategy 2023-2026 (Strategy) continues to strengthen, and build upon this approach, and reaffirms State Records' commitment to support agencies to achieve the objectives and meet the information management principles required under this Strategy and in the Information Management Standard (Standard).

The Strategy establishes the principles that government agencies must follow to ensure their data and information assets can be relied upon and trusted.

The five principles outlined in the Strategy are:

» **The value of information is known:** Information is treated as an asset of the agency: its value to enable business activities and functions, both current and future, is determined, understood and leveraged to improve business outcomes.

» **Information assets are created and managed appropriate to risk:** Agencies understand what information needs to be created and kept to support business objectives, meet compliance obligations and mitigate risk.

» **Ownership of information assets is assigned:** Responsibility for the governance of information assets is assigned appropriately in order to ensure information assets are managed for the best outcomes of the agency, its customers and broader community.

» **Information assets can be relied upon:** Policies, practices and systems are implemented that ensure information assets can be relied upon as trusted and authentic evidence of decisions made and actions taken.

» **Information assets are available as required:** Information assets are accessible for as long as needed and are shared appropriately (subject to access, security and privacy rules) within a protected and trusted environment.

The focus for the next four years will be on supporting agencies to improve their information governance maturity and capability. This will be determined by assessing how well their current information management practices comply with the principles and behaviours set out in the Standard.

To assist with improving agencies overall information governance maturity and capability, State Records has developed:

» an Information Governance Guideline that expands upon the behaviours underpinning the Standard, offering guidance on the necessary structure and rigor to manage information assets; and

» a Self-Assessment Tool to assess current information management practices against the Standard.

Information Governance Guideline & Self-Assessment Tool

The Information Governance Guideline (Guideline) expands on the behaviours underpinning the Standard. It offers guidance on the necessary structure and rigor to manage information assets.

It should be used in conjunction with the Self-Assessment Tool through which your agency can assess its information governance maturity and capabilities (current information management practices) against the Standard.

The Guideline assist agencies with:

» the development and implementation of an Information Management Program, as prescribed in Standard, or

» improvement of an existing Information Management Program.

It also offers advice to assist in compliance with other standards issued under section 14 of the *State Records Act 1997*, and other advice provided by State Records.

The Self-Assessment Tool (Tool) allows agencies to assess their Information Management Program 's compliance and current information management practices against the Standard.

The Tool offers a scalable, tiered approach to help identify areas of strength and weakness at each level of maturity and capability.

The results of the Tool provide an indicative assessment of an agency's overall information governance maturity and capability, highlighting Program elements to focus on to ensure compliance with, and improvement against, the Standard. The Tool will help agencies to develop and implement actions to address weaknesses, improve outcomes and progress to the next level of information governance maturity.
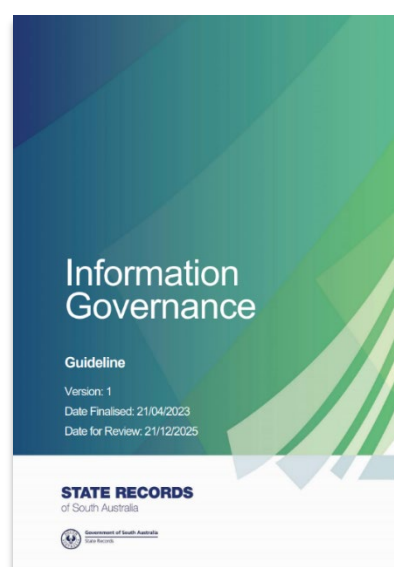
Information Privacy Strategy & Protecting Personal Information – Privacy Fundamentals

In June 2023, State Records finalised and published the Information Privacy Strategy and the Protecting Personal Information – the Privacy Fundamentals.

The Strategy promotes State Records' vision for personal information to be respected and proactively managed in a consistent manner that aligns with international best practice.

It provides a principles-based approach to proactively managing the privacy of personal information collected, held, and used by South Australian government agencies, local governments, and universities.

It also introduces the concept of a Personal Information Privacy Management Framework (Framework) that agencies need to develop to protect the personal information held by the agency.

Underpinning the Strategy, is the Protecting Personal Information - the Privacy Fundamentals. Reflecting best practice, it will help ensure a consistent, well governed approach to the management of personal information.

It provides practical guidance on how an agency can develop a Framework. The Framework is built around respect, transparency, design, data minimisation and information safety and security.

The Framework is separated into four parts:

» **Commitment to Information Privacy** – where good privacy governance and leadership foster a culture that respects privacy and prioritises individuals.
» **Education** – staff are appropriately trained and know their privacy obligations.
» **Privacy policies and practices** – your agency has strong processes and policies to manage privacy obligations.
» **Monitoring and reporting** – privacy considerations in the agency are reported and improved.

ArchiveSearch Replacement

A significant achievement this year was the much anticipated replacement of ArchiveSearch, our online catalogue. This was a substantial undertaking by all involved. Released in March 2023 the new ArchiveSearch catalogue provides an improved user experience and enhanced searching capabilities for the physical records held in the archive.

The new catalogue also provides us with updated analytics to better understand how our stakeholders are using the catalogue. This will inform the development of user education, including website content and information sessions, to help people find and use records in the archive.
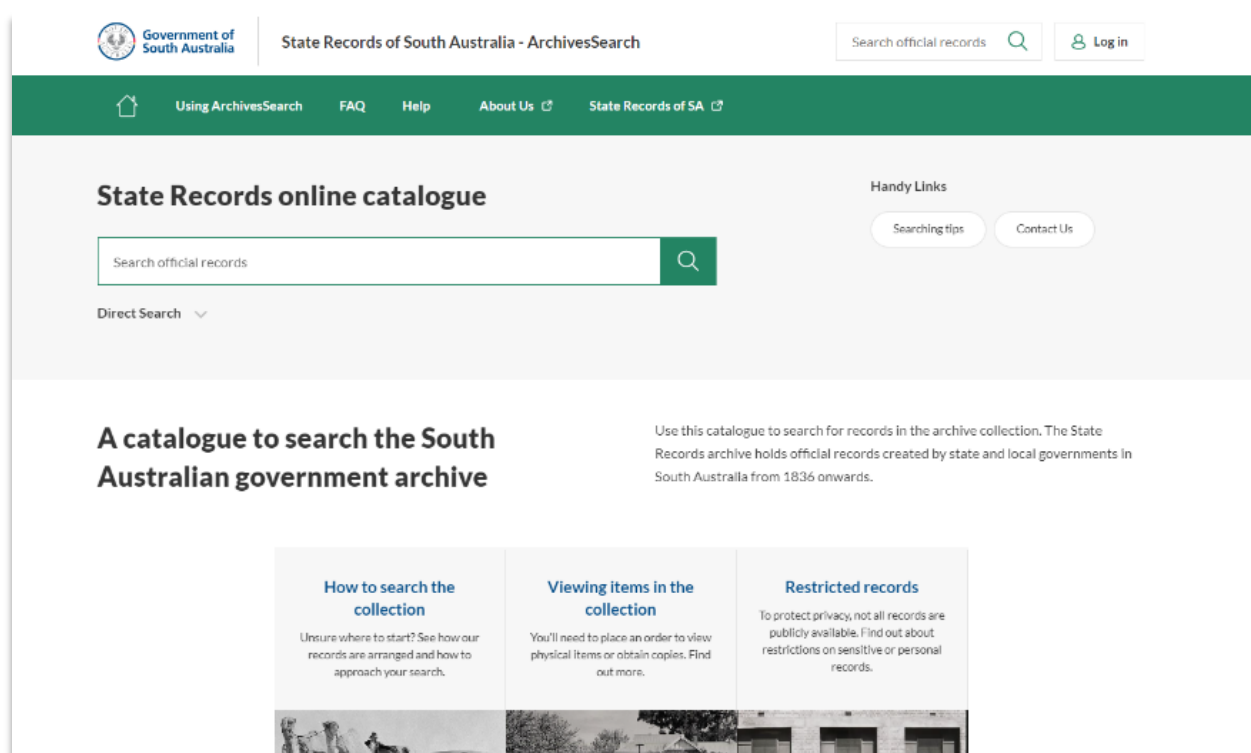
Strategic Focus

In 2022 State Records developed a four-year strategic plan for 2023-2026.

The Strategic Plan 2023-2026 clearly articulates State Records' Vision and incorporates key messaging about our goals and the strategies and actions we will use to achieve them.

Identity.

Be known by the community and recognised as a valued contributor to government.

Priority for Aboriginal Peoples.

State Records will strengthen its role and relationship with Aboriginal Peoples, with the archive becoming a model of respect and collaboration.

The Archive.

Build a quality archive that supports individual rights and documents South Australia history and culture.

Information Governance.

Foster information governance maturity and capability across government.

Goal: Identity

Be known by the community and recognised as a valued contributor to government

Strategic Plan 2023-2026

The State Records Strategic Plan 2023-2026 (Strategic Plan) was published during 2022-23. The Strategic Plan builds on the achievements of our previous Strategic Plan 2019-2022.

It articulates our priorities for the next four years and describes the strategies and actions State Records will progress to shape our future.

Our goals for 2023-2026 have been shaped to support the needs of all our customers and the South Australian community. It recognises the importance of being known by the community and recognised as a contributor to government, our continued commitment to Aboriginal Peoples, our commitment to the Tandanya Declaration, the significance of Aboriginal voices in the archive, the importance of the Archive in supporting individual rights and documenting South Australian history, and the importance of fostering information governance maturity and capability across the South Australian government.

Our Strategic Plan 2023-2026 can be found on the State Records website.

New State Records website

In March 2023, State Records saw the launch of its new website. The website has enhanced features which improve user engagement and accessibility. The website and ArchivesSearch are now better integrated for a consistent user experience across both sites.

The new website also brings with it improved compliance with the South Australian Government security standards, and the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.1).

Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, and we continue to receive feedback to help us continuously improve the website for our end users.

Community engagement

In August 2022, State Records commemorated the 150th anniversary of the Overland Telegraph Line with a display in the GPO Exchange Building foyer, featuring the diary of Charles Todd.

In August 2022, during National Family History month, State Records delivered webinars which demonstrated how records can be accessed online though our website and catalogue, and other platforms. State Records also held behind the scenes tours of the repository, and talks, in collaboration with National Archives of Australia, about using archives to research family history.

In May 2023, State Records participated in the annual South Australia History Festival.

Events in South Australia's History Festival included:

» **Archives Open!:** a behind the scenes tours of the repository and a display of records from the archive,

» **Stories of Crime:** a talk to explore records of true crimes in the archives, presented in collaboration with National Archives of Australia,

» **The Grand Embezzle Off:** run in collaboration with National Archives of Australia, an interactive event that allowed the audience to vote on the most interesting stories of theft in both archive collections,

» **Online webinar:** which demonstrated how records can be accessed online through State Records' website and catalogue, and other platforms.

Goal: Priority for Aboriginal Peoples

State Records will strengthen its role and relationship with Aboriginal Peoples, with the archive becoming a model of respect and collaboration.

Actions To achieve our strategies, we will:

• Work with Aboriginal peoples to review our services and improve access to the Archive, including improving finding aids for records of relevance

• Continue to strengthen relationships with non-government service providers who work for Aboriginal peoples and their communities

• Engage with Aboriginal communities, conduct outreach programs and participate in events that celebrate Aboriginal peoples' history and culture

• Collaborate with other institutions to improve access to all records, including those not held in the Archive

Response to the Tandanya Declaration & the Aboriginal Reference Group

During the reporting year the Aboriginal Reference Group continued to meet.

State Records commenced reviewing a series of records highly accessed by Aboriginal people with the intent of working with the agency responsible and the Aboriginal Reference Group to improve how the records can be accessed, and continued digitising that series of records.

State Records worked alongside staff from Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation to respond to Aboriginal Access enquiries and improve processes around access to records in the archive.

In addition, State Records staff met with staff from SA Link-Up to discuss an updated Memorandum of Understanding.

Goal: The Archive

Build a quality archive that supports individual rights and documents South Australia history and culture.

Actions To achieve our strategies, we will:

• Support agencies to identify and transfer permanent information assets to State Records • Advance a new facilities solution for the state's archive and associated services

• Pursue a new archival management system as a foundation for a digital archive

• Expand access to digitised copies of records in the archive

• Digitise and preserve magnetic media, film and other records in formats that are at risk

Deadline 2025

The State Records Deadline 2025 project continued during the reporting year, following the completion of a pilot digitisation. Identification of all items on magnetic media and film formats in the archive continued, alongside an assessment of preservation for films. 413 films were tested for acidity levels to determine preservation status and priority for digitisation.

FamilySearch & Volunteers

FamilySearch volunteers returned to State Records in May 2023 and continued digitisation of the agreed program of works, including school admission registers and probate books. These records will be added to the FamilySearch website and available through State Records as capture and quality checking continues.

State Records' Volunteer Program continued to digitise high demand records to improve access to the archive. The following projects continued:

» Digitisation of Correspondence files – Aborigines' Office and successor agencies (GRG52/1)
» Digitisation of Memorial books (GRS 12154).

Volunteers also worked on listing and indexing projects that improve access to the archive collection, including correspondence files of the State Children's Department (GRG27/1) and railway employee sheets (various series).

Goal: Information Governance

> Foster information governance maturity and capability across government.

FOI Reporting, FOI Tools & FOIMS Decommissioning

Since 2005, State Government agencies, Local Government councils and Universities have used the Freedom of Information Management System (FOIMS) to capture and manage FOI applications. State Records extracted agencies FOI application data from FOIMS for population in the Annual Report on the Administration of the Freedom of Information Act 1991 (Annual Report).

Agency access to FOIMS ceased at the end of the 2021-22 reporting period as it was no longer supported and had reached end of life. Both the systems test and production environments have now been decommissioned.

Despite the absence of FOIMS, agencies are still required to capture and report FOI application data as prescribed in the Government Gazette. In the lead up to the 2022-23 reporting year, State Records released new and updated guidelines and a data collation tool to assist agencies in capturing this data.

State Records began planning for and developing a reporting tool that would allow agencies to provide their FOI application data to State Records easily and securely. It was determined that a form be developed using iApply – a tool that has the capability of creating complex forms that requires login credentials to access.

State Records' Records Disposal Schedule

State Records developed a new Records Disposal Schedule, replacing RDS 2005/15, to cover its operational records and to document its agency history with a comprehensive Context Statement. The RDS built on work already developed and was further refined following the findings of a records holding survey and consultation sessions with State Records staff.

RDS 2023/08 Version 1 was approved by State Records Council on 17 March 2023 and is effective until 17 March 2033.

Looking Forward

During 2023-24 State Records will progress a range of initiatives.

Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) Guideline & Templates

Recognising privacy impact assessments are complex to undertake, State Records plans to release a PIA Guideline to assist agencies to successfully conduct and navigate undertaking PIAs.

It will include what a PIA is and why they are needed, as well as providing the steps of the PIA process.

Privacy Self-Assessment Tool

State Records will release a privacy self-assessment tool to allow agencies to self-assess the maturity of their privacy practices within the agency. An agency will be able to rate itself against key information privacy measures and identify areas for improvement.

The tool will be like the self-assessment tool agency's use to assess information governance and compliance with the Information Management Standard.

Reporting won't be mandatory, but State Records hopes all agencies will provide their self-assessment reports to State Records, to provide data for benchmarking purposes and to highlight any issues where State Records may need to provide further guidance.

Online privacy education

State Records also plans to provide three online training modules:

» Handling Personal Information – to provide an understanding of the importance of handling personal information appropriately.
» Overview of the Information Privacy Principles Instruction – to provide a more in depth look at the IPPI.
» How to conduct a PIA – to provide information on how to undertake a PIA. This training will complement the PIA Guideline.

Information Management Maturity Survey

State Records will be conducting a survey of all public sector agencies current information management practices compliance against the Information Management Standard (Standard) under section 15 of the State Records Act 1997 (SR Act) during the first half of 2023-2024 financial year.

The official Survey mechanism will be the Self-Assessment Tool.

Responses to this Survey should be coordinated by agencies internally. A report will be made available after the results have been analysed.

Digitisation Guideline

State Records is in the final stages of drafting its new Digitisation Guideline to underpin the Disposal Standard. The Digitisation Guideline (title still to be finalised) will assist agencies by providing a structured framework in which their digitisation activities should occur, this includes undertaking a digitisation viability assessment prior to commencing any digitisation, the governance required for such activities and the minimal technical specifications for digitisation that should be met to ensure digitised records can be trusted and relied upon for as long as they are required.

Review of State Records' response to the Tandanya Declaration

A review of State Records' response to the Tandanya Declaration has commenced, with completion expected in 2023-24.

The review will assess actions taken since 2019 and set a plan of actions to be completed before the next review.

Healing Foundation Principles

State Records will assess progress against the Healing Foundation's Principles for nationally consistent approaches to accessing Stolen Generations records. This work will take place in consultation with the Aboriginal Reference Group and government agencies.

Digital Archive and Archival Management System

The procurement of a digital archive and supporting technologies continues to be a goal, with a business case under development to highlight the need for technology to support preservation of and access to the state's physical and digital records of permanent value.

Plan to implement a digital loans service for agencies

State Records is working towards a digital loan service for government agencies seeking access to their records in the archive. Ceasing the physical loan of older and fragile records will assist with preservation and provide agencies with copies that can be used for ongoing reference purposes.

Future Facility

State Records continues to look towards a new facility to meet its current and future needs.

Our collection is approximately 90 000 Linear meters in size and growing at a rate of approximately 1 300 linear meters annually. This growth is anticipated to continue for another 20 to 30 years, and we will soon outgrow our current capacity of 100 000 linear meters. As the records held in our collection are of permanent value to the state of South Australia, the storage conditions must ensure the long term health of these records, including maintaining the right temperature and humidity conditions for the preservation of all formats,

including paper and audio visual records. In addition to the needs of our physical records, the state of South Australia has, and continues to, produce digital records of permanent value which need to be stored and preserved in a Digital Archive. State Records SA does not currently have the infrastructure to support a Digital Archive in the existing facilities.

State Records SA has recently commissioned a facility scoping report to describe the requirements of a facility that would meet our future needs. Based on this report, State Records will develop a business case to seek funding for a future facility and will begin some of the necessary work to prepare for a new facility, including completing an audit of our current records of permanent value so that we can ensure we have the right storage solutions in place.

Performance Summary

Public Enquiries

	2022-23	2021-22
Reference and access	1 127	1 733
Freedom of Information	97	121
Privacy	29	34
Records Management	28	34

Agency Enquiries

	2022-23	2021-22
Archival Services	587	394
Freedom of Information	449	483
Privacy	176	129
Records Management	216	221

Repository Specifications, Holdings and Transfers

	2022-23	2021-22
New government agencies created	40	96
New series registered	349	483
New items created	12 302	19 113
Consignments transferred	404	506
Total linear metres transferred	237	271
Total holdings (shelf linear metres)	86 746	86 499
Total holdings (items)	13 705 884	13 666 771
Repository storage area (m^2)	7 749	7 749
Total shelving capacity (linear metres)	100 133	100 131

Use of the Collection

	2022-23	2021-22
Visits by the public to the research centre	856	799
New public registered users	149	322
Records retrieved for viewing in the research centre (agency and public)	4 938	4 248
Records retrieved by agency to view in agency	3 718	3 597

Record Digitisation

	2022-23	2021-22
Images digitised by State Records	9 518	20 341
Images digitised by third parties	177 783	284 470
Total images digitised	-	1 276 051

Education and Training

	2022-23	2021-22
Online Information Management Training*	512	684
Free Online FOI Training*	362	825
Training for Accredited and Non-accredited FOI Officers	102	108

*In 2022-23, State Records launched our online learning platform, LEARN@State Records. This platform allows us to measure activity more accurately, compared to 2021-22. State Records has also began providing training courses to agencies to be used within their internal training environments. (*The statistics above do not include internal agency training activity*)

State Records Council

Message from the Chair

It gives me great pleasure to provide my contribution as Chair of the State Records Council (Council) to State Records' Annual Activity Statement for the financial year ended 30 June 2023.

2023 brought a significant change of 5 Members to Council. I take this opportunity to publicly farewell and thank the following past members for their contributions to Council over the years:

- » **Susan Marsden** - representing public researchers for over 15 years
- » **Ian Sutherland** - representing the Australian Society of Archivists for over 9 years
- » **Dr Robert Foster** - representing the History Trust for over 6 years
- » **Anne Lindsay** – Deputy Chair - representing the Chief Justice of South Australia for 3 years
- » **Dr Helen Donovan** - representing Local Government for 3 years

We welcomed the following to Council on 29 January 2023:

- » **Amanda Paul** - representing the History Trust of South Australia
- » **Jennifer Scott** - representative for Australian Society of Archivists
- » **Deborah Horton** - Deputy Chair - Representative for Local Government
- » **Judith O'Connor** - representative for Chief Justice of South Australia
- » **Dr Herbert Stock** - representative for public researchers

They were welcomed warmly by the returning members:

- » **Keith Nicholas** – Chair – representing South Australian Government agencies
- » **Deanne Hanchant-Nichols** - an Aboriginal person engaged in historical research involving the use of official records
- » **Kerry Hazel** – representing the Records and Information Management Professionals of Australasia
- » **Karen White** - a person with practical business experience

The Council met 6 times during 2022-23.

During 2022-23 Council reviewed and discussed 21 Disposal Schedules, including 9 extension requests. Council approved 19 agency operational records disposals and 2 general disposal schedules.

Significant matters considered by Council during 2022-2023 have included consultation for:

» the new State Records Strategic Plan 2023-2026

» the Information Management Strategy 2023-2026

» review of the Appraisal Standard

» the draft Information Privacy Strategy and Protecting Personal Information – the Privacy Fundamentals.

A single strategy meeting was held in early 2023 to welcome and inform the new members focused on:

» introduction of Council members

» introduction of State Records staff

» responsibilities of Council members

» State Records' Strategic Plan 2023-2026

» State Records' Information Management Strategy 2023-2026

Council members also had an opportunity to tour the Gepps Cross repository facility.

In conclusion, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the past and present State Records Council Members for their collective efforts and robust discussions throughout 2022-2023, and the Director, Executive Officer, and other staff of State Records for their support and assistance to Council.

Keith Nicholas

Contact State Records