

To: DAVID RICHARDSON
Subject: integrated ARCS/ORCS syst

Distribution:

None, this item is In Progress

ORCS: 12700-01

To: David Richardson,
A/Assistant Deputy Minister,
Program Services

RE: British Columbia's Integrated System of Records Classification, Records
Scheduling, and Archival Appraisal

Gary Mitchell has asked me to forward to you information about our
ARCS and ORCS records systems. The following paragraphs are from papers
presented at records management and archival conferences.

In case you would like more details, I am forwarding (in hardcopy)
two documents:

- 1) the "Report of the Federal-Provincial-Territorial Records Management
Council on Records Retention and Disposition Scheduling" which the
Province of British Columbia prepared in 1989 under the direction of
the Council; and
- 2) a paper on British Columbia's integrated system presented in 1991 at the
Association of Canadian Archivists conference.

I trust that the following paragraphs provide the information you
require. If not, please let me know.

Walter J. Meyer zu Erpen, Manager
Appraisal and Acquisition Section

cc. BCARS Management Team
AAS Staff
Records Officers on EMAIL

BRITISH COLUMBIA'S INTEGRATED SYSTEM OF RECORDS CLASSIFICATION,
RECORDS SCHEDULING, AND ARCHIVAL APPRAISAL

SUMMARY: The approach which the British Columbia Government has adopted in
scheduling records integrates the records classification, records
scheduling, and archival appraisal functions. This integrated
approach provides government with a framework for the management
of all information resources, regardless of physical storage media.

It is estimated that less than five percent of all government records
are ultimately transferred to an archival repository for long-term
preservation due to their ongoing values. Conversely, more than 95
percent are ultimately destroyed, many after only a relatively short
retention period.

With the tremendous increase in the volume of government records

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created since the 1960s, the records management functions of classification and retention and disposition scheduling have become a crucial component at the front end of the archival acquisition function. From the archival point of view, the records classification and scheduling functions must identify as much as possible of the 95 percent of government records which have no archival value. In addition, records management functions must provide the means and authority by which valueless record series may be destroyed on an ongoing basis without requiring the intervention of a professional archivist on each occasion.

In order to deal with the large volume of government records being created, the British Columbia Archives and Records Service (BCARS) has adopted an integrated system of records classification, records scheduling, and archival appraisal. In 1989, the amalgamation of the Records Management Branch and the Provincial Archives created a new organization, BCARS, which is based upon a functional organizational structure. The components of the records management and archival functions relevant to classification, scheduling, appraisal, and acquisition were brought together in the Appraisal and Acquisition Section.

An integrated records classification and scheduling system is a system which integrates the classification and scheduling of the recorded information resources of an organization and documents both records classification and scheduling in one hardcopy or electronic manual. British Columbia's integrated approach provides government with a framework for the management, including retrieval, retention, and disposition, of all information resources.

The integrated system has several advantages. Firstly, the integration of records classification and scheduling provides a direct relationship between individual records classifications and the applicable schedule. The standard format page is divided into two vertical columns with classification information documented on the left and scheduling and appraisal information on the right. Secondly, the integrated system can be made available to users in one manual (hardcopy or electronic) in order to facilitate the application of approved schedules and alleviate the necessity of maintaining and updating two different manuals.

These and other advantages have been achieved through the implementation of the following enhancements to existing records management and archival methodology:

- 1) integration of records classification and scheduling information into a standard block numeric format;
- 2) standardization of primary and secondary numbers and titles;
- 3) scheduling of all information regardless of physical format; and
- 4) linkage between integrated records classification and scheduling systems and off-site records storage facilities.

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