

Moving the Paper Mountain A Case Study

**Health Canada
National Archives of Canada**

September 13th, 2002



**Health
Canada**

**Santé
Canada**



**National Archives
of Canada**

**Archives nationales
du Canada**



Let's begin with introductions...

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INFORMATION MATTERS.
L'INFORMATION, ÇA COMPTE.

Let's begin with introductions...

**Grant Cranston
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Origins of the Paper Mountain at Health Canada

- **Hold on destruction** as a result of the unauthorized destruction of Canadian Blood Committee records and subsequent criminal investigation
- Slow implementation of the Information Commissioner's recommendations
- Lack of resources



How Big is the Paper Mountain?

- 8 000 boxes in a HC facility
- 27 000 boxes at the Federal Records Centre
- 90 000 boxes at private storage facilities



IMSD
DSGI



How Big is the Paper Mountain?

Weekly findings by records
improvement initiatives



IMSD

DSGI



How Big is the Paper Mountain?

- Backlogged information still exists in individual offices
- Electronic media is out of scope



IMSD
DSGI





PROJET **axs** PROJET

Making Information Easy to Access at HC

- **Records Improvement**
 - develop inventory of HC's paper-based records
 - ensure strong RM practices throughout dep't
- **Electronic Records Management Application**
 - iRIMS – for use by RM staff to control large amounts of corporate info across multiple repositories
 - Domino.Doc - for use by HC staff to classify and save documents, facilitates easy location and retrieval of info

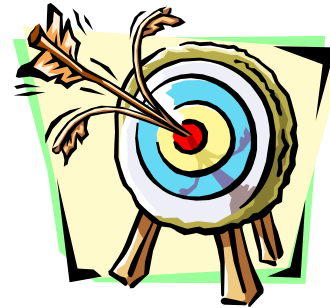


How did the Government of Canada Paper Mountain come about?

- Poor implementation of effective IM policies and procedures
- Inability to distinguish historical records from ones with temporary value, so an overwhelming volume of older records is kept
- Lack of resources inside the department to manage records
- Staff changes that leave the context of many records unknown
- Absence of disposition authority from the NA that allows for destruction of records



Project Goals at HC



- Work towards the scalable archival preservation or destruction of Health Canada's backlog
- Determine the applicability of 150 existing Health Canada Records Disposition Authorities (RDAs) and an additional 25 RDAs that were originally granted to the former Department of National Health and Welfare
- Compile and update the administrative history of the department
- Map RDA coverage to functions of the Department to produce a Multi-Year Disposition Plan (MYDP)

Project Scope

STAGE 1	STAGE 2	STAGE 3	STAGE 4
Jan 7 – Jul 5, 2002	Jul 8 – Sep 30, 2002	Oct 1 – Dec 31, 2002	Jan 1 2003 – Dec 31, 2005
DELIVERABLES Final comprehensive list of useable RDAs (Letter from Ian Wilson, National Archivist of Canada) MIDA Training	DELIVERABLES Signed MYDP Reduction of backlog	DELIVERABLES Reduction of backlog Records Disposition Submission Report Training Completed amendment of RDA 98/019	DELIVERABLES Comprehensive (functional) RDAs Revocation or amendment of RDAs with “Selective Retention” Reduction of backlog



Risks

- Competing resource priorities with other NA IM projects
- Availability for approval of recommendations considering tight time lines of the project which are concurrent with other related projects



Progress

- All deliverables met by the NA/HC team and we are confident that the stage 2 deliverable will also be met
- New policy and processes for disposition successfully navigated HC governance
- Various disposition actions underway

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Benefits for Health Canada

- Aided the revitalization of the retention and disposition function
- Will provide comprehensive records disposition authorities and reestablish a formal disposition process with the NA
- On-site access to expertise and ongoing partnership with NA on a range of IM issues
- Expedited reduction of backlog and associated savings

IMSD

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Benefits for the National Archives



- Demonstrated evidence to share with institutions
- A best practice for the updating all government RDA's
- Application of the Business Activity Structure Classification System (BASCS)
- May lead to stronger policies and procedures reflecting today's IM challenges
- Allow archival records to be preserved more easily, thus allowing the reduction of short term records that have served the needs of the operation



What can this mean for your organization?

- Comprehensive guidelines and tools available to handle your paper mountains
- Enhancing awareness of the function and importance of disposing of records regularly
- Long term benefit in reducing storage costs
- NA expertise and HC best practices available to you
- Re-establishment of business relationship and partnership with the NA



NA GOV IM / ER Infrastructure Initiatives



- **Making and Communicating a Case for Action to contribute to a common GoC IM Vision and Strategy**
- **Developing products and services that facilitate the management of records and information through their life cycle:**
 - IM Maturity Model Tool and Pilot Assessments
 - Records and Information Life Cycle Management Guide
 - Classification Design and Implementation Guide
 - Guide on the Management of E-Mail Messages
 - Federal Records Centres Strategy
 - Clear Paper Mountain Pilots
 - Records Retention Periods for Common Administrative Functions
 - Review and Validation of Records Disposition Authorities
 - Electronic Records Archival Infrastructure Strategy



Paper Mountain Pilots



Objective:

- Through multi-disciplinary teams, improve the management of the backlog in government records and facilitate the transition to the electronic record by:
 - Locating, organizing and preserving the paper records of ongoing utility to the Government of Canada; and
 - Disposing of paper records no longer having value

Pilots:

- 2002-03 Pilots with Health Canada, NRCan and Department of Justice

Deliverables (2002-03):

- Clear some records (guidance on disposition and retention)
- Develop rules and protocols to clear records and avoid similar situations in the future
- Share approach, methodology and lessons learned with other departments
- Work on sizing the overall backlog in government records and a plan to address it



The team at Health Canada...



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Moving the Paper Mountain

A Case Study

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