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The End of the Beginning: The SPIRT¹ Recordkeeping Metadata Project

By Glenda Acland, Kate Cumming and Associate Professor Sue McKemmish

Glenda Acland has been an archivist/ recordkeeping professional for more than twenty-five years. In that time she has been employed at institutions such as Australian Archives and the University of Queensland. Since 1998 she has worked as a freelance recordkeeping consultant, educator and researcher, mainly for Monash University, where she has been Research Consultant for the SPIRT Recordkeeping Metadata Research Project. Her professional interests include articulation of records continuum thinking, professional identity, electronic recordkeeping and enterprise recordkeeping regimes. Glenda is a well known speaker at Australian and International conferences.

Kate Cumming began work with the National Archives of Australia (NAA) in 1995 after completing an Honours degree in Australian history at the University of Sydney. During her time with the NAA she worked in many operational areas in both the Canberra and Sydney offices. In June 1988 Kate became the Australian Postgraduate Award holder for the SPIRT Recordkeeping Metadata Research Project. She is currently completing her research master's thesis within the framework of this project within the framework of this project.. Since May 1999, Kate has been a member of the Electronic Recordkeeping Project team at State Records in NSW.

Sue McKemmish is an Associate Professor in the School of Information Management and Systems (SIMS) at Monash University in Melbourne, Australia. With her Monash colleagues she has developed innovative, integrated, multi-disciplinary approaches to records management, archival and information management education at postgraduate and undergraduate levels within the framework provided by records continuum and information continuum theory. She was Principal Chief Investigator for the 1998-99 SPIRT Recordkeeping Metadata Research Project, is Director of the Records Continuum Research Group within SIMS, and a research associate of the new Enterprise Distributed Systems Technology National Collaborative Research Centre. Sue is the immediate past editor of "Archives and Manuscripts" and a Laureate of the Australian Society of Archivists.

This paper reports on the eighteen month SPIRT Research Project which is currently being completed with its results to be widely published. From the Project's conceptual frame of reference of the Records Continuum Model and the Australian Series System, the presentation explores the conceptual models developed as a framework for standardising and defining Recordkeeping Metadata. The elements of the SPIRT Recordkeeping Metadata Schema (RKMS) are introduced followed by a discussion of the purposes of recordkeeping metadata. The Schema's relationship with other recordkeeping metadata schemata is examined and, as an example, an analysis of a mapping of the RKMS with the Victorian Electronic Records Strategy (VERS) is presented.

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Introduction

In the beginning there was metadata: and metadata has existed in record systems throughout time. But it is only now that the recordkeeping community has begun the process of the codification of recordkeeping metadata so it can be fully understood and employed both within and beyond our own profession. Within the context of various metadata related initiatives in Australia and elsewhere, the SPIRT Recordkeeping Metadata Research Project was envisaged to build a framework in which other sector specific metadata standards could be developed for targeted application.

The eighteen month collaborative SPIRT Research Project, **Recordkeeping Metadata Standards for Managing and Accessing Information Resources in Networked Environments Over Time for Government, Commerce, Social and Cultural Purposes** is currently being completed with its results to be widely published both in Australia and internationally. Last year at the 1998 ASA Conference in Fremantle, the paper "Metadata Mania: Use of Metadata for Electronic Recordkeeping and Online Resource Discovery,"² jointly delivered by Prof Sue McKemmish and Adrian Cunningham, provided a demystification of metadata for recordkeepers. This paper included, inter alia, details of the origins and early research of the SPIRT Project. It is not proposed to recover this territory again today. In Fremantle last year the opportunity was also taken to launch the Project website³, which at this Brisbane conference we again welcome you to visit.

Presentation Outline

Our presentation today will explore the conceptual models developed by the SPIRT Research Team as a framework for standardising and defining Recordkeeping Metadata. It will introduce the elements of the SPIRT Recordkeeping Metadata Schema (RKMS) [4](#) and briefly discuss the Schema's relationship with other pertinent metadata schemata. One significant component of the research activity undertaken during the last year has been an in-depth analysis of existing records and archives metadata sets and standards. This was accompanied by the conceptual mapping of their elements in various combinations, followed, as the project advanced, by mapping the various iterations of the RKMS against these related sets. As an example of this activity, an analysis of a mapping of the RKMS with the Victorian Electronic Records Strategy (VERS) will be briefly presented.

Conceptual Frame of Reference

The Recordkeeping Metadata Project's conceptual frame of reference is the Records Continuum Model and the Australian Series System. A key element in the approach being taken in the SPIRT Project is found in the way *description* is conceptualised in continuum thinking.

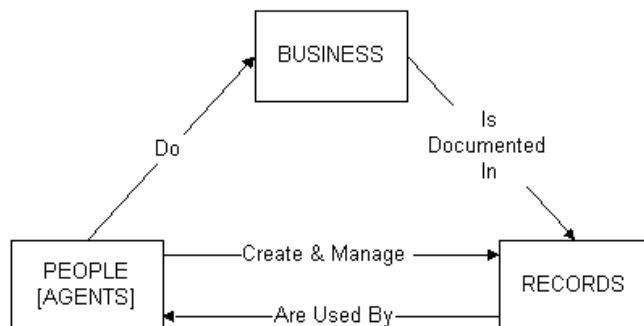
Description in the continuum encompasses recordkeeping processes that capture and inextricably link authoritative metadata to documents created in the context of social and business activity from the time of their creation and throughout their life span. Description-related processes begin at or before records creation and continue throughout the lifespan of the records. Their primary aim is to provide the intellectual controls that enable reliable, authentic, meaningful and accessible records to be carried forward through time within and beyond organisational boundaries for as long as they are needed for the multiple purposes they serve.

Recordkeeping metadata is defined broadly to include all standardised information that identifies, authenticates, describes, manages and makes accessible documents created in the context of social and business activity. Recordkeeping metadata so defined has traditionally been captured and managed in both recordkeeping systems and archival control systems. [5](#)

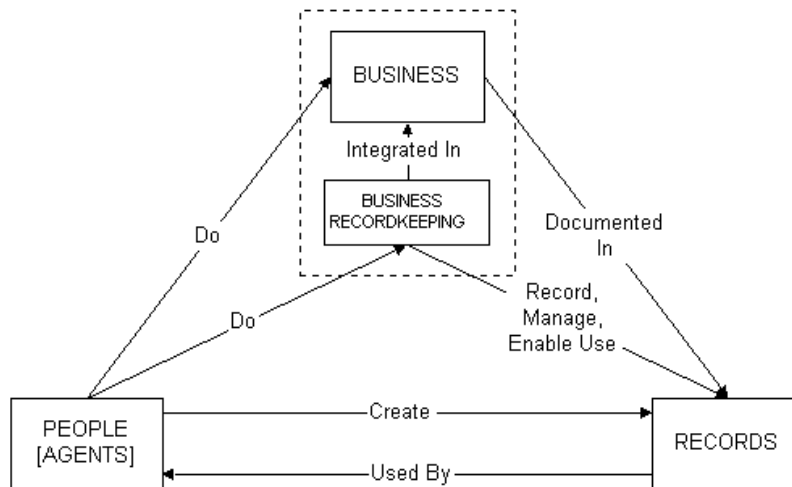
Framework for Standardising and Defining Recordkeeping Metadata

The Research Team has developed three high level models, Figures 1, 2 and 3, to provide the framework for standardising and defining recordkeeping metadata. [6](#)

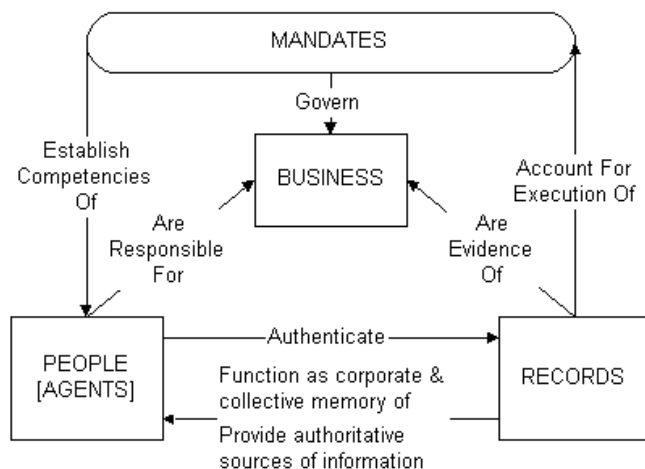
Figure 1: The Business



People do business with each other. In the course of doing business, they create and manage records. The records created in the course of doing business capture the business done in documentary form. Business is here defined in the very broadest sense to encompass social and organisational activity of all kinds.

Figure 2: Recordkeeping

Optimally recordkeeping forms an integral part of any business activity.

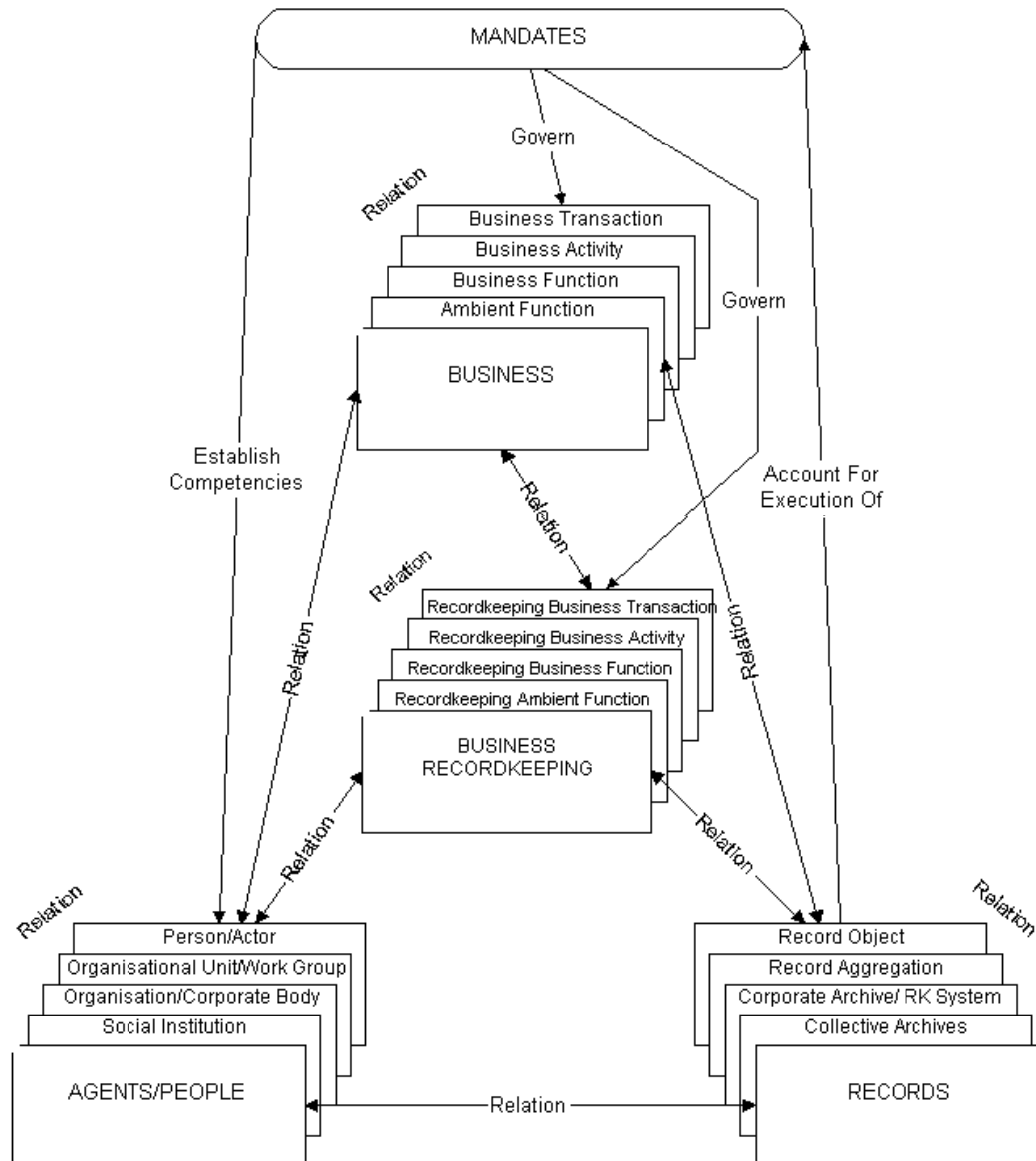
Figure 3: The Business Context

People do business in social and organisational contexts that are governed by external mandates (e.g. social mores, laws, regulations, standards and best practice codes) and internal mandates (e.g. policies, administrative instructions, delegations, authorities). Mandates establish who is responsible for what, and govern social and organisational activity, including the creation of full and accurate records. Authentic records of social and organisational activity provide evidence of that activity and function as corporate and collective memory. They also provide authoritative sources of value added information. And they account for the execution of the mandate – internally and externally, currently and over time.

Recordkeeping Metadata

With reference to these high level conceptual models, the RKMS is presented diagrammatically below (see Figure 4) as essentially concerned with three classes of entities. These are **Business** entities, **People** entities and **Records** entities, as well as with the external and internal **mandates** which are associated with Business, People and Records entities and govern the relationships between them. Furthermore, **Business-Recordkeeping** entities form a sub-class of the **Business** entity class.

Figure 4: Coverage of Recordkeeping Metadata



- The **Business entity class** encompasses business transactions, the business activities of which they are a part, the business functions the activities carry out, and the broader societal purposes they fulfil.
 - The **Business-Recordkeeping entity sub-class** encompasses recordkeeping business transactions, the recordkeeping business activities of which they are a part, the recordkeeping business functions they carry out, and the broader ambient functions or societal purposes they fulfil.
- The **Agents [People] entity class** includes natural and legal persons, e.g. individuals, work groups, corporate bodies, and social institutions.
- The **Records entity class** covers records at any level of disaggregation or aggregation.

All these entities and their complex inter-relationships require unique identifiers and standardised descriptive metadata.

The Recordkeeping Metadata Elements – Version 3.02

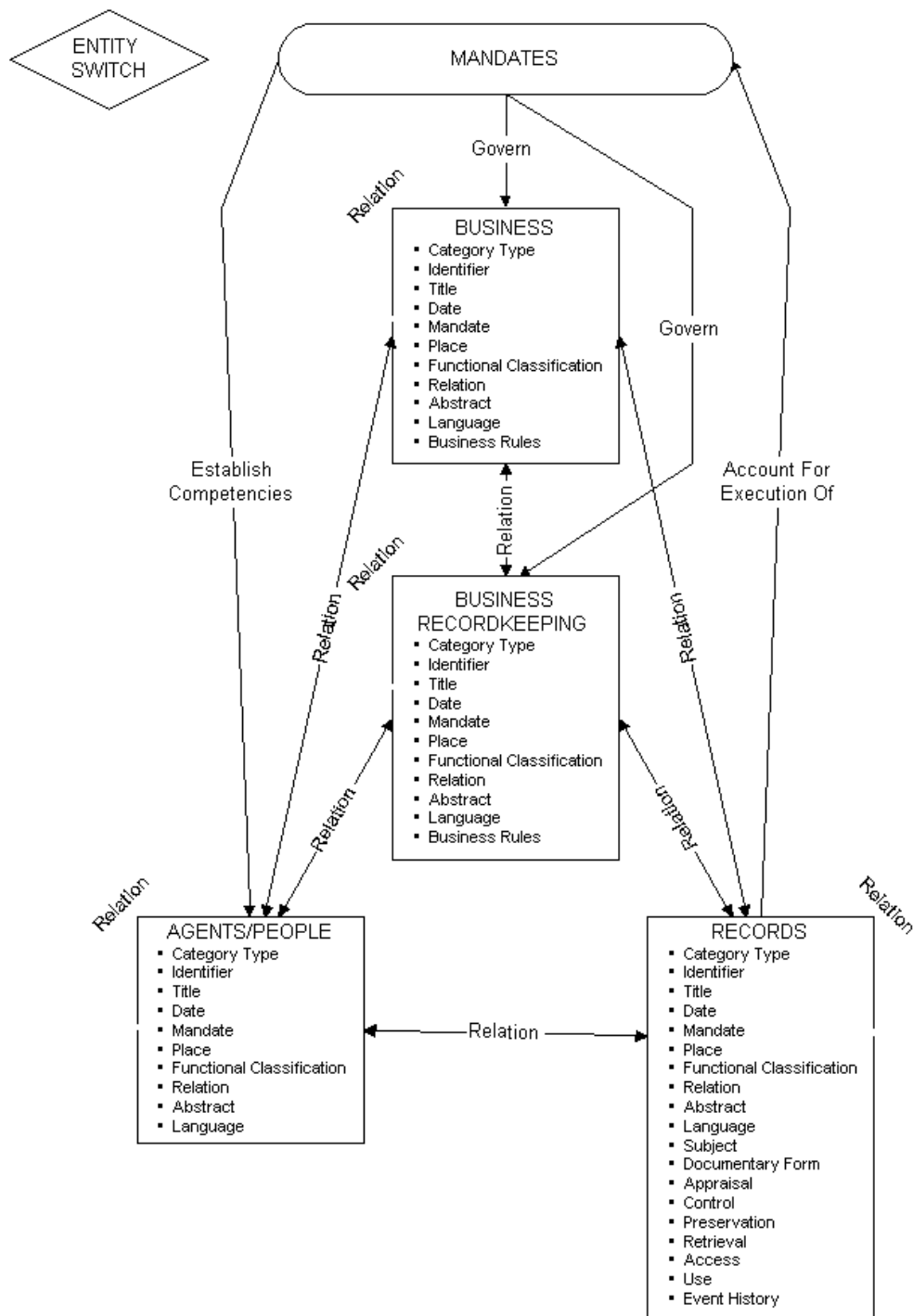
A set of highly structured metadata elements has been defined, although only the high level elements and not their qualifiers are represented in Figure 5. The set inherits part of the Australian Government Locator Service set and extends it to address the sector specific needs of recordkeeping. [Z](#)

The elements defined in the Recordkeeping Metadata Schema identify and describe significant features of the business contexts in which records are created, managed and used. They identify and describe the people or agents involved, and the records themselves. They also link business contexts to the people or agents doing the

business and the records that document it, and they reference the mandates that authorise and control business activity. They enable description and management of recordkeeping business functions, activities and transactions that are concerned with recording, managing and enabling the use of records, e.g. transactions and activities relating to the recordkeeping functions of appraisal, control, preservation, retrieval, access and use of records. They also provide for the tracking and documenting of the recordkeeping business itself.

The Recordkeeping Metadata Schema includes elements which are common to all entities, and those which are unique to a particular class of entities.

Figure 5: Recordkeeping Metadata Elements



Scope of the Recordkeeping Metadata Schema

The Recordkeeping Metadata Schema elements are presented as four sub-sets, one for each of the entities, and one for the Recordkeeping Business sub-class:

RKM Elements: **Business**

RKM Elements: **Business - Recordkeeping**

RKM Elements: Agents

RKM Elements: Records

Table 1: Recordkeeping Metadata Elements Version 3.02

Entity Switch	
BUSINESS	
BUSINESS – RECORDKEEPING	
AGENTS	
RECORDS	
BUSINESS	
CATEGORY TYPE	BUSINESS RULES
IDENTIFIER	
TITLE	
DATE	
MANDATE	
PLACE	
FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION	
RELATION	
ABSTRACT	
LANGUAGE	
BUSINESS – RECORDKEEPING	
CATEGORY TYPE	BUSINESS RULES
IDENTIFIER	
TITLE	
DATE	
MANDATE	
PLACE	
FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION	
RELATION	
ABSTRACT	
LANGUAGE	
AGENTS	
CATEGORY TYPE	
IDENTIFIER	
TITLE	
DATE	
MANDATE	
PLACE	
FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION	
RELATION	
ABSTRACT	
LANGUAGE	
RECORDS	

CATEGORY TYPE	SUBJECT
IDENTIFIER	DOCUMENTARY FORM
TITLE	APPRAISAL
DATE	CONTROL
MANDATE	PRESERVATION
PLACE	RETRIEVAL
FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION	ACCESS
RELATION	USE
ABSTRACT	EVENT HISTORY
LANGUAGE	

Scalability: the Entity Switch and Category Type Element

A significant feature of this high level schema is that it is scalable, i.e. when it is implemented it can apply to records at any level of aggregation, to business and recordkeeping business activities ranging from an individual transaction to the societal purpose it ultimately serves, and to agents acting at any level in organisational and social hierarchies. An Entity "switch" has therefore been included in the set. In any particular instance the Entity Switch indicates whether a **Business, Recordkeeping Business, Agent** or **Records** entity is being described.

Within each entity, the *CATEGORY TYPE* element then functions as a handshake, introducing the specific type of entity being identified and described:

- Hello, I'm a description of a class of business activity.
- Hello, I'm metadata about a recordkeeping business function.
- Hello, I identify and describe an organisation.
- Hello, I'm a record of a transaction.
- Hello, I'm a description of a series of records.

Qualifiers in the RKMS

As mentioned above, the RKMS is made up of a set of highly structured metadata elements and qualifiers. The qualifiers allow for a more detailed recordkeeping description, providing the facility to refine the semantics of the RKMS and to add precision to the values of the metadata elements. The RKMS has adopted the DC/AGLS application of three types of qualifiers: [8](#)

- *Element Qualifiers* – refine the semantics of the element by further specifying the relationship of the element value to the recordkeeping entity;
- *Value Components* – structure an element by splitting it into labelled components;
- *Value Qualifiers* – 'Schemes' which provide typologies for values; controlled vocabularies for values; classifications and structures for values; rules for constructing values; rules for encoding of values; and the authorities for all of these.

The metadata community is only beginning to explore the complexity of the relationships between schemata which govern and control metadata elements and values. An exciting area for further research relates to the development of metadata regimes to identify and describe these schemata and their interrelationships. [9](#)

The Creation of the Recordkeeping Metadata SchemaSchema

The Project's Vision was to:

develop a standardised set of interoperable recordkeeping metadata elements, classified according to purpose, and mapped against related generic and sector-specific metadata sets. [10](#)

The Project envisaged the creation of set of metadata elements that are derived from:

- a foundation of records continuum concepts;
- an understanding of the essential purposes of recordkeeping metadata; and
- an assessment of current best practice in metadata specifications.

Research activities conducted to meet these objectives included:

- analysing the purposes of recordkeeping metadata and

- conceptual mapping exercises

Recordkeeping Metadata Purposes

A key principle of the Project's methodology was that a recordkeeping metadata structure could only be successfully constructed once the purposes it needed to fulfil had been adequately articulated and understood. [11](#) As a result a significant concern of the research team was to specify the purposes of recordkeeping metadata across the spectrum of recordkeeping activities. Purposes in this analysis were derived from relevant literature, from recordkeeping best practice, [12](#) from other metadata specifications and were influenced by the Records Continuum framework.

Key purposes of recordkeeping metadata identified by the research team in the early phases of research were:

- unique identification
- persistence of context
- persistence of record structure
- administration of terms and conditions of access and disposal
- track and document use history, including recordkeeping and archiving processes
- restrict unauthorised use
- enable discovery, retrieval and delivery for authorised users
- authentication of records

The RKMS has been formulated to meet each of these key recordkeeping objectives.

The following examples demonstrate how the RKMS meets two of these key recordkeeping purposes – the persistence of context and the administration of access and disposal terms and conditions. It should be noted that the examples below can relate to records at any level of aggregation. The particular CATEGORY TYPE for each example from the RKMS has therefore not been included.

Table 2: Recordkeeping Metadata Elements, Version 3.02
Purpose - persistence of context
RKMS ELEMENTS
Business: TITLE
Agent: TITLE
Records: TITLE
Business: DATE
Agent: DATE
Records: DATE
Business: MANDATE
Agent: MANDATE
Records: MANDATE
Business: PLACE
Agent: PLACE
Records: PLACE
Business: FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION
Agent: FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION
Records: FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION
Business: RELATION
Agent:
Records:

Agent: RELATION
Records: RELATION
Business: BUSINESS RULES
Records: APPRAISAL
Records: CONTROL
Records: PRESERVATION
Records: ACCESS
Records: USE

Recordkeeping metadata specifications must enable the creation and maintenance of rich, complex and time-based contexts if recordkeeping purposes are to be achieved and if meaning, accessibility and accountability are to be maintained for as long as a record is required. Such information also has to be appropriate to meet the needs of the various uses of records through time. Throughout the continuum, records need to operate as reliable, authentic, meaningful and accessible evidence of the activities they document. The documentation of relationships and contextual metadata is necessary from the moment of record creation and needs to become richer and more layered, as the record moves beyond its context of creation into different temporal or spatial domains. The RKMS enables the documentation and preservation of the many and varied relationships that exist between records and importantly between the **Records** and the other entities in the RKMS – that is, **Business**, **Agents** and **Recordkeeping Business**.

Table 3: Recordkeeping Metadata Elements, Version 3.02
Purpose – administration of terms and conditions of access and disposal

RKMS Elements

Recordkeeping Business:

CATEGORY TYPE

IDENTIFIER

TITLE

DATE

MANDATE

PLACE

FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

RELATION: (element qualifier) *Recordkeeping Business-Record*

RELATION: (element qualifier) *Recordkeeping Business-Agent*

RELATION: (element qualifier) *Recordkeeping Business-Business*

RELATION: (element qualifier) *Recordkeeping Business-Recordkeeping Business*

ABSTRACT

LANGUAGE

BUSINESS RULES

Records:

APPRAISAL

ACCESS

An additional purpose of recordkeeping metadata in the RKMS is to enable recordkeeping business actions such as the resolution of user permissions or the initiation of disposal actions to be undertaken and, importantly, to be documented by a recordkeeping system. The metadata that initiates action can also be used to document this action. It goes on to provide vital contextual and accountability information about the agents and recordkeeping business processes that have impacted on the viability of a record. In the table above metadata that fulfils the purpose of administering terms and conditions of access and disposal demonstrates how metadata can provide this variety of information.

Conceptual Mapping

In addition to the specification of purpose, the process of mapping facilitated both the construction and validation of the RKMS.

Mapping was adopted by the SPIRT project team as a means of comparing metadata sets, element by element.

The mapping employed in the project is best described as 'conceptual mapping'. The intent of this exercise is to map the concepts and purposes inherent in metadata specifications. It was designed as a means to 'identify matching elements, redundancies and gaps' and as a way to 'specify additional metadata' so that the RKMS could encompass the full range of recordkeeping metadata. [13](#). Mapping also enables equivalences and correspondences between sets to be made and expressed in the standardised metadata framework provided by the SPIRT Schema. The capacity for semantic interoperability of specific implementations of metadata when mapped against a standardised set is thus one of the resulting benefits for the recordkeeping community.

Nine metadata specifications of significance to the recordkeeping community were selected for analysis in this stage of the SPIRT Project research. The sets analysed were:

- Commonwealth Record Series (CRS) System set [14](#);
- Encoded Archival Description (EAD) set [15](#);
- General International Standard Archival Description, ISAD(G)
- International Standard Archival Authority Record for Corporate Bodies, Persons and Families, ISAAR(CPF) [16](#)
- Recordkeeping Metadata Standard for Commonwealth Agencies (NAARKS) [17](#);
- University of Pittsburgh's Business Acceptable Communications (BAC) Model [18](#);
- Victorian Electronic Records Strategy (VERS) metadata specification [19](#);
- University of British Columbia's (UBC) project *The Preservation of the Integrity of Electronic Records* [20](#)
- United States Department of Defense's Standard for Electronic Records Management Software Applications, 5015.2 [21](#)

These specifications were chosen and mapped against the RKMS as they are generally representative of recordkeeping initiatives in the area of metadata research and are regarded as significant developments within the recordkeeping community.

The sets listed above cover the continuum of recordkeeping activity and therefore were useful models for ensuring the RKMS was able to encompass all that is required of a metadata specification designed to cover the full spectrum of recordkeeping activity. For example:

- EAD and ISAD(G)/ISAAR represent the perspective of traditional archival description. The purpose of these standards is to facilitate a researcher's access to records in archival custody. They are designed to retrospectively describe records in archival custody.
- The BAC and NAA sets are designed to specify metadata that makes records meaningful, useful and renderable in the context of the environment in which they were created. They do not however stand alone in more global contexts. These sets, through their inclusion of management, identification, description and resource discovery metadata are best suited to the management of records in their immediate business context.
- VERS is closely related to the BAC model and specifies metadata about the record and its context that is most relevant to the immediate business context. VERS differs from the BAC model however in that it treats the record as an artefact rather than as a dynamic, self-managing record object.
- The CRS specification provides much richer contextual and relationship metadata than the other sets because it is structured around the use of both record and agent entities.

In addition to the above nine sets, the Australian Government Locator Service (AGLS) metadata specification was also analysed and mapped against the RKMS. AGLS is different from the sets described above in that it is not a recordkeeping metadata specification and its primary purpose is resource discovery. [22](#) AGLS inherits and extends the Dublin Core metadata framework. It is designed to enable government agencies to make their web based resources more accessible, but also has a role to play in facilitating the conduct of electronic business. The degree of acceptance of AGLS in Australia and its ability to facilitate resource discovery in the electronic environment made it an obvious and useful comparison to the RKMS.

Given its scope, which is the result of all this purpose and mapping based research, the SPIRT set can now provide a framework in which other sets can be mapped, their gaps and redundancies identified, their purposes and level of implementation clearly articulated. From being a product of iterative mapping exercises, the set can now become a tool for future mapping analyses and metadata set design.

The RKMS as a Framework Standard – RKMS and VERS

The following is intended to provide a brief example of the RKMS as a framework standard within which other metadata sets can be mapped and understood. As a framework standard, the RKMS encompasses the continuum of recordkeeping activity. It should therefore be able to encompass or represent within it,

recordkeeping metadata specifications created to document activities in any of the dimensions of the continuum. As a means of demonstrating this, the following examples of the RKMS:VERS Crosswalk demonstrate how VERS can nest within the RKMS structure. [23](#)

As indicated above, the VERS metadata set is a scaled down implementation version of the BAC set that is based on consideration of the metadata requirements in a specific sector – the immediate business context of the Victorian public sector. With reference to the RKMS as represented in Figure 4, the VERS set is essentially concerned with the **Records** entity at the level of the *Record Object* and *Record Aggregation*. It associates with its Records entities a minimalist set of contextual metadata about records transactions (operating at the *Business Transaction* level in the RKMS framework) and agencies (operating at the *Person/Actor* and *Organisation/Corporate Body* levels in the RKMS framework).

Although the VERS Report does not explicitly address the relationship between the metadata it specifies and the metadata present in the Public Records Office of Victoria's series system-based archival control system, it is in this latter system that the broader contextual and relationship metadata specified in the RKMS is found. Like the RKMS, the PROV's system specifies metadata associated with Records, Agent and Business entities and their interrelationships. It should be noted that together the VERS metadata and PROV archival system metadata map fairly closely to the RKMS, although neither substantially addresses the metadata that the RKMS associates with **Recordkeeping Business** entities.

Mapping of VERS and RKMS

The following discussion and example mapping demonstrates the relationship between VERS and RKMS. When representing VERS within the RKMS framework, the *Entity Switch* in Figure 5 is set to **Records** and the CATEGORY TYPE element is set to *record object* and *record aggregation*. When discussed within these parameters, VERS elements map either completely or partially against the following elements in the RKMS **Records** entity set:

- CATEGORY TYPE
- IDENTIFIER
- TITLE
- DATE (partial match only)
- MANDATE
- FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION (partial match only)
- RELATION (partial match only)
- ABSTRACT
- SUBJECT
- DOCUMENTARY FORM (partial match only)
- APPRAISAL (partial match only)
- PRESERVATION
- RETRIEVAL
- ACCESS (partial match only)
- USE (partial match only)
- EVENT HISTORY (partial match only)

The RKMS: PLACE and LANGUAGE elements are not represented in the VERS set. This is because of the implementation environment envisaged for VERS – a specific organisational setting where place and language attributes are assumed to be fairly static or commonly understood. The RKMS: CONTROL element also does not map against the VERS set.

As an example of the mapping process, the following table demonstrates how selected VERS elements sit within the RKMS framework.

Table 4: Mapping of selected VERS Records Elements with RKMS	
VERS Element	RKMS Element
Record Key	Records: Record Object: IDENTIFIER
Transaction Type	Records: Record Object: FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

The above demonstrates how the VERS metadata can sit within the RKMS **Records** entity.

As previously discussed, VERS does not recognise **Agents, Business or Recordkeeping Business** as independent entities. It classes individuals and the transactions they are involved with as properties of records. The VERS specification contains four Business related elements, which can be mapped against the RKMS **Business** Entity elements at the *Business Transaction* level of that entity:

Table 5: Mapping of VERS Business Elements with RKMS	
VERS element	RKMS Business entity element
Transaction identifier	Business: Business Transaction: IDENTIFIER
Transaction reference	Business: Business Transaction: IDENTIFIER
Business procedure reference	Business: Business Transaction: BUSINESS RULES
Action required	Business: Business Transaction: RELATION (element qualifier) Business-Business

VERS contains five elements that are used to represent the **Agent** entity at the *Person/Actor* level or at the *Organisation/Corporate Body* level:

Table 6: Mapping of VERS Agent Elements with RKMS	
VERS Element	RKMS Agent Entity Element
Originator	Agent: Person/Actor: TITLE
Recipient	Agent: Person/Actor: TITLE
Originating organisation	Agent: Organisation/Corporate Body: TITLE
Signature [Digital signature]	Agent: Person/Actor: IDENTIFIER
Signer [Short textual description of person or system creating the signature]	Agent: Person/Actor: ABSTRACT

These mapping exercises demonstrate the use of the RKMS as a framework standard and show how a sector-specific set can be nested within it.

Conclusion

The final meeting of the SPIRT Project Steering Committee was held earlier this week²⁴. The major work is in the process of being wound up although there will be some continuing activities relating to reporting, presentation of findings and an extensive schedule of publishing. But as the Research Team quickly realised this is not the beginning of the end but rather the end of the beginning.

So where to from here?

- A number of research activities developing on from the SPIRT work have been identified for resourcing through Monash University, including a proposal for a three year SPIRT 2 Application to commence, if successful, in 2000.
- An exciting outcome of SPIRT 1 has been the development of an ongoing research association between the Records Continuum Research Group at Monash University and DSTC, the Distributed Systems Technology Centre, a well established government funded collaborative Research Centre based here in this state, at The University of Queensland. DSTC has now received significant funding for a further 7 year period as the Enterprise Distributed Systems Technology National Collaborative Research Centre and taken on a number of new partners including Monash University.
- Within the archival community the ACA/ASA Committee on Descriptive Standards has endorsed the SPIRT Recordkeeping Metadata as a framework for the Committee's future work on the development of domain specific recordkeeping metadata and archival descriptive standards. The Chair of this Committee has

recently approached Standards Australia with a proposal to develop the SPIRT Recordkeeping Metadata Schema into a Framework Australian Standard for Recordkeeping Metadata

- The Research Team is currently considering in conjunction with the Project's Industry partners, a professional development program to deliver the results of SPIRT to the wider recordkeeping community.
- The Research Team is also exploring with an international partner an implementation Case Study which would test the applicability of the RKMS in a different national context.

Watch this space!

1 The acronym SPIRT derives from the name of the Research Grant which funded the Project, Strategic Partnership with Industry – Research & Training (SPIRT) Support Grant, which provides for joint funding by the Australian Research Council and the Industry partners.

2 Sue McKemish, Adrian Cunningham and Dagmar Parer, 'Metadata Mania: Use of Metadata for Electronic Recordkeeping and Online Resource Discovery' in EM>Place, Interface and Cyberspace: Archives at the Edge, Proceedings of the 1998 Conference of the Australian Society of Archivists, Fremantle 6-8 August 1998. Canberra. Australian Society of Archivists. 1999, pp129-144.

3 <http://www.sims.monash.edu.au/rcrg/research/spirt/index.html>

4 Schema is used to mean the semantic and structural definition of the metadata used to describe recordkeeping entities. A schema (plural schemata) describes the names of metadata elements, how they are structured, their meaning etc. The metadata community also refers to a metadata schema as a metadata set or specification.

5 Sue McKemish and Dagmar Parer. 'Towards Frameworks for Standardising Recordkeeping Metadata.' Archives and Manuscripts, vol 26 no1 1998, pp24-45.

6 The Project Team, in developing a simple but high level framework model for recordkeeping metadata given as Figure 1, used as an example of effective visual representation the INDECS Community's "Model for Commerce". See David Bearman, Eric Miller, Godfrey Rust, Jennifer Trant and Stuart Weibel, 'A Common Model to Support Interoperable Metadata: Progress report on reconciling metadata requirements from the Dublin Core and INDECS/DOI Communities.' *D-Lib*, Vol.5 No.1, January 1999. Available at:

<http://www.dlib.org/dlib/january99/bearman/01bearman.html>

7 For details of the Australian Government Locator Service see <http://www.naa.gov.au/govserv/agls>

8 Note that the extensive set of qualifiers are not reflected in Figure 5. For detailed information about the qualifiers specified in the RKMS, visit the project web site: <http://www.sims.monash.edu.au/rcrg> 'The Australian Government Locator Service (AGLS) Manual for Users, Version 1.1: 1999-06-09,' Office of Government Online, National Archives of Australia provides details of the application of these types of qualifiers.

9 Simon Cox has written an excellent discussion paper for the DC community on issues relating to structure, authority and qualification in DC.

10 From the SPIRT Project homepage, located at <http://www.sims.monash.edu.au/rcrg/research/spirt> and accessed on 14 July 1999.

11 *ibid*

12 For example, an analysis of the metadata requirements in AS 4390.1-1996, Australian Standard - Records Management, the metadata requirements of the Pittsburgh Functional Requirements for Evidence in Recordkeeping (FRERK) and the University of British Columbia project *The Preservation of the Integrity of Electronic Records* Electronic Records Templates.

13 From the Methodology section of the SPIRT project site, located at <http://www.sims.monash.edu.au/rcrg/research/spirt> and accessed on 14 July 1999.

14 See the National Archives of Australia website at: <http://www.naa.gov.au/>

15 EAD elements are listed at

16 Information about both of the above standards is available via http://data1.archives.ca/ica/cgi-bin/ica?04_e

17 The Standard can be access via

18 The BAC model is described at

19 Information on the VERS project was drawn from Appendix 4, 'Technical Detail', of the *Victorian Electronic Records Strategy Final Report*, Public Record Office Victoria, 1998.

20 This project and its outcomes are described at

21 The Standard can be accessed via

22 The AGLS Manual for Users can be accessed via <http://www.naa.gov.au/govserv/agls>

23 The VERS elements used in this exercise were taken from the *Final Report* of the VERS project (op cit), and do not necessarily represent the metadata specification that is scheduled to be issued by the PROV in October 1999. 24 The final meeting of the SPIRT Project Steering Committee was held in Brisbane on Wednesday 28 July 1999.

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