ANNUAL REPORT of the Chief Records Officer



2019



Table of Contents

Minister's Message	4
Mandate of the Chief Records Officer	5
Promoting Effective Information Management	7
Training the Public Service in Information Management	
Information Management Training – IM117	7
Records Management Training Refresh	7
Records Management Advice and Consulting	
Addressing the Challenge of Email	8
Raising Awareness of the Role of CIRMO	8
Videos for the Public Service	9
Presence at Learning Events	9
Promoting the Preservation of Valuable Government Information	10
Documenting Government Decisions	10
Maintaining a Solid Records Management Infrastructure	11
Defining and Identifying Historically Valuable Government Information	12
Setting Standards for Digitization of Records	14
Building and Maintaining Relationships with Key Stakeholders	14
Stakeholder Engagement Plan	14
Royal BC Museum and Archives Relationship	15

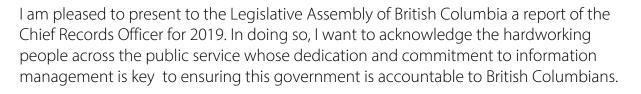
Approving Information Schedules	16
About Information Schedules	
Ensuring Quality in Information Schedules	
Ministry Program Area Review	
Central Agency Review	17
Public Consultation	
Information Management Advisory Committee	
CRO Approval	18
Increasing Number of Records Covered by an Information Schedule	18
Schedules Approved in 2019	18
Managing the Digital Archives	20
About Digital Archives	20
Digital Archives Progress to Date	20
Directive on Archiving Government Information	21
Examining, Evaluating and Reporting on the Management	
of Government Information	22
Facilitating Ministry Self-Assessments	22
Looking Forward	23
A Message from the Chief Records Officer	23

99 Minister's Message

July 7, **2020**

The Honourable Darryl Plecas Speaker of the Legislative Assembly Suite 207, Parliament Buildings Victoria, B.C. V8V 1X4

Dear Mr. Speaker,



Sincerely,

Honourable Anne Kang

Minister for Citizens' Services

pc: Ms. Kate Ryan-Lloyd

Clerk and Clerk of Committees

Legislative Assembly of British Columbia

Mandate of the Chief Records Officer

The Chief Records Officer (CRO) is designated by the Minister of Citizens' Services under the *Information Management Act (IMA)*. Current CRO, Kerry Pridmore, was designated by the Minister on April 8, 2019.

Section 3 of the IMA defines the mandate of the CRO:

- » To promote effective information management by government bodies.
- » To promote the preservation of valuable government information for current and future use.
- » To approve information schedules governing the holding, transferring, archiving and disposal of government information.
- >> To manage the digital archives and promote its availability to the public.
- » To examine, evaluate and report on the management of government information by government bodies and to make recommendations considered advisable.

On March 31, 2019, the IMA was amended to include a requirement for the CRO to provide the minister with an annual report on the carrying out of the CRO's mandate. This 2019 report represents the first annual report since this requirement was brought into force.



Promoting Effective Information Management

The CRO plays a major role in educating the public service on their Information Management responsibilities.

Training the Public Service in information management

It is of vital importance that public servants understand their obligation to manage government information appropriately. Under the CRO's direction, the Corporate Information and records Management Office (CIRMO) provides training and education on a variety of information management topics, including: records management, privacy and access.

Information Management Training – IM117

All ministry employees are required to take government's mandatory information management training, IM117. This course provides employees with training on the legislative requirements and best practices related to access to information, records management, information security and privacy. IM 117 is one of three mandatory courses for all public servants (along with Annual Review of Standards of Conduct and Oath of Employment and Diversity & Inclusion Essentials).

This training was first developed in February 2017, and through a successful implementation program, achieved high completion rates, with over 28,000 government employees completing it. During implementation in 2017, Ministers, Deputy Ministers, Parliamentary Secretaries, political staff and many ministry senior executives were

provided IM117 training in person, with additional sessions provided over the last several years to further support positive information management practices.

Over 29,000 government employees have taken the refreshed training, which represents over 90% completion rate.

A refreshed course was delivered in 2019, building on the successes of the initial version of IM117, and retained familiar concepts, while introducing new material — including new content on the requirement to document government decisions, and an expanded information security section.

The updated course includes a wider range of teaching methods to support adult learning, through quizzes, scenario-based learning and other interactive components. This supports a diverse range of learning preferences and aims to make the course engaging and easy to absorb.

Records Management Training Refresh

In 2019, CIRMO embarked on a transformation of the approach to

the content and delivery of records management training to the BC public service. The conventional approach to training delivery was high-touch and in-person. While this approach is effective for participants, it had limited capacity and geographical reach.

In reimaging the training delivery approach, CIRMO had several goals:

- To increase the number of learners who are able to access records management training.
- To provide learning on-demand at a time that is most convenient and useful for the learner.
- » To improve the speed of course updates by employing an agile approach to course development.

As a result of these changes, 2019 saw three new course releases: Records Management Foundations, Email Organization and Records Management Administrative Practices. Enrollments grew 150% with enrollments poised to grow even more substantially in 2020.

Records Management Advice and Consulting

A significant portion of the CIRMO operations is devoted to consulting and advice related to government records management legislation, policy and best practices. In 2019, this client engagement function took many forms, including:

» attending hundreds of one-on-one meetings with program areas to address their specific records management challenges such as: Local Area Network (LAN) reorganization, website and system decommissioning, digitization initiatives, the implementation of information schedules once approved, interpretation of policy, and records management strategic planning; and

» hosting a monthly online Records Management Community of Practice that is open to all government employees.

Addressing the Challenge of Email

In 2019, the CRO published a <u>new, consolidated Email Guide</u>, with advice for public servants on the use of email, sending messages, protecting sensitive information, searching email in response to Freedom of Information requests and managing email records appropriately.

Most public servants use email while conducting government business and email management is one of the most common and confusing challenges in records management. Prior to the publication of a consolidated guide, advice on email use was provided through a variety of channels, including numerous online guides, online and in-person training and through one-on-one advisory services.

Raising Awareness of the Role of CIRMO

In 2019 the CRO launched an initiative to raise awareness across government of the role and services of CIRMO. In 2020 several informational videos will be published on the BC government-wide intranet site to raise awareness

Videos for the Public Service

CIRMO partnered with the Public Service Agency's Audio-Visual Operations (AVO) team to produce a series of videos for a broad BC Public Service audience. Broadcast on the @Work site, the goals of this series were to:

- » raise the profile of CIRMO's corporate leadership and accountabilities around information management;
- » illustrate the value of good information management practices;
- » increase awareness of CIRMO's services and how to access them; and
- » inform all public servants about their responsibilities as information workers.

Presence at Learning Events

CIRMO regularly takes advantage of opportunities to engage with public servants. For example, CIRMO actively maintains a presence at ministry and government-wide events such as Managing in the BC Public Service and the Privacy & Security Conference.

CIRMO hosts information management events for public service staff, including a two-day records management client event in March 2019 that was attended by delegates from all ministries.



Promoting the Preservation of Valuable Government Information

The CRO promotes the preservation of valuable government information for current and future use by providing foundational support to ensure government information is properly managed, protected and made accessible throughout its lifecycle.

The Corporate Information and Records Management Office (CIRMO) reports to the CRO. As trusted advisors, CIRMO enables its partners to benefit from effective and modern information management. CIRMO includes program areas and staff with expertise on records management, privacy and access. CIRMO operations support the CRO in delivering on their mandate.

Documenting Government Decisions

The first step to ensuring valuable government information is preserved is to ensure the right records are created in the first place. On March 31, 2019, British Columbia became the first jurisdiction in Canada to legislate a duty to document. The obligation to create government records supports openness and transparency, preserves corporate memory, helps accurately report decisions, and ensures documentation for future generations.

Implemented under the IMA, the new requirement states that:

The head of a government body is responsible for ensuring that an appropriate system is in place within the government body for creating and maintaining government information that is an adequate record of that government body's decisions.

The requirement also states that the head of a government body must take reasonable steps to ensure that the government body complies with directives, and is guided by guidelines, issued by the CRO.

At the same time that the documenting government decisions requirement was brought into force, the CRO issued both a Directive and Guidelines to help ministries understand and meet their new obligations under the IMA. The <u>CRO Directive on Documenting</u> Government Decisions sets out the components of an appropriate system for creating and maintaining government information, and what constitutes an adequate record. The CRO Guidelines on <u>Documenting Government Decisions</u> expand on the Directive, and provide ministries with examples, resources and tools for implementing the requirement.

In anticipation of the new requirement, CIRMO began working with ministries and public bodies subject to the IMA in the fall of 2018 to help them understand the new requirement, to assess current practices, and then address any gaps in processes. Every ministry and IMA body appointed a senior-level "champion" for the initiative. With the support of CIRMO, each champion worked with the head of the public body to ensure the requirement was communicated and implemented within their organization.

These legislative updates are an important step towards fulfilling government's commitment to meet or exceed the 27 recommendations made by former Information and Privacy Commissioner David Loukidelis. Mr. Loukidelis reviewed BC's approach to implementing a requirement to document government decisions and concluded that:

"when properly implemented, the directive and guidelines will result in a leading-edge framework for the documentation of government decisions that meets or exceeds requirements in other jurisdictions around the world."

Maintaining a Solid Records Management Infrastructure

Another key to promoting the preservation of valuable government information is ensuring public servants have the tools they need to manage records appropriately. The CRO's staff in CIRMO provide key systems and technologies that ministries rely on for recordkeeping.

A team in CIRMO provides support for the Enterprise Document and Records Management System (EDRMS) Content Manager – a system widely used throughout government to manage print and electronic records. CIRMO's support includes: help desk support, managing access, maintaining data integrity and on-boarding new clients to the system.

In late 2018, CIRMO completed a major upgrade to EDRMS Content Manager. 2019 saw the realization of the key benefits of the upgrade: a simplified user interface, full integration with the latest Microsoft Office software, more reliable content search, a foundation for mobile and web interface, and an improved onboarding experience for new users.

In 2019, CIRMO launched a project to retire a legacy records management application called CRMS. Benefits of this project include:

- elimination of duplicate systems for tracking physical records;
- reduction in business and technical support costs;

- » reduction in infrastructure costs;
- » improvement in records management application functionality (for users migrating to EDRMS Content Manager); and
- » assurance of business continuity and on-going access to records.

The CRMS Upgrade and Retirement Project is expected to continue until early 2022.

CIRMO sets standards and maintains contracts for physical records storage on behalf of all ministries. Setting and procuring to <u>defined</u> <u>facility</u> standards helps ensure that governments physical records are safe and secure. Government currently stores more than 1M boxes of physical records, including records that must be maintained for decades, or even permanently. In 2019, CIRMO updated several existing records storage contracts to ensure compliance with the latest privacy and security requirements.

Defining and Identifying Historically Valuable Government Information

Under the IMA, the CRO has the mandate to approve information schedules that govern the "archiving and disposal of government information." In this context, archive means "to transfer information from a government body or court to the digital archives or museum archives of government." For the purpose of the IMA, archival appraisal is the process of deciding which records to transfer to the

government archives at the end of their retention period. For more information on the information schedule approval process, see the following section of this report.

Appraisal is part of a well-managed and effective records management program, and supports the CRO's mandate to preserve valuable government records for current and future use.

The benefits of appraising government records include:

- » records of enduring value as evidence of government actions and decisions are identified and managed appropriately;
- » British Columbia's collective recorded memory and heritage is preserved;
- » records are not maintained (i.e. stored and managed) for longer than necessary, thereby implementing prudent financial management; and
- decisions concerning government records disposal are transparent, decision makers can be held accountable for them, and stakeholders are consulted.

Government records must be appraised by taking a government-wide perspective to promote the preservation of valuable records. A government-wide perspective is particularly important because it avoids duplication and allows for a consideration of the whole context in which records were created and used, thereby ensuring that complementary information is preserved. At the same time

privacy, confidentiality and security are protected from infringement due to the aggregation of information held by different government bodies for different reasons. CIRMO archivists provide an overarching perspective, following archival principles and methods, and adhering to national and international standards and best practices.

To support the CRO, CIRMO establishes principles and criteria for archival appraisal of government information in the Appraisal of Government Information Policy.

Updated in 2019, the Appraisal of Government Information Policy states that the appraisal of government records must:

- » Meet legislative and legal requirements. Appraisal must identify and comply with statutory and other legal obligations for the disposition of government records or their transfer to the government archives.
- Support accountability and transparency. The appraisal process must support openness and transparency and help ensure government is accountable for its actions.
- » Be informed by the knowledge and perspective of stakeholders. The rights and interests of stakeholders must inform the appraisal process. Stakeholders will be identified and consulted during the appraisal and review processes.
- Be mindful of the process of reconciliation and the government's relationship with Indigenous Peoples. Appraisal decisions should contribute to the inclusive and meaningful

- representation of Indigenous Peoples in support of reconciliation efforts and the process of building and maintaining a supportive relationship.
- » Be planned and consistent, taking into consideration government's existing holdings.
- Be based on an understanding of the records and justified. Appraisal decisions must be adequately documented to allow for review. Justification for them should be well informed, take into consideration concerns of relevant staff and experts, and be based on an understanding of the functions and activities documented in the records.
- Ensure that the records transferred to the government archives are those that document government actions and decisions in the most compact, effective and usable way. Though most records are valuable for some purpose, it is essential to identify for long term preservation only those that best represent government activities.
- » Be mindful of resources. It is not desirable, affordable or sustainable to keep all government records. Appraisal decisions must reflect government's capacity to preserve the records in question, in terms of financial and other resources.
- Reflect the diversity of the province. Appraisal decisions should be made with consideration of reflecting the diversity of populations that the government serves.

Articulating these principles in policy supports consistent and transparent decisions by CIRMO archivists, and serves to communicate the basis for choosing recorded information for preservation in the government archives.

Setting Standards for Digitization of Records

As government moves toward increasingly digital processes, ministries are looking to the CRO for guidance on how best to convert physical records into electronic format (aka digitization). In 2019, CIRMO worked on a Digitizing Government Information Standard to provide a common standard for digitizing government information. The development process included consultation with other jurisdictions, review of international standards and extensive internal consultations within government. The CRO expects to approve and publish this standard in 2020.

When approved, the standard will:

- » provide practice and technical requirements for converting non-digital form government information (also known as source records) into digital form to create authentic, defensible digital records;
- » set practice requirements for a defensible digitization process;
- » allow for the disposal of non-digital government information following digitization, where appropriate;

- » set minimum technical digitization requirements for longterm preservation of government information, including records scheduled for archiving in the digital archives; and
- » support related records and information policy and practice.

Building and Maintaining Relationships with Key Stakeholders

The digital age is fundamentally changing how government manages its information. CIRMO's corporate role in information management must support partners' efforts to deal with increasing citizen expectations, exploding volume of information and new digital preservation requirements. We cannot do this work in isolation.

Stakeholder Engagement Plan

CIRMO created a stakeholder engagement plan with the following goals in mind:

- » Maximize collaboration across the Broader Public Service and within CIRMO.
- Establish clear roles and responsibilities across partner organizations.
- » Leverage government communications platforms to build CIRMO brand identity, advertise services and disseminate key messaging across the public service; and
- Survey client and partner spaces to ensure we maintain a user-centric approach to service delivery.

Royal BC Museum and Archives Relationship

In 2019 the Ministry of Citizens' Services and the Royal BC Museum and Archives extended our Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to March 31, 2021. Originally signed in 2015, the MOU recognizes the importance of ensuring physical records of historical value are preserved and made accessible to the citizens of British Columbia. Extending this agreement emphasizes our on-going mutual commitment to this shared goal.



Approving Information Schedules

The IMA grants the CRO the authority to approve information schedules. In doing so, the CRO sets the policy on how records are managed, and how long they are retained.

About Information Schedules

Information schedules govern how records are organized and managed.

Government and broader public sector organizations use information schedules to ensure records are kept for as long as required, identify records of enduring value for preservation and ensure that others are routinely destroyed when they are no longer needed.

Information schedules are based on the types of records they apply to:

- » Administrative Records Classification System (ARCS)
- » Operational Records Classification Systems (ORCS)
- » Special Schedules

Ensuring Quality in Information Schedules

The CRO may approve an information schedule if they are satisfied that the "information schedule provides, with as much specificity as practicable, for the disposal of all information required to be disposed of by law and for the holding of all information required to be held by law."

The CRO has established a rigorous and thorough process for the approval of information schedules. The standard review process provides CRO assurance that retention meets legal requirements and includes five key steps:



Ministry Program Area Review

In creating a new information schedule, or amending an existing one, archivists in CIRMO work closely with the program area to understand the nature of the business and the records that are generated. The first step in the approval process is to ensure the eventual users of the information schedule understand and can apply it. This step also involves a review by legal review to ensure records retentions are in accordance with any legislation that may apply to the program area's records.

Central Agency Review

Under the CRO, CIRMO is the Central Agency responsible for developing information schedules, for creating information schedule standards and for ensuring schedules comply with those standards. For more information, see the section on Defining and identifying historically valuable government information earlier in this report.

Public Consultation

Transparency and accountability are important to this government and we know these values are also important to British Columbians. Whether it is health records, school records, budget documents, advice papers, adoption records, emails or any other information that government creates and maintains, the people of BC have a right to have a say in how this information is managed over time.

All information schedules are posted for at least two weeks on the <u>govTogetherBC website</u>. The public have the opportunity

to be part of an ongoing decision-making process to help guide the management of government records. Any feedback is considered as part of an ongoing review process for information schedules. Comments are assessed in the context of all other information received.

Information Management Advisory Committee

The penultimate stage in the information schedule approval process is review by the Information Management Advisory Committee (IMAC).

IMAC's chief responsibility is to review draft information schedules and provide a consistent, government-wide perspective on the appropriate identification, retention and final disposition of the information described in each schedule.

The Committee is comprised of senior public officials with years of public service experience and expertise concerning one or more of the following areas:

- The fiscal, historical and other values of government information.
- Sovernment's legal obligations and risks with respect to that information.
- Sovernment's risk management and security requirements for information.
- Sovernment's information management and information technology strategies and goals.

The committee is chaired by the Executive Director, Government Records Service and includes members from Comptroller General, Legal Services Branch, Royal British Columbia Museum and Risk Management Branch.

CRO Approval

Once all reviews and amendments are complete, and the CRO is satisfied that the schedule can be approved under their mandate, the CRO gives final approval to the schedule, the program area is notified, and the schedule is published on the Information Schedule website.

Increasing Number of Records Covered by an Information Schedule

Demand for new information schedules has increased significantly since the IMA came into force in 2016. The IMA provides clear direction on the crucial role information schedules play in the management of government information.

The Act states:

Government information to which an information schedule applies must be held, transferred, archived or disposed of in accordance with the information schedule.

If no information schedule applies to government information, the government information must be held until the Chief Records Officer approves an information schedule applying to the government information, or the Chief Records Officer approves the transfer, archiving or disposal of the government information.

In 2019, CIRMO completed an assessment of the current state of information schedule coverage across government. They found that coverage varies widely by ministry (from 6% to 96% of records).

Approximately 50% of government records overall are covered by an approved information schedule.

The CRO is committed to continuing to provide the operational and administrative support to increase the number of records covered by an approved information schedule, with the eventual goal of 100% coverage across all ministries and program areas.

Schedules Approved in 2019

The CRO approved and published the following information schedules in 2019:

- » Barrister and Solicitor Services ORCS
- » Oil and Gas Commission ORCS
- » Defunct Programs Schedule
- » Office of the Premier ORCS
- » Climate Change Strategy ORCS
- » Revenue Services BC ORCS
- » Records of the British Columbia Commission of Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Special Schedule
- » Prosecution Services ORCS
- » Property Taxation ORCS

The CRO anticipates increasing the number of schedules approved in 2020.



Managing the Digital Archives

The IMA requires the establishment of a digital archives to preserve and make available government's digital records of permanent value and assigns responsibly for managing, securing and preserving the digital archives to the CRO. Progress has been achieved in planning the implementation of the digital archives, which — once created — will make British Columbia a leading jurisdiction in preserving and providing access to its digital heritage.

About Digital Archives

The digital archives is a key component of the transition to digital provision of services to citizens, thereby increasing the accessibility and efficiency of government programs. A digital archives, otherwise known as a "trusted digital repository", will address challenges relating to electronic degradation, obsolescence of hardware and software, and the risk of natural and human-caused disaster. It will ensure that our key documentary heritage is both preserved and made available to the public, in an accessible format, far into the future.

The digital archives will complement and coordinate with the Royal BC Museum's archives, which will continue to hold and make available the permanent physical archival records of the Government of British Columbia. Digital archives holdings will be available to citizens and researchers across BC, and around the world over the Internet.

Digital Archives Progress to Date

CIRMO is committed to establishing a digital archive. Work is underway to meet this commitment, and to implement a solution that meets client needs. Since the IMA came into force, and under the CRO's direction, CIRMO has been developing expertise and gathering information on the requirements for a successful digital archives. CIRMO has consulted with digital archives experts in other leading jurisdictions, including the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Australia, and the United States. Additional consultations have occurred with internal stakeholders and archival repositories in Canada and British Columbia, including the Royal BC Museum.

The CRO and CIRMO continue to raise the need for a digital archives corporately. Key planning documents have been created in support of this project, including functional and technical requirements, an operating model and a preliminary cost estimate. In March 2019 the OCIO Digital Investment Office committed Capital Funding for Digital Archives. Approval of operating costs is in progress.

Planning for a robust, staged procurement process is underway. A Request for Information was issued in 2018 and a Request for Proposals is expected to be issued in 2020 with further stages after all financial approvals are in place. The planned online "opening" of the BC Government digital archives is expected in the next few years, contingent on the timing of operating funding approval.

It is estimated that digital collections will become available through the archives approximately one year after the digital archives program is established. This is also contingent on the timing of operating funding approval.

Directive on Archiving Government Information

Section 13 (1) of the IMA states that "Government information in nondigital form must be digitized before it is archived."

Presently, information that is scheduled for full or selective retention that is in physical form is transferred to the Royal BC Museum and Archives. Until a digital archives is established, there is no corresponding custodian for archival records in digital form.

On October 1, 2019 the CRO issued a directive under section 6 of the IMA (Directive CRO 02-2019).

This directive provides clarity for ministries and bodies subject to the IMA on how to manage their records of permanent historical value, helping to ensure that these important records are preserved and safe-guarded.

For Government Information in Digital Form:

(1) Government information in digital form that is scheduled to be archived under an information schedule must be held by government bodies until further direction is issued by the Chief Records Officer on the timing of its transfer to the digital archives.

For Government Information in Non-Digital Form: (2) Government information in non-digital form that is scheduled and will be eligible for archiving on or before September 30, 2021, is exempted from the requirement in s.13 (1) of the Act for the information to be digitized before it is archived.

(3) Government information that is exempted in (2), above, is approved for transfer to the museum archives of government, upon notification by the **Corporate Information and Record Management** Office that the information is eligible for archiving.

Examining, Evaluating and Reporting on the Management of Government Information

Facilitating Ministry Self-Assessments

As per Section 3 of the IMA, part of the mandate of the CRO is to examine, evaluate and report on the management of government information by government bodies and to make recommendations considered advisable.

Management of government information happens over four domains, including: Privacy; Records Management; Access to Information; and Information Protection. As there are numerous requirements across these domains, in 2019 CIRMO developed a framework of approximately 60 criteria in the four domains of information management (IM) against which, ministries' IM practices can be assessed.

The framework has been supplemented with supporting tools including a formal methodology, resources for developing and logging interviews, and templates to record and evaluate assessment results.

Additionally, CIRMO further supports facilitation of ministry assessments by delivering education to public servants through consultations, presentations and workshops on how ministries can approach an assessment. These training efforts include workshops at the 21st Annual Privacy and Security Conference, which have been well attended and received.



99

Looking Forward

A Message from the Chief Records Officer

This report has highlighted some of the key activities I — along with the team of professionals within CIRMO — have accomplished as government's Chief Records Officer in 2019. The initiatives we completed this year built on prior years' work on the modernization of information management that commenced in 2016.

2020 will see the continuation of efforts already underway and the launching of new initiatives in support of my mandate as CRO. I anticipate I will have more progress to report on digital archives, a digitization standard, training, policy and awareness of the work we do at the Corporate Records and Information Management Office.

I would like to thank all those across the public service that work to raise awareness and advance our information management approach both corporately and within individual teams, together we can transform and collectively increase our accountability in this important area.

Yours truly,

Kerry Pridmore

Chief Records Officer and ADM Corporate Information and Records Management Office Office of the Chief Information Officer Ministry of Citizens' Services



