



# panorama NEWSLETTER

## SPECIAL ISSUE 2005/4, 2006/1 & 2006/2

From TheEditor's desk

Due to an urgent personal necessity that required many weeks of continuous attention, a string of 14-plus hours seven full days each week, TheEditor was compelled to delay preparation of the newsletter. He extends his apologies and wishes to thank readers for their patience. Hopefully, for all of us, this will not happen again.

One of the outcomes of PARBICA 11 at Nadi was the welcomed appointment of

Karin Brennan as co-editor of PARBICA panorama. Both of us may co-opt others to assist from time to time, and at all times we will welcome news items, short or long, as well as suggestions or comments.

For the newsletter to continue to serve the members of PARBICA and others in the archival endeavour, your own interest and participation is essential. We look forward to hearing from you.

### PARBICA 11 NADI 19-23 September 2000 Conference Delegates



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## President's Message

**Dear Members,**

I extend to you all a very warm greeting from members of your Executive Bureau.

It has been a while since we met in Nadi in August last year.

Your Bureau however has worked assiduously to advance the resolutions of our meeting and find ways to support archiving in the region.

One of the developments that have taken place since the meeting is that a submission has been made to the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat for the recognition of "Recordkeeping" in the "Pacific Plan" as an essential tool for good governance, and that requirements for records are considered in the development of legislations that impact on recordkeeping. In this regards, the Bureau have also written to Pacific Island Leaders soliciting their support.

There are other ongoing activities which include the revamping of our Website, the development of a "Recordkeeping Toolkit", and of course planning for PARBICA 12. We will keep you posted on developments on these initiatives.

It would be remiss of us not acknowledge the goodwill of institutions like the National Archives of Australia and Archives New Zealand that have kept the machinery of PARBICA going.

The Bureau is keen to work with all of you. After all, PARBICA is your organisation. We welcome your participation and want to hear your views. There is no better way to do that than to contribute to PANORAMA.

Vinaka vakalevu.

Setareki Tale  
President.

### **M.B.E. for Jacob Hevelawa**

Congratulations to PARBICA Past-President Jacob Hevelawa, National Archives of Papua New Guinea. On the 17 June 2006 Jacob was appointed by her Majesty the Queen to be an Ordinary member of the Civil Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire for public service.

## News from the PARBICA Bureau, May 2006

*Warm Pacific Greetings! Bula vinaka! Kia ora tatau!*

It is my pleasure to greet you all on behalf of the PARBICA Bureau 2005-2007, and to give a quick update on our activities since PARBICA 11.

### **New and Expanded PARBICA Bureau**

The Bureau elected by the General Conference in Nadi, Fiji on 23 September 2005 comprises: **Setareki Tale** (Fiji), President; **Albert Tui'vanuavou Vaea** (Tonga), Vice-President; **Evelyn Wareham** (New Zealand), Secretary

General; and **Adrian Cunningham** (Australia), Treasurer. Following tradition, as our first action, we reconfirmed **John C. Wright** (Hawaii) as Editor. As a result of the Nadi General Conference's call for an expansion of the PARBICA Bureau to increase its capacity and representation, we have also co-opted **Jacob Hevelawa** (Papua New Guinea) and **Salesia Ikaniwai** (Fiji) to continue to work on the Bureau, and welcomed **Karin Brennan** (Australia) as the new PARBICA Co-Editor.

### **Following PARBICA 11 and Recordkeeping for Good Governance**

The new Bureau has met regularly by teleconference since Nadi, with our disembodied voices joined across the great Pacific Ocean thanks to the gracious technical hospitality of the National Archives of Australia. We met on 20 October and 15 December 2005, and on 16 February and 27 April 2006. We have been busily tying up the various loose ends that result from our biennial conference. We have thanked all our sponsors and reconciled the conference accounts. Ken Scadden assisted us by compiling excellent and useful reports on participants' evaluations of the conference and on the short survey of members' needs and interests. To follow through on our strong statements at PARBICA 11, the PARBICA President has written letters to all heads of government of Pacific Islands Forum countries, communicating the importance of recordkeeping as a pillar of good governance in our region. We have also started to look at how we can make the most of the significant discussions and resolutions at PARBICA 11 on "Recordkeeping for Good Governance". A submission to the Pacific Island Forum on the Pacific Plan has been developed which is published as an open letter in this issue of *Panorama*.

### **Participation at ICA CITRA Conference, November 2005**

PARBICA's President Setareki Tale represented the Pacific at the Conference of the International Round Table on Archives (CITRA), which was held in the United Arab Emirates in November. At this meeting, he participated in meetings of the ICA Executive Board and of the Association of Commonwealth Archivists and Records Managers (ACARM). At the ICA's Annual General Meeting, Seta spoke to leaders of national archives and professional associations from around the world about PARBICA 11 and the significance of its focus on 'Recordkeeping for Good Governance'.

### **Planning Ahead – PARBICA Projects**

The Bureau has also started to consider other PARBICA projects and initiatives to be undertaken in the next two years. With our new Co-Editor on board, we are looking at expanding the content of *Panorama* and introducing an annual supplement on education and training

opportunities. A proposal has also been developed for a *Pacific Archives Reader* to celebrate PARBICA's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2006 – this would bring together historical pieces on the development of archives administration in the Pacific Islands, current reflections by institutions and individuals, and a Pacific archives bibliography. Work has started on the reader led by Karin Brennan and Ewan Maidment. We've also been discussing a project to develop a *Recordkeeping for Good Governance Toolkit* of manuals, guides and brochures that can be used to support promotion of records management, improved systems and training in multiple Pacific Island countries. All going well, sponsorship for the toolkit will be confirmed this year and work can begin in earnest in early 2007. We are continuing to consider possibilities for a Pacific archives education programme, following the intensive discussions on this topic in Fiji.

### **ICA Project Proposals and Meetings on Congress 2008 and Executive Board**

The Bureau has also discussed how to make PARBICA's activities and projects visible in the ICA programme and which PARBICA projects might be nominated as 'ICA projects'. As I write this, Seta is in Tokyo representing our region at the main meeting of the ICA Executive Board for 2006. With ICA's support, I was also able to attend meetings in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on 6-8 February 2006 to assist with preparations for the 2008 International Congress on Archives. Thanks to input from a number of members, I was able to pass on messages about your priorities for the programme and for assistance.

### **Building Collaborative Relationships**

A number of professional associations have been in contact to ask how they provide more support archives and records services in the Pacific region, including the Australian Society of Archivists (ASA), the Archives and Records Association of New Zealand (ARANZ) and the Records Management Association of Australasia (RMAA). The Bureau has also been in regular contact with Abel Caine at the UNESCO Pacific States office in Apia, and I have met with Lawrence Zwimpfer of New Zealand who was recently elected chair of the international intergovernmental

council of UNESCO's Information for All Programme (IFAP).

### **Conference on Archives and Tsunami**

Seta has been invited, as PARBICA President, to participate in an ICA international archives gathering on "Tsunami and Archives: The Unexpected Possibilities", to be held on 17-18 July 2006 in Jakarta, Indonesia.

### **Memberships**

With the PARBICA President's support, the Tonga Traditions Committee has been accepted as a category A (national archives) member of the ICA and also of PARBICA.

The Bureau was delighted to welcome several new members. We have approved membership applications from:

- Oceania Marist Society – Fiji (category C, archives institution)
- Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat – Fiji (category C, archives institution)
- Nicolas Dubuisson – New Caledonia (category D, individual member)
- Helen Patricia Onopko – South Australia (category D, individual member)

- Kataloto Lopati Ponton – Fiji (category D, individual member)
- Karina Taylor – New Zealand (category D, individual member)
- James Lowry – Australia (category D, individual member)

We have also been approached by a number of professional associations interested to become more involved in supporting archives and recordkeeping in the Pacific.

Our Membership Officer / Assistant-Treasurer Mark Semmler has been doing sterling work on updating our database of membership contact details, as well as reconfirming the status of PARBICA members in ICA. As a result, a new edition of the PARBICA membership directory will soon be winging its way to you all.

We are about to start on a drive to increase PARBICA's memberships, offering the *Compendium of Pacific Archives Legislation* as an incentive for institutions and individuals to join the PARBICA family.

Evelyn Wareham  
**PARBICA Secretary General**

### **Goodbye and farewell to you all from Robert Gwamuwe**

Dear all

I am sending you this e-mail to let you all know that I am leaving National Archives after serving the institution for 29 years. It was a hard decision to make, but I have decided to quit for family reasons, both here and back from where I come from.

It has been an honour of knowing you all, working and sharing experiences and knowledge from professionals like you. I will treasure all fond memories of you all during our meetings in countries we had met in those years, in my time, I had been with the National Archives.

I will write and send you greetings from my island, if not very busy.

So greetings and farewell from me to you all right across the ocean.

Goodbye good luck and aloha, kaiyone, lukim yu, bamahuta, mwago, friends.

If anyone of you wishes to drop me few lines, my address is as follows;

Robert Gwamuwe  
C/- Catholic Mission  
Jinjo  
Vyema Village  
Rossel Island Milne Bay Province  
PNG

## In Memoriam

It is with great sadness that PARBICA has to report the passing of Ponciano Kempis Mad at age 52 in Koror on 11 May 2006. Kempis was put to rest at Metuker, Melekeok State on 17 May 2006. The PARBICA community sends its condolences to his family and friends and the people of Palau who lost a 'historian, linguist, writer and a walking dictionary of Palauan history and culture' (Tia Belau Newspaper May 19-26, 2006).

### **Kempis Mad: A Remembrance**

In 1985, I had the pleasure of being asked to consult for the Belau National Museum in Koror, Palau. There were just a few staff members. One of them was Kempis in charge of the library and serving as a cultural resource person. I soon came to realize he had little interest in being a librarian, as such, but that he had an unending interest in the content of the books and other material in the library. The museum and its library then were unique among cultural agencies in Micronesia. Kempis was unique in being able to find among the jumble of the uncatalogued volumes and the multitude of boxes of seemingly unsorted files and papers and even more uncatalogued stuff, exactly the information needed by staff or requested by young students, Palau elders, as well as distinguished researchers, some of whom came from as near as Koror and Airai, Yap and Guam and as far away as England, Germany, Japan and the United States.

Kempis, from a distinguished clan of Melekeok (one of the sixteen states of Palau), early on was not really understood by many of his relatives and became almost a puzzle to most of his extended family. All of his adult life he usually lived alone, with few clothes or worldly goods. It may have been an unspoken way of respecting family and friends, not to be a burden. To many who knew him only casually, he seemed pleasant but a bit odd. In fact, he was a complicated person, his complexity and breadth of knowledge often marked by a lively sense of humour. That outward levity also hid an inner sadness, the inexplicable private sadness of an intellectual.

Ten years later, I again was working at Belau National Museum, for about four months. The major project was a complete renovation of the library, which meant it had to be closed. At the time Melekeok was planning to build a new (modern) *abai*, men's meeting house, and Kempis was assigned the task of making certain the decoration and Palauan designs were specific and correct. Kempis was enlivened by this task and often came to consult various references in the library, at a quiet time when work finished for the day. He worked, I listened, and gained a renewed respect for what he was doing and the way he did it, frequently asking himself questions for which there were no quick and easy answers.

Later visits to Palau were shorter and always busy. I much regret not chatting with Kempis at greater length about many topics and many facets of Palau. He always seemed happy to meet and talk to me, and share some food and drinks. Perhaps he felt he could express certain feelings and thoughts to me simply because I was not Palauan.

No one knows the extend to which he freely and sincerely helped others, young and old. When he left this world, there were no earthly possessions to leave behind. His legacy is far more valuable and lasting: a clearer, abiding, and inspiring appreciation for the rich history and culture of Palau and the enduring spirit of being Palauan.

John Cotton Wright May 2006

# **PARBICA 11 Conference and Workshop Report: Recordkeeping for Good Governance**

*Jacob Hevelawa, PARBICA Past President, and Evelyn Wareham, PARBICA Secretary General, November 2005*

## **Introduction**

PARBICA 11, with the theme *Recordkeeping for Good Governance* was held from 19-23 September 2005 at the Skylodge Hotel in Nadi, Fiji. It brought together records and information management professionals to discuss and develop a long-term program to build capacity and competencies required to improve recordkeeping for good governance.

## **Participants**

Sixty-six participants, including twenty-three Fijian representatives, attended the conference and workshops. Delegates came from almost every corner of the Pacific region, representing sixteen countries, states and territories. Most were heads of government archival institutions. Speakers also participated from the National Archives of Malaysia (including ICA's Deputy Secretary General) and from the International Records Management Trust. 56% of the 66 participants were women.

Delegates welcomed the participation of Anne Thurston OBE, Director of the International Records Management Trust, Abel Caine, Communication and Information Programme Specialist from the UNESCO Office Apia, and Ms Mahfuzah Yusuf (ICA Deputy Secretary General) and Mr Azemi Aziz, National Archives of Malaysia. The insights on the role of recordkeeping in good governance from Fijian representatives were also of high value, including Hon. Marieta Rigamoto, Minister for Information, Communications and Media Relations of Fiji, Mr Kaveni Takalevu, Deputy Auditor General of Fiji, Verenaisi Bavadra, Fiji Human Rights Commission, and Ikbal Jannif, Founder of Transparency International Fiji Chapter. Ms Joan Yee, Acting University Librarian, University of the South Pacific, participated in a discussion on options for the establishment of an education programme for archives and records management in the Pacific Islands.

## **Theme**

The theme ***recordkeeping for good governance*** was selected by the PARBICA Bureau as many of the Pacific Island countries' archives authorities were concerned to improve recordkeeping practices in order to facilitate the effective management, disposal and safekeeping of records designated as archives of national significance. The theme reflected the resolutions passed in a conference held in South Africa in September 2002, sponsored by World Bank and International Monetary Fund through the International Records Management Trust, which focused on 'evidence-based governance in the electronic age'. It was decided that PARBICA's 11<sup>th</sup> conference should relate to the discussions and presentations from various experts in the South African meeting, which revealed that the systems for creating and managing accurate and reliable government records systems have deteriorated in many developing countries including Pacific Island countries. At the same time, there were suggestions that the challenges of managing electronic technologies have become more pressing in these countries.

Therefore, it was hoped that a change in the theme from the traditional archives management oriented theme of past PARBICA conferences would lay the foundation for addressing electronic and paper records management issues and for placing records management as a Pacific development agenda.

## **Programme**

The Bureau undertook a selection process and appointed Evelyn Wareham to be training program coordinator. On the whole, it was anticipated the training program would help PARBICA member countries to develop strategic plans to improve governance through better recordkeeping by:

- Raising awareness of the critical importance for public sector reform

- Developing tools to assess the quality of records management within countries
- Undertaking initiatives to improve records management capacity; and
- Providing opportunities to share experiences and develop solutions

The programme combined interventions from guest speakers chosen for their strong knowledge of good governance and recordkeeping, with presentations from PARBICA members on initiatives and issues in their respective countries and territories. All participants were encouraged to take an active role throughout the week, through speaking on panels, group discussions and formation of recommendations. PARBICA has progressively adopted a meeting format, which merges 'general conference' and 'training' components. We have found that the archivists of our region gain the most benefit by sharing experiences and knowledge with one another.

Following this introduction to the theme, there was a series of workshop sessions focusing on key areas in support of recordkeeping for good governance.

#### ***The importance of record keeping for good governance***

Recordkeeping for good governance is an international agenda recently emphasised by financial institutions such as the World Bank and IMF through the International Records Management Trust, who would like to see it be achieved through related programme activities and projects by archival institutions and related professional organizations around the world such as PARBICA in the Pacific Region.

By way of introduction, in her address to open the conference, the Minister for Information, Communication and Media Relations of Fiji, Marieta Rigamoto expressed concern and emphasized that the principle of good governance embraced by governments of PARBICA member countries can be achieved if they take into consideration records and archival work as vital functions for effective and efficient management and administration in the public sector reform process undertaken in their respective countries.

International experts and senior civil servants of the Fiji public service who were invited to present papers also expressed similar views, which were taken into consideration for inclusion in the resolutions developed. The presentations by the senior civil servants of Fiji were of great interest. Their situation and experiences concerning recordkeeping demonstrated a common situation across most Pacific Island countries.

#### ***Assessing the state of record keeping***

A number of country representatives shared their experiences as panellists, in a workshop convened by the Director of the International Records Management Trust, Dr Anne Thurston, and IRMT Consultant Michael Hoyle. Records and information management professionals presented papers and facilitated informal discussions on records management capacity assessment software prepared by IRMT, which is openly available for access on the Internet.

The general perception on the presentations from Dr Thurston and members on the panel was that a number of countries in the region lack fundamental components of the archives infrastructure required to support government recordkeeping: some countries still require a purpose built archives building, while others continue to lack archives legislation. In other countries there are challenges for the introduction of records training programs, digital technology, and recovery and preservation of cyclone-affected records. Almost all countries face the challenge of introducing internationally accepted recordkeeping standards and practices. The IRMT experts acknowledged the work of the auditor general and recommended to the audience that archives and audit authorities should work closely as partners.

#### ***Advocacy to support recordkeeping***

The second workshop session focused on advocacy for recordkeeping as a priority on the development agenda through strategic approaches in respective countries and territories. Discussions covered the repositioning of the records, archives and information management profession and the need to make aware to respective authorities the work of records and archives institutions. Participants expressed concern to come up with strategic plans to promote of the work of

archives, records and information management professionals and also to use such plans as guides to make aware to respective authorities why recordkeeping is an area of major concern as well an important component to achieve good governance. Panel discussions on this issue resolved to prepare a submission for the Pacific Island Forum to advocate for inclusion of recordkeeping as a development agenda in the Pacific Plan

#### ***Training for recordkeeping across government***

Speakers from Papua New Guinea and Samoa presented situation reports on records management training offered to officers in the public sector in their respective countries. The training highlighted both professional education programmes and seminar / workshop based training, where it was evident the workshop oriented training would be most suitable and appropriate to be applied in other countries. It was clear from the discussions that Papua New Guinea and Samoa were very active in this area and other Pacific countries and territories were encouraged to apply or adopt similar approaches.

#### ***Emergency planning and response for records across government***

The fourth workshop session related to designing and putting into action emergency response program plans to use as guides to rescue and restore records and archives affected by disasters. Presentations from panellists on record management and archives preservation activities invited the audience to give suggestions and views on what plan of action and programs are in place, which can be adopted to suit a particular country. Concerns were raised to the conference on the ability of PARBICA to respond to situations where records and archives are victims of disaster and how those countries affected can be assisted to restore their documentary heritage.

#### ***PARBICA current developments and strategic issues***

Time was set aside for considering current developments and strategic issues for PARBICA's future. On Monday afternoon, PARBICA member representatives briefly discussed current developments in their countries, states and territories, including achievements and challenges. Participants then deliberated on strategic issues to be addressed by PARBICA in the areas of

- Training and Education
- Communications
- Governance and Secretariat

USP representatives joined participants to discuss the proposed distance education programme on records and archives.

On Friday morning, time was reserved to convert the ideas and recommendations developed during the week's sessions into concrete plans for action. This resulted in a strategic declaration for approval by the PARBICA General Conference.

#### ***Conference Outcomes***

PARBICA representatives at the conference were alerted to the fact that records management has been an overlooked part of national and international development work.

The conference and its implications can be related to the need for improving current recordkeeping practices in all levels of government in most Pacific Island countries and territories, for example highlighted in the different official government commissioned enquiries into administration and expenditure of public funds allocated to public institutions.

Participants from many countries and territories expressed concern of the fact that the systems for creating and managing accurate records systems have deteriorated at all levels of government.

For example, the National Archives of Papua New Guinea has undertaken extensive records surveys, which revealed that, when Papua New Guinea adopted the large bureaucracy from the Australian colonial administration, there was no specific policy for records and archives management to ensure there was consistency, uniformity and impartiality in the procedures and conditions adopted for the creation, maintenance, storage, use and disposition of common types or related and other functional records and archives in all level of machinery of government. As a result of the absence of such a policy:

- Efficient records management programmes were not in place to keep pace with the increasing amount of records produced
- Programmes for the management and use of records were not



regarded or recognized as integral parts of the administrative process

- Training and employment of professional records officers/managers, or any other information managers, were not organized resulting in records and information management problems growing both in quantity and quality

International aid agencies through the International Records Management Trust have expressed and emphasized the need for governments around the world, including the Pacific Islands, to consider records management as an important component to national and international development work to achieve good and evidence based governance.

One of the main concerns expressed at PARBICA 11 was for governments in the Pacific to reposition and support the services of national archives in the respective PARBICA member countries through adequate resource allocation. In so doing, these national archives can become partners to support and implement government policies directed at achieving good governance.

The archives, information and records management professionals' general perception on the outcome of the conference was that the sponsors of the conference recognized the significance of well-managed records for good governance and that good recordkeeping underpins transparency and accountability. In view of role of recordkeeping as a fundamental component to achieve good governance, the participants agreed on the need to promote to the authorities in the respective PARBICA member countries and

territories as a requirement for any government project and/or initiative to include records and information management requirements as a key component of the planning and implementation process to support accountability, transparency, good governance and poverty alleviation.

The participants deliberated on the issues discussed and have, among other resolutions, resolved to participate in the formulation of strategic plans through

- collaboration with development partners, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) agencies and civil society
- outreach programs, lobbying, awareness raising and resource mobilization to achieve effective and sustainable records and information management programs for the benefit of government and citizens

#### **Declaration and Resolutions**

At PARBICA's 11<sup>th</sup> General Conference on Friday 21 September, national and territory representatives approved a *Declaration on Recordkeeping for Good Governance*. This declaration urges strongly for the recognition of the importance of recordkeeping for good governance by governments and international organisations, and recommends the development of national recordkeeping strategies in the countries and territories of the Pacific region.

The General Conference also passed a number of resolutions making recommendations for PARBICA's governance and activities in the decade ahead.

#### **New PARBICA website – [www.parbica.org](http://www.parbica.org)**

The PARBICA Bureau is pleased to announce the launch of the revised and new-look PARBICA website. We thank the National Archives of Australia for the redevelopment of the website and for its continuing maintenance.

We soon hope to include a **Members Only** page which will include this newsletter and the Membership Directory. There are plans to include working copies of papers, projects and other membership privileges in the future.

The Bureau hopes the website will be conduit to increase its communications to members regarding its activities and deliberations and for members to actively share information with each other and the Bureau.

Please send you contributions or comments by email to the PARBICA Treasurer.

## **PARBICA 11 Resolutions**

On the occasion of PARBICA's 11<sup>th</sup> General Conference, from 19 to 22 September 2005, archivists and records managers from throughout the Pacific meeting in Nadi, Fiji, send greetings to colleagues across the world through the auspices of the ICA and resolve as follows:

### **1. PARBICA DECLARATION ON RECORDKEEPING FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE**

[see separate declaration]

### **2. PARBICA: THE DECADE AHEAD**

#### *EDUCATION AND TRAINING*

- 2.1 Call on the PARBICA Bureau to assemble information on the various opportunities and avenues for education and training that are available to Pacific archivists and records managers and to make this information available to PARBICA members regularly through a variety of means.
- 2.2 Thank the University of the South Pacific for its interest in developing and delivering recordkeeping training in the Pacific. PARBICA welcomes USP's acceptance of PARBICA's proposal to establish a Certificate programme and offers to continue to provide professional input into USP's deliberations and planning, but calls on USP to pursue funding and work with other education and training providers for course development and delivery.
- 2.3 Call on PARBICA member institutions to support and mentor individuals who are pursuing training and education.
- 2.4 Request that the PARBICA Bureau develop a five-year strategic plan of priority steps for building the capacity of each archives in the region, based on a needs assessment for Pacific archives.

#### *COMMUNICATIONS*

- 2.5 Call on the PARBICA Bureau to improve and increase communications to members about the activities and deliberations of the Bureau.
- 2.6 Call on PARBICA members to actively share information with each other and the Bureau through:
  - contributions to Panorama and the PARBICA website;
  - correspondence by email and regular mail; and
  - development of partnerships between institutions.

#### *GOVERNANCE AND SECRETARIAT*

- 2.7 Call on the PARBICA Bureau to review the PARBICA Constitution for consistency with the revised ICA Constitution (2004) and for consistency with the wishes of the PARBICA membership.
- 2.8 Call on the PARBICA Bureau to co-opt additional members in order to expand the capacity of the Bureau and to ensure wider representation of the views of members.
- 2.9 Call on the PARBICA President, in his/her capacity as a member of the ICA Executive Board, to strongly support applications by French Pacific territories to achieve Category A membership of the ICA.

## *RECORDKEEPING FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE*

- 2.10 Call on the PARBICA Bureau to analyse the various recommendations for actions to support recordkeeping for good governance put forward by participants at PARBICA 11 and develop an action plan.
- 2.11 Call on the PARBICA Bureau to consider establishing projects to develop basic templates, guidelines and tools for recordkeeping in Pacific organisations. These tools might cover recordkeeping capacity assessment, benchmarks and basic manuals for recordkeeping and training packages and modules.

### **3. MOTIONS OF THANKS**

- 3.1 Express their satisfaction with the successful conference sessions and workshops conducted within this meeting on the importance of recordkeeping for good governance, assessing records management capacity, advocacy to promote recordkeeping, training for records management across government and emergency planning and response.
- 3.2 Express appreciation for the generous support for local costs and participation of delegates, without which this important meeting could not have taken place, from:
- Government of Fiji, Ministry of Information, Communications and Media Relations
  - Archives New Zealand
  - AusAid Good Governance Programme
  - Australian Society of Archivists Inc
  - National Archives of Australia
  - NZAid
  - Commonwealth Foundation
  - UNESCO
- And also the contributions made by:
- Aqua Pacific
  - Fiji Water
  - Lundia Shelving
  - Metal Edge Archival Storage Supplies
  - Meteorological Office, Namaka, Nadi
  - Nomads Skylodge Hotel Management and Staff, Nadi
  - NZ Micrographic Services Ltd
  - Paradise Canyon Systems
  - Taina's Travel Services Ltd
- 3.3 Give special thanks to the following for the honour of their participation and their support:
- Hon. Marieta Rigamoto, Minister for Information, Communications and Media Relations of Fiji
  - Dr Anne Thurston, OBE, Director, International Records Management Trust
  - Mr Semiti Ravatu, Pacific Islands Forum
  - Mr Ikbal Jannif, Founder of Transparency International Fiji Chapter
  - Mr Abel Caine, UNESCO Pacific States Office
  - Ms Mahfuzah Yusuf and Mr Azemi Aziz, National Archives of Malaysia
  - Mrs Verenaisi Bavadra, Fiji Human Rights Commission
  - Mr Kaveni Takalevu, Deputy Auditor General of Fiji
  - Ms Joan Yee, Acting University Librarian, University of the South Pacific
- 3.4 Express their appreciation to Evelyn Wareham, as Director of Studies, and the PARBICA Bureau for their magnificent efforts in bringing together a groundbreaking and significant programme on the theme of 'Recordkeeping for Good Governance'.
- 3.5 Convey their deep gratitude and appreciation to Setareki Tale, Salesia Ikaniwai and the team from National Archives of Fiji and the Ministry for Information, Communications and Media Relations for their gracious and well-organised hosting of this conference and for the splendid Fijian hospitality they arranged.

## **PARBICA Declaration on Recordkeeping for Good Governance**

On the occasion of PARBICA's 11<sup>th</sup> General Conference, from 19 to 23 September 2005, archivists and records managers from throughout the Pacific meeting in Nadi, Fiji, under the auspices of the ICA, resolve as follows:

- 1 Recognising the extreme importance of well managed recordkeeping systems as a fundamental pillar for good governance
- 2 Recalling that the creation and management of records as evidence of decisions and actions is essential to accountability, transparency and efficiency
- 3 Concerned at the condition of recordkeeping systems in some Pacific countries as a result of administrative change, electronic technologies and cultural factors
- 4 Emphasising the role to be played by national, state and territory archives and records authorities in leading and supporting the development of effective recordkeeping systems across their respective governments

### *GOOD GOVERNANCE AND THE PACIFIC PLAN*

- 5 Urge that recordkeeping be recognised as a core component of good governance in intergovernmental strategic plans, policies and standards for the Pacific region, including the Pacific Islands Forum's Pacific Plan
- 6 Call on Pacific governments to establish national recordkeeping strategies in support of transparent, accountable and efficient governance, and to include recordkeeping in national policies and legislation on governance and access to information
- 7 Call on intergovernmental organisations and aid agencies to include records management in the terms of reference for governance projects and to ensure that consultants involved have the necessary competence in records management
- 8 Call on the Pacific Islands Forum to ensure that requirements for records are considered in the development of information and communication technologies (ICT) initiatives pursued under the auspices of the Pacific Plan

### *ASSESSING RECORDS MANAGEMENT CAPACITY*

- 9 Call for strong cooperation between archives authorities and audit offices to assess capacity for recordkeeping in Pacific governments and to reinforce the critical importance of recordkeeping as an essential enabler of accountability

### *ADVOCACY FOR RECORDKEEPING*

- 10 Call on archives authorities in the Pacific to raise awareness at government and public level of the importance of recordkeeping for good governance and of the role to be played by archives authorities in supporting improvements to records management systems

### *RECORDS MANAGEMENT TRAINING*

- 11 Emphasise the fundamental importance of training in records management for the public service, and call on Pacific governments to work with archives authorities and appropriate training providers to deliver practical training in good recordkeeping to government officials

### *EMERGENCY PLANNING AND RESPONSE*

- 12 Call on governments in the Pacific to include provisions for the protection and recovery of vital records of governance in disaster plans for their respective countries, states and territories

## **PARBICA Submission to Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat on Pacific Plan**

22 December 2005

Mr Greg Urwin  
Secretary General  
Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat  
Ratu Sukuna Road  
Suva  
**FIJI**

Dear Mr Urwin,

### **PARBICA RECOMMENDATION FOR ADDITION TO THE PACIFIC PLAN**

As President of the Pacific Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (PARBICA), I am writing to recommend changes to the Pacific Plan to incorporate the importance of well managed recordkeeping systems as a fundamental pillar for good governance. PARBICA is greatly concerned at the condition of recordkeeping systems in many Pacific countries as a result of administrative changes, electronic technologies and cultural factors. The creation and management of records as evidence of decisions and actions is essential to accountability, transparency and efficiency.

In September 2005, over 70 delegates from PARBICA members' institutions from some 20 countries and territories in the Pacific met in Nadi for strategic discussions and workshops on the theme "***Recordkeeping for Good Governance***". One of the topics that occupied the attention of the delegates was the Pacific Plan. Drafts of the Plan were circulated to delegates and enthusiastically discussed and debated. Delegates all agreed that the Plan provides an excellent opportunity to promote good governance across the region. They called attention to the fact that is vital to include good public recordkeeping in the Plan, as a key enabler of good governance.

The "***PARBICA Declaration on Recordkeeping for Good Governance***" that was unanimously adopted by country, state and territory representatives is enclosed. You will notice that the Pacific Plan is the subject of items 5-8 in the Declaration.

I would like to suggest for your consideration the following wording amendments to the current version of the Pacific Plan:

1. That the words "*good public recordkeeping*" be inserted into the list of regional support commitments in the first dot point under Good Governance in the "For immediate implementation" section.
2. That a form of words based on resolution 6 from the PARBICA Declaration be inserted under Good Governance in the "For agreement in principle" section of the Plan. The form of words could be something like: "*Development of national public recordkeeping strategies in support of transparent, accountable and efficient governance and the inclusion of requirements to make and keep good public records in national policies and legislation on governance and access to information.*"

If you are available to meet with me to discuss these issues I would be very happy to do so. I am based in Suva at the National Archives of Fiji and can be contacted by telephone on 3304-144 and by email at [stale@govnet.gov.fj](mailto:stale@govnet.gov.fj).

I hope that these recommendations are of interest to you and your colleagues in the Forum Secretariat.

Yours sincerely,

Setareki Tale (Mr)  
**President**  
**PARBICA**

## **Reports on Recent Developments in Pacific Archives from PARBICA 11**

*Ewan Maidment, Pacific Manuscripts Bureau*

Several significant developments in Pacific archival infrastructure were reported at PARBICA's 11th Conference:

Setareki Tale announced that the Fiji government has allocated F\$4m for a new archives building to be constructed over the next 3 years; that the National Library of Fiji is to be separated from the National Archives (NAF); that the Fiji archives legislation is to be reviewed; that the NAF is now developing its website and, with assistance of JICA, will undertake a digitisation project; and that the NAF had acquired new microfilming equipment, valued at F\$500,000, courtesy of JICA.

George Paniani reported that the Cook Islands National Archives (CINA) now occupies its new building and that the Cook Islands National Radio and Television has transferred its archives to CINA.

Kunei Etekira reported that the National Archives of Kiribati has completed an index to all land records and would now like to digitise all its old land records.

Nicolas Dubuisson reported that Archives Territoriales de Nouvelle-Calédonie has published its Guide to Archives Sources for the History of the Kanak People; that it has developed a search engine linked to the Archives finding aids which will be accessible on the internet soon; that, in conjunction with the French Embassy in Port Vila, it is undertaking cooperative projects in Vanuatu; that it has acquired microfilms of the Port Vila Diocesan archives (through the PMB's OMPA series); and that it is undertaking a joint project with the PMB on French judicial archives at the Supreme Court of Vanuatu.

Joan Tahafa reported that the National Archives of Niue is still struggling to re-establish itself after Cyclone Heta in January 2004: it has no dedicated building, little space and needs more archives boxes. She appealed for help from PARBICA.

Naomi Ngirakamerang reported that the National Archives of Palau submitted a

report to UNESCO in March 2004, which resulted in recognition by the UNESCO National Commission and the Palau Legislature. The Archives has tripled its budget and will move into a new repository; it had also received UNESCO and AusAID funding for shelving and a new microfilm reader.

Jacob Hevelawa reported that the National Archives and Records Service of PNG, which has been operating a project aimed at rescuing Provincial administration records, has identified 200,000 records in eight Provinces and supplied boxes for their retention. The National Archives is also running 3-day records management workshops in order to encourage higher record keeping standards and practices in the administration. AusAID announced funding for renovation of the National Library of PNG just before the PARBICA conference. Jacob Hevelawa indicated that he hoped for some spin-off for the National Archives.

Ulrike Hertel Akuino reported that there is still no archives building in Samoa; however a Public Records Bill has been drafted. With assistance from Emma Murray, an Australian Business Volunteer, Ulrike established a Records Task Force, which held two training courses for Records Managers in government departments. Many Samoan Ministries are struggling with systems development associated with institutional strengthening projects, which have not included a records management training component.

The National Archives of the Solomon Islands (NASI) was represented at the conference for the first time after the crisis. George Vari reported that although hardcore militants had occupied the Archives, he had kept the key to the strong room. He appreciated the efforts of RAMSI as it has brought law and order back to the Solomon Islands. With assistance from Australia and NZ, the Archives restored a phone line three months ago. There are plans to appoint an advisor from the National Archives of Australia to help build the Archives' government record keeping capacity.

Albert Vaea reported that a JICA volunteer is working with the Tongan Traditions Committee; that the NZ and British High Commissions had supplied extra shelving for archives; that the Archives had received copies of Western Pacific High Commission correspondence with Tonga; and funds had been allocated for the construction of a new National Museum in which Archives may be granted one floor.

Togiola Funafuti reported that the budget for the National Archives of Tuvalu had decreased and that it was very short of storage and workspace. The Endangered Archives Programme and the PMB have commenced digitising and microfilming some key records.

Tom Sakias, the National Archivist of Vanuatu, reported that he would be going

to Paris for training. There has been no change in the status of the repository, which has been full for years and no improvement in the Archives' minimal staffing situation.

Cheryl Stanborough reported that the Yap State Archives has recovered from a severe cyclone in May 2004. The Archives has published a very useful disaster recovery booklet. Its budget is now stable and secure. There are positions for two trainees at the Archives, but one is vacant at present. A workshop on government record keeping has been held this year. The Endangered Archives Programme has awarded the Archives a major grant for digitising audio recordings associated with the proceedings of the Yap State Constitutional Convention.

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## **PARBICA 11 PHOTO GALLERY**



First meeting of the newly elected PARBICA Bureau  
(L to R: Adrian Cunningham, Treasurer; John Wright, The Editor; Setareki Tale, President; Albert Tu'ivanuavou Vaea, Vice-President; and Evelyn Wareham, Secretary General)



PARBICA 11 Delegates enjoy the morning tea break on the conference opening day





REUNION TIME



Salesia Ikaniwai (c), Secretary General, with her predecessors  
(missing Lindsay Cleland)



UNSW Archives Course class mates



Founding members of PARBICA



Delegates enjoy the conference dinner evening



Kava ceremony



## News and Updates

### **David Leitch joins the ICA Secretariat**

The National Archives at Kew, which preserves the records of over nine hundred years of English and United Kingdom government, has agreed to fund the secondment of David Leitch to the ICA Secretariat for a period of eighteen months, starting on 3 July. As Senior Programme Manager, he will play a significant role in co-ordinating the many projects in ICA's programme in the run-up to the Kuala Lumpur Congress in July 2008 and in ensuring that the Congress programme fully reflects the vitality of the archive profession in the early 21st century. He will have particular responsibility for strengthening still further ICA's relations with archival organisations throughout the world.

### **ICA Training the Trainer Resource**

ICA's Section for Archival Education and Training announces the publication of the Training the Trainer Resource Pack: <http://www.archive-skills.com/trainerpack/index.htm>

The Training the Trainer resource pack is intended for anyone who wants some guidance or direction in planning, organising and delivering effective training for both professionals and support staff whatever their working or learning environment. The bulk of the pack addresses the various techniques for delivering training but it also covers the practical administrative tasks that are essential for successful training courses and which underpin the training content.

The Training the Trainer project was part of the ICA Section for Archival Education and Training's Medium Term Plan for 2000-2004, when the peer review draft came out. It was completed in December 2005. The authors, Margaret Crockett and Janet Foster, are Co-Directors of the Archive-Skills Consultancy and based the pack on their experience of delivering both training the trainer courses and archives and records management training.

The pack is also available from the SAE website at: <http://www.ica-sae.org/> and the Archive-Skills Consultancy website at: <http://www.archive-skills.com/>

### **Integrating Records Management Requirements into Financial Management Information Systems**

International Records Management Trust  
Press Release  
2 December 2005

The International Records Management Trust ([www.irmt.org](http://www.irmt.org)) is working with the UK Department for International Development (DFID) on a project to investigate how records management standards and good practices can be integrated into financial information management systems to reduce the misuse, mismanagement or loss of the electronic financial records created in these systems and to strengthen control of paper-based inputs.

Financial management is at the heart of anti-corruption and transparency efforts, and one of the most fundamental ways that governments are held accountable for their actions is by providing evidence, in the form of financial records, of how public funds have been spent and managed.

Records management standards and good practices, notably the International Standard on Records Management (ISO-15489), are available to guide the management of records as evidence. Within the past decade, standards and practices also have emerged for the life-cycle management of electronic records. However, most financial management information systems are implemented without consideration of these standards.

This means that one of the most critical systems for supporting government services and accountability is operating at significant risk due to the lack of systematic processes and controls for the capture, organisation, preservation and long-term accessibility of electronic records. At the same time, inadequate attention has been given to the issues involved in managing paper-based records as a critical part of financial information management systems. As a result, the

systems tend to be incomplete and difficult to audit.

This project seeks to provide solutions to these issues by developing model policy statements, management frameworks, functional systems specifications and implementation guidelines for incorporating sound records management principles, processes and controls into financial information management systems. This will be done through an iterative analysis of standards and good practice against results of field studies and field testing.

More details on the project can be provided by contacting the Trust:  
by email at [info@irmt.org](mailto:info@irmt.org)  
by fax +44 (0) 20 7831 6303  
by post to IRMT, Haines House, 6th floor,  
21 John Street, London WC1N 2BP, UK.

#### **UNESCO OFFICE FOR THE PACIFIC APIA, SAMOA**

#### **Launch and Inaugural Meeting of the Pacific Information For All Programme (IFAP) Committee**

The UNESCO Communication & Information Sector serves as the Secretariat for the Information For All Programme (IFAP).

The IFAP Vision is of a world where everyone has access to relevant information and the skills to properly use this information to improve their lives.

The inaugural meeting of the IFAP Pacific Regional Committee which was held on 2 May 2006 in Wellington, New Zealand and called on Information and Communications Ministers from Pacific Islands' countries to meet and discuss digital content issues.

Participants included representatives from New Zealand government and civil society agencies. The Apia office for UNESCO funded the participation of Sin Joan Yee,

University Librarian at the University of the South Pacific (USP).

The meeting discussed and agreed to adopt the three strategic priorities identified by IFAP, namely Information Preservation, Information Literacy; and Information Ethics. These priorities would help to guide the development of a workplan for the Committee.

The meeting focused on "Information Preservation in the Pacific" and endorsed a proposal to establish a Pacific Memory of the World register. A project to register the "founding documents" (e.g. treaties, instruments of Independence, etc.) of Pacific Island nations was discussed and also agreed to.

For more information contact Abel Caine, Adviser for Communication & Information.  
UNESCO Office for the Pacific States  
4-Corners, Matautu-uta,  
PO Box 615,  
Apia, SAMOA

#### **Article "The Digital Black Hole" by Jonas Palm now online**

Jonas Palm is Director, Head of the Preservation Department, National Archives of Sweden, Stockholm. The article presents an analysis of costs for digitizing and long-term storage at the Riksarkivet (National Archives, RA) in Stockholm, Sweden. This example includes forecasts of cost development for the next few years which may help other institutions in analysing their own costs and budgeting for long-term storage. The article is published in the framework of the TAPE project: Training for Audiovisual Preservation in Europe, <http://www.tape-online.net/>

To download the article go to:  
[http://www.tape-online.net/docs/Palm\\_Black\\_Hole.pdf](http://www.tape-online.net/docs/Palm_Black_Hole.pdf)  
(445 KB).

## Upcoming Events

### **Connections And Conversations - Archives At Work**

Australian Society of Archivists, 2006 Conference  
18 to 21 October 2006 Port Macquarie, NSW, Australia

The conference will cover a wide range of topics, from the role of the Collections Council of Australia, the Collections Australia Network to practical matters such as guiding principles for appraisal, digital preservation for small archives, recordkeeping for small businesses, managing microfilming projects, preparing digital finding aids, and writing history, and, on an international level, to hearing about developments in East Timor and the Solomon Islands.

If you would like more information or to view regular updates to the conference program, visit the ASA website [www.archivists.org.au](http://www.archivists.org.au)

### **SEAPAVAA Conference 2006 The Visible Archive: Access, Advocacy And Accountability**

10th Anniversary Conference - 13 to 17 November 2006 Canberra, Australia  
SEAPAVAA (South East Asia/ Pacific Audiovisual Archive Association)  
Hosted jointly by the National Film and Sound Archive of Australia and the New Zealand Film Archive

This is a special year for SEAPAVAA. It will be reviewing the achievements of its first decade and setting a vision for its second. So the theme deals with the fundamentals of creating and running successful archives, whatever the circumstances. SEAPAVAA's action agenda is focused on the South East Asia/Pacific region. But the issues raised by the theme are universal. Participants from all over the world, and from the collecting/archiving field generally, are warmly welcomed. (Registration details will be advertised later.)

Mick Newnham is co-chair of the conference organising committee  
[mick.newnham@nfsa.afc.gov.au](mailto:mick.newnham@nfsa.afc.gov.au) .

### **Dancing with Memory: Oral History and its Audiences**

14th International Oral History Conference  
Sydney, Australia, 12 to 16 July 2006  
Website: <http://www.une.edu.au/ioha2006>

Website features include conference details and paper titles and abstracts as they become available.

If you require further details, please email: [ioha@uts.edu.au](mailto:ioha@uts.edu.au)

Or contact Rosie Block, President, OHAA (NSW), c/- Oral History Program, State Library of New South Wales, Macquarie Street, Sydney NSW 2000. Phone: (02) 9273 1697 Fax: (02) 9273 1697

### **Preserving Aboriginal Heritage – Call for Papers**

**Symposium 2007: Preserving Aboriginal Heritage**  
Ottawa, Canada, September 24-28, 2007

Arranged by the Canadian Conservation Institute (CCI). This international conference will provide an opportunity for Aboriginal people (First Nations, Metis and Inuit) and conservation specialists to learn from one another a--in an atmosphere of mutual respect--about traditional, technical, ethical, and intangible aspects of the conservation of Aboriginal material culture. An Advisory Committee comprising members of First Nations, Inuit, and Metis communities across Canada is providing input and guidance to the CCI organizing committee.

Symposium 2007 will be a unique venue for sharing concerns and approaches and for discussing state-of-the-art preservation practices. People from a variety of backgrounds and experiences will present their knowledge and expertise. With an eye to the future, exchanges will also focus on best practices for collaboration and on ways to enhance the capacity of both the Aboriginal and the museum communities to care for Aboriginal cultural objects.

For more information on the Symposium, including details on its major themes, and

for Guidelines on preparing a submission, see [http://www.cci-icc.gc.ca/symposium/callforcontributors\\_e.aspx](http://www.cci-icc.gc.ca/symposium/callforcontributors_e.aspx)

Or contact:  
symposium\_2007@pch\_gc\_ca

Further details also can be obtained from:  
Carole Dignard  
Program Chair  
Canadian Conservation Institute  
1030 Innes Road  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0M5, Canada  
613-998-3721 ext. 151  
carole\_dignard@pch\_gc\_ca

**15th Annual Conference and General Meeting  
Pacific Islands Association of Libraries and Archives (PIALA)  
November 13 - 17, 2006, Koror,  
Republic of Palau**

The 2006 conference theme is "Libraries, Archives, and Museums: Building Knowledge Networks for Vibrant Communities". PIALA 2006 will feature a two day pre-conference workshop on Library Advocacy, organized by Arlene Cohen and funded by IFLA. Sandy Fernandez  
Chair, Programs and Exhibits Committee  
PIALA 2006  
Librarian, Belau National Museum  
Email: bnm@palaunet.com  
Fax: (680) 488 - 3183

## **Report from Mississippi**

*Prepared by Society of American Archivists President Richard Pearce-Moses, September 21, 2005*

Three weeks after Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast, a small team was able to visit some of the archival repositories in the areas of Mississippi hit hardest by the storm. The team sought to show the profession's support for archivists and to ask the people on the front lines how the profession can respond in ways that will truly help given the current situation.

The team included David Carmichael, President of the Council of State Archivists and State Archivist for Georgia; Richard Pearce-Moses, President of the Society of American Archivists and Director of Digital Government Information for the Arizona State Library and Archives; and Debra Hess Norris, Chair of Heritage Preservation and Chair of the Art Conservation Department at the University of Delaware. Other partners who helped organize the trip included the National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators (NAGARA), the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), the Council of State Library Administrators (COSLA), and the Society of Southwest Archivists (SSA). On Sunday, September 18, Norris led an informal workshop on recovery of wet photographic materials. That evening, the

staff of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH), including Department Director Hank Holmes and State Archivist Julia Young, briefed the team on what they had seen on visits to hurricane-ravaged areas during the previous two weeks.

On Monday, September 19, MDAH staff members Grady Howell and Jeff Rogers led the team on site visits to several repositories in Waveland, Gulfport, and Biloxi. The team observed that collections typically were either lost entirely or survived the storm but were damaged subsequently by high humidity and mold, with few collections in between. The Waveland City Hall and two buildings at Beauvoir (the Jefferson Davis home) were demolished, leaving only a slab or a pile of rubble; records left in the buildings were destroyed. At other sites, records in buildings without power were damp from the high humidity, often exacerbated by water damage to the building. Many records at the Biloxi Public Library were submerged and will need to be salvaged. Much of the damage to records came from a storm surge that swept through buildings, destroyed their contents, and then retreated. This suggests that conditions may be different in New Orleans, where the water resulted from a broken levee rather than a storm surge and where damage has probably



resulted from standing water rather than surging water.

There was little evidence of paper in the debris surrounding homes and businesses. Shreds of fabric and plastic were caught in trees, but it appears that the power of the storm surge completely destroyed paper. A few plastic data disks and videotapes were scattered around, although caked in grime, and an occasional photograph was seen among the debris. In a few instances, a file cabinet could be seen standing (although often missing drawers), and in every case observed, the records were already heavy with mold. Nothing can be done for the collections that were destroyed. The top priority in protecting surviving records is to arrest the growth of mold. For those records that are merely damp, getting them into an air-conditioned environment is a high priority. Power is still off in many areas, however, and even where it is available there is the concern that it is not always safe to restore power to damaged buildings. It is critical that these records be removed from damaged buildings to ensure that they are not destroyed during efforts to clean up the buildings. The (smaller number of) records that were soaked must be (and are being) transferred to freezer trucks when possible, but often access to those collections is complicated by hazardous conditions in the building.

At the same time that individuals are working to care for their collections, they are also struggling to recover their own lives. One individual with whom we spoke has lost his home, and another had six feet of water on the first floor. Both, though, were hard at work sorting through damaged records. Their commitment to their work is admirable. Although a few repositories could potentially use volunteers to help with recovery, the reality is that currently there is no way to accommodate volunteers. In the affected areas, there is no lodging, no potable water, no food. Lodging in Jackson, about 150 miles from the coast, is scarce; MDAH staff members have been commuting three hours each way on a nearly daily basis.

Stabilizing the records can buy time. If damp records can be dehumidified to halt mold growth and if wet records can be

frozen, people can then take some time to do more careful planning, to find out what FEMA will pay for, and to identify other funding sources. At some time in the future, it will be possible for volunteers to be accommodated.

The team repeatedly asked, "What do you need?" Here's what we heard:

1. An air-conditioned space to which damp and wet records can be moved.
2. Someone to help manage logistics for the transfer and control of records stored in this facility and, in the future, to coordinate volunteers.
3. Space for accommodating volunteers.
4. A telephone hotline, staffed by experts, that members of the public might call for advice on recovering their personal papers, photographs, and other records.

MDAH staff members currently are spearheading recovery work, but it is placing enormous demands on their staff and budget. Staff members of the National Archives and Records Administration -and Allen Weinstein personally- are helping to remove bureaucratic barriers. NARA already has released some funds to Mississippi and Louisiana to help with immediate expenses, and it is looking for additional funds to support these efforts. It may be a month before repositories will be ready for volunteer help in salvaging documents. In the interim, the professional organizations must work together to help find solutions to the immediate problems described above.

The team is putting together a document of "lessons learned." But one lesson stands out among all others: Even modest efforts at disaster preparedness and prevention often made the difference between destruction and survival of essential records. That's a lesson everyone can and should take to heart.

*Richard Pearce-Moses*  
[president@archivists.org](mailto:president@archivists.org)

