

Media Statement

From the Victorian Auditor-General and Director and Keeper of Public Records

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New recordkeeping tool provides help for government agencies

A recordkeeping checklist was published by the Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO) on Wednesday 30 July¹, and follows the audit of Victorian Government records management earlier this year. The checklist aims to improve the management of government records and help agencies fulfil their obligations under the *Public Records Act 1973*.

In releasing the recordkeeping checklist, Auditor-General Des Pearson said, 'Recordkeeping is a fundamental function of all government entities and the responsibility of all staff. Government records are both an important business asset and the cornerstone of truly accountable government.'

The checklist has been developed to assist government agencies to assess the administrative frameworks established by them to manage their records. The checklist is divided into seven sections; each section represents one of the seven principles of sound records management.

Justine Heazlewood, Director of Public Record Office Victoria (PROV), said she 'supports the use of the checklist across government and PROV intends to use it in its review of recordkeeping standards and the development of a compliance and assessment tool for the management of records in agencies.'

Des Pearson said, 'To maximise the value of the checklist, it should be used in conjunction with the relevant standards, guidelines and advice issued by PROV.'

In March 2008, VAGO tabled a report in Parliament on Records Management in the Victorian Public Sector. The report highlighted that the establishment of an effective records management framework was a significant business challenge for agencies. During its audit, VAGO used the recordkeeping checklist to assess agencies against seven principles of records management.

Key findings in the report included:

- electronic records were not well managed, particularly email and website records
- more needed to be done by senior management to promote and provide support for records management
- most agencies did not adopt a strategic approach to the management of their records.

¹ Please note that this release was not distributed on the day the report was tabled.

The checklist was the result of a successful collaboration between the staff of VAGO and PROV.

Public Record Office Victoria, 99 Shiel Street, North Melbourne, is the archive of the State Government of Victoria, holding records from the beginnings of the colonial administration of Victoria in the mid-1830s to today. For more information, contact Public Record Office Victoria on 9348 5600 or go to www.prov.vic.gov.au.

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Link to checklist: <http://www.audit.vic.gov.au>

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