Australian
STANDARD

Information and documentation— Records management

Part 1: Concepts and principles

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- Public Record Office Victoria
- Queensland State Archives
- Records and Information Management Professionals Australasia
- State Archives and Records Authority of New South Wales
- State Records Office of Western Australia
- University of Sydney

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AS ISO 15489.1:2017

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Part 1: Concepts and principles

PREFACE

This Standard was prepared by the Standards Australia Committee IT-021, Records and Document Management Systems, to supersede AS ISO 15489.1—2002, *Records Management*, Part 1: *General* and AS ISO 15489.2—2002, *Records Management*, Part 2: *Guidelines*.

The objective of this Standard is to define the concepts and principles from which approaches to the creation, capture and management of records are developed. This Standard applies to the creation, capture and management of records regardless of structure or form, in all types of business and technological environments, over time.

This Standard is identical with, and has been reproduced from ISO 15489-1:2016, *Information and documentation — Records management — Part 1: Concepts and principles*.

As this Standard is reproduced from an International Standard, the following applies:

(a)   In the source text 'this part of ISO 15489' should read 'this Australian Standard'.

(b)   A full point substitutes for a comma when referring to a decimal marker.

None of the normative references in the source document have been adopted as Australian or Australian/New Zealand Standards.

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INTRODUCTION

This part of ISO 15489 establishes the core concepts and principles for the creation, capture and management of records. It sits at the heart of a number of International Standards and Technical Reports that provide further guidance and instruction on the concepts, techniques and practices for creating, capturing and managing records.

About records and managing records

Records are both evidence of business activity and information assets. They can be distinguished from other information assets by their role as evidence in the transaction of business and by their reliance on metadata. Metadata for records is used to indicate and preserve context and apply appropriate rules for managing records.

Managing records encompasses the following:

a) creating and capturing records to meet requirements for evidence of business activity;

b) taking appropriate action to protect their authenticity, reliability, integrity and useability as their business context and requirements for their management change over time.

NOTE 1 Reference to "business activity" or "business activities" in this part of ISO 15489 is interpreted broadly to mean those activities that support the purposes of the organization's existence. Functions, activities, transactions and work processes are representations of particular forms of "business activity" and are defined in Clause 3.

Increasingly, records are made and kept in digital environments, offering a range of opportunities for new kinds of use and reuse. Digital environments also allow greater flexibility in the implementation of records controls, within and between systems that manage records.

Changing models of business are extending responsibilities for records beyond traditional organizational and jurisdictional boundaries. This requires records professionals to understand and meet a diverse range of internal and external stakeholder needs. These can include increased expectations of transparency of decision-making from business and government, the general public, customers, users of services, records' subjects, and others with an interest in how records are created, captured and managed.

NOTE 2 In this International Standard (all parts), the phrase "creation, capture and management" is used to summarize the management of records as a whole. It is inclusive of the act of receipt of a record and of the range of records processes described in this part of ISO 15489.

With these environmental factors in mind, this part of ISO 15489 has been developed with an acknowledgement of the following:

a) the roles of records as enablers of business activity and information assets;

b) increased opportunities for records use and reuse in the digital environment;

c) systems and rules for the creation, capture and management of records that need to extend beyond traditional organizational boundaries, such as in collaborative and multi-jurisdictional work environments;

d) records controls that can be independent of other components of records systems;

e) the importance of recurrent analysis of business activity and context to identify what records need to be created and captured, and how they should be managed over time;

f) the importance of risk management in devising strategies for managing records and the management of records as a risk management strategy in itself.

While the concepts and principles of this part of ISO 15489 apply across varied business and technological environments, these environments can require different approaches to the

implementation of records controls, processes and systems. This part of ISO 15489 is not intended to provide detailed implementation advice for specific environments in which records are created, captured and managed. Rather, it defines key concepts and establishes high-level principles from which records controls, processes and systems for managing records in any environment may be developed. Advice on the design and implementation of controls, processes and systems for managing records in these different environments is addressed in subsequent part(s) and in other International Standards and Technical Reports.

Benefits

Approaches to the creation, capture and management of records based on the concepts and principles in this part of ISO 15489 ensure that authoritative evidence of business is created, captured, managed and made accessible to those who need it, for as long as it is required. This enables the following:

a)   improved transparency and accountability;

b)   effective policy formation;

c)   informed decision-making;

d)   management of business risks;

e)   continuity in the event of disaster;

f)   the protection of rights and obligations of organizations and individuals;

g)   protection and support in litigation;

h)   compliance with legislation and regulations;

i)   improved ability to demonstrate corporate responsibility, including meeting sustainability goals;

j)   reduction of costs through greater business efficiency;

k)   protection of intellectual property;

l)   evidence-based research and development activities;

m)   the formation of business, personal and cultural identity;

n)   the protection of corporate, personal and collective memory.

Policies, assigned responsibilities and procedures for the creation, capture and management of records support organizational information governance programs.

Relationship to other standards

This part of ISO 15489 is designed as a self-contained resource. However, it is also part of a family of International Standards and Technical Reports on a range of aspects of the creation, capture and management of records. These are listed in the Bibliography and may be consulted for more detailed advice on particular aspects of managing records.

The management of records in line with this International Standard (all parts) is fundamental to a successful Management System for Records (MSR), the management system defined by the ISO 30300 series of International Standards. An MSR links the management of records to organizational success and accountability by establishing a framework comprising policy, objectives and directives for records. It establishes requirements for the following:

a)   defined roles and responsibilities;

b)   systematic processes;

c)   monitoring and evaluation;

d) review and improvement.

Managers and others seeking to implement, operate and improve an MSR are advised to use this part of ISO 15489 in conjunction with the ISO 30300 series of International Standards.

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