InterPARES 3 Project
International Research on Permanent Authentic Records in Electronic Systems
TEAM Canada

Government Transparency in the Age of Electronic Records

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6th National Transparency Week

Transparency in the Americas

October 27-29, 2009

Panel 6: Records Management and Transparency

What principles should govern records management?

- For public records, the guiding principle is to ensure that records can be used to hold governments accountable for their actions and decisions.

Regulation of administrative and historical records

- Should the same authority regulate administrative and historical records?
  - Yes. Records in archives should be subject to the same regulatory and institutional framework as records that are in still in the custody of the creating offices. This allows for integrated management of records from the point of creation through final disposition.

Regulating the management of electronic records

- The same guiding principles that apply to paper records must apply to electronic records.

- At all stages of the records' lifecycle, the records must be **complete**, **retrievable** and **authentic**.

Complete records

- Records must be managed in their totality.
  - Paper records must be linked to any related electronic records.
  - Electronic records in different systems must be managed and, if necessary, preserved:
    - Unstructured records
    - E-mail
    - Databases
    - Other types of records

Retrievable records

- Records must be retrievable and understandable. In other words, they must be adequately identified so that they can be found and understood in context.

- Electronic records must be not only retrievable but reproducible. Hardware and software obsolescence can make this very challenging.

Authentic records

- An authentic record is a record that is what it purports to be and that is free from tampering or corruption.

  - The recordkeepers must be able to demonstrate that this is true at any point during the record's lifecycle: i.e. at the point of creation, while it is in use, while it is in semi-active storage, and while it is in the archives.

The InterPARES Project

- International Research on Permanent Authentic Records in Electronic Systems
- Based at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada.
- Active 1999-2012.

InterPARES 1, 1999-2002

- Primarily textual documents produced and maintained in databases and document management systems

InterPARES 3 Project
Evelyn McLellan
InterPARES 2 Co-Investigator, InterPARES 3 Collaborator

InterPARES 2, 2002-2006

- Records of the arts, sciences and government in experiential, interactive and dynamic systems

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InterPARES 3, 2007-2012

- Implementing electronic records preservation systems in small and medium-sized organizations

Key findings and products

- How to assess authenticity of electronic records in active recordkeeping systems

- How to maintain authenticity of electronic records in archives

- How to ensure that dynamic systems (such as Geographic Information Systems) are also good recordkeeping systems

- How to overcome cultural and administrative barriers to good recordkeeping

Most important point

- Successful preservation of electronic records requires cooperation by all the players: administrators, IT personnel, access and privacy officers, records managers and archivists

www.interpares.org

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