

**Case Study Number:** 23

**System Type:** Document Management System

**Title:** Comprehensive Integrated Document Management System (CIDMS), Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, B.C. Region

**Institution or Agency:** Government of Canada

**Unit:** Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC), B.C. Region

**Case Study Conducted by:** Marnie Burnham, Jana Buhlmann (Vancouver Office, Government Records Branch, National Archives of Canada), Lisa Beitel, Lara Wilson (InterPARES Project, Graduate Research Assistants)

**Duration of Study:** August 8, 2000 to January 11, 2001 (Round 3 of Case Studies)

**Functional Responsibilities of Respondent(s):**

1. Supervising management of information.
2. Managing Comprehensive Integrated Document Management System (CIDMS)
3. Supervising Records Information Management and Systems

**Summary of System Information**

**Business Context:** Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) pursues initiatives to assist Aboriginal and Northern communities to overcome obstacles to their development and to help them access resources necessary to build and sustain viable communities. The British Columbia Regional Office is responsible for implementing departmental programs and policies within the region. The Comprehensive Integrated Document Management System (CIDMS) supports all business functions at INAC. Documents created and/ or maintained within CIDMS start the process of program delivery, including the dissemination of funds to bands, treaty negotiations, genealogical research and the investigation of specific land claims. The Information Management Group provides information management services to INAC, B.C. Region, managing information through its entire life cycle. This unit provides a broad spectrum of services and supports the execution of INAC's mandate through managing records and information required to support decision-making and program execution. Specifically, this unit maintains the corporate record, establishes records policy, and monitors recordkeeping practices.

INAC administers in whole or in part 69 statutes. The predominant piece of legislation is the Indian Act, which outlines the Department's functions and sphere of responsibility. As a federal body, INAC is subject to numerous pieces of legislation that impact records creation including the Financial Administration Act, the National Archives Act, the Access to Information Act, the Privacy Act, the Canada Evidence Act, the Income Tax Act, and the Constitution. In addition, INAC adheres to numerous government wide policies and standards including government security policies and the Management of Government Information Holdings.

A variety of officials are responsible for the business activity at CIDMS, including the Regional Director General, directors and managers.

**Description:**

**Form, Content, and Requirements:** While CIDMS has the capacity to generate and maintain a wide variety of records, the system is predominantly used to create correspondence. All incoming paper records are scanned into CIDMS with the exception of oversize materials. For outgoing correspondence, every system user has the authority to create every type of record. Any limitations on records creation are embodied within the business rules and the delegation of responsibilities specific to each unit within INAC. Records classifiers at Central Records are responsible for determining if an incoming paper document will be scanned into CIDMS.

CIDMS includes two core elements - the document and the document profile. These two elements are stored separately but are accessed simultaneously when a system user opens a document. Each document is stored on a hard drive as a separate file. Each document profile is maintained within a relational database. A field within the document profile provides a pointer to the storage location of the document. For incoming documents, the name of the author is

recorded in the author field of the document profile using natural language. For outgoing documents, the name of the author is included in the document profile. It is entered as an abbreviated ID but displays as the full name of the author. Access rights are in use to determine which users can view, retrieve, edit, copy, or delete a document.

While CIDMS has records retention and disposition capabilities, these features have not yet been implemented. The intention of INAC is to retain records as active for a period of between 6 months and 2 years. The exact time period will be influenced by the number of software upgrades within CIDMS during a given time period. Upgrades occur less than every six months.

INAC has integrated the ISO 9000 standard into CIDMS. INAC adheres to government wide information management policies and standards as well as departmental standards and business rules developed at both the National and Regional levels. Business rules have been developed to ensure that the content of the fields in the document profile is standardized and predictable. For example, when assigning a title to a document, the user is required to include both the Indian Band's proper name and its band number. While spelling of band names vary widely, the band number acts as a stable identifier.

**Characteristics and Appearance:** Records are kept in French and/or English, depending on the purpose for which the document was created and the intended recipient. The content of the record is predominantly words, numbers and scanned images (the content of the document is predominantly words, numbers and images; the content of the profile is words and numbers). The system has the capacity to store moving images, sound, and GIS data. Some incoming and outgoing documents have crests and letterhead; logos and crests are integrated into the body of the document at the discretion of the user. Logos predominantly take the form of letterhead in correspondence; letterhead can be in electronic or paper form. Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, B.C. Region, is the author; this is implied by their ownership and use of the system. An indication of author is not explicit within the document profile; an indication of authorship can be found within the content of the document (address, letterhead, qualification of signature, etc). When a document is saved and a profile created, the date is captured. Time is captured within the version control features of the system, not the profile, and can be found by accessing the document menu. Time and date of last edit are linked to each version through the document history feature of the document menu. When users make a document official, they may choose to update the date. However, for the most part, this does not occur. The date of creation in the document profile generally reflects the date of the first saved version.

Names of addressee(s) are included in the body of the document and the profile as "recipient". Recipients are INAC staff and clients. The names of intended receivers may be found within the content of the document as a "cc" notation (correspondence and e-mail). Subject matter is expressed within the "title" and "RIMS file number" fields in the profile. Business processes demand that the title must reflect accurately the subject content of the record. The system and users make annotations. The comments field in the document profile allows the writer to add any additional information about the document. Before a document is marked "official", any user with proper authority can alter the information within the fields. Once marked "official", information in a given field can only be altered or completed by Central Records Staff with appropriate level of authorization. Although not given a separate field in the document profile, CIDMS utilizes version control allowing for 99 versions and 26 subversions of each document. DOCS Open assigns a unique registration number to each document when a document profile is completed. This number simply reflects the order in which documents are saved within the system and in no way reflect activity or function.

**Technical Information:** The medium is both electronic and paper. CIDMS integrates scanning software, GroupWise, DOCS Open, RIMS, Cyberdocs, the intranet, and word processing software. Records within CIDMS are classified according to the sensitivity of the content of the document. Integrated into CIDMS is an access control list, which defines who has access to a document and their

user security clearance. If a user wishes to delete a document and/or version from the system, they must submit a request to the supervisor for review. Upon completion of review the supervisor forwards the request to the system administrators for further review and possible deletion. The Network implements security controls. CIDMS is backed up and stored off-site. In addition, incoming paper records are retained in a paper file after they have been scanned into CIDMS. INAC is in the process of developing a strategy for the long-term preservation of its electronic records, but such a transfer has not yet occurred.

Overview compiled by:  
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