Short Statement for Management

Management should consider the way their organizations create and control records in the changing operating environment.

All organizations, regardless of their size or the nature of their business create records from their work processes.

Organizations need to consider:

1) records as assets,
2) the adequacy of the records for the purpose for which they are made and kept, and
3) the management of their records for as long as they are needed.

Uses of records

Records are created as the organization conducts its business to facilitate that business, to keep a record of the what, who, when, how, and at what cost the organization's work is undertaken. The records created are kept as evidence of the business transactions:

- as accumulated information about the business which supports management, analysis and planning;
- as audit trails for accounting purposes;
- for use in disputes, litigation and legal protection;
- to enable the organization to meet its regulatory obligations.

Changing operating environment

Global factors drive organizations, both profit and non-profit, commercial and government, large and small, to reduce their costs and increase their responsiveness to the external environment. They include:

- Intensified commercial competition
- Technological change leading to e-commerce and e-government
- Speed of communications and dissemination of information through the internet
- Increasing complexity of the regulatory environment – local, national and international
- Increased expectations of citizens that organizations should operate in an accountable, transparent and socially responsible manner
- Heightened risk from the external environment including security threats and natural disasters.

Standards

In response to this, standards are available to improve creation and control of records and set benchmarks for organizations to assess the adequacy of their records.

The standards promote:

- Identification of responsibilities for records creation and control
- Standardised methods and best practice for creation and control of records
- Adoption of computerised and automated means of creating and managing records

- Integration of records creation and control with business processes
- Incorporation of records into organizations' information framework to enhance their value and encourage their use
- Retention for as long as the records are needed and timely destruction in accordance with legal requirements and society's expectations.