



Fostering Trust and Transparency in Governance: *Investigating and Addressing the Requirements for Building Integrity in Public Sector Information Systems in the ICT Environment*

New Research Project Underway

The International Records Management Trust has embarked on a research project aimed at addressing an issue affecting governments worldwide: the crucial importance of managing electronically generated records for development. The focus of the study will be pay and personnel records. Payroll control and procurement are the two major areas of government expenditure that are most vulnerable to misappropriation, and payroll control is, therefore, a highly significant issue for all governments. This focus will provide an opportunity to explore the management of paper records as inputs to financial and human resource management information systems, the management of electronic records as digital outputs and the links between them. It also will examine the degree to which the controls and authorisations that operated in paper-based systems in the past have been translated into the electronic working environment.

The primary geographical focus of the study is east and southern Africa, and two significant regional bodies are participating in the study: the Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (ESARBICA) and the East and Southern African Association of Accountants General (ESAAG). Five countries from the region are being invited to host case studies, and comparative studies will be carried out in three other countries, one in West Africa and two in Asia.

The findings should help to support the availability of accurate pay and establishment information for cross verification between computerised and paper-based systems and will provide the basis for developing good practice guidance and capacity building materials. The products, which will be available in the region and internationally without charge, will include:

- indicators for auditors to help define the strength of records controls
- a route map for moving from a paper-based to an electronic information environment
- good practice guidance (both generic and in relation to pay and establishment records) on policies, standards and resources required to capture and preserve electronic records
- four core training modules on the management of records in electronic form.

In a broader sense, the expected outcome of the research will be that:

- Governments will be in a position to build the infrastructure and capacity needed to manage electronic records as accurate and reliable evidence in electronic environments.
- Governments' ability to measure progress toward accountability will be enhanced.
- There will be a higher success rate of e-governance applications.

For further information, see <http://www.irmt.org/ResearchProj.html> or contact the Trust:

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