



# Performance reports

Performance reporting in this annual report is based on the outcomes and outputs structure as set out in the Portfolio Budget Statements/ Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements 2004–05.

The National Archives has one outcome:

A national archival collection, preserved and accessible for all Australians; the creation and management of Commonwealth records that support accountable government.

The outcome is the result or consequence of the actions taken by the Archives for the Australian community.

The structure of this report has been developed to improve readability and ensure a clear relationship between the planned achievements in the Portfolio Budget Statements/ Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements and the actual results achieved by the Archives.

Each report against the output covers effectiveness and quality and quantity measures.

## Output 1.1

Enable and promote best practice in the management of government records from the point of creation for as long as required to support the needs of government and the people.

### Strategies

In order to enable best practice management of government records, the Archives:

- provides standards, policies, guidelines and training about the creation, management and preservation of records; and
- authorises arrangements for the disposal and custody of Commonwealth records.

To ensure the long-term preservation of records of national archival value, the Archives:

- provides appropriate storage conditions;
- continually assesses and monitors the physical condition of the records; and
- undertakes both preventive preservation measures and conservation treatments for traditional and electronic formats.

## Performance

<b>Effectiveness</b>
<b>Measure</b>
Improved management of government records
<b>Indicator</b>
The management of government records to best practice

### Reorganisation for best practice

A change to the Archives' internal structure this year sharpened its focus on best practice in managing government records.

- The establishment of the Digital Government Branch reflects the priority the Archives gives to preserving digital government records; and recognises that advances in information technology and the concept of knowledge management have converged.
- An Agency Service Centre was established as a first point of contact for Australian Government officers to seek advice on the Archives' recordkeeping products.
- A new Branch took on responsibility for the Archives' preservation activities. The Preservation Branch's activities include large repackaging projects, technical conservation work, preservation of audiovisual material and the creation of digital images of records in the collection. The collection was also revalued as at 1 July 2005 at \$1 093 400 324.

The Archives continued its leading role in the Australasian Digital Recordkeeping Initiative (ADRI), which comprises all national, state and territory public records institutions in Australia and New Zealand. ADRI was formed to foster a uniform approach to issues relating to the preservation of digital records. A strategic plan identifying required standards and guidelines and a specification for an ADRI website were the key outcomes for 2004–05.

### Records management policies, guidelines and standards

Archives' standards and policies continue to be used as benchmarks for whole-of-government assessment by the Australian Public Service Commission in its *State of the Service* reports and the Australian National Audit Office in its recordkeeping audits.

The following guidelines, specifications and standards were issued or approved in 2004–05.

- *Guidelines for Using Selected Generic Activities from Keyword AAA in Agency Business Classification Schemes* (online) form Appendix 15 to *DIRKS – A Strategic Approach to Managing Business Information*. The guidelines assist agencies to classify and control records relating to their core functions.
- The *Functional Specifications for Electronic Records Management Systems Software* and *Functional Specifications for Recordkeeping Functionality in Business Information Systems Software* provide a generic set of recordkeeping requirements for digital records and information management systems. Each functional specification document is accompanied by a companion set of guidelines.

These publications assist Australian Government agencies in the purchase, design or upgrade of records and information management software. The specifications may assist in auditing, assessing and reviewing an agency's existing systems software.

In December 2004, the Archives convened an interdepartmental working party to develop a metadata standard for government email communications. The Government Chief Information Officers Committee approved the *Metadata standard for email communication by agencies* in June 2005. This standard is a subset of the Archives' *Recordkeeping Metadata Standard for Commonwealth Agencies*.



Kate Stenner of the Archives' Agency Service Centre providing recordkeeping advice.



Jessica Wignell inspects an item for preservation treatment.

### ***Recordkeeping website***

The Archives' recordkeeping website is the main published source of the *e-permanence* suite of recordkeeping policies and standards. To assist agencies in the best practice of records management, the Archives maintained and updated content relating to digital recordkeeping throughout the year.

In 2004–05, the Archives' recordkeeping website averaged 87 877 visits a month.

### **Agency compliance with metadata standards**

Metadata is information about records that is essential for their management, control and retrieval. All formal paper registry systems in the Australian Government comply with the Archives' *Recordkeeping Metadata Standard for Commonwealth Agencies*. Agencies are beginning to use the Archives' metadata standard for benchmarking during the transition from paper to digital recordkeeping systems.

Most of the commercial records management software products used by agencies assert compliance with the metadata standard. The Archives has not audited this compliance.

### **Disposal of government records**

The Archives uses a functions-based approach to appraising and authorising disposal of Commonwealth records. This approach analyses agency-specific functions and activities, establishes how long records for each function need to be kept and records decisions in disposal authorities.

In 2004–05 eight functions-based disposal authorities were issued. The Archives also introduced a more streamlined approach to enable Australian Government agencies to determine their recordkeeping needs, including records retention requirements.

### **Training and promotion**

#### ***Building recordkeeping capability***

In 2004–05 the Archives initiated a project to develop a learning and development framework for recordkeeping capabilities for Australian Public Service staff and Archives' staff.

#### ***Recordkeeping training***

The Archives' recordkeeping training package *Keep the Knowledge – Make a Record!* was popular with Australian Government agencies. The Archives distributed 25 copies of the electronic package and almost 4 000 printed

copies of the booklet and a ready-reference card.

The *Training for Commonwealth Recordkeepers* course covers records creation, sentencing, transfer, lending and destruction procedures. An initial review of the recordkeeping content of the course was completed during 2004–05. This resulted in the inclusion of various recordkeeping products such as the *Keep the Knowledge: Make a Record!* package. Further redevelopment of the course is planned.

The Archives developed DIRKS (Designing and Implementing Recordkeeping Systems) training packages to support agencies in the use of the DIRKS methodology, detailed in *DIRKS: A Strategic Approach to Managing Business Information*.

Strong demand for DIRKS training continued in 2004–05. The *Introduction to DIRKS* training course and workshops were presented in Canberra, Sydney and Brisbane. Information sessions about the DIRKS methodology were also presented to agencies in Hobart, Melbourne and Darwin.

#### **Government communications**

The Archives developed a communications strategy to increase awareness about its role as an expert advisor on government digital recordkeeping and to influence behavioural change in client agencies.

The Archives delivered strategic messages about roles and responsibilities at a range of seminars and conferences that explored digital issues. In addition to conference paper presentations, the Archives organised five education and information stands where visitors were made aware of advances in the digital recordkeeping environment. These were the International Congress on Archives (Vienna), Records Management Association Australasia (ACT), Institute of Public Administration Australia (ACT), Institute of Information Management (ACT) and Institute of Information Management (Vic).



The Archives' storage repository at Mitchell, Canberra.

#### **Storage of collection**

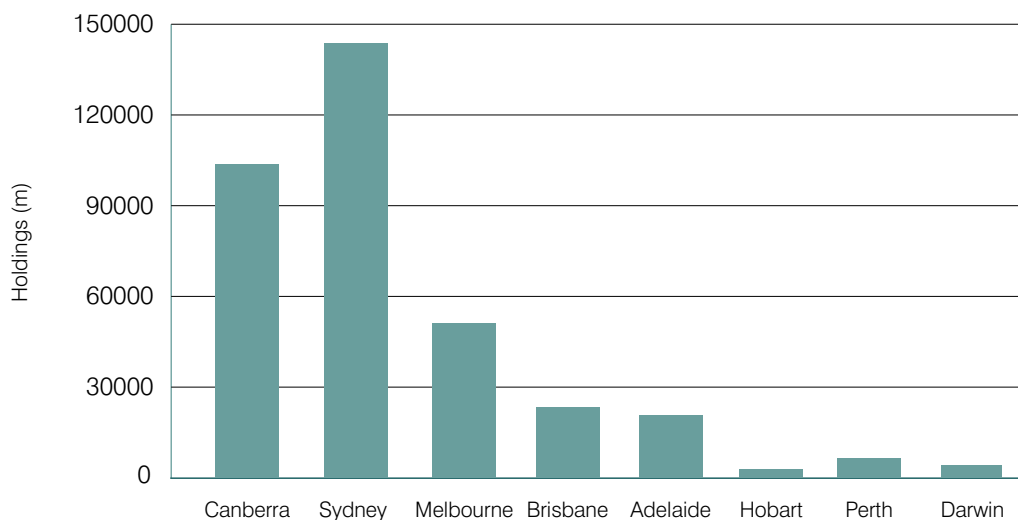
The proportion of records in the national archival collection stored in appropriate conditions increased from 88 per cent in 2003–04 to 89 per cent in 2004–05. The 1 per cent increase was the result of work undertaken during the year to re-house records in archival-quality folders and containers.

To be stored in appropriate conditions, records must be stored in archival-quality folders and boxes and located on shelving. The storage premises must have appropriate temperature and humidity controls and suitable fire and security protection. All records stored in Melbourne, Adelaide, Perth, Darwin and Brisbane are stored in airconditioned space.

In Canberra, Sydney and Hobart some records are stored in non-airconditioned space. The Archives considers that while the records in non-airconditioned space are in stable environments, it would be preferable for them to be stored in airconditioned repositories.

Existing storage in Canberra is very near capacity. The Archives is currently investigating ways of expanding and improving the overall storage environment. See Figure 3.

**Figure 3 – Holdings by office at 30 June 2005**



**Table 2 – Format of records held by the Archives, in metres**

Total holdings as at:	30 June 03	30 June 04	30 June 05
Paper files and documents	310 995	304 560	302 243
Bound volumes	18 349	18 005	18 089
Cartographic records	12 350	16 359	19 039
Audiovisual	13 075	13 174	13 988
Photographic	2 641	2 711	2 803
Audio	249	249	291
Microforms	5 751	817	824
Electronic records	110	126	126
Other format*	165	166	166

\* Other format includes three-dimensional records, index cards and textiles.

## **Preservation**

In February 2005, the Archives finalised the National Long-Term Collection Preservation Plan. The plan identifies key risks likely to affect the collection in the near future, and establishes strategies and priorities to eliminate these risks.

During the year preservation projects targeted a range of records, including:

- literary copyright registrations and exhibits, and Tariff Board records held in Canberra;
- naval correspondence and Army militia records held in Melbourne;
- alien registrations and World War I intelligence records held in Brisbane;
- large-format railway records held in Hobart;
- records of the North Australia Crown Law Office held in Darwin; and
- Post Office files and photographs held in Sydney.

The new fit-out of preservation work areas in the Archives' Sydney and Melbourne offices improved the Preservation Branch's capacity to undertake preservation tasks in accordance with current best practice and standards.

### ***Digital preservation activities***

The main focus of the Archives' digital preservation project was the construction of a prototype secure digital vault and associated work laboratory for digital records processing.

The prototype secure digital vault and hardware infrastructure are the culmination of more than three years of research and development, which has ensured delivery of a specialised, innovative and highly functional facility.

Work also continued on refining the digital preservation software platform. The software platform consists of three main applications developed by Archives' staff. Together these applications ensure that digital records maintain their integrity and authenticity while undergoing virus-checking, conversion and storage in a safe and secure repository.

The Archives has begun trial operations of the complete software and hardware infrastructure in preparation for digital records transfers from Australian Government agencies in the coming financial year.

### ***Audiovisual preservation activities***

Preservation work continued on early Commonwealth Film Unit/Film Australia productions, ABC productions, censorship, defence and Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electricity Authority film records.

The detailed restoration of the ABC series *Seven Little Australians* undertaken by the Archives in 2003–04 resulted in a DVD release of the series by ABC Enterprises. This was the first archival DVD release undertaken by the ABC.

The project to copy more than 2 000 hours of ABC radio program material from deteriorated audio tapes was completed this year. The Archives' audio and video copying programs are now focused on records at imminent risk of loss due to deterioration, such as u-matic videos and micro-cassettes.

A specialised low-temperature film and photographic vault for storing deteriorating film components was completed at Chester Hill, NSW. By storing the film at low temperatures, the deterioration is slowed down, hence extending the life of the items. More than 30 000 motion picture films and 250 000 photographic negatives are now stored in the new vault.

## Quality and quantity measures

Quality	Performance
Records management policies and guidelines, disposal authorisations and storage standards satisfy government stakeholders and the profession	Two independent assessments of Australian Government agency perceptions of the Archives indicated that target audiences hold the Archives' recordkeeping advice in high regard.
Proportion of government agencies compliant with Archives' metadata standards	All formal paper registry systems in the Australian Government comply with the <i>Recordkeeping Metadata Standard for Commonwealth Agencies</i> . Agencies are using the Archives' metadata standard for benchmarking purposes during the transition from paper to digital recordkeeping systems.
90 per cent of the collection appropriately stored	The proportion of records in the national archival collection stored in appropriate conditions increased from 88 per cent in 2003–04 to 89 per cent in 2004–05.
Quantity	Performance
Number of new and revised standards, policies and guidelines	One new guideline was developed and issued. Five new standards, policies and guidelines were developed. Five existing standards, policies and guidelines were revised. Five new Archives Advices were issued and seven were amended.
Number and proportion of total government functions with disposal coverage	Disposal authorities were issued for 34 per cent of all high-level functions performed by the Australian Government – an increase of 4 per cent since 30 June 2004.
Number of training courses and participants and promotional activities	A total of 22 training courses relating to recordkeeping were attended by 224 participants. Five education and information stands attracted 3 370 visitors.
1.4 million items receive preservation treatment in the year	In 2004–05, 1.1 million individual record items received preservation attention because they were damaged, degraded or identified to be at risk. In addition, preservation treatment processes for digital records were developed and tested in 2004–05 and will become operational in 2005–06.



Low-temperature vault for storing deteriorating film.



Geeta Jatania prepares to copy a magnetic soundtrack to a more stable polyester film.

## Output 1.2

Develop, maintain and promote a visible, known and accessible national collection that engages and informs the community; and foster appreciation of the role of archives in society.

### Strategies

To develop and manage its collection, the Archives:

- continually reviews its holdings;
- undertakes extensive arrangement and description of material; and
- manages RecordSearch, the primary repository of information about its collection, accessible through its website.

To enhance the accessibility of the collection, the Archives:

- mounts exhibitions, develops websites, and conducts events and education activities, and maintains an active publication program;
- maintains reading rooms in each state and territory capital city; and

- provides a national reference service for off-site researchers.

Members of the public can view original records, purchase photocopies or request that digital copies of selected collection material be placed on the Archives' website.

### Performance

#### Effectiveness

##### Measure

A visible, known and accessible archival collection

Archives' role appreciated

##### Indicator

Number of people who accessed the collection or information about it in a year

The public know and appreciate Archives' role in society

#### Documented collection

One means by which the Archives develops its collection is through the transfer of records from agencies. The records the Archives

**Table 3 – Records transferred to the Archives**

	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Number of transfers	711	889	903
Quantity of records transferred in shelf metres	6 296	3 828	2 380

**Table 4 – Records reviewed**

	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Shelf metres	22 805	8 118	8 219
Percentage of records in custody	6%	2%	2%

accepts are those that have been identified as 'retain as national archives' (RNA) material in accordance with a current disposal authority. A description of selected record transfers is at Appendix C. Table 3 lists quantities of records transferred to the Archives.

#### ***Increased information on RecordSearch***

Major repackaging and data entry projects undertaken on the Archives' database RecordSearch are listed at Appendix C. Where appropriate, government agency and record series descriptions on RecordSearch were also enhanced.

#### ***Volunteer repackaging of records***

The Archives acknowledges with gratitude the work of volunteers from the Heraldry and Genealogy Society of Canberra (listed at Appendix B), who are reboxing and refolding a very large series of individual court martial and war crimes case files created between 1901 and 1988. The volunteers have dealt with 25 000 record items in 2004–05.

#### ***Collection review project***

In 2004–05, the Archives reviewed a total of 8 219 shelf metres of records to identify records that no longer warranted a place in the collection.

#### ***Programs engaging the community***

##### ***Review of the publishing program***

In November 2004 the Archives concluded a review of its publishing program undertaken at

the request of the National Archives of Australia Advisory Council. The Council endorsed the recommendations of the review, urging that the Archives continue to fund a publishing program aimed at promoting its collection and improving access for all Australians.

A full list of Archives' publications released in 2004–05 is provided at Appendix D.

#### ***Guides***

*John Curtin: Guide to Archives of Australia's Prime Ministers* was launched by historian Professor Geoffrey Bolton on 4 November 2004. The guide was published jointly by the National Archives and the John Curtin Prime Ministerial Library. It is the fifth in the Prime Ministers guide series and the first undertaken in collaboration with another archival institution.

A new research guide was published in June 2005. *Chinese–Australian Journeys: Records on Travel, Migration and Settlement, 1860–1975* by Dr Paul Jones provides details on records in the Archives' collection related to Chinese people in Australia.

Subject guides to records in the Archives' collection are released in digital and print formats. The digital versions are available from the Archive's website. In 2004–05 website usage statistics showed continuing growth in the number of downloads of all online guides.



Guests at the launch of *Russian Anzacs in Australian History* were entertained with traditional music.



Some of the guests at the launch were descendants of 'Russian Anzacs'.

### **Books**

In April 2005, the Archives launched *Russian Anzacs in Australian History* by Elena Govor, co-published with University of NSW Press. Dr Govor used the Archives' World War I service records extensively in her research on Russian-born members of the First Australian Imperial Force. By June 2005 more than half of the print run of 1 200 had been sold.

### **Touring exhibitions**

- *Just Add Water: Schemes and Dreams for a Sunburnt Country* was developed and opened to the public. The exhibition explores water management in Australia across the last century. The Archives received a grant from Visions of Australia to help with development costs. Sponsorship or other support came from the Murray-Darling Basin Commission, ACTEW, Melbourne Water, South Australian Water, Natural Resources and Mines (Qld), Sydney Catchment Authority, Caroma Industries, CSIRO and the Bureau of Meteorology.
- *Wine! An Australian Social History* finished its three-year Australian tour.

- *Beacons by the Sea: Stories of Australian Lighthouses* continued its tour, visiting venues in South Australia, Tasmania and New South Wales.
- *Unexpected Archives: Introduced by Robyn Archer* visited art centres, museums, libraries and theatres throughout Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria.
- *It's a Dog's Life! Animals in the Public Service* began its tour with visits to Wagga Wagga and Sydney.

The tour of the last three of these exhibitions were supported by Visions of Australia. A list of exhibitions and visitor numbers is at Appendix E.

### **Visiting exhibitions**

Three exhibitions visited the Archives' Gallery:

- The *Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards*.
- *John Horbury Hunt 1838–1904* provided an insight into the life and breadth of the architectural work undertaken by this innovative architect.
- *The Policeman's Eye: Paul Foelsche's Photography and Ethnography* showed 19th century photographic images and objects



Most of the Archives' collection was created after Federation.

collected for ethnographic studies. This exhibition was supported by Visions of Australia.

A list of exhibitions and visitor numbers is at Appendix E.

### ***Events***

A number of Archives' offices held family history fairs. The Canberra fair featured a multicultural theme. Citizenship ceremonies on the day welcomed about 120 new Australian citizens.

The annual Grandkids Day in Canberra and open days at the Brisbane and Darwin offices attracted large numbers of visitors. The Archives received extensive exposure through displays at the Perth Royal Show and the Paniyiri Greek Festival in Brisbane, and through involvement in the Tasmanian Lighthouse Trail and Antarctic Midwinter Festival. These activities were successful in introducing the Archives and its collection to new audiences and demystifying the archival process.

A wide range of subjects was presented through Speaker's Corner, a regular lecture



Volunteers from the Heraldry and Genealogy Society of Canberra.

series presented at the National Archives in Canberra. A number of the presentations focused on themes of the current exhibitions.

### ***Regional visits***

The Archives conducted tours throughout Australia to promote awareness and use of the collection in regional areas. The areas visited included the Eyre Peninsula, Charters Towers, Bowen, Townsville, Launceston and Burnie. Local and family history groups, students and teachers benefited from the workshops and presentations.

### ***Education***

*Vrroom* (Virtual Reading Room) is a new education website that will deliver the Archives' collection to teachers and students at their desktop.

*Vrroom* was promoted through seminars involving key educators in all Australian capital cities. These seminars raised awareness of the pilot site and involved curriculum developers in helping to determine the content of *Vrroom*. The website will be launched in 2005. A second version is already being planned.



Artist Antonia Chaffey, great-granddaughter of William Chaffey (on screen, left), at the launch of *Just Add Water: Schemes and Dreams for a Sunburnt Country*.

The Archives continued to host visiting students and teachers, and to present development days for educational professionals.

#### ***Uncommon Lives website***

The *Uncommon Lives* website is a series on individual Australians whose records are held in our collection.

In 2004–05 the Archives launched a new feature about Dhakiyarr Wirrpanda on the *Uncommon Lives* website. In the 1930s, Dhakiyarr Wirrpanda, a Yolgnu man from Arnhem Land, was the first Aboriginal Australian to have a case tried in the High Court. Mr Wirrpanda won the appeal against his conviction in the Northern Territory for the murder of Constable Albert McColl.

The Archives holds an extensive collection of records on Dhakiyarr's case. Digital copies of the records of this significant case were created and uploaded to the website, making them available to more Australians.

*Uncommon Lives: 'Dhakiyarr Wirrpanda: Appeal for Justice'*, was launched by Dhakiyarr's grandson, Dhukal Wirrpanda; Northern Territory



More than 450 visitors attended a multicultural family history fair at the Archives in February.

Administrator Ted Egan and three other members of the Wirrpanda family attended the launch.

*Uncommon Lives* was highly commended in the Museums Australia Publications Design Awards 2005.

#### ***Our History website***

The Archives launched a new website, *Our History*, to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the appointment of Ian Maclean as the first Australian Government archivist. The site documents the development of the Archives' 60-year contribution to national and international archival practice.

#### **Reference inquiries**

The Archives helps the Australian community to access its collection by:

- maintaining reading rooms in Canberra, each state capital and Darwin for those wishing to undertake research;
- offering a remote reference and mail order copy service; and
- facilitating online research by providing access to the collection database



ABC newsreader Virginia Haussegger spoke to a packed house at the Archives in Canberra, May 2005.



Two-year-old Max Enright at the Archives' annual Grandkids Day in Canberra.

RecordSearch, and collection guides through the comprehensive National Archives' website.

RecordSearch contains information about items in the collection. A number of these items have been digitised and can be viewed using the RecordSearch database. See Table 5.

#### *Digitisation of records*

The Archives' digitisation-on-demand trial service continues to be well used by the Australian community. This service allows the public to request the creation of a digital copy of selected records held by the Archives in Canberra. The digital copy is made available through the Archives' online database RecordSearch. Making digital copies of archival records available online is an increasingly important method of improving the public's access to the Archives' collection.

During 2004–05 more than 4.2 million pages of digital images of collection material were made available for access through RecordSearch (nearly 1.5 million images made inhouse by the Archives and 2 750 000 made through

the World War I preservation project), bringing the total number of images available online to 8 638 107. These represent almost 450 000 complete record items available to the public digitally. Planning continues on proposals to extend the service nationally. See Table 5.

#### *Review of the reference service*

In September 2004, the Archives adopted a new pricing policy for photocopies of collection material and introduced an online order and payment system. This service has proved popular with researchers.

The Archives evaluated its new public reference telephone inquiry service, which has been operational for a year. The review showed that the Callex system had afforded efficiency gains in servicing reference enquiries.

Records proactively digitised in 2004–05 and made available through the RecordSearch database included:

- 1974 Cabinet records
- 1954 Cabinet notebooks
- Naval personnel records
- photographic material.

**Table 5 – Cumulative total of record items described and digitised**

	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
<b>RecordSearch</b>			
Item descriptions available to the public	4 959 078	5 372 479	6 115 617
Percentage increase since previous year	51%	8%	13%
Total no. of digitised pages	1 344 471	4 286 035	8 638 107
<b>PhotoSearch</b>			
Total no. of item descriptions	131 307	611 606	639 786
Total no. of digitised photographs	86 994	129 499	103 080*

\* Reduction was the result of changed reporting methods.

#### ***Access to defence service records***

In 2004–05, the Archives received nearly 40 000 requests for copies of Australian service personnel records. Media interest in events commemorating the 90th anniversary of the Gallipoli landing led to a dramatic increase in requests for copies of service records in April and May 2005. Not all requests were processed by 30 June 2005. The Archives responded to 86 per cent of requests within 30 days.

In April 2005, the Archives completed the descriptions of 377 000 World War I service records. This information was added to the RecordSearch database to enable researchers to find records using keyword searches. This was a significant achievement in the project to preserve the World War I service records. Digital images of over one-third of the World War I records are now available online. The Archives expects digital copies of the whole collection of World War I records will be available online in 2006.

#### ***Access to immigration records***

Senator the Hon. Amanda Vanstone launched the *Making Australia Home* service on 9 February 2005.

The service provides copies of immigration records to researchers on request in a presentation folder with useful information about related records. Since February 2005, the Archives has received 1 232 requests through the service.

#### ***Researcher education***

Throughout 2004–05, the Archives presented researcher education sessions in all states and territories. These sessions provided a unique opportunity for the Archives to foster appreciation for the role of archives in society. Training was provided to the:

- Caboolture Family History Research Group
- Curtin University Information Studies students
- LaTrobe University History students
- Dutch–Australian Genealogy Group.

Sessions provided an overview of the collection and research strategies, and training in the



Senator the Hon. Amanda Vanstone launching the kit *Making Australia Home*.



Students from Mt Isa School of the Air at the Archives' exhibitions in Canberra, July 2004.

use of the RecordSearch database and other tools for locating records. The sessions were tailored to the interests of the participants.

#### ***Access examination***

The *Archives Act 1983* provides a general right of access to Commonwealth records more than 30 years old. Before records are released for public access, Archives' staff examine them to ensure they are suitable for release.

The Act provides that the Archives should make decisions about the release of records within 90 days. During 2004–05, the Archives examined and notified decisions on 96 per cent of records within the statutory 90-day response time: 88 per cent were completed within 30 days.

Longer response times generally resulted when records were referred to agencies or overseas governments for advice, or where the record was not in the Archives' custody.

The Archives proactively examines records that are likely to be of high research use. In 2004–05, the Archives examined a range of material, including:

- 1975 Cabinet records
- 1955 Cabinet notebooks
- records relating to John Curtin's period as Prime Minister
- personal records of the Hon. Edward Gough Whitlam AC QC.

#### ***1974 Cabinet records release***

On 10 December 2004, the Archives invited members of the media to attend the embargoed release of the 1974 Cabinet documents. More than 40 representatives, including many senior correspondents from major newspapers and television stations, attended the briefing.

#### **Service Charter**

The National Archives Service Charter sets out Archives' services available to the public, the standards applying to each of those services, and mechanisms for comments and complaints. The charter applies to a range of services, including file retrieval, reference assistance, copying, publications, websites and exhibitions. The charter is available from all National Archives' offices and on the Archives' website at [www.naa.gov.au/about\\_us/service\\_charter/service\\_charter.html](http://www.naa.gov.au/about_us/service_charter/service_charter.html).

***Performance against the Service Charter standards***

**Our website will be available 98 per cent of the time. Planned downtime will be notified one day in advance.**

Our websites – naa.gov.au; foundingdocs.gov.au; archivenet.gov.au; primeministers.naa.gov.au; uncommonlives.naa.gov.au; whitlam.naa.gov.au; shop.naa.gov.au – were all available more than 98 per cent of the time.

**We will answer reference inquiries within 30 days, or advise researchers if there will be a delay.**

The Archives answered 94 per cent of reference inquiries within 30 days. In cases where a response took longer than 30 days, researchers were advised of the reasons for the delay and given an estimated response time.

**Our reference inquiry telephone number will be answered from 9 am to 5 pm each business day.**

The Archives' national reference service 1300 telephone number was staffed from 9 am to 5 pm each business day.

**Our reading rooms will be open from 9 am to 4 pm each weekday as a minimum.**

The Canberra reading room and Orientation Centre were open from 9 am to 5 pm Monday to Saturday. On Tuesdays the Canberra reading room remained open to 9 pm. All other reading rooms were open from 9 am to 4.30 pm weekdays. Reading rooms were also regularly open on Saturdays in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Adelaide.

**Records will be delivered within 30–90 minutes, except in Melbourne where records will be delivered within 24 to 48 hours, as the repository is distant from the reading room.**

More than 99 per cent of records were made available within the standard times in all Archives' reading rooms.

**Photocopy orders of less than 10 pages will be completed the same day. Orders of more than 10 pages will be completed within 14 working days.**

More than 99 per cent of orders less than 10 pages were completed on the same day and 99 per cent of larger orders were completed within 14 working days.

**We are required to make access decisions on Commonwealth records within 90 days.**

The Archives completed 96 per cent of access applications within 90 days.

**We will provide advice about the destruction of any record within 30 days.**

All inquiries about destroyed records were answered within 30 days by providing information on the provisions of the relevant disposal authority.

**We will respond to any complaint about our services within 10 working days.**

The Archives responded to 98 per cent of complaints about Archives' services within 10 days. The Archives maintains a national complaints register to ensure a consistent record of the complaint and its resolution is kept.

**Table 6 – Use by the public**

	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
<b>Reference inquiries</b>			
Remote reference inquiries	123 700	109 534	120 237
Visits to reading rooms	24 090	25 332	22 660
<b>Total reference inquiries</b>	<b>147 790</b>	<b>134 866</b>	<b>142 897</b>
New visitors to reading rooms	4 634	5 979	5 620
<b>Records made available</b>			
For remote users	110 568	112 641	125 817
In reading rooms	49 448	55 003	57 892
<b>Total</b>	<b>160 016</b>	<b>167 644</b>	<b>183 709</b>
<b>Records accessed in digital form on website</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>646 296</b>

**Table 7 – Use by Australian Government agencies**

	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
<b>Reference inquiries</b>			
Remote reference inquiries	826	787	747
Visits to reading rooms	899	1 121	948
<b>Total reference inquiries</b>	<b>1 725</b>	<b>1 908</b>	<b>1 695</b>
<b>Records made available</b>			
Issued for use on agency premises	31 839	57 925	55 079
In reading rooms	1 261	1 473	980
<b>Total</b>	<b>33 100</b>	<b>59 398</b>	<b>56 059</b>

**Table 8 – Records examined for release**

	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
<b>Total records examined for release</b>	<b>119 541</b>	<b>440 760</b>	<b>245 441</b>
Number of records sought by the public	32 353	36 832	37 218
Other records examined for public release	87 188	403 928	208 223
<b>Access decisions resulting from examination</b>			
Wholly released	112 026	435 143	240 927
Partially released	3 979	4 160	4 343
Withheld from public access	739	345	171
<b>other (eg closed period)</b>	<b>2 797</b>	<b>1 112</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Time taken to respond to applications made by the public</b>			
0–60 days	31 107 (94%)	34 906 (93%)	34 556 (93%)
More than 60 days	2 086 (6%)	2 223 (7%)	2 985 (7%)

**Table 9 – Internal reconsideration of access decisions**

	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
<b>Internal reconsideration applications received</b>			
	36	17	30
<b>Internal reconsideration applications processed</b>			
Decision maintained	7	8	7
Decision modified	25	8	20
Request withdrawn	3	1	25
<b>Time taken to respond to internal reconsideration applications</b>			
0–14 days	12 (38%)	10 (59%)	16 (31%)
More than 14 days	23 (62%)	7 (41%)	36 (69%)
<b>Internal reconsideration applications outstanding</b>			
Decision outstanding*	204	58**	36

\* Including applications outstanding from previous years.

\*\* Inactive applications pre-dating 1995 have been cancelled.

## Quality and quantity measures

Quality	Performance												
100 per cent of the collection is documented so that all items can be retrieved	<p>All of the Archives' collection can be identified through paper documentation and indexes that were prepared when the records were created or transferred to the Archives.</p> <p>Details of all record series and the agencies that created them are available on the RecordSearch database, which can be accessed via the Archives' website. During the year 2 212 969 items were added to RecordSearch, making a total of 7 997 651 items.</p>												
90 per cent of public customers rate services, programs and products as satisfactory	<p>A broad sample of programs and products, covering major events, presentations, exhibitions and education programs, were evaluated by the public and professionals in the field.</p> <p>The results consistently showed the average level of customer satisfaction to be above 90 per cent. Professionals, such as education curriculum developers from each state, have fully supported the Archives' initiatives in providing access to the national collection through online education programs.</p>												
Quantity	Performance												
Number of public programs projects delivered and number of customers	<p>A total of 408 programs and events were conducted around the nation, attracting 17 063 participants. State offices presented 124 programs and events to 5 462 attendees. In Canberra 284 programs and events attracted 12 401 visitors to the Archives.</p> <p><b>All Archives' websites showed increased use since 2003–04:</b></p> <table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td>Archives' corporate website</td> <td>4 771 252 unique visits (up 12.6%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Archives of Australia</i></td> <td>155 966 unique visits (up 13.2%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Documenting a Democracy</i></td> <td>437 073 unique visits (up 9.7%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Australia's Prime Ministers</i></td> <td>321 160 unique visits (up 11.7%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Uncommon Lives</i></td> <td>100 366 unique visits (up 249%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>eShop</td> <td>123 106 unique visits</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Archives' corporate website	4 771 252 unique visits (up 12.6%)	<i>Archives of Australia</i>	155 966 unique visits (up 13.2%)	<i>Documenting a Democracy</i>	437 073 unique visits (up 9.7%)	<i>Australia's Prime Ministers</i>	321 160 unique visits (up 11.7%)	<i>Uncommon Lives</i>	100 366 unique visits (up 249%)	eShop	123 106 unique visits
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Number of reference inquiries	<p>The Archives received 144 592 reference inquiries and responded to 94 per cent of inquiries within the 30-day standard of service.</p> <p>A total of 23 608 researchers visited the Archives' reading rooms to access the collection, a 10 per cent decrease on last year.</p> <p>The Archives received 120 984 inquiries through the remote reference and mail order copy service, an increase over the previous year. More than 83 per cent of contact with the public about the collection is now done through the remote reference service or via the Archives' website.</p> <p>A total of 646 296 pages of digital copies of collection material were accessed via the Archives' website.</p>												