

State Comptroller for the fees they collect for their various services. While they are authorized to pay salaries and other necessary expenses of their office out of the fees collected, any excess balance must be deposited in the State Treasury. In return, the State makes up the deficit in those offices where the fees collected do not cover necessary expenses. Before making expenditures for record equipment or services, they must obtain the approval of the Comptroller.

Representative examples of the requests for equipment and services reviewed are: microfilm cameras and readers, photostat cameras, quick-copy machines, roller shelving, filing equipment, indexing, and the rehabilitation of records. We give careful consideration to the problems underlying these requests, before making our recommendation to the Comptroller.

Earlier in this report, we mentioned the participation of our microfilm staff in the retirement of records through the substitution of microfilm copies for the original records. Prior to the acquisition of our records centers, microfilming was sometimes employed just to save space and filing equipment. Since then, it has generally been done only when the original would otherwise be retained indefinitely, or when a security copy is considered necessary. The other activities of this staff are perhaps less closely related to records management, but they are nevertheless an important part of the over-all program of the Hall of Records. Since 1953, the Commissioner of the Land Office has been provided with microfilm copies of the currently recorded county land records, and the Department of Assessments and Taxation with copies of current deeds for its tax map program. Our staff initially filmed these records in thirteen counties, but now most of these counties have their own microfilm equipment. However, in the counties which prepare their own microfilm copies or use the projection print program, the staff continues to supervise this work and inspect the completed film. They also film the proceedings of the General Assembly of Maryland after each legislative day, in order to provide insurance against loss or error by the printer or in transit. In addition, they have cooperated in the Hall of Records program of securing insurance copies of major county records series, both by filming a number of these series and by inspecting the microfilm copies of others prepared for us by the counties.

Interest in the records management program has not been confined entirely to Maryland. Each year we receive requests for information relating to our program or for assistance with records problems. Frequently these requests are from states which wish to establish programs of their own. It is our policy to share our experience in this field with others whose objectives are akin to ours and to encourage them to visit the Hall of Records to observe our program in operation whenever possible.