

or before they were expended. Requests for filing equipment were reviewed to insure that all possible records had been transferred to the Centers or destroyed and that the equipment thus released was utilized before authorizing the purchase of new equipment. Other types of equipment or services were examined to determine whether they were needed or were appropriate for the purpose.

We also made some progress in controlling the creation of records and in improving their management while in use. In some instances, the creation of certain records and the unnecessary duplication of others were eliminated, while improvements in filing practices, use of equipment, and labeling of files were recommended. In other instances, agencies asked our advice and assistance with specific record problems or asked us to make a comprehensive study of their records and office equipment and procedures. Often in the larger agencies, proposed changes in records systems are developed from studies conducted within the agency by their own personnel or by outside consultants. In such cases, we frequently are asked to participate in the studies or to review the proposals. For example, the Assistant Records Administrator was asked to serve on the Data Processing Coordinating Committee organized by the Comptroller of the Treasury. This Committee, composed of representatives from the Comptroller's office, the State Treasurer, State Auditor, Budget Bureau, Commissioner of Personnel and Hall of Records, was established to coordinate and review the study undertaken by the firm of Ernst & Ernst regarding the feasibility of converting certain operations of divisions of the Comptroller's department to electronic data processing. It is through such cooperative efforts as this that the records systems of tomorrow can best be developed.

Again this year we devoted considerable time to the records problems and space requirements of the Clerks of Court and Registers of Wills in the counties and in Baltimore City. These officials are State officers, elected locally. The fees they collect in excess of operating expenses are deposited in the State Treasury. They also must obtain the approval of the Comptroller of the Treasury before making any extraordinary expenditures. When these involve records equipment or services, the Comptroller seeks our advice.

Because of the rapid growth in population and the increasing demand for improved service, space for both staff and records is at a premium in most courthouses. Since the county is responsible for