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Maryland State Archives

DISCUSSION OF PERFORMANCE – UNITS OF MEASUREMENT – FY05

The Managing for Results (MFR) submission for the Maryland State Archives highlights critical functions of the agency and articulates a plan for achieving measurable results in the programs most important to our mission and patrons served.

Goals for the Archives' principle program (DA10.01) focus on the core requirements of the agency to:

- Serve as custodian of the State's permanent records and collections
- Describe government
- Provide intellectual interpretation

Fundamental Infrastructure. MFR and budget documents together define the fundamental infrastructure required for a successful Archives. Requirements include a physical infrastructure (storage requirements for permanent records) and information technology infrastructure. The IT infrastructure will provide:

- Archival storage for security backup of certain records, as well as for converted and electronic records
- Efficient and more cost effective delivery of records, and of important interpretive and analytical work
- Intellectual access to records in the form of search engines and finding aids

Electronic Records. The Archives has begun (with a very modest technology budget) to confront a revolution in the very nature of government records: how they are created, stored, and made accessible. Almost overnight, the paper world has been overtaken by the advent of the electronic record, a medium that has grown far faster than the ability of archives all over the world to cope with it. The move to automated systems at all levels of government presents this and all archives with enormous challenges and exciting opportunities. The challenges are to find the resources to store and make accessible the huge volume of electronic records created by government each day. If this can be done, then basic services and records that relate to the lives of every citizen, and the interaction between Maryland citizens and their government, will be available at the click of a mouse.

Electronic Archives. To meet these challenges and take advantage of the opportunities, since FY2002, the primary objective of the Archives has been to create and maintain a truly viable and permanent electronic archives. In partnership with the Maryland Judiciary, the Archives began work to scan and place online all available land record indices, all subdivision plats and condominium records in Maryland, and specific court records in danger of being lost.

These land record initiatives (*ELROI*, *mdlandrec.net*, & *plats.net*) represent just a portion of the thousands of records (many of them vital to the lives of our citizens) requiring preservation in electronic form. Yet, their success (well documented in the MFR) serves as a model for electronic government.

Archives – Custodian of the Permanent Record (Goal 1 of Program DA10.01)

The most basic requirement for record preservation is to move records from a costly (and often destructive) office environment to the secure and environmentally stable custody of the Archives. Inadequate space in which to safely house the material represents a huge obstacle to achieving this primary objective.

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Presently, in addition to the Hall of Records in Annapolis, the Archives maintains two adjunct facilities. Together, these two facilities offer a total current shelving capacity of 247,944 cubic feet. Holdings at all facilities now total 239,254 cubic feet. Nonetheless, despite the migration from paper to electronic records in government, the quantity of permanent records created by State and local government continues to grow at a rate of 3,800 cubic feet per year. In addition, the statewide records inventory conducted by the Department of General Services shows an additional 164,913 cubic feet of material housed with originating agencies.

Through the plan year, the Archives must continue to maximize the efficient use of existing space by constructing additional shelving.

At the close of FY2002, the Hall of Records in Annapolis was filled to capacity, housing 168,480 cubic feet of records (3.74 cubic feet of material per square foot of space). Likewise, the storage facility in Linthicum was filled to capacity housing 30,912 cubic feet of records (3.03 cubic feet of material per square foot of space). Even with the acquisition of 33,936 additional cubic feet of shelving capacity during FY2003, the remaining facility in Glen Burnie lacks a full complement of compact shelving. Currently, it houses only 39,862 cubic feet (1.99 cubic feet of material per square foot of space). Records transfers already scheduled through the end of calendar year 2003 will fill the facility's current shelving capacity of 55,776 cubic feet.

To accommodate agency demand for records transfers and meet minimum transfer requirements through FY2004, the Archives must acquire and construct 5,480 cubic feet of additional shelving capacity and lease an additional 10,000 square feet of space. In FY2005 to meet minimum transfer requirements, an additional 73,584 cubic feet of shelving will be needed and another 20,000 square feet of warehouse space will have to be leased.

Requirements for the information technology infrastructure continue to grow, despite a zeroing out of the IT budget for the Archives in FY2003 and FY2004, because performance in the area of providing access to government records through electronic means continues to exceed expectations.

In FY2003, the Archives received 60,840,966 requests for 1,082 gigabytes of data on our website, a 14% increase in requests and 134% increase in data available over FY2002. At the end of FY2003, some 9.5 million files (html, gif, tif, max, or jpeg) were made available to the public. Approximately 20% of the files are textual materials, such as *the Maryland Manual On-Line*, biographical research, educational materials, transcriptions, and finding aids derived from 9,359 database inventories, containing 21 million records. The balance of the site holds roughly 7.6 million images of records in Archives' custody. Although the Archives initiated its website in 1995, over 85% of the content has been placed in service during the last four years through two initiatives: the *Archives of Maryland Online*, and the *Digital-Image Reference System for Land Survey Subdivision, and Condominium Plats (plats.net)*. These two initiatives represent a significant achievement by ensuring long-term access to important records. The Archives' website will continue to grow significantly over the next few years with the advent of *mdlandrec.net*.

Using the Department of General Services records inventory to determine how many permanent records exist, the Archives can calculate how much electronic storage is needed to take on the existing permanent records in an imaged environment. The appraisal formula for conversion into an imaged environment would require 902,582 gigabytes of storage capacity. Recognizing the enormity of this requirement, the sensible approach that the Archives' plan contemplates is to identify those permanent records that, if made available online, would offer the highest return on investment. The new *mdlandrec.net* project, *A Digital-Image Retrieval System for Land Record Indices in Maryland* (a joint e-government pilot project of the Maryland Judiciary and the Maryland State Archives) will integrate with existing land record systems to efficiently allow the electronic retrieval of indexes and records. It also will provide a means by which to safeguard the permanent record. The benefits of this concept cannot be overstated. *Mdlandrec.net* will:

- o Provide seamless and immediate access to records for Maryland citizens and public officials
- o Reduce the workload of the Clerks of the Courts
- o Eliminate travel requirements to the Courts for many users

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At the end of FY2003, the Archives had stored over 1,082 gigabytes of electronic archival records. In FY2004, the Archives expects to take on over 24,054 gigabytes of land record images through the *mdlandrec.net* initiative. In FY2005, this number will increase by another 19,803 gigabytes. This joint partnership with the Judiciary will afford the electronic storage and servers necessary to provide access to and store the huge volume of land records and their indices.

Land records constitute one of the most voluminous, and arguably most important, record series created by government. Nearly 80% of all existing land records have been created since the end of World War II, and the pace of recordation is only increasing. The quantity of land record instruments recorded each year currently numbers in the millions. Even allowing for local variations, those circuit court clerks who now serve have been responsible collectively for the creation of nearly half of all existing land records. Clearly, the old model for creating and providing public access to these materials (a model developed before 1700 to meet minimal demand, and a model made only slightly more responsive to ever increasing demand for access by the introduction of microfilm), will not carry us through the 21st century.

The Maryland Judiciary and the Archives jointly share the responsibility for preserving and providing access to land records. *Plats.net*, *ELROI*, and *mdlandrec.net* serve as models of what can be accomplished through purposeful interagency cooperation to achieve common goals. These three initiatives not only provide the people of Maryland with more efficient and effective access to critical record series today, they also contribute directly to the preservation of these materials for the use of future generations by eliminating the need to subject original records to further damage from repeated handling.

Through successful implementation of the *plats.net*, *ELROI* and *mdlandrec.net* partnership, Maryland will become the first state in the nation to provide comprehensive, cost-effective, and efficient access to existing records relating to land use and ownership. This effort also will insure a means by which to preserve and make accessible those records that the Courts have identified as in danger of being lost forever. Finally, *mdlandrec.net* helps secure the State's significant investment in the digital imaging of land records by enabling older ELROI images to migrate to a cost-effective archival environment.

Tight budgets argue strenuously for improved access to records through the expansion of web-based delivery of reference services. The ratio of electronic to traditional delivery shows a small portion of our holdings (*plats*) being compared to the demand for the wide range of records requested in the traditional manner. Even so, *plats.net* as a model demonstrates the efficiency with which self-help digital delivery improves archival service, reduces costs, promotes preservation, and has the potential to produce revenue.

Staff levels, particularly in Reference Services, have fallen far below that necessary to properly respond to government and private patron requests. The Archives is in the process of converting many services to web-enabled self-help systems in order to handle some of the overwhelming demand. Unfortunately, the necessity of providing essential and immediately required certified copies of legal documents to citizens, or of returning required files to originating agencies, or of assisting patrons in person in the Search Room, cannot be met entirely with a digital solution. As a result, while many cultural inquiries can be handled through enhanced electronic services (which are dependant on an under-funded technology infrastructure), many more demands for traditional services are going unmet in both qualitative and quantitative terms.

In FY2003, the Archives severely cut back public and government services. The public Search Room reduced operating hours by more than 25%, cutting in-person record use and patronage. In FY2005, we hope to reopen the Search Room, Monday through Friday. Telephone reference service has been terminated completely, but the Archives still receives about half as many calls as before. Vital record research for nonlegal reasons was suspended from February until October 2003, but will resume with a digital self-help component.

To deal with some of these issues, the Archives launched several major digital initiatives to decentralize reference services and use technology to better serve our patrons. A vital records index will be available in FY2004 and expanded through FY2005. The most popular record series (especially indices) are being scanned for web-based publication for

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remote use. The courthouses have a new image based index and document delivery system for land records. The *plats.net* website continues to be a heavily used state-of-the art archival index and record delivery system. The *Archives of Maryland Online* publication series is heavily used by the public and takes advantage of the Internet to deliver documents through commonly used web search engines. These various projects are designed to more efficiently serve patrons and do so without the need for direct assistance from Archives staff. An on-line ordering system also should be put in place sometime in FY2005 to make ordering copies easier for patrons and staff.

Even with digital solutions, there is a need for the State to support basic reference services and to recruit, retain, and reward archivists with unique skills and knowledge. Homeland and personal security depend on this expert Archives staff. Social security payments, remarriage permission, employment, and gun permits all require the work of the Archives personnel. Any understanding of our past, as a society, as families, or as individuals requires an understanding of the permanent records and the ability to access them. Only through adequate State funding to the Archives is this possible.

Archives – Describing Government (Goal 2 DA10.01)

The Archives assists Maryland citizens and public officials with current and historical information about government through the *Maryland Manual On-Line* (*mdmanual.net*) and the *Maryland Manual* (book & cd editions). As the reliability of the *Maryland Manual On-Line* is recognized, its use as a source of government information increases. In FY2003, the number of hits on the server increased by 39% and the number of people looking at the *Manual* rose 38%. While the *Manual Maryland On-Line* now gives more information on county and municipal governments, basic information about local agencies, their functions, historical evolution, origin, personnel, reports (mandated), and election returns still needs to be provided, just as the *Manual* does for State government agencies.

In FY2003, more people accessed the *Maryland Manual On-Line* for more information. Yet, staff and resources remained unchanged. Use of and demands by the public for government information will continue to rise significantly in FY2004 and FY2005. Without additional resources, it will become increasingly difficult to maintain the quality and reliability of that information. Moreover, at a time when imagery in the electronic *Manual* increasingly documents Maryland government personnel, buildings, and sites, the *Manual* has no photographic resources with which to maintain the site.

The Archives also secures and provides access to publications and reports of Maryland State, county and municipal governments. Quick and easy access to these materials is vital to compilation of the *Maryland Manual On-Line*. Since General Fund appropriations to the State Publications Depository and Distribution Program stopped in the early 1990s, the Program has deteriorated. For this reason, in FY2005, the Archives will support the revival of the State Publications Depository and Distribution Program to acquire, preserve, describe, and make available online Maryland government publications and reports.

Archives – Providing Intellectual interpretation (Goal 3 DA10.01)

An important function of the Archives is to add value to the archival record by identifying, and interpreting records, and making the results accessible through electronically published historical compilations and analyses. In FY2003 areas of research made available through our website included a detailed history of amendments to the State constitutions, the presentation of a selection of significant court cases heard by the Maryland Judiciary, and additional biographies of distinguished Marylanders. By conducting such research, the Archives serves constituencies that include legislators, government agencies, teachers, students, genealogists, and other members of the general public.

Intellectual effort is a difficult area to quantify in a meaningful way. The measures offered here identify the number of complex research requests undertaken which require time, staff expertise, and detailed responses above and beyond that of a basic reference request. In the course of completing these requests, materials are added to our electronic archive, associated research databases, and finding aids, thus adding value to the record.

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For FY2003, the *Archives of Maryland Online* was able to put on the web nearly 50,000 pages of material related to the history of Maryland. The project started FY2003 by making available the annual reports of the State Archivist and the Hall of Records Commission. Another notable collection made available in 2003 was the complete run of Coleman Directories, detailing African-Americans living in Baltimore from 1913 to 1946. Baltimore city directories covering the years 1827-1857 also were scanned and converted to searchable text. In FY2003, the *Archives of Maryland Online* received an endowment of \$20,000 to make available the earliest county court records of the State. Work on the project began in March 2003 with Kent County criminal records from 1724 to 1728 being scanned and transcribed.

In FY2004, the work of making available online the primary historical records of the State will continue. Its focus will be to finish presenting the full text of all laws passed in the State of Maryland from 1647 to the present. At that time, in similar fashion, work will begin making accessible the proceedings of the House and Senate from 1800 to the present (some 500,000 pages). Work on these legislative proceedings will continue in FY2005.

Patrons increasingly are finding answers to their research questions from historical records identified and interpreted by research staff and posted on the Archives' website. In FY2004, a survey of users will gauge customer satisfaction with the reliability, accuracy, and completeness of our web-based research. Our methods of evaluating efficiency also will track e-mail, log phone calls, and distribute questionnaires to walk-in patrons.

The Archives legally is mandated to assist the Commission to Coordinate the Study, Commemoration, and Impact of Slavery's History and Legacy in Maryland. The Commission supports the preservation, cataloguing, and presentation of cultural resources relevant to Maryland's history and legacy of slavery. Currently, the Archives is conducting biographical research related to the Underground Railroad in Maryland; instituting on-line indexing of enslaved population records; and compiling a pool of over 6,000 documented cases of slave flights from the 1830s through the 1860s. For future online access, related documents are being transcribed into a searchable database (with digital images). Staff also is preserving digitally several important (often widely unavailable) resources for studying the history and legacy of slavery in Maryland. These include narratives and letters about the Underground Railroad, and directories of prominent blacks in the legal and business communities. In FY2003, this work was supported by a \$25,000 grant from the National Park Service, awarded to the Archives because of its unique and fresh perspective brought to this field of history. Also, in FY2003, the Archives won a competitive grant of \$250,665 from the U.S. Department of Education based on a proposal submitted to study the Underground Railroad in Maryland.

The Archives' internship program continues to be an important venue for providing professional archival and research training to high school and university students. During FY2003, applications to the program increased by nearly 90% and participation in student internships to meet community service requirements increased by 25%. Interns processed and interpreted archival collections through research, writing, electronic imaging, computer programming, and record stripping. The Archives also has benefited from the support of patrons who volunteer their time to help staff complete core program objectives. Volunteers answer reference questions; provide orientation for new researchers; assist patrons with online guides and indexes; and demonstrate the use of computers, microfilm readers, and reader printers. They also process records, keyboard data, and conduct group tours. In FY2003, volunteer hours increased by 47%, and the Archives continues to recruit. In addition, as a partner with the University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC), the Archives is participating in the Teaching American History in Maryland Program to mentor educators and assist them in using historical documents in their classrooms.

Conclusion

It is our mission to appraise, acquire, describe, preserve, and make electronically available the permanent records of the past, while providing reliable current information about Maryland State, county and municipal government. Since 1995, the Archives has led in the use of the web to deliver services electronically to Maryland citizens. In order to continue, it is imperative that information technology tools (hardware and software) critical to our mission be funded. Electronic storage is only one component of the IT support

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equipment dilemma. Without new and replacement computers, servers, and scanners and software upgrades necessary to perform our mission, the Archives will be forced to step backward into a traditional paper environment to the detriment of e-Government.

DA10.02 ARTISTIC PROPERTY

The State-owned art collections - the Annapolis Collection and the Peabody Collection - are valuable artistic and cultural assets to the State, its citizens, and the nation. Representing three centuries of Maryland history, as well as American and European art of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries collected by Baltimoreans, these collections are made accessible to the public through exhibitions within the Annapolis complex, and online through the Archives' website.

In FY2001, the General Assembly appropriated \$30,000 for a conservation assessment of the Annapolis Collection, and in FY2002, another \$30,000 to assess the Peabody Collection. Conducted in 2001, these surveys identified and prioritized the need for conservation in order to preserve the collections for future generations. Even though these assessments indicated a critical need for significant conservation within both collections, and while repeated requests for funding have been made for this purpose, no funding has been forthcoming. Furthermore, General Funds appropriated for limited conservation work outside the scope of the assessments have been deleted due to fiscal constraint measures. Therefore, for the foreseeable future, the program has no ability to act upon the conservation plan that was initially supported by the legislature. Efforts will be focused in FY2004 and FY2005 to obtain federal and/or private grant monies to apply toward the conservation of these valuable collections and prevent their further deterioration.