**National and Federal Archives: Results of a Survey of Category A Members of ICA**

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**Funding and Support**

This survey is a part of an ongoing project run by Prof. Junki Yaegashi, Faculty of Information at Shizuoka University, and funded by the Japanese Ministry of Education and Science. A similar survey was undertaken in 1988 by Paola Carrucci and presented at the XXVI Citra held in Madrid in 1989.

**Archives Statistics**

It is hard to find statistical information on archives. The Japan Libraries Association undertakes an annual statistical survey on the public libraries and college and university libraries in Japan. The Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Telecommunication and Post (Bureau for Statistics) is responsible for Japanese statistics and issues yearbooks. The UNESCO Institute for Statistics publishes statistics on education, science, culture, communication and social science every five years. It has been considering engaging itself in a World Survey on Archives.

**Statistics about Archives prepared by Archivists**

It is odd in these days of computerization that Paola Carrucci's 1989 report is the most recent world-wide comprehensive survey on national/federal archives. There is nothing available on the developments that shocked archives in the 1990s, such as computerization of archives services themselves or the introduction of electronic records, e-government and ICT in general.

**Do It Ourselves**

Archives should start collecting relevant data on archival institutions, archival organizations and archival legislation and training to enable comparative analysis. For a start the Study Group for Analysis of Archive Materials in the Wide Range of Scholarly Fields, headed by Shizuoka University and funded by the Japanese Ministry of Education and Science, decided to undertake a follow-up survey to the 1989 report. This initiative received support from ICA.

**Design of the Questionnaire**

The 2002 questionnaire is based on the 1988 questionnaire so that the results can be compared. It is divided into 8 subjects:

I.      Respondents (Q.1,2);
II.     Laws and Legislation (Q.4-7);
III.    Organizational Structure (Q. 8-10);
IV.     Buildings (Q. 12-13);
V.      Archive Staff Members (Q. 14-17);
VI.     Archive Holdings (Q. 18-22);
VII.    Electronic Records (Q. 24-30)
VIII.   Future Improvements (Q.31).

The 8-page questionnaire in paper format was sent out in September 2002 to all Category A members of ICA (210 addresses) on the list provided by the ICA secretariat.

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**The Respondents**

Although the official deadline was November 30, 2001 we allowed for some delay and by June 2002, 72 responses had arrived in my office (see the final list below). May I take this opportunity to express my deepest gratitude to the individuals and institutions responding.

### Respondents 2001 Survey by DJI

As of October 30, 2002

| EUROPE 41 | | ASIA/PACIFIC 10 |
|---|---|---|
| Austria | Russian State Archives of Literature and Art | Australia |
| Belgium | Russian State Naval Archives | P. R. China |
| Republic of Belarus | Russian State Archive of Science and Technical Documents | Hong Kong, China |
| Bulgaria | | India |
| Croatia | | Japan |
| Czech Republic | Russian State Archive of Social and Political History | Myanmar |
| Estonia | | Nepal |
| Finland | Russian Federation, Republic of Tatarstan | Pakistan |
| France | | Vietnam, Socialist Republic of |
| Federal Republic of Germany | Russian Federation, Udmurt Republic | Sri Lanka |
| FRG Bundesländer | Scotland, UK | |
|   Bavaria | Slovak Republic | AMERICA 10 |
|   Berlin | Sweden | Barbados |
|   Hamburg | Switzerland | Bermuda |
|   Hessen | Federal Republic of Yugoslavia | Brazil |
|   Rheinland-Pfaltz, | FR Yugoslavia / Republic of Montenegro | Canada |
|   Free State of Saxony(Dresden, Chemnitz, Freiburg, Leiptzig) | | Canada, New Brunswick |
|   Schleswig-Holstein | AFRICA 12 | Cuba |
|   Speyer | Benin Republic | Dominica |
| Greece | Cabo Verde | Mexico |
| Hungary | The Gambia | |
| Latvia | Ghana | |
| Liechtenstein | Kenya | |
| Lithuania | Malawi | |
| Luxembourg | Mauritius | |
| Republic of Macedonia | Namibia | |
| Malta | Rwanda | |
| Poland | South Africa | |
| Portugal | Swaziland | |
| Spain, Andalucia | | |

**A brief summary of some of the results**

(Q 8-10) Parent organizations of the national archival institutions varied from one country to another. Among the various Ministries involved, culture and education were found to be the predominant parent organization at the present time. However, Ministries of the Interior, Communications, or Prime Ministers' offices were also numerically significant, especially among the countries which were formerly under the umbrella of the Soviet Union.

(Q 11-30) Data on buildings, staff members, holdings, and electronic records should be collected as a regular ICA activity, so that people, business sectors, research institutions, and governments of all levels are able to obtain basic statistics from reliable sources, possibly in the form of an ICA Yearbook.

(Q 31) Few respondents think their institution satisfactory. The publication of reliable and regularly updated archival statistics would help archives authorities to build a stronger case vis-à-vis their government.

**Electronic Records: Present State of Play**

The 8 page questionnaire brought a tremendous amount of information from all over the world. Out of all the information received, I decided to focus on electronic records. As archivists we have been discussing electronic records and their long term preservation, and now this survey has provided timely information on the handling of electronic records in archive institutions worldwide.

**IT Policy and the Government**

Does your government issue an IT policy?   52 out of 75 respondents answered YES, and 9 of them said NO.   In addition 14 blanks were found.   Approximately two third of the respondents' countries/states issue an IT policy, and 15 % of them do not, and 20% were not clear about this topic.

| Issue an IT policy? | yes | no | blank |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 52 | 9 | 14 |

**Were there any electronic records included in recent acquisitions?**

For more than a decade archivists have been discussing new archives, in particular electronic records. And do we receive electronic records into our archive institutions nowadays?   25 out of 75 respondent answered YES, whereas 38 answered NO, and 12 left a blank column.

The numbers set out below indicate that electronic records are not yet a major acquisition for archive institutions.   Only one third of the respondents received them in recent acquisitions, and half of them do not accession electronic records into their archive institutions.   On the other hand many governments release a huge quantity of information through their websites, for example.   Who takes care of such information on the website?   And we should also think about our email communications and their archiving.

*Electronic Records included in recent acquisitions*

| Yes | No | blank |
|---|---|---|
| 25 | 38 | 12 |

**Electronic Records Holdings**

Now let us consider what kinds of electronic records are already with us in the archives.   One question focused on the type of media which are understood as electronic records in general, while the other focused on the contents of the records.   The result has been arranged into the two tables below.

As you see in the two tables, the blanks are always the largest items in the tables.   While arranging the first tables, I gained the impression that terms such as "cartographic" were not well understood by archivists.

The fact that there are many blanks in the two tables is significant.    From these two tables I should judge that about. 20 respondents are familiar with electronic records in the course of their daily work. But the remainder, of about 40 to 50 respondents, is not familiar with the handling of electronic records as part of their archive holdings.

*Electronic Records Holdings*

*Media Type*

| | MT | disks | CD | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 19 | 19 | 20 | 7 |
| No | 14 | 13 | 11 | 1 |
| Blank | 42 | 43 | 44 | 67 |

*Contents Types*

| | data-base | public documents | video | sound | case files | carto-graphic | email | web-site | other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 22 | 25 | 22 | 19 | 13 | 8 | 9 | 9 | 4 com-ments |
| No | 6 | 9 | 8 | 6 | 7 | 9 | 13 | 11 | |
| blank | 47 | 50 | 53 | 50 | 55 | 58 | 53 | 55 | |

Many archive institutions have various electronic media as their holdings, and the table below indicates the name and type of electronic medium currently kept among archival holdings. On the other hand such media are also used as the electronic archiving materials.

**Current Electronic Holdings**

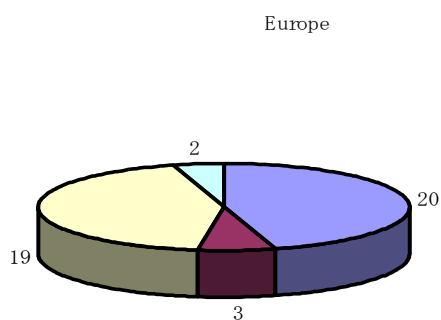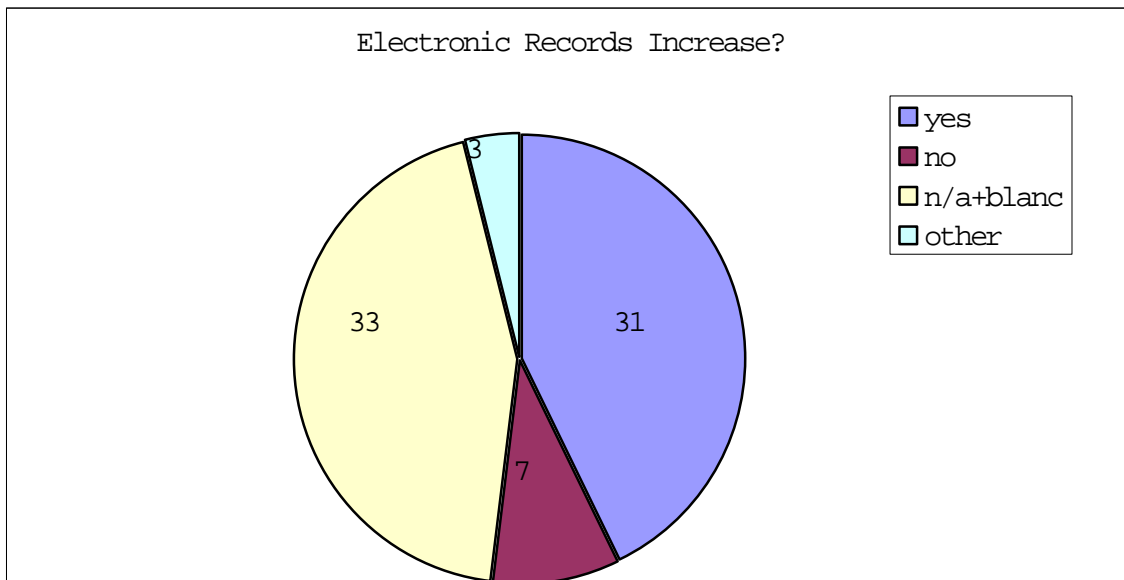The following table gives examples of the electronic holdings currently kept in the archive institutions of the world.

|  | Magnetic Tape | Disks | CD-ROM | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Canada | 120x8mm. 8mm helical scan, 240 gigabytes total | 45x1.44MB; 3.5"floppy | 12x700MB; ISO 9660 |  |
| Canada New Brunswick |  |  | CD-R/650 MB 9(variety of data) |  |
| Cuba |  | Type/size 18 | Type/size 462 |  |
| Germany; Federal Republic of | Gtracks/ 1/2inch (5) | Floppy 3.5 inch (78) | CD-R (1) | IBM compatible Magnetic Tape Cartridges 34801349013490E (768) Qip-Disk 130MB (1) |
| Germany; Free State of Saxony, Dresden |  |  | Type/size 64 KB |  |
| Republic of Tatarstan; Russia |  | 45,18Mb |  |  |
| Scotland, UK |  |  |  | CD-R Hewlett-Packard C4437A, 650 Megabyte capacity: 2 CD-Rs, Total of 810 Megabytes of data |
| Sweden | 3480-cartridges 564(cap=500MB) Exatyle-cassette 1(cap=10GB) |  |  |  |
| Switzerland | 10 GB database records; 10 TB video sequences |  |  |  |
| Malawi | Video:700 | V3'/2 floppy: 10 |  | Sound Tapes: 6000 |
| Mauritius |  | Type/size 2 | Type/size 2 |  |

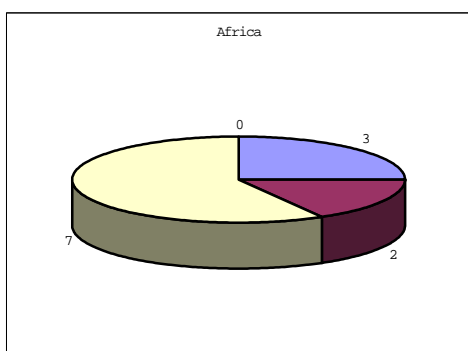| | Magnetic Tape | Disks | CD-ROM | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Namibia | 300 000 titles of files/ documents, books, photos, maps, audio tapes, films, video tapes | | | |
| South Africa | (casette)5000 | | | Dicta belts 50000 videos (beta cam +VHS) 5000 |
| Swaziland | | (Type/size) F8072680E1 (Quantity)   10 30 | (Type/size) 55k002096195A20 (Quantity)15 | |
| Pakistan | (Type/size) 60 Misc. audio cassettes (Quantity)   300 Nos. | | | |
| Sri Lanka | 3.75 7.5    380 | D500A; D504A; D505A   6 | Data life plus CD-R, 650 M.B.   120 | <Video Cassettes> U. Matic: 02; V.H.S.: 25; Samsung C.60:1000; T.D.K. C.90 500 |

**Is the quantity of electronic records increasing?**

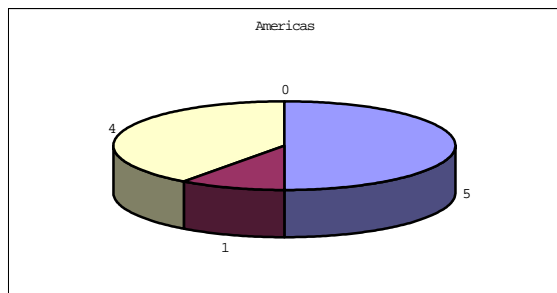| | yes | no | blank; n/a | other | total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Africa | 3 | 2 | 7 | 0 | 12 |
| Asia/Pacific | 4 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 9 |
| Europe | 20 | 3 | 19 | 2 | 44 |
| Whole America | 5 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 10 |
| Total | 31 | 7 | 28 | 3 | 75 |

The quantity of electronic records transferred into archive institutions is increasing.   Almost 50 % of the respondents think so.   The author finds it difficult to understand why so many respondents kept the column blank.   The following charts and graphs provide a more detailed break down for the four regions of the world.

## Electronic Records Increase?

Legend:
- yes
- no
- n/a+blanc
- other

33 | 31 | 7 | 3
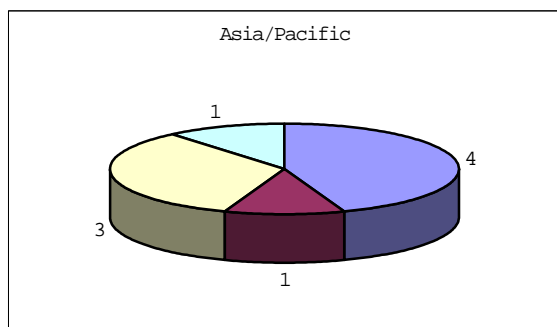
Europe

20 | 3 | 19 | 2

In the case of Europe 20   respondents think that electronic records are increasing.    At the same time there was almost the same number of blank answers.   In European countries electronic records   are already widespread.   They provide an essential tool in daily lives and their archiving    is also a very natural behavior.

Africa

0 | 3 | 7 | 2

In the African countries' responses 58 percent left the column blank. One quarter said "yes" and 17percent said "no." Some countries receive electronic records, and others do not. Those electronic records are mostly video tapes, sound tapes.   Floppy disks and CD-ROM are also reported.
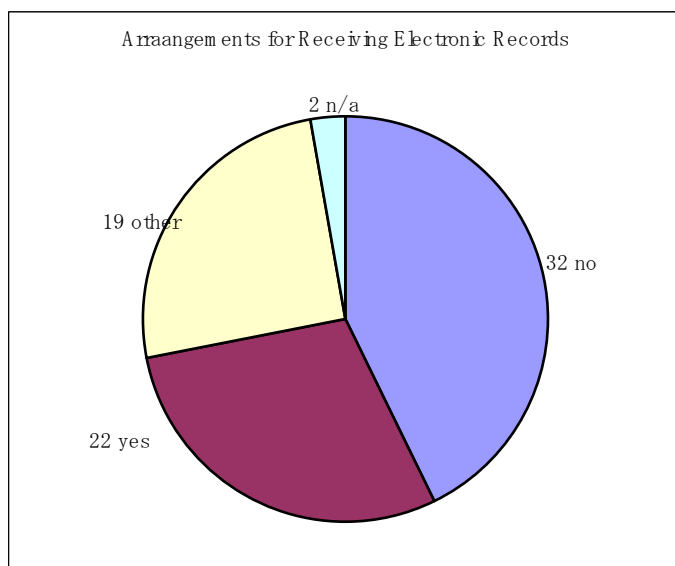
6

Americas

50 % of the American countries also receive electronic records. One third of the respondents in this region kept the column blank.



Asia/Pacific

Asia/Pacific responses happened to yield the most similar results to the total worldwide sample. Some countries in this region have advanced computing systems, but not all of them.

**Arrangements for Receiving Electronic Records**



A little less than 50 percent of the respondents do not make any special arrangements for receiving Electronic Records into their archive institutions. It is not easy to evaluate whether professional archivists already have the capacity to receive electronic records. In the case of Australia there were question marks in the column. Receiving electronic records into their archive institutions may form part of their ordinary work and probably they do not need to make any special arrangements. Such trends were found among the comments indicated below.
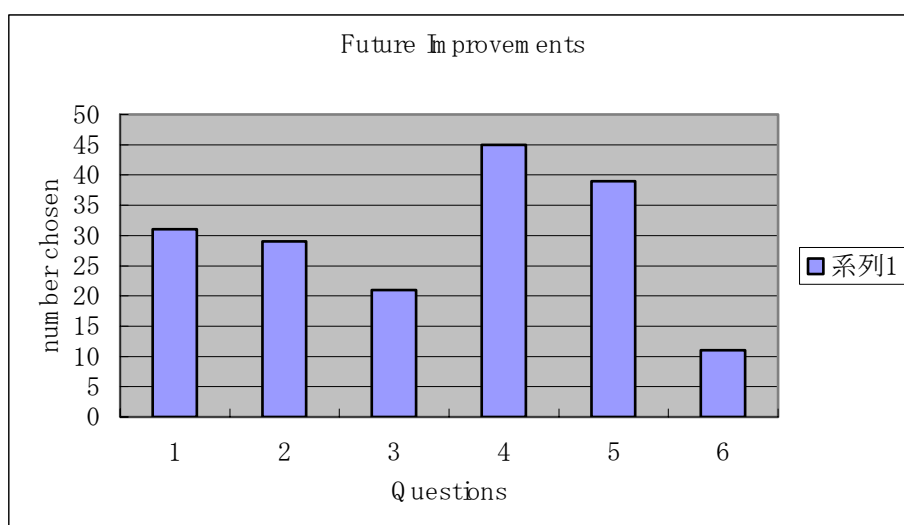
**Comments**

| some PDF, due to receive some public documents soon, initially in the form of images | Scotland, UK |
|---|---|
| official publications | Germany, Federal Republic of |
| office systems including spreadsheets presentations, statistical surveys | Canada |

**Future Improvements:**

Respondents were asked to choose up to two points from 6 points for their future improvements. The points indicated were:

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Amending Legislative Structure | Enlarge/restructure the Organization | Enlarge/restructure the Business of the archive institution | Improve professional knowledge of the staff | Increase of the number of staff | Proceed to the out-sourcing of the business |



Most of the respondents were so reluctant to choose more than two points but in some cases all six points were chosen. Improving the professional knowledge of staff (number 4) and increasing their number(number 5) were the two points most frequently chosen. Most archives institutions need more staff and hope that their staff will have more professional knowledge to carry out their work.

**Conclusion**

In the course of this research survey I found many difficulties in understanding terms. Because my mother tongue is not English I always need to translate the terms and meanings into English or into my mother tongue. This research survey represents a huge bulk of translation. Most of the respondents have their own mother tongue, and they made translations into English. English is not my mother tongue, so I in turn had to translate the responses. There must have been repeated translations before the respondents filled up the questionnaire. Some terms I have used in the questionnaire might have been strange and/or unfamiliar to the respondents.

I understand that archives are the key tool for information sharing during the passage of time. The recorded paper or electronic media must be legible far into the future. It means that the record we create today must be seen and readable for the people who will consult the archives 50 years or 100 years into the future. We must be careful to use understandable terms and words when we write anything of archival value. To avoid terminological problems the completion of the Archive Terminology Project of ICA, which started about a decade ago, would be warmly welcomed.