

Data Analysis Template: Sample Customised for Anonymous Archival Authority

NB: There is inevitable overlap between the three broad categories of workarounds, genres and infrastructure. The important thing is to note down information in one or the other of these categories – there’s no need to repeat unless thinking of it from a different perspective highlights different dimensions of information culture.

1. Workarounds

- What unofficial systems and/or tools do people use? How do they ‘customise’ existing systems?

1. Use of shadow information repositories (paper and/or digital) in regional offices

2. Personal digital copies kept in addition to those filed in the EDRMS

3. Personal paper files maintained for classified information

4. Use of Outlook folders for emails rather than the EDRMS

5. Some departments over classifying (i.e. applying security classifications when unnecessary) records.

6. Use of shared drive environment rather than the EDRMS

7. Staff more likely to ask colleagues for information rather than search the EDRMS

- Why?

1. Efficiency – network access very slow and unreliable

2. Need for speedy response, to have all information at ones fingertips when required.

3. EDRMS perceived as not sufficiently secure

4. The amount of effort required to add emails to the EDRMS and uncertainty about who's responsible, and what should happen to attachments

5. Hoarding, reluctance to share information with others

6. Resistance to sharing information beyond immediate workgroup

7. Trust in colleagues' knowledge, and EDRMS not perceived as effective information retrieval tool

- What's the impact of these workarounds? Can they/should they be further developed?

Examples 1-7 reflect resistance in some areas of AAA to using the EDRMS, for a variety of reasons. Impact is that the EDRMS is not fully comprehensive, there is potential for embarrassment e.g. in assuming there has been no previous contact with a particular person such as a politician.

- Analysis – what insight do these workarounds provide into information culture?

1. Issues with regional ICT infrastructure (Level 1) and possibly also corporate ICT governance (Level 3)

2. Mistrust of the EDRMS (Level 3)

3. and 4. Reluctance to share information (Level 1).

7. Trust in people as sources of information (Level 1)

2. Genres (includes documents and meetings)

- What are the main/distinctive genres that get talked about? (nb: comprehensive list not necessary)
 - 1. Non text file formats or niche software products (e.g. Spreadsheets, Visio, MS Project, design files)*
 - 2. 'Siloed' case files for agencies.*
 - 3. Emails and attachments*

4. Registers
5. Weekly department meetings

- What, where, how and why are they used, who uses them?

1. Used according to need in different areas – all represent key tools for the areas concerned, but for one reason or another problematic to manage in the EDRMS so likely to be kept in separate information stores.

2. Files for each agency established by branches according to the particular nature of the transactions occurring between the branch and the agency, making it difficult to gain holistic overview of interactions between AAA and a specific agency. Often easier to ask people to contribute to a brief, rather than trying to interrogate EDRMS for relevant records.

3. Emails – knowing what to capture and when to capture. Attachments often filed with the email – i.e. still embedded in the email, rather than as separate document. Also, people may still email a document for discussion or comment rather than use the EDRMS as tool to facilitate collaboration.

4. Hardcopy Registers – used extensively by archivists in various departments to record data such as temperature, reading room requests, items processed etc.

5. Employees greatly enjoy weekly meetings where specific projects are discussed. The meetings are informal (no agenda, no minutes) and only decisions are recorded.

- Analysis: What do the genres tell us about the information culture?

1. EDRMS can only provide a partial view of the organization, and will not encompass non-text records. Information related competencies (Level 2), people need to have better understanding of file complexity and size, and consequences for network operations.

2. Information flow – upwards and downwards, not sideways (Level 1). Reliance on people as sources of information. (level 1). Reluctance to share information (level 1).

3. Information related competencies – training needed specifically focused on handling emails and using the EDRMS as a tool to facilitate collaborative working (level 2)

4. Information related competencies – training required to increase level of understanding of office software functionality (level 2)

5. Information preferences – people prefer informal communication (level 1)

3. Infrastructure

- What formal systems/tools/resources exist to manage information? (e.g. filing system, EDRMS, collection etc)

1. EDRMS is positioned as the heart of information management at AAA.

2. Shared drives, used exclusively by some sections

3. Formal RM training programmes – now online

4. Mobile working not well supported – e.g. mobile devices only issued for senior management and wi-fi patchy

- Analysis: What does the infrastructure tell us about information culture?

1. Ambivalence to EDRMS – most actively resist using it. (Level 1 and level 2 factors).

2. Reluctance to share information (level 1)

3. Have been problems with uptake of training, hence move to online. Difficult to get employees to engage with training.(Level 2)

5. Ambiguity – tools to support transition to digital working not implemented (level 3)