

2019–2020
ANNUAL
REPORT



Communication Objective

This Annual Report provides information about Queensland State Archives' non-financial performance for 2019–20. It has been prepared in accordance with the *Public Records Act 2002*.

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Queensland State Archives Annual Report 2019–20

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Online open data reporting

Content for the following annual reporting requirements can also be accessed on the department's website at

<http://www.hpw.qld.gov.au> and the Queensland Government data website at <https://data.qld.gov.au/>:

- consultancies
- overseas travel
- Queensland Languages Services Policy.



Department of
Housing and Public Works

30 September 2020

The Honourable Mick de Brenni MP
Minister for Housing and Public Works
Minister for Digital Technology
Minister for Sport
1 William Street
Brisbane, QLD 4000

Dear Minister

I am pleased to submit for presentation to Parliament the Annual Report 2019–20 for Queensland State Archives. This document is the 18th Annual Report submitted to Parliament in accordance with the *Public Records Act 2002*.

Yours sincerely

Mr Mike Summerell
Executive Director & State Archivist
Queensland State Archives
Department of Housing and Public Works

An Annual Report from the State Archivist of Queensland is required under section 56 of the *Public Records Act 2002*.

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Our Agency

Message from the Executive Director & State Archivist

The past 12 months have been another year of innovation and transformation for Queensland State Archives (QSA). In 2016 QSA set itself the goal of being recognised globally as one of the most innovative archives, and strong progress has been made since, with 2019–20 being a significant year in that journey. Innovation has become the cornerstone of QSA's approach with this year's results reflecting the amazing ideas developed and implemented across the organisation. I'm enormously proud of the incredible work the teams here deliver every day. We are hugely appreciative for the support we get from the Public Records Review Committee and the Department of Housing and Public Works in being able to do what we have done over the last few years.

A key strategic focus since 2016 has been to provide new ways for the people of Queensland to experience our collection. Archives are a key institution in promoting the transparency and accountability of any government and a key measure of success is the number of records that are accessed by the public. In 2015–16 only 67,000 records were accessed. In 2017–18 this rose to over 3.5 million records and in 2018–19 this rose again to 6 million records being accessed. 2019–20 has seen another leap in this incredible engagement with over 14 million records being accessed by both Queenslanders and our global community. The popularity of our digital channels has been a staggering success and the rate of growth is ever increasing. The digitisation of our physical collection is a huge priority for us going forward with the aim of making our older records available to all, no matter their location.

The challenge presented by the COVID-19 crisis saw the benefits of our culture of agility, adaptability and responsiveness come to the fore. Safety of staff and customers were prioritised and we adapted our operations and services to online delivery where possible. The closure of our public Reading Room in March emphasised the importance of digitising our physical collection. It was notable that records accessed through digital channels reached unprecedented levels in the following months. Our Reading Room opened again to the public in July 2020, accompanied by a number of enhancements to how the public and agencies interacted with our collection. These enhancements are the first stage of the Digital Archive Program going live. Over the next two years it is hoped that our ability to receive and provide access to born digital permanent value public records will be realised.

Over the last four years QSA's key performance metrics have been transformed. In 2015–16 the cost per record accessed was a startling \$170 per record. In 2019–20 this has dropped to close to \$1 per record, with access through digital channels the primary driver of these efficiencies. What is staggering is that less than one per cent of our physical collection has actually been digitised. There are significant challenges to digitising our physical collection. It is hugely labour intensive and requires significant data storage, however our vision remains to greatly expand the number of our physical records digitised and available to members of the public, again no matter their location.

We have once again invested in transforming the experience of people coming to our facility in Runcorn and significant improvements are planned again in 2020–21. However a major focus for 2020–21 and onwards is how we take our collections to the other parts of Queensland. Our plans for next year are innovative and exciting as we prioritise regional engagement and transform the onsite experience.

A further highlight for the year was our continuing transformation in the Workplace Culture Space. Over the last four years we have made our culture of Kindness and Innovation the centrepiece of everything we do. There is no doubt it is the key to all of our success. It was wonderful this year to see our culture translate into exceptional results in the annual Working for Queensland Survey in 2019. Positive Staff Engagement was at 86% – 28% points higher than the Queensland Public Service average. QSA's perception as an organisation of innovation was emphasised with 90% of staff responding that QSA was an innovative organisation – 31% points higher than the Queensland Public Service average. A great source of pleasure was

seeing the percentage of staff recommending QSA as a Great Place to Work rise to 90%, with no staff viewing the organisation negatively at all in that context. We have an amazing team doing amazing work every day, for me as State Archivist our culture is a source of enormous pride.

This year has been another of year of highlights, however it is important to remember that our core reason for existing is the administration of the *Public Records Act 2002* (the Act) and that safeguarding the integrity of the Queensland Public Record remains the foundation principle of everything we do. Our Government Recordkeeping Innovation team has implemented some wonderful initiatives this year to promote better government recordkeeping to ensure that the permanent public records of Queensland survive and thrive. Unfortunately, there have been once again far too many incidents that have led to us investigating potential breaches of the Act by public authorities.

The Act is now over 18 years old and the advances in new communication technologies would never have been anticipated when the Act was passed in 2002. Sadly, the last few years have seen an increasing incidence of failures in recordkeeping, some with tragic consequences. A feature of many investigations undertaken by integrity agencies such as the Crime and Corruption Commission, the Office of the Queensland Ombudsman and the Queensland Government Audit Office have highlighted failures in recordkeeping as significant factors in their investigations.

Advances in new communication technologies are creating new challenges for public authorities, the volume of public records in particular being created is a significant challenge. There is a risk that the Act is inadequate to meet these challenges. There is an increasing risk that key public records that should be made and preserved for the benefit of current and future generations may be lost, or worse, never created at all.

Overall, there is no doubt we have had another wonderful year. We set ambitious goals and far exceeded them. It has been an exciting year and I am hugely proud to be part of a great team looking to transform this organisation and the services it provides. I would like to thank all staff and volunteers for their energy, enthusiasm and great work throughout the year. The progress we have made is due to the efforts of this wonderful team here at Runcorn. We have had challenges and overcome them on all occasions, and I look forward to what 2020–21 will bring.

Mike Summerell

Who we are

What we do

Queensland State Archives (QSA) provides access to almost 200 years of the state's history. Through exhibitions, events, digital content, media opportunities and our onsite Reading Room, we help people connect with the stories contained in the millions of public records in our collection.

For government we are the custodian of the public record, managing and preserving the information we hold, while also providing expert recordkeeping advice to government agencies.

Our Mission

Ensure the public records of Queensland are made, managed, kept and preserved for the use and benefit of present and future generations.

Our Vision

To inspire all Queenslanders to discover the stories contained within the record of the Queensland Government – anytime, anywhere.

Our Performance

Queensland Service Delivery Statistics

Improve Services for Queensland	2019–20 Target/Est	2019–20 Actual
Access & Engagement Measures		
Number of records accessed	>7 million records accessed annually	14,242,170 up 121%
Total social media views	>7 million records accessed annually	14,215,864 up 126%
Collections & Discovery measure		
Total collection size (linear metres)		66,951
Total number of items in the collection		3,400,862
Total number of items added to collection this year		48,809
Total items available to the public (in ArchivesSearch and open)		2,155,162
Percentage of collection open to the public		63.37%
Increase in items available to the public		74,851
Items digitised & Postproduction activities (excluding File Issue and Reading Room requests)		1,191,538
Preservation work (treatment/activities)		18,437

Government Agency Service Delivery Statistics

Improve Services for Government	2019–20 Actual
Government Recordkeeping & Innovation	
Queries	
Queries – all query topics	702
Disposal Authorisation 8	
Amendments to scheduled and other disposal authorisations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Retention and Disposal Schedule (GRDS) and General Retention and Disposal Schedule (GRDS) Lite were both updated to include the vulnerable persons disposal authorisations • The Racing Integrity Commission retention and disposal schedule was amended following identification of a discrepancy in retention period for class 1.2.1 • Disposal authorisation for select records for the Justices of the Peace Branch (DJAG) was issued – specifically for declaration records • Retention and disposal schedule covering records created by the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages • Retention and disposal schedule covering records created by the Queensland Audit Office 	5
Lost and damaged records: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Education (Runaway Bay Sports and Leadership Excellence Centre) • Queensland Corrective Services (Community Corrections Offender Work program) • Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service (Gladstone Hospital) 	3
Regulations 2	
Completed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commonwealth Games Infrastructure Authority public records transferred to Department of Housing and Public Works • Category 2 water authorities established under the <i>Water Act 2002</i> transferred to Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy 	2

Our Achievements

COVID-19 Response

As it has worldwide, the COVID-19 crisis and associated safety restrictions impacted QSA's operations and services. Our first priority was to ensure the safety of the public and staff, so our Reading Room, public programs and volunteer program were closed from March 2020 for the rest of the financial year.

Staff were equipped to work from home where possible, with 25 per cent of staff rotating onsite to meet increased digitisation demand and to manage the facility. Increased cleaning, social distancing and strict hygiene rules were implemented.

During this period, recordkeeping became a key theme across government with departments and agencies requiring advice on contaminated records, how to keep records when working from home and how to deal with information relating to contact tracing and the management of contaminated documents.

Our culture of flexibility and adaptability allowed us to:

- ringfence vulnerable staff immediately

- quickly equip staff with the technology to work from home
- adapt work programs to suit working from home
- ensure a COVID safe environment for those working onsite
- establish rolling teams to ensure onsite work, such as digitisation and facility management, could continue
- deliver a whole-of-government training video about recordkeeping from home
- produce simplified one-page advice about managing contaminated records
- deliver events online
- stop physical delivery of records and move to digital delivery which allowed agency customers to work from home
- increase digitisation by 2,000%
- change work practices to allow agencies to continue work on court cases, redress applications and Native Title assessments when physical deliveries of records ceased
- enable staff to work from home on specific projects that contributed to the discoverability of records
- provide digitisation services to Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnership's Community and Personal Histories team when staff were no longer able to work from QSA.

Digital Archiving Program & a new Archival Management System

The end of June 2020 saw the launch of a new Archival Management System (AMS) that provides Queenslanders with an intuitive and accessible online platform to engage with QSA's historical and culturally significant collection. The new system also empowers agencies to more effectively manage their own records held in the collection.

This milestone was the result of a strong collaborative effort between the Digital Archiving Program (DAP), QSA and industry. The new system comprises three integrated components: ArchivesSpace, ArchivesSearch and ArchivesGateway and replaces QSA's obsolete system ArchivesOne.

ArchivesSpace is the heart of the new system and is used by QSA to provide rich descriptions of the State's cultural and historical records. It allows greater discoverability of the archival collection and includes new functionality that automatically calculates when records are open and accessible.

ArchivesSearch is used by the public and provides greater visibility, transparency and self-service than previously available as well as the ability to:

- create and manage your own user accounts
- filter and save search results
- view and manage requests including access to restricted records and orders to the Reading Room
- order digital copies of records via the Queensland Government online payment system.

ArchivesGateway provides brand new functionality to agencies providing them with a secure, self-service portal through which they can access their records in the collection. The system allows for a 'digital by default' approach whereby agencies can request digital copies of physical records online for the first time.

Key Statistics include:

- Data migration:
 - 3,446,352 records
 - 18,649 series
 - 5,952 agencies
 - 67,590 digital images
- Testing
 - 982 sprint test cases

- 2,638 data validation tests (6 QSA testers on average 4-5 days)
- 2,035 functional tests (8 QSA testers on average 4-5 days)
- Early adopters
 - 3 high volume, high priority, QSA service users (90% of service ready for Go-Live)
 - 19 agencies identified for staged onboarding
- Sprints
 - 28 sprint cycles
 - 15 months
 - 6 initiatives
- Business process change
 - 4 impact assessments
 - 60 recommendations implemented for Go-Live
- Knowledge transfer
 - 19 QSA training modules
 - 36 QSA participants
 - 4 agency modules
 - 3 user guides
 - 17 online artefacts (videos, fact sheets).

Access and Engagement

Regional Projects

In 2019-20, the Regional Projects Team achieved:

- *Toad vs Beetle: Clash in the Cane 1935* - In partnership with Cairns Museum Toad vs Beetle represents the first collaborative exhibition developed as part of QSA's Regional Engagement Strategy. The exhibition opened on 22 June 2020 and explores the impact of the introduction of the cane toad to Queensland. The exhibition also features QSA's first use of augmented reality to deliver narrative experiences for visitors via smartphones. Another feature within Toad vs Beetle is ***Place Invaders***, an interactive community engagement project that explores the impact invasive plants and animals have had on Queensland.
- *Pac Ma'am & Copper* - QSA's retro-arcade games, incorporating 1880s historical records with 1970s arcade gaming, have been trialled at State Library of Queensland this year. This playful reimagining of how our community can engage with history is available to loan for free for regional organisations and communities.
- *Birdcage of the Bay* - The Birdcage of the Bay exhibition was a major feature of 2018–19. This year the exhibition was repurposed to allow others to explore the content. Visitors to the St Helena Island Museum will soon be experiencing a virtual reality flyover of the stockade and Queensland students, through Learning Queensland, can explore the films and VR originally featured in the exhibition.
- *Q-Album* - Launched in December 2019 Q-Album is an online platform that allows QSA, as well as small to medium community historical organisations, to share our collections with the wider Queensland community. Q-Album is offered to community groups as part of QSA's Regional Program. Community organisations currently using Q-Album include Kilburnie Homestead in Central Queensland, Discover Eumundi Heritage and Visitor Centre and North Stradbroke Island Museum on Minjerribah. In developing the platform for the community, QSA ensured that Q-Album is:
 - low bandwidth, meaning regional areas won't be restricted by poor internet connections
 - easy to use for community groups, and the public
 - a robust and secure platform
 - mobile-first, meaning that the platform works as well on mobile phones and tablets as it does on desktop computers.

Engagement Services

In 2019-20, we delivered:

- *1989 Cabinet Minutes* - The 1989 Queensland Cabinet Minutes were released to the public on 1 January 2020 after their 30-year closure period. A media conference held by the Honourable Mick de Brenni, MP, Minister for Housing and Public Works, Minister for Digital Technology and Minister for Sport, resulted in widespread media coverage. Research into the minutes was undertaken by Dr Jonathan Richards.
The year 1989, Dr Richards pointed out, was 'the only year in Queensland politics, to date, with Cabinet Minutes that included three Premiers, three Cabinets, two different Governments and one momentous election result'. It was also the year the Fitzgerald Report was released, which resulted in a massive indictment of both official corruption and electoral manipulation in Queensland.
- *Hacking QSA tours* - In September 2019 and February 2020, staff attended Museum Hack training, which challenged staff to reimagine the customer tour experience. As a result, a series of new tours will be launched in 2021.
- *Memory Lounge* - QSA continued the delivery of its Memory Lounge program until COVID-19 restrictions suspended visitation in March. As well as in-house sessions, we have worked with other partners to spread the program beyond our facility by:
 - Partnering with Griffith University to deliver program training to medical humanities students. Four sessions with medical students and residents at St Vincent's Care Services residents in Southport were held in January 2020.
 - Presenting a keynote presentation at the Museums and Galleries Queensland biannual conference *Opening Doors* in Cairns in September 2019. The presentation covered the development of the program at QSA and key strategies to develop similar programs in other institutions.
- *Brisbane Open House* - On 12 October 2019 we opened our doors for Brisbane Open House. This year, after the Museum Hack training, we invited visitors to learn about the many unique architectural and operational features of the archives while also including entertaining stories from the collection. Over 182 visitors attended the Brisbane Open House weekend at Runcorn.
As part of the program we also provided a video collection of stories for the Old Windmill in Spring Hill, Queensland's oldest surviving convict-built structure. The windmill received over 2,000 visitors during the weekend.
- *Donna Davis: Creative-in-Residence* - Artist Donna Davis was QSA's Creative in Residence in 2019–20. Donna spent three months working with QSA's archivists to research the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area in North Queensland. Donna's exhibition 'Tropical Treasures' opened on 27 February 2020, revealing artworks that included digital assemblage, mixed media, animation and sculpture.
Her works were displayed at various locations in Cairns, including the Cairns Botanic Gardens and the Tanks Arts Centre. QSA created a digital interactive by which visitors could explore the mountains of the Wet Tropics and their flora.
The 'Tropical Treasures' exhibition ended early due to COVID-19, however Donna's works created during the residency have gone on to be included in a national touring exhibition. The digital interactive has been included in the ACM Hypertext Conference, organised by the University of Central Florida and the Association for Computing Machinery.
QSA's Creative-in-Residence Program offers Queensland-based creatives the opportunity to work with QSA's historical collection to transform the archival collection into works that spark public curiosity and demonstrate the richness of Queensland's culture and history.
- *World Science Festival* - In 2020 QSA collaborated with the Queensland Museum to take part in the Regional Program of the World Science Festival. We took Place Invaders, our community-sourced digital game on the road to Chinchilla on 28 and 29 February 2020. Content for the retro-themed game, developed as part of the 'Toad vs Beetle: Clash in the Cane' exhibition, was sourced from an online portal by which members of the community could submit local images of invasive species. Over the Student Day and Community Day, 3,370 visitors attended the World Science Festival at the Chinchilla Cultural Centre.

- *Playing with the Past Evening Event* - QSA hosted its first after-hours event in partnership with the National Trust. *Playing with the Past* featured presenters Brett Leavey, Director of Virtual Songlines and Phil Manning, Senior Curator at QSA in an evening of exploring how history and digital technologies have successfully worked together to increase access and engagement with the community. The evening was attended by a full house of 100 people.
- *QSA Talks* - The QSA Talks program of onsite and online events continued throughout 2019–20, including our partnership with Griffith University's Harry Gentle Research Centre. Talks over the past year have included:
 - **Living under the Act** - a presentation by Kathy Frankland from the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships that explored the impact of past Queensland Government legislation which was used to control the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
 - **Superintendent Spicer's Workbook** - in partnership with Griffith University and the Harry Gentle Resource Centre, Roger Ford discussed the fascinating story behind the workbook of Superintendent Spicer, who worked in the administration of the notorious commandant Captain Patrick Logan.
 - **Okinawans Reaching Australia** - a presentation and book launch by John Lamb who drew on his exploration of archival resources to discuss the interactions of Okinawans from Japan in Australia during the first six decades of the twentieth century.
 - **QSA Conservation Conversation** - a public workshop in which our Preservation Team offered advice on caring for archival documents and gave conservation advice about participants' own items.
 - **Peopling Place** - in partnership with Griffith University and the Harry Gentle Resource Centre, Annemarie McLaren discussed the German missionaries at Zion Hill, and the significance to the colony of the cross-cultural relations that were created.
 - **Meet Me at Lennon's** - in talking about her award-winning novel book *Meet Me at Lennon's*, set in Brisbane during the Second World War, Melanie Myers explored the sensitive issue of dealing with historical incidences of sexual assault in works of fiction and non-fiction.
 - **River City Bridges** - as part of the Asia Pacific Architecture Festival, an initiative of Architecture Media and State Library of Queensland, we hosted a presentation by Ian Ainsworth. He compared Brisbane's many bridges and investigated the history of the multiple Victoria Bridges.
 - **Picturing the North** - in partnership with Griffith University and the Harry Gentle Resource Centre, Visiting Fellow Timothy Roberts illustrated highlights of early art in Queensland, emphasising the themes of exploration, establishment and edification.

Preservation

In 2019–20, the Preservation Team have:

- treated around 17,000 items
- digitised more than 300 obsolete format videos
- prepared objects for exhibitions and loans - Spoken; Cane vs Beetle, Sir Samuel Griffiths, Fitzgerald Report, internal displays (Place Invaders, 5-minute archives etc)
- assessed 90,000 microfilms
- completed pilot for digitisation of glass plate negatives – Series 21251
- participated in a Facebook Live event – Ask a Conservator
- produced several short videos on how to salvage water damaged archival records
- conducted workshops in Conservation Conversations, Educators PD Day: STEM in Conservation
- worked closely with the Creative-in-Residence Donna Davis including creation of works of art featuring conservation environmental monitoring equipment
- performed conservation treatments
- conserved a phoenix painting stuck to document IID 2818 relating to Brisbane trams
- consolidated an architectural model.

Volunteer Program

This year our volunteers collaborated with our teams on multiple projects before the program was suspended in March due to COVID-19 restrictions. We continued cross-team projects between Preservation and Collection Enrichment and Discovery and introduced additional roles within our front-of-house Ambassadors program and Engagement Team. The total number of volunteers grew from 27 to 32.

In 2019–20, the QSA volunteers achieved:

- *The Preservation and Collection Enrichment and Discovery volunteers* - This year the Preservation and Collection, Enrichment & Discovery teams welcomed some new volunteers, boosting our numbers by 50 per cent. They worked on several new and ongoing collaborative projects, and their combined preservation and catalogue listing efforts have simultaneously protected and made accessible another 20,000 photographs. This includes many stunning historical railway images unearthed in an estray collection. They have also worked tirelessly rehousing and listing another 18,000 of our most popular land files and continued preserving and making discoverable a highly sought-after series of nominated immigrant records. In a mammoth effort, they have also meticulously transcribed more than 7,000 signatory entries from our 67-metre-long 1890 Central Queensland Separation Petition, bringing to life details such as names, occupations and addresses of all signatories.
- *Indexing volunteers* - The Indexing team completed 46,764 indexed entries in the last financial year. This number is significantly reduced due to suspension of the program during COVID-19.
- New and improved indexes and data sets represent 124,339 index entries now available online.
- Four indexes have been completed in the last year and the datasets loaded to the Open Data portal in 2020:
 - Applications by Selectors 1868–1885 (LAN/P57 Index)
 - Beaudesert Shire & Logan Village Burial Registers 1878–2000
 - Brisbane Gaol Hospital Admission registers 1889–1911
 - Immigrants & Crew 1909–1938
- Description tasks completed in June 2020:
 - Register of the Engagement of Immigrants, Bowen Immigration Depot 1873–1912
 - Registers of Immigrants, Rockhampton 1882–1915
 - Mineral Leases 1871–1940 (rebuilt with additional entries and more helpful data included)
- A further 16 open data sets uploaded to the Queensland Government Open Data Portal were created by volunteers. We now have a total of 74 datasets on the portal. The new datasets are:
 - Applications by Selectors 1868–1885 (LAN/P54-56) LAN/P57
 - Beaudesert Shire Burials - Logan Village 1878–2000
 - EOG Scholarships 1900–1940
 - Hospital Admission registers 1889–1911
 - Immigrants and Crew 1860–1865 (COL/A)
 - Immigrants and Crews 1909–1932
 - Immigrants, Rockhampton 1882–1915
 - Index to Pensions 1908–1909
 - Orphanage Admission Registers 1865–1908
 - Outdoor Relief 1900–1920
 - Register of Cases & Treatment 1830–1862 (Moreton Bay)
 - Register of the Engagement of Immigrants at the Immigration Depot - Bowen 1873–1912
 - Registers of Lessees of Agricultural and Grazing Farms 1885-1908 [LAN/P518 Index]
 - School Inspectors Reports 1872–1875
 - Teachers in EOG 1899–1925
 - Leases, Selections, Pastoral Runs and other related records 1850–2014.

Digitisation and Collection Services Pilot

Innovation and transformation have redefined the way QSA enables access to our collection for our community. The Digitisation & Collection Services Pilot is a six-month project. Commencing June 2020, it will focus on improving core business services for our users, both public and government.

The scope of the project is to bring together business units who deliver similar services. Reviewing and identifying process opportunities, introducing technological solutions and delivering services that are responsive, integrated and easy to use.

This staff-led initiative, has been developed through a consultative process and seeks to:

- increase QSA's online digitised content by 100%
- provide an effective and efficient service to agencies
- build QSA's capability to respond to a digitised future.

The outcome of the pilot will be a final report delivered in November 2020.

QSA Ambassadors Program

The Ambassadors program is a front-of-house customer service initiative utilising a roster of staff in the foyer to welcome visitors to QSA and assist them with their visit. Established in 2018, the program has continued to develop with in excess of 30 per cent of QSA staff participating in the program. The program was put on hold in March due to COVID-19.

Collections and Discovery

Transfers

Transfer volumes into the archival collection have been much lower this year as the Collections and Discovery team have been busy developing, testing and preparing for the release of ArchivesSpace and ArchivesGateway. Included in this year's 28 transfers were:

- four transfers from the Queensland Rail heritage collection at Ipswich, including wagon and locomotive cards, railway station name files, working plan section books and station yard plans. These items have all been added to ArchivesSpace and are discoverable in ArchivesSearch.
- a private donation of Queensland Rail photographic negatives and prints. Volunteers at QSA are doing extensive rehousing and listing work to make these records accessible.
- original correspondence from the Central Regional Office Rockhampton Police Station Inquiry into the Mackay Plane Crash Flight 538 on 10 June 1960.

Section 10 Survey

This year QSA conducted a survey issued under section 10 of the *Public Records Act 2002* to find out what records public authorities hold in their possession that are over 25 years old.

From 205 surveys sent out, we achieved a response rate of 80.9 per cent.

Respondents included:

- Departments
- Schools, TAFEs and Universities
- Courts
- Hospitals, Health Services and Hospital Foundations
- Local Governments
- Rail and Energy Statutory Authorities
- Ports, Water Authorities and River Improvement Trusts

Results of the survey showed public authorities have in their possession:

- over 101 linear kilometres of paper records
- 2.3 million registers and records in other formats
- over 248 terabytes of digital records.

Redress

Staff at QSA have been responding to search and copy requests from agencies in support of redress applications under the National Redress Scheme. This year a total of 171,806 pages have been digitised for redress purposes.

Additionally, QSA staff have:

- worked with departments to proactively digitise records for future redress claims
- worked with departments in support of submissions to the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability
- helped members of the public prove they were held in institutions
- helped departments locate records relevant to historical child abuse cases
- used SigBox, a secure file sharing solution allowing transfer of digital files with agencies.

Government Recordkeeping Innovation

Collaborative Publications

QSA partnered with the Crime and Corruption Commission (CCC) to publish two joint publications relating to the management of public records.

Council records: A guideline for mayors, councillors and council employees sets out the requirements for the effective management of council records and establishes how elected council officials, as well as CEOs and council employees can fulfil their recordkeeping responsibilities. Release of the guideline was promoted through a webinar delivered in partnership with the Department of Local Government, Racing and Multicultural Affairs. The event was attended by more than 150 representatives from local governments across Queensland. Attendees were able to participate in a Q&A session to clarify any questions they had about the guideline.

Public records: Advice for all employees of a public authority outlines the requirements and benefits of effective recordkeeping. It details what a public record is and who should keep them, why good recordkeeping is important and how poor recordkeeping can put an agency at risk. The advice also sets out the key elements to be considered when creating, storing and deleting public records.

In addition to the work with the CCC, QSA collaborated with the Office of the Independent Assessor (OIA) to publish a new guide outlining the rules and risks for Queensland councillors when using messaging apps to discuss council business. The guide is intended to make it easier for councillors to understand their legal obligations when it comes to the use of apps, while highlighting the pitfalls to avoid. The advice complements existing requirements published by the OIA, CCC and the Department of Local Government, Racing and Multicultural Affairs relating to councillor's obligations when managing public records.

Investigations

In December 2018, the CCC requested the State Archivist to review whether the use of private messaging accounts by Logan City Council councillors and employees may have resulted in any breaches of *the Public Records Act 2002*. The State Archivist assessed whether public records had been created in private messaging accounts, and if so, whether these records had been captured in official Logan City Council

systems. The State Archivist found that it was likely that actions of councillors may have resulted in the failure to manage public records appropriately. However, Logan City Council were able to recover and capture relevant public records in accordance with the requirements of the Act. Following the investigation, Logan City Council updated their policies and procedures to improve the way councillors manage public records.

During 2019–20, the State Archivist received four complaints from members of the public regarding allegations of potential breaches of the *Public Records Act 2002* by Queensland public authorities. One complaint related to a potential breach of section 7 of the Act and the requirement for public authorities to make and keep full and accurate public records. Three complaints were made in relation to allegations of unlawful disposal of public records under section 13 of the Act by public authorities. The State Archivist investigated each complaint received, with some matters still ongoing.

Automated Record Appraisal Feasibility Project (QSAbot)

In late 2019, QSA collaborated with QUT Centre for the Digital Economy and ran a project to prove a component of the QSAbot concept where recordkeeping happens automatically in the background. The goal was to discover whether technology could be used to make recordkeeping an automated process that doesn't require human action or intervention. The project identified that machine learning technologies could be used to identify public records and the length of time they should be kept.

Vulnerable Persons Guideline

In March 2020, QSA released the *Guideline for creating and keeping records for the proactive protection of vulnerable persons*. Initially, the guideline was developed in response to the recommendations from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (RCIRCSA).

A key finding from RCIRCSA was that inadequate, incomplete or poor recordkeeping had a significant impact on vulnerable people who were subject to abuse or mistreatment and sought to make a complaint.

As work began on the guideline, QSA became aware of two more royal commissions that could have similar findings. Consequently, the guideline and supporting materials represents a unique piece of work by QSA as it was developed in response to RCIRCSA, and in anticipation of the recommendations from the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability and the Royal Commission into Aged Care, Quality and Safety.

The guideline is people centric. It prioritises the protection of vulnerable people over the recordkeeping processes of government, as such, it differs from previous recordkeeping advice which is largely administrative in focus.

Development of the guideline was a long and at times difficult process for the team members involved and QSA is proud of the work and the approach we took to achieve it.

In addition to the engagement undertaken in the development phase, following the release of the guideline, QSA collaborated with consulting firm, GWI, to promote the new advice through a webinar. QSA provided background information behind the development of the advice and disposal authorisations. GWI then shared some examples of how this advice applies across a range of government sectors. The webinar was viewed by over 50 people.

Corporate Information

The Corporate Information area supports QSA in meeting its strategic goals, mission and vision through providing high level advice and guidance in recordkeeping best practice and ensuring the agency's records and information are managed appropriately and in compliance with government policy and guidelines.

Key bodies of work for this year have included:

- planning and consultation for the implementation of a record management process for the creation and keeping of records relating to vulnerable persons
- working with business areas on the development and implementation of processes relating to the re-opening of QSA during COVID-19, regarding the collection, management and destruction of contact tracing information
- in-house development of recordkeeping training modules, with more planned for next year
- comprehensive audit of records holdings focussing on appropriate classification and retention
- completion of the annual disposal program.

Recordkeeping across Government

Successful open government relies on sound recordkeeping practices to support public accountability and transparency. Under the *Public Records Act 2002*, Queensland public authorities are required to manage public records responsibly to ensure they are complete, reliable, accessible and usable for as long as they are needed.

Through an examination of 24 reports tabled during the 2019–20 financial year by the Queensland Audit Office, the Queensland Ombudsman, the Office of the Information Commissioner and the Crime and Corruption Commission, QSA has noted several cases of poor recordkeeping practices within government departments and public authorities within its jurisdiction.

Recordkeeping issues were identified in 14 of the reports. Specific issues include:

- ineffective recordkeeping practices (e.g. procedures; policies; workplace culture)
- decentralised records management systems
- systems and technology limitations (e.g. maintenance; security, capability, automation)
- inadequate recordkeeping training / awareness
- falsified / fabricated records.

Public authorities which were the subject of reviews with recordkeeping issues were:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| • Departments and Agencies | 23 |
| • Statutory Bodies and GOCs | 139 |
| • Local Governments | 77 |
| • Universities | 1 |
| • Controlled Entities | 75 |

Looking Forward

In 2020–21, we will continue to support government priorities by:

Access and Engagement Projects

- Strategic online engagement development.
- Non-traditional partnerships such as Brisbane Airport Corporation.
- Digitisation of iconic and fragile glass plate negatives from Queensland Rail collection.
- Development and delivery of thematic tours for the public focused on narrative story telling experiences.
- Prioritising digitisation of at-risk audio-visual records.
- Integration of ArchivesSearch into public-facing services.
- Developing a road map to facilitate access to, and realise the healing potential of, records relevant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and Australian South Sea Islanders held in the collection.
- Delivery of Memory Lounge and Dementia Awareness training to staff and volunteers at the Rockhampton Art Museum in August 2020.
- Delivery of an exhibition by artist Melissa Stannard - *Fragments of Remembering* developed from her research into archival records of Aboriginal reserves, missions and family members. Works will include jewellery, sculpture, assemblage and textiles which she uses to embrace the damaged parts of herself, her culture and family history. It will be on display from 3 August – 30 September 2020.

Regional Projects

- *Regional Strategy* - This year saw QSA develop a regional strategy to connect our collection with communities across the state. In collaboration with Museum and Galleries Services Queensland (MAGSQ) QSA have identified significant opportunities. *Birdcage of the Bay*, an exhibition about the St Helena penal colony, will be transformed into a significant touring exhibition, the first for MAGSQ in over a decade. Other projects are being finalised for deployment into the regions later this year including:
 - *HILDA*: a unique interactive that incorporates micro mapping projection and a futuristic setting to allow users to navigate imagery of Queensland past. Historical Image Library Discovery Assistant (HILDA) brings a new level of interactivity and engagement for the user.
 - *QSA TV*: Taking inspiration from 1970s television sets, this pop-up interactive allows users to watch animations that capture stories from Queensland's past.
 - *Exhibition-in-a-Box*: Taking exhibitions to those place that normally can't support exhibiting, from schools to hospitals, the boxes contain modular flexible exhibitions designed to suit small regional venues. The first exhibition to be made available, *Living Colour*, applies modern colourisation techniques to bring to life images from 1890s Queensland.

RDS Project and use of technology

QSA's current approach to approving the disposal of records is by issuing agency specific retention and disposal schedules. The schedules assign value to business information by categorising it and specifying the minimum amount of time it must be kept. By default, the schedules also authorise when you are allowed to dispose of a record.

In addition to agency specific retention and disposal schedules, there is also the *General Retention and Disposal Schedule* (GRDS) for the management of generic business records.

The development of schedules is both time and resource intensive and the end result is a complex, multi-page document developed by QSA in collaboration with our client agencies. Business application of the schedule and appraisal log (its companion document) relies on specialist recordkeeping knowledge that is beyond the interest and expertise of the people who create the records. Under this approach, there are

almost 300 current retention and disposal schedules which comprise almost 47,000 record classes. In an effort to provide clarity over the management of government information, the overwhelming scale of categorisation and sub-categorisation has created confusion, with the result that retention and disposal schedules do very little to assist the effective day to day management of government records.

Using AI assisted data analysis, QSA undertook an assessment of the classification of government information covered by the 300 current retention and disposal schedules. This analysis indicates that although there are thousands of records classes, 'government records' can be generally grouped into a handful of 'retention periods' (how long do you keep it) and a more simplified approach to managing this information might be easier to achieve than we first thought.

Through technology and user centred design, QSA aims to remove the complexity from the current process and make government recordkeeping easier to do by making it easier to understand.

The early results from these initiatives are clear. If QSA takes its service to our clients with flexible options that make it easier for them, we will develop better solutions. Consequently, the Government Records Innovation team is changing the way we engage with and offer services to our clients.

Collections & Discovery

QSA will continue to work with the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission (QIRC) to review approximately 2,000 boxes of their legacy records stored at QSA that are not accessible to the public. QIRC has allocated a staff member to work at QSA to list and identify any permanent value records so they can be added to the collection and made available to the public.

The analysis of the responses to the section 10 survey revealed that the permanent records still in agencies by far exceed the remaining storage capacity at QSA. To maximise storage, QSA will:

- resume accepting transfers of public records that are immediately available after transfer and have significant public interest
- continue work to identify and appraise temporary records in the collection and return them to agencies
- re-examine the value of large collections of records in the collection that are not regularly accessed by users. Target those public records for transfer created before 1900.

Our People

Corporate breakdown

As at June 2020, Queensland State Archives employed 69.26 full time equivalent employees across five areas of the organisation – Office of the State Archivist, Government Records Innovation & Discovery, Access & Engagement, Finance & Technology and Capability & Planning.

Gender

Female = 45.51 FTE | Male = 23.75FTE

- TOTAL = 69.26 FTE

Workforce profile

EEO target group	Current status
People from a non-English speaking background	9.21%
People with disability	2.63%
Women in leadership	32.89%

Table: Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) targets and results

Health safety and wellbeing

In 2019–20, QSA staff received:

	2019–20 Staff numbers
Seasonal influenza vaccinations	38
Health assessments (down due to COVID-19)	8

Table: Healthy workforce programs for staff

Classification Breakdown

Class Group	Total
AO2	10.80
AO3	4.97
AO4	5.95
AO5	8.28
AO6	16.00
AO7	7.00
AO8	3.60
PO2	1.00
PO3	5.09
PO4	1.57
SES	1.00
SO	2.00
TO3	2.00
Grand Total	69.26

Early retirement, redundancy and retrenchment

During 2019–20, no employees received redundancy packages.

Working for Queensland Survey

Working for Queensland Survey	2019–20 result
Surveys completed by QSA staff	68
Participation rate	94%
Understand how their work contributes to QSA's objectives	88%
Understand what's expected of them to do well in their job	93%
Staff are proud to tell others they work for QSA	92%
Staff who would recommend QSA as a great place to work	89%
People in my workgroup treat customers with respect	96%
People in my workgroup are committed to delivering excellent customer service to customers	93%
Staff are encouraged to make suggestions about improving work processes and/or services	96%

Table: Working for Queensland survey results

Great Place to Work certification

QSA is the only public sector organisation in Australia to be certified in 2020 by workplace research and consulting firm, Great Place to Work. Certification is gained by analysing a staff survey (completed by 92 per cent of staff) and an audit of company policies and cultural practices.

QSA gained exceptional results:

- 90% of staff agree that overall, QSA is a great place to work
- 89% enjoy working here
- 86% are fully engaged
- 84% report high trust with management.

Our Governance

Public Records Review Committee

The Public Records Review Committee was established in March 2003 under the *Public Records Act 2002*. Its purpose is to advise the Minister for Housing and Public Works and State Archivist on the administration and enforcement of the Act.

In addition to its advisory role, the committee has a number of dispute resolution functions. If requested by a public authority, the committee can review decisions of the State Archivist not to authorise the disposal of particular records. The committee can also be asked to resolve disputes between the State Archivist and a public authority about restricted access periods for records.

Our Public Records Review Committee as at 30 June 2020

Chair: Ms Julie Steel

Executive Director, Supreme, District and Land Courts' Service, Justice Services

Ms Steel was admitted to practice as a solicitor of the Supreme Court of Queensland in 1989. She has extensive experience in legal practice and procedure, courts management, and justice policy and administration. From 1999–2005, she held a variety of positions with the Department of Corrective Services. In November 2005 she started working in the courts and she has been the Executive Director of the Supreme, District and Land Courts' Service since February 2010.

Member: Mr Ross Buchanan

Ross Buchanan was appointed Global Investment Commissioner in August 2019.

Prior to taking up that role, he was Executive Director of the Economic Policy team in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

Ross has held senior executive roles in the Queensland Government for more than 17 years, working on trade, industry and investment projects. He was the Queensland Trade and Investment Commissioner – Japan for 3 years and drove business expansion efforts for Queensland across the UK, Europe and Africa on a later 2-year posting in London. He also spent 6 years as Director of the Queensland Government's Investment Attraction Division, and 3 years as Executive Director, Trade for the Queensland Government.

Ross is a lawyer by training and spent 10 years working at major firms in Brisbane and Tokyo. While working for an international legal firm in Tokyo for 3 years, he provided advice on international commercial business transactions. Other roles included working in the infrastructure advisory area of a mining company and for a private-sector advisory firm.

Ross holds an MBA from Queensland University of Technology and Bachelor's degrees in Law (hons), Commerce and Arts from The University of Queensland.

Member: Ms Kate Slack

Kate brings a wealth of experience in Administrative and Public law to her position on the Public Records Review Committee.

Kate's practice as a Barrister at the Queensland Bar focuses on this area of the law in both Commonwealth and State jurisdictions. Prior to being called to the Bar, Kate was employed as a Senior Solicitor at Sparke Helmore Lawyers. She holds a Bachelor of Laws (Hons) and a Bachelor of Arts in Politics and Government from Griffith University.

Member: Ms Louise Howard

Louise Howard is a senior information professional with over 20 years' experience in higher education, local and state government and the not for profit sector.

Louise is currently Director, IT Infrastructure and Cloud at Griffith University. She is part of the senior leadership team providing technology services and digital solutions at Griffith University to staff, students and researchers. Louise is a member of the ICT executive leadership team and accountable for the design, procurement, development, delivery and support of robust IT infrastructure including networks, servers, identity and access, data storage, data centres and technology in teaching and learning spaces. She is a member of the Queensland Women in Technology ICT Subcommittee and recently received a Highly Commended Vice Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Leadership.

Member: Ms Sandie Angus

Sandie Angus is an experienced strategic leader and non-executive director with significant legal, governance, and risk management expertise. She is admitted as a solicitor and has over thirty years' experience working in law firms and in the government finance and electricity sectors. She sits on the boards of various not-for-profit companies in the health, sports, education and disability sectors.

Member: Dr David Solomon AM

Dr David Solomon has a BA (History and Politics), LLB with Honours and a Doctorate of Letters "after due examination of his published work on Australian Government, politics and constitutional law." All degrees are from the Australian National University (ANU). In addition, Griffith University has awarded him an honorary degree, Doctor of the University. He recently completed a five-year term as Queensland Integrity Commissioner.

He was chair of the independent committee that reviewed Queensland's Freedom of Information legislation in 1997-8, resulting in the passage of the new Right to Information Act. He was chairman of the Queensland Electoral and Administrative Review Commission in 1992-3. He recently chaired an inquiry into complaints against local government councillors. That report will be implemented from December 2018. His primary career before coming to Queensland in 1992 was as a journalist working in Canberra covering politics and the law.

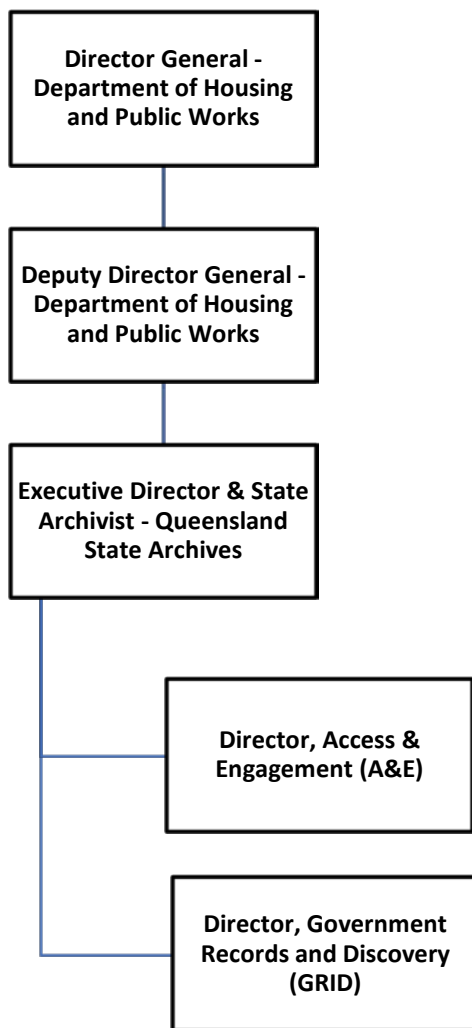
Member: Ms Monica Bradley

Monica is a director with digital transformation, technology and start up investment experience.

During her executive career she held business development, leadership and consulting roles in New York, Abu Dhabi and Sydney. Since her return to Australia she has established a portfolio of directorships, technology investments and innovation advisory roles.

At the board table, Monica brings knowledge of emerging technologies and practical experience of driving new revenues, customer engagement and efficiencies from digital. Her direct technology investments and advisory with private equity and venture capital provide knowledge of valuations, funding models and investor networks. In short, Monica brings a practical understanding of how digital and technology can be applied in organisations to produce value.

Organisational Structure



Our Location

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