

# A baseline assessment for the establishment of a Records Management Programme at the Civil Aviation Authority of Botswana: The beginning

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# Introduction

- Business records serve as the corporate memory and enable organisations to be accountable for their actions and transactions (Ndenje-Sichalwe 2010).
- Companies in East and Southern Africa keep records for a certain period of time for compliance with tax, company and, customs and excise regulations (Chachage and Ngulube 2006).
- The maintenance of proper records management regimes may assist companies to avoid paying unnecessary fines and lawsuit settlements costs.
- Furthermore, records would provide evidence of transparency and accountability of private business to stakeholders (Chachage and Ngulube 2006).

# Civil Aviation Authority of Botswana (CAAB)

- CAAB is a body corporate established by the Civil Aviation Act (Government of Botswana 2011).
- Its mandate is to promote safe, regular, secure and efficient use and development of civil aviation.
- Previously it was known as Department of Civil Aviation (DCA). Through the Civil Aviation Act of 2011 it was transformed into a quasi-government organisation.
- Specifically, CAAB provides air navigation services, airport engineering and maintenance, airport management, aviation safety, aviation security and facilitation oversight and aviation standards and safety oversight.

# Theoretical Framework of the Study

- The Records Life-cycle and Records Continuum models are the dominant theories in the archival and records management field (Chachage and Ngulube 2006).
- This study was however anchored on the International Records Management Standard, ISO 15489-1 (ISO 2001) and the Records Life-cycle model (Akussah 1996; ISO 2001; Shepherd & Yeo 2003)

# Statement of the Problem

- Since 2012, Internal audit reports at CAAB repeatedly highlighted records management shortcomings.
- Specifically, these were regular difficulties in finding some requested files, lack of qualified records management staff, duplication of files, lack of documented framework to guide records management and poor security of records.
- Mrwebi (2000) says that despite the seemingly obvious reasons for the importance of good records management, most organizations do not have good record management system as evidenced by missing documents and improper filing systems, amongst others.
- This study utilised a records survey to assess the state of records management at CAAB and lay a foundation for the development of a records management programme at CAAB (Chaterera 2013).

# Objectives of the Study

- To establish the existence of a legislative and policy framework for the management of records at CAAB;
- To investigate the current practices for managing records throughout their life cycle;
- To investigate the use of information and communication technologies (ICT's) in the management of corporate records at CAAB;
- Recommend records management initiatives required to formally establish a records management programme for CAAB.

# Methodology

- Qualitative research design: suitable for an in-depth assessment of the state of records management at CAAB (Creswell 2014; Ngulube and Ngulube 2015).
- Data collected through interviews with purposively selected action officers (4 Directors; 7 Managers at CAAB Head Office; 4 Airport Managers; 3 Records Officers based at CAAB Head Office and 4 Administration Officers).
- Data also collected through documentary reviews. Documents are a useful source of data in qualitative research as data from documents can be used to corroborate evidence from other sources (Matangira 2016).
- Direct observation was done on resources, facilities and tools for recordkeeping activities at CAAB, providing an opportunity to document activities, and physical aspects on records and archives management processes and facilities

# Findings of the study

## The Regulatory Framework for Managing Records at CAAB

- **National Archives and Records Services Act**
- **Civil Aviation Act:** Members of CAAB board have to maintain confidentiality of information and records as Board members.
- CAAB has to keep proper books of accounts of all its income and expenditure and proper records in relation to those accounts by preparing a statement of accounts.
- Other records: aircraft registration; pilot licensing, aircraft airworthiness, aerial work permits, air transport service licensing, air operator certificates and aeronautical information amongst others.
- The Act prescribes that these records be kept, there is no mention of their disposal and preservation.

# Findings of the study cont...

## The Regulatory Framework for Managing Records at CAAB

- Aviation Security Act
- Section 49 of the Act prescribes that “the management, setting of priorities and organization of oversight activities within CAAB shall be completely independent of activities and persons responsible for the implementation of the security measures” (Also: ICAO Annex 17 Standard 3.4.7).
- Separation of records management functions of oversight functions and implementers of aviation services

# Findings of the study cont...

## Policy on records management

- CAAB does not have a policy on records management
- Records should be managed through guidance of a specific policy framework (Okello-Obura 2011).
- Organisations should define and document policies for records management in line with ISO 15489-1 (ISO 2001).
- Records management policies communicate management commitment to promote and practice good records management

# Findings of the study cont...

- **CAAB Recordkeeping Practices throughout the whole Life Cycle and ISO 154891 (Records Creation)**
- CAAB create pilot and aircraft licensing records, aeronautical records, airworthiness certification, airport management and Maintenance records, procurement records, financial records, HR records and other administrative records.
- No guidelines in place for the creation, capture and retention of records.
- Tax records were also managed without the guidelines for their creation, capture and retention (Ndemanyisho 2014).

# Findings of the study cont...

- **CAAB Recordkeeping Practices throughout the whole Life Cycle and ISO 154891 (Organisation of records)**
- CAAB operates a near decentralized records management system whereby the RMU takes care of policy and operational records; Human Capital Services manages personnel records.
- Organizations can choose to have decentralised or centralised records keeping systems, depending on the question of space availability, security, and convenience as well as availability of resources (Northern Territories 2005).

# Findings of the study cont...

- **CAAB Recordkeeping Practices throughout the whole Life Cycle and ISO 154891** (Records maintenance and use).
- CAAB does not have functional file classification scheme, just a file list previously used by its predecessor, the Department of Civil Aviation (DCA) although CAAB was established in 2010.
- No retrieval tool or register for semi current records.
- Accountability for records in the custody of action officers was also reported in Botswana public sector organisations (Tshotlo and Mnjama 2010; Moje 2015).

# Findings of the study cont...

- **CAAB Recordkeeping Practices throughout the whole Life Cycle and ISO 154891(File tracking)**
- File tracking tools available but not always used: Records Officers depended on memory at times when they would not have documented file movement.
- Findings are comparable to Moje (2015) who also found out that file tracking tools were not used effectively at Bakgatla Tribal Administration and as a result some records were reportedly lost.

# Findings of the study cont...

- **CAAB Recordkeeping Practices throughout the whole Life Cycle** (records preservation, storage and disposal).
- **Non current transferred to BNARS when CAAB was still DCA.**
- Kootshabe and Mnjama (2014) advocate for the transfer of records to BNARS records centre as it has very good preservation measures like suitable conditions for records preservation and qualified human resource that helps in the care and maintenance of such records.
- Records centres provides a safe location for the protection of information assets and have basic elements of any disaster prevention programme (Nengomasha and Nyanga 2012).

# Findings of the study cont...

- **Staff training on records management and records management procedures**
- Records Officers adequately trained
- Lack of basic records management procedures amongst staff
- Low awareness of basic records management procedures has also been attributed to lack of staff training on records management at public sector bodies in Botswana and Namibia (Nengomasha 2009; Mampe and Kalusopa 2012; Mosweu 2012; Moathodi 2015).

# Findings of the study cont...

- **Use of information and communication technologies (ICT's) in the management of corporate records**
- **ICTs used: Human Capital Services; Financial Management; Procurement; Library Services; Email communication**
- No guidelines to ensure email records are captured as corporate records, although Botswana Records Management Procedures Manual (2009) recognizes e-mail records as official records but does not provide guidance
- Management of electronic records is widely reported in literature covering ESARBICA region (Keakopa 2002; Makhura 2005; Ngoepe and Keakopa 2011; Keakopa 2013; Ndemanyisho 2014; Ngoepe and Saurombe 2016).

# Conclusion and recommendations

- Records management shortcomings at CAAB are indicative of a lack of formal and document RM Programme adopted at Management level.
- The study recommends the development and implementation of a RM programme.
- Management adoption of suggested records management initiatives as informed by the records survey is the first step in the journey towards proper records management.