

V. Conclusion

Whether as a result of a direct service to citizens or businesses or a behind the scenes decision about how to implement a new environmental conservation law, a record is created in most government work. It is clear that currently more government work is being performed electronically thereby creating new electronic records. By designing transaction systems that fully take into account electronic record creation and record keeping needs, government agencies will ensure compliance with records management requirements in a more cost-effective manner.

This paper documents the experience and recommendations of staff that have struggled with electronic record keeping issues at the state level both from an information technology and a records management and retention perspective. In conclusion, we would like to highlight the following major points made in the document:

- Electronic record keeping issues should be considered at the earliest stages of transaction system design. They should not be an afterthought.
- It is imperative that system planning and design teams be cross disciplinary in nature including policy and program staff, information technology staff, legal staff, records management staff, and archives professionals.
- System requirements such as security and functionality should reflect the results of a risk assessment and cost/benefit analysis. Risk factors will differ among various systems and electronic records and a "one size fits all" security approach is not cost-effective.
- Map the records lifecycle over the system life cycle to determine what record keeping functionality the transaction system will be expected to handle for how long. Plan up front for any record keeping functionality that will be necessary when the system is retired.

We hope this document will help project teams identify and plan for electronic record keeping requirements as they design electronic transaction systems. The document authors welcome any comments or reactions to this document — to comment, visit www.ec3.org and click on the "General Information" link.
