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中国电子文件管理： Electronic Records Management in China: Problems and Solutions 问题与对策

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前 言

文件是国家管理、组织运行、社会沟通的重要工具和真实记录，于国家于公民、于当前于长远都具有不可替代的作用和多重价值，因此文件管理就成为政府管理、企业管理、社会管理活动的必然组成部分。当今时代文件管理的最大挑战来自计算机的广泛应用和社会信息化的进程，随着电子政务、电子商务及各类电子业务的快速发展，完全不同于传统文件记录方式和传递方式的电子文件在全世界呈现出飞速增长与广泛普及之势，成为人类社会的基本记录形式、重要信息资源和法律证据，电子文件管理也随之成为信息时代的重要课题。有效管理、充分开发电子文件资源，对于国家政治、经济、文化等各项事业都具有不可或缺的作用和重要而深远的意义。

综观世界上信息化进程比较快的国家，20 世纪 90 年代以来电子文件管理越来越受到重视。电子文件被视为电子政务、电子商务和其他各类电子化业务的基本工具，视为机构的重要信息资产，视为国家和社会的珍贵历史记录。这些国家大多通过制定法规、政策与标准，借助管理与技术双重手段，逐步建立了科学、有效的电子文件管理体系，从而有力地支撑了各项电子化业务的顺利开展，促进了电子文件信息资产的价值实现，推动了历史文明的保护与传承。包括电子文件在内的文件管理国际标准的陆续出台进一步推动了电子文件管理的科学化、规范化进程。



近年来，我国在电子文件管理领域做了大量的探索和推进工作，取得了长足进步。但是，由于各方面的原因，目前我们对电子文件还远未达到应有的认知和重视，尚未建立科学、高效的电子文件管理体系，数以亿计的电子文件还没有得到妥善保管，处于失控、失存、失信、失用、失密的危险状态，并可能引发多重社会风险。

意识到这一问题的严峻性和紧迫性，中国档案学会和中国人民大学信息资源管理学院于2007年5月共同向中国科学技术协会申报了“电子文件管理机制研究”课题，得到了中国科学技术协会及评审专家的充分认可，并获得重点立项与资助。

作为本课题的首席专家，我一方面欣喜于这一课题得到了中国科协专家和领导的如此关注，同时也为其研究难度和进度要求而深感压力。仅仅半年多时间，课题组全体成员经过艰辛的调查与研究，初步掌握了我国当前电子文件管理的总体状况与主要问题，在大范围追踪国外电子文件管理经验和发展趋势的基础上，对我国建立电子文件管理体系提出了若干理论观点和政策建议。2007年12月，课题顺利通过验收鉴定，获得来自信息化部门、国家档案局、图书情报界等多领域专家的鼓励和认可。中国科协党组书记邓楠非常重视这一课题，亲自签署研究报告上报中央，特别令我们鼓舞的是温家宝总理对中国科协提交的这份研究报告给予了充分肯定并作出重要批示。这本书就是在课题研究成果的基础上总结、提炼、丰富而成的。

电子文件带来的挑战和难题是错综复杂的，其中牵涉全局、影响较深的是管理机制问题。所谓“机制”，可以理解为某一领域运行方式的内在结构及其相互关系，其中也会涉及一些体制、管理原则问题。建立健全科学合理的电子文件管理机制，是强化国家对电子文件信息资源的控制力、提高我国电子文件管理质量的一个关键性问题。因此，本书着眼于电子文件管理机制的研究，希望以此推动电子文件管理的全面进展。

这是一项现在时态的对策性研究，课题组的愿望是获得实质性成果，而不是翻炒概念或在既有理论圈子里打转转。循着“以问题为导向、以事实为基础、以学理为支撑、以解决实际问题为目的”的研究原则和“提出问题—分析问题—解决问题”的研究思路，本书的框架简明而直白：绪论阐明了研究背景以及资料与

方法支撑，正文三章分别是找问题、析原因和提对策，我们以这种常用的“三段式”清楚地传达这项对策研究的思路和脉络。

在研究全过程中，我们努力在了解现状、分析问题、提出对策方面下足工夫。我们把现状调研分为国内、国外两部分，国内力求同口径、准确性和可信度，国外立足大覆盖、多来源；分析问题追求说准说透、不兜圈子、不回避难点、不含糊其辞；对策研究则注重针对性、建设性和可行性。在研究过程中我们综合运用了档案学、行政管理学、公共政策学、法学等多学科的理论与方法，希望通过多视角、全方位的研究把我们的思维带进更加广阔的天地和更为务实的取向中，从而获得一些新的认识，得出一些有价值的结论。

本书的附录部分也值得关注，那些数据和资料是研究团队花费大量精力通过多种途径获取的，为我们分析、研究问题提供了重要的依据，我想也可以成为本书读者的有益参考。

本书框架由冯惠玲、赵国俊规划和设计，内容经课题组核心成员反复研讨、论证，由徐拥军主要执笔。参加撰写的还有安小米、王健、孙森林、张璋、钱毅、张宁、章燕华、叶晗、杜雅楠等，杨红艳、陈香、纪婷婷、付子霞、赵晶、周文佳、邵博、王木亮、罗继业、许成伟、章双喜、杨臆璁、唐德文、刘炀、杨圆圆、胡芳、钟万梅、李佳佳、祝米莉、金源鑫、李输、尹美京、邬佩、宋微、赵瑞红、鞠毅美等同学参与了文献资料的收集、翻译与整理工作。全书由冯惠玲统稿、审定。

中国科学技术协会杨文志副部长、刘兴平处长、黄珏女士对本课题的研究给予了大力指导与支持，国家档案局局长杨冬权、中国档案学会理事长冯鹤旺、原中国科学院文献信息中心主任徐引麓、原中国科学技术信息研究所所长梁战平、国家信息化专家咨询委员会委员陈玉龙、国家档案局技术部主任王良城、政策法规司司长郭嗣平、科技处处长蔡学美、北京市档案局副局长姜之茂、中国化工信息中心副主任揭玉斌等专家在本课题的立项、开题、中期检查与结题验收过程中提出了许多宝贵的意见与建议，国家档案局档案馆室司司长孙钢对国内调研工作给予了大力的支持和帮助，在此一并深表感谢！

电子文件管理机制是一个深层的、复杂的问题，以我们现在



的视野和知识所做的分析必然会有这样那样的欠缺，得出的结论还要在理论的深入和实践的发展中经受检验。这是一次面向实践的探索，而这种探索当然要随实践的发展而继续和深化。和我们一样行走于电子文件管理探索之旅的任何人，对于这项研究的任何关注和任何批评指正，都是我们乐于接受的。

冯惠玲

2009年1月15日

ABSTRACT

I . Introduction

With the rapid growth of e-government, e-commerce as well as other e-businesses, electronic records are emerging and growing rapidly. In fact, paper records are progressively giving way to electronic records which now function as the basic record form, essential information resource and necessary legal evidence. In 2006, electronic records produced by the central government agencies in China increased by 18.9% over 2005, and electronic records accounted for 72.7% of the total. However, due to the poor understanding of and practice in electronic records management, millions and millions of electronic records are being threatened by the lack of control, improper preservation, loss of credibility and confidentiality in different degrees, therefore, to establish a scientific and effective electronic records management system is the best answer to the urgent need.

Researchers have come to know the general state and the major problems of electronic records management in China, extensively traced the tendency of electronic records management overseas and proposed some theoretical ideas and suggestions on electronic records management system based on intensive study, after carrying out practical investigations in 115 government offices, enterprises and archives at different levels, and undertaking literature research on organizations in 16 foreign countries (or dis-



tricts) and on UNESCO, International Council on Archives, International Organization for Standardization and other international organizations.

II. Problems

Investigation shows that many problems exist in the field of electronic records management in China as follows:

1. Lack of management threatens the country's control over information resources.

From a micro perspective, most organizations haven't established their electronic records management systems, in which no personnel are specially appointed for electronic records management; and from a macro perspective, most archives haven't enlisted the receiving of electronic records in their agenda. Up to now, the state hasn't put electronic records under centralized management and preservation, or made effective monitoring and standard control over electronic records management.

2. Loss of electronic records endangers the continuity of the country's history and the nation's memory.

According to the investigation, 42.2 percent of electronic documents haven't been kept in any form; 74.4 percent of organizations haven't taken any measures to preserve such electronic records as database, e-mails, multimedia records and web pages; and what's even worse, some preserved electronic records are unreadable due to improper management.

3. Lack of efficacy of evidence threatens the legitimacy of all activities.

About 73.6 percent of the organizations under investigation admitted that the electronic records they have produced cannot independently bring into play the efficacy of the evidences.

4. The issue of insecurity challenges the safety and interests of the Party and the country.

Many examples show that due to the lack of mature electronic records management measures, there is a severe leakage of se-

cret of electronic records in China.

5. The low-level development and application weakens the service function of governments. Because the electronic records under effective control and management are of small quantity and poor quality, and no reasonable policies on development are there to be depended on, there is still a long way to go for China in the development and application of electronic records to catch up with the countries advanced in information, either in depth or magnitude.

III. Causes

1. Cognitive factor: obsolete concepts and ideas

China's backward electronic records management is mainly caused by the poor understanding on electronic records management, which can be specifically described as the following:

(1) Lack of the sense of evidence

Many departments and staff are not aware that records, as the original documentation of activities, are important legal evidence; and they don't regard electronic records as formal records, nor do they recognize the evidence efficacy of electronic records.

(2) Lack of the sense of property

A large majority of organizations and individuals haven't realized that electronic records are information resource that cannot be regenerated and valuable information property and knowledge property of an institution, or even a country.

(3) Lack of the sense of risk

Electronic records are faced with multiple risks due to the complexity and fragility in technology. However, a great number of organizations and staff are basically not risk-conscious.

(4) Lack of the sense of profit

According to the investigation, 77.6 percent of institutions completely or partly adopt a "dual-track system", and 89.9 percent adopt a "dual-set system". The excessive dependency on "dual-track system" or "dual-set system" shows that many de-



partments and staff haven't realized that the ultimate aim of informatization construction is to improve efficiency and reduce costs.

2. System factor: segmental management and decentralized management

(1)Segmental management

At present,in China,the whole process of electronic records management is divided into file processing in the early stage and records management in the latter stage. The two stages are not integrated into a whole,and are not well-coordinated. The segmental management vertically breaks up the whole process of records management.

(2)Decentralized management

At an institution, administrative records and business records, paper records and electronic records are scattered in archives department,information department or business segments, making the management disordered. The fact is that a great majority of achieves departments have not systematically accepted electronic record archival management and electronic records are scattered and preserved in their producing organizations or individuals. The decentralized management horizontally breaks up the integral subject of records management.

3. Management factor: lack of coordination and communication

(1)Lack of coordination between different departments

In China, comprehensive offices of the Communist Party Committee,comprehensive offices of government,archives departments and information departments are co-existing in charge of records management,making it difficult to establish and implement a unified strategy and management system for electronic records management.

(2)Lack of consistence between different laws and regulations

The basic terms in the regulations and standards are not unified. The standards of records management between Party com-

mittees and governments are not coordinated. There are also conflicts between local standards and national standards. All the differences and conflicts greatly impact the integrity, sharing and integration of electronic records resources, which acts as the main cause of the confusion and out of control of electronic records management.

(3) Lack of compatibility between programs and systems

From the perspective of the country, we have no top-level overall design or planning from top to bottom. Horizontally, the local agencies launch their own electronic records programs regardless of the locations, modes, functions, standards, techniques and approaches of the others. Thus the “isolated information island” emerges one by one. Vertically, every industry establishes its own management system from top to bottom which is isolated and independent from the others, and produces many isolated “information chimneys”.

4. The Legal factor: undeveloped laws and lack of regulations

(1) Undeveloped Laws

In China, no specific laws or regulations applicable to electronic records management have been established yet. *Signature laws in People's Republic of China is mainly targeted at e-business, without covering e-government. The Regulation of the People's Republic of China on the Disclosure of Government Information* does not deal with the issue of information disclosure of public departments like the Party Affairs Committee, (China) National People's Congress, Chinese People's Political Consultative Committee, and only belongs to the State Council department regulations.

(2) Undeveloped standard establishment

Only 5 national standards or industry standards have been launched in China. Many metadata standards established or being in progress are neither scientific nor specialized, and cannot ensure the authenticity, reliability, integrity and practicality of electronic records.



(3) Lack of supervision system

In China, electronic records management system hasn't been tested, and neither the electronic records management responsibility system nor the property auditing system for electronic records hasn't been established.

5. The Supporting factor: weak in research and short age of professionals

(1) The backward theoretical research and technical development. The research in electronic records management in China, with quite a few strong research teams, started late from a rather low level, to which experts in Science of Law, information technology, administrative management, business administration have not attached enough attention. The technical storage for electronic records management is also undeveloped.

(2) Shortage of professionals

As the main force of electronic records management, there are few top full-time archivists. Most of the full-time archivists are of low-level expertise and few have acquired the management techniques through systematic learning.

IV. Countermeasures

In order to improve the level and quality of electronic records management, the electronic records management system should be established centered by system construction, based on our specific situations, in light of the features, movement rules and special risks of electronic records, by introducing the advanced experience of other countries. The electronic records management system with Chinese characteristics is composed of value layer, operation layer and guarantee layer. Specifically, the value layer mainly refers to correct consciousness of electronic records; operation layer includes "bring-in" system, centralized management principle, cooperative system, cooperation and sharing mechanism, and so forth; and guarantee layer consists of supervision and audit, regulations and standards, theoretical research and technical develop-

ment, and professional training.

The electronic records management system in China is an organic whole. It is focused on the authenticity, reliability, integrity and usability of electronic records, and is aimed at realizing the efficacy of electronic records, with updating ideas as the premise, "bring-in" mechanism as the core, centralized management as the cornerstone, cooperation and coordination between departments as the condition, program establishment and sharing as the breakthrough, supervision and audit as the guarantee, rules and standards as the basis, theoretical research, technical development and professional training as the support to pursue a scientific, specialized and standardized way of managing electronic records.

1. To update thoughts and ideas

Increasing awareness, updating thoughts, and establishing correct understanding of electronic records are important premises to the development of electronic records management in China. We should have a correct understanding that the rise of electronic records is a historical choice. And we should build up the confidence on electronic records and the management, overcome the excessive dependence on "dual-track system" and "dual-set system". Moreover, leaders should take the lead in the above efforts.

2. To build a "bring-in" system

We should bring electronic records management into the strategic framework of informization construction so as to facilitate the interaction and coordination between electronic records management and informization progress, uplift the level of electronic records management and achieve the great-leap-forward development.

We should bring electronic records management into the activity system, which includes but not limited to e-government and e-business, through legislation and post duty system, to ensure the evidence efficacy of electronic records.

We should bring electronic records into the development system of information resource and bring the risks of electronic re-



cords into the framework of risk management.

3. Strengthen the principle of centralized management

(1) The electronic records management should be monitored by archival departments for the whole process.

We suggest that archives bureaus should be renamed Records and Archives Bureaus, while *the Archives Law of the People's Republic of China* and other relevant regulations should be revised, clearly defining the document management and front-end control authority of archive departments.

(2) A national electronic records resource system should be built in China.

A National Electronic Records Center shall be established as soon as possible to receive and preserve the electronic records of central and national agencies. A nationwide resource system and service network should be built to connect electronic records centers of all kinds at all levels, with National Electronic Records Center as its model, center and hinge.

4. To enhance the cooperation and coordination mechanism

(1) The relationships between responsibility distribution and coordination among departments should be straightened out.

The responsibility on document management of archives departments, information departments or performance management departments at all levels should be clearly defined, and their cooperation shall also be well specified.

(2) An interdepartmental coordination department should be established like “National Electronic Records Management Coordination Committee” as the top coordination organization.

(3) The system of joint conference shall be established to coordinate the unconventional and significant electronic records management programs which may involve several departments.

5. To improve the system of “co-establishment and sharing”

In order to avoid the phenomenon of “Isolated Information Island” or “Isolated Information Chimney”, we should set up a system of “co-establishment and sharing”. National Archives

should establish management strategies and macro plans to arrange the electronic records programs; introduce RMP of USA and cooperate among departments; adopt the way of “public sponsoring”; and facilitate the sharing of research results and practical experience.

6. To set up a supervision and audit mechanism

We should certify the management function of electronic records in information system, establish and improve the supervision and audit mechanism, apply the performance examination to electronic records management and implement the property audit of electronic records.

7. To speed up the formulation of regulations and standards

(1) We shall push forward the legislation. A better *Documents Act of People's Republic of China* shall be launched.

(2) We shall promote the progress of standardization. A scientific standardization system for electronic records management shall be set up as soon as possible to address the standard issue in the field of document management in China. Currently a *Guide to Electronic Records* shall be edited to provide guidance and standard for the policies of electronic records management. International standards shall be introduced in an active manner and the publication and implementation of standards shall also be strengthened.

8. To improve technical research and professional training

(1) We shall put emphasis on theoretical research and technical development.

Relevant authorities should make plans for long-term research subjects of electronic records management on the basis of practical needs; jointly establish and sponsor the research participated by many institutions and experts to solve the key theoretical and technical problems; and should study and develop the China-made, high-quality software applicable to electronic records management.

(2) We shall attach importance to building a contingent of



professionals.

The electronic records management training for all staff shall be initiated, meanwhile the professional certification for electronic records management shall be set up, and the training contents and teaching approaches shall also be updated in time.