

Sir Rupert Hamer Awards Case Study

Public Record Office Victoria

Department of Health and Human Services

SIARD Project



Public Record
Office Victoria





Sir Rupert Hamer Award recipient, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), oversaw the first successful electronic relational database transfer in Victoria using Software Independent Archiving of Relational Databases (SIARD). DHHS was awarded for Excellence and Innovation in Records Management at the 2016 Sir Rupert Hamer Awards.

Key Topics

Electronic records management

Databases

SIARD

Digital archive

Records transfer

Key Discoveries

- **Relational databases can be preserved using the Software Independent Archiving of Relational Databases model (SIARD).**
- **This project is an example for use across Victorian Government to ensure the long-term preservation of relational databases.**

About

In 2015 the Victorian Government established the Department of Health & Human Services, bringing together the former Department of Health, Department of Human Services and Sport and Recreation Victoria. The Department was established to develop and deliver policies, programs and services that support and enhance the wellbeing of all Victorians.

The Challenge

Many Victorian Government records are created in relational databases and the challenge is to preserve these databases in a format that enables long term preservation. In 2013–14 Public Record Office Victoria (PROV) evaluated the SIARD tools developed by the Swiss Federal Archive for use in Victorian Government. PROV determined that:

- The tools work and the siard format, based on [eXtensible Markup Language \(XML\)](#), is acceptable for long-term preservation
- PROV will accept transfers of records from relational databases in siard format as VERS encapsulated objects, or VEOs (VEOs are a product of the Victorian Electronic Records Strategy Standard, it is a long term preservation format.

PROV approached DHHS in early 2014 seeking a collaborative partner in a 'Field trial' of SIARD.

The Solution

The SIARD project commenced in May 2014 and focussed on preparing and transferring relational databases to the PROV digital archive.

At a high level, the anticipated benefits of the project were to achieve considerable progress towards a new capacity for the long term preservation of valuable public records from relational databases. At a practical level the project aimed to:

- Establish capability by developing SAIRD into a 'complete package' that could be used effectively across all Victorian Government with minimal additional training.
- Evaluate and document insights and lessons learned through the conversion of each database and through DHHS' adoption of SIARD.
- Influence adoption across Victorian Government by establishing a program of database preservation and transfer and demonstrating the benefits of the program.

Approach

The Department's Plan Room Index System (PRIS) was selected as the relational database for this three-year project.

Firstly, DHHS worked with PROV to set up a SIARD environment that could work with all of DHHS' current and future dataset needs. By 2015 a database preservation environment was established at DHHS and they were able to submit a [transfer proposal to PROV](#).

In 2016, PRIS VEOs were created as metadata and documentation was finalised with PROV registering the PRIS database as a new series within the state's archival collection.

The Result

The project resulted in a successful collaboration between DHHS and PROV, to establish the capability for preserving public records from relational databases using the SIARD tools, that will benefit not only other government agencies, but also the broader Victorian community in years to come.

Future transfers are currently being planned by the project team.

Sir Rupert Hamer Awards

The Sir Rupert Hamer Awards recognise excellence and innovation in records management within the Victorian Public Sector.

The Awards seek to highlight the importance of good recordkeeping in ensuring government accountability and efficient operation of public administration within the State of Victoria.

For further information about the Sir Rupert Hamer Awards visit prov.vic.gov.au

