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Information and documentation -- Work process analysis for records

Information et documentation -- Analyse des processus pour le gestion des informations et documents d'activité

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Information and documentation — Work process analysis for records

Information et documentation — Analyse du processus des «records»

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ISO copyright office
Case postale 56 • CH-1211 Geneva 20
Tel. + 41 22 749 01 11
Fax + 41 22 749 09 47
E-mail copyright@iso.org
Web www.iso.org

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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

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The main task of technical committees is to prepare International Standards. Draft International Standards adopted by the technical committees are circulated to the member bodies for voting. Publication as an International Standard requires approval by at least 75 % of the member bodies casting a vote.

In exceptional circumstances, when a technical committee has collected data of a different kind from that which is normally published as an International Standard ("state of the art", for example), it may decide by a simple majority vote of its participating members to publish a Technical Report. A Technical Report is entirely informative in nature and does not have to be reviewed until the data it provides are considered to be no longer valid or useful.

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

ISO/TR 26122 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 46, *Information and documentation*, Subcommittee SC 11, *Archives/records management*.

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Introduction

All organizations, regardless of their size or the nature of their business, exist and act to achieve certain goals and objectives. To realize its own specific goals and objectives, each organization will determine and apply appropriate work processes which constitute the organization's business.

Every organization generates records from its work processes. These records constitute evidence of the organization's goals and objectives, of its decisions and of its transactions. To fully understand these "business records", it is necessary to understand the work processes that generated them. This understanding can also be used to identify the records that should be generated from work processes and to manage them through time as assets of the organization.

Work process analysis for records is undertaken to determine the requirements for records creation, capture and control. It describes and analyses what happens in a function in a specific business context. It cannot take place in the abstract but is dependent on accurate information gathering and a well-grounded understanding of the organization's context and mission.

This Technical Report is intended for:

- records professionals (or persons assigned within an organization for managing records) responsible for creating and managing records in either a business system or dedicated records application software;
- system/business analysts responsible for designing business processes and/or systems that will create or manage records.

For the purposes of this Technical Report, *work process analysis* involves identifying:

- a) the relationship between work processes and their business context;
- b) the relationship between work processes and the rules governing their application (as derived from the relevant regulatory environment);
- c) the hierarchical decomposition of work processes into their component or constituent parts; and
- d) the sequential interdependence between discrete work processes or single transactions

Analysis of work processes for the purposes of creation and control of records serves to:

- provide a clear identification of records creation requirements, facilitating automatic capture and management of records as the work is performed; and
- define business contextual links between records, and thereby lead to their logical arrangement and grouping, thus ensuring clear documentation of work processes and facilitating retrieval, retention and disposition of the records based on knowledge of the business.

Work process analysis supports the integration of the capture of records as the work is undertaken. Processing orders and accounts, payment of wages, managing assets, stock control or quality assurance systems and contract management are examples of work processes in which the creation of records is normally integrated with processing the transactions. Integrating records processes into automation protocols applied to work processes will ensure that organizations' records are created, captured and controlled systematically in their business systems.

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Information and documentation — Work process analysis for records

1 Scope

This Technical Report provides guidance on work process analysis from the perspective of the creation, capture and control of records.

It identifies two types of analyses, namely

- a) functional analysis (decomposition of functions into processes), and
- b) sequential analysis (investigation of the flow of transactions).

Each analysis entails a preliminary review of context (i.e. mandate and regulatory environment) appropriate for the analysis. The components of the analysis can be undertaken in various combinations and in a different order from that described here, depending on the nature of the task, the scale of the project, and the purpose of the analysis. Guidance provided in the form of lists of questions/matters to be considered under each element of the analysis is also included.

This Technical Report describes a practical application of the theory outlined in ISO 15489. As such, it is independent of technology (i.e. can be applied regardless of the technological environment), although it can be used to assess the adequacy of technical tools that support an organization's work processes.

This Technical Report focuses on existing work processes rather than on facilitating "workflow" (i.e. the automation of a business process in whole or part, during which documents, information or tasks are passed from one participant to another for action, according to a set of procedural rules as outlined in Reference [1] of the Bibliography).

2 Normative references

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 15489-1:2001, *Information and documentation — Records management — Part 1: General*

ISO/TR 15489-2:2001, *Information and documentation — Records management — Part 2: Guidelines*

ISO 23081-1:2006, *Information and documentation — Records management processes — Metadata for records — Part 1: Principles*

ISO/TS 23081-2:2007, *Information and documentation — Records management processes — Metadata for records — Part 2: Conceptual and implementation issues*

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3 Terms and definitions

For the purpose of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 15489-1 and ISO 15489-2, ISO 23081-1 and ISO 23081-2, and the following apply.

3.1 documentation

collection of documents describing operations, instructions, decisions, procedures and business rules related to a given function, process or transaction

3.2 functional analysis

grouping together of all the processes undertaken to achieve a specific, strategic, goal of an organization, which uncovers relationships between functions, processes and transactions which have implications for managing records

3.3 sequence

series of transactions connected by the requirement that undertaking a later transaction is dependent on completing earlier transactions

3.4 sequential analysis

sequential analysis maps a business process in a linear and/or chronological sequence which reveals the dependent relationships between the constituent transactions

3.5 transaction

smallest unit of a work process consisting of an exchange between two or more participants or systems

3.6 work process

work process is one or more sequences of transactions required to produce an outcome that complies with governing rules

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4 Undertaking work process analysis

4.1 General

Work process analysis for records is employed to gather information about the transactions, processes and functions of an organization to identify the requirements of records creation, capture and control.

There are two approaches to undertaking work process analysis:

- a) functional;
- b) sequential.

Before selecting either analysis or a combination, the purpose of the records project, the scope and scale of the project and the organizational context (contextual review, see Clause 5) of the work to be analysed needs to be determined.

4.2 Records dimension of work process analysis

Work process analysis is the foundation needed for the following processes used for creation, capture and control of records:

- a) identification of records requirements to document a function or other aggregates of processes;
- b) development of function-based classification schemes for identification, location and linking of related records;
- c) maintenance of links between records and the context of their creation;
- d) development of naming and indexing rules and conventions to ensure maintenance of identification of records over time;
- e) identification of ownership of records over time;
- f) determination of appropriate retention periods for records and development of records disposition authorities;
- g) analysis of risk management in records system context;
- h) determination of appropriate security protection for records and development of access permissions and security levels.

4.3 Scope and scale of work process analysis

The two analyses may be undertaken in various combinations and scaled depending upon the scope of the task. The analysis can be scaled to meet various requirements, i.e. from a comprehensive identification and analysis of all functions of an organization down to the micro-level analysis of a particular process in a single business unit. The scale and level of detail used will depend on the organization's risk assessment and the purpose of the records management task.

Functional analysis uses a top-down analytical method which begins with organizational goals and strategies and may descend to the analysis of transactions. It can be used across more than one organization (within one or more jurisdictions), within one organization, or one division of an organization responsible for a function.

Sequential analysis can be scaled to analyse processes across a whole organization, across one or more organizations, (within one or more jurisdictions), or within a division, or a single business unit. It can be used to analyse an aggregate of processes, the transactions which make up a single process, or a single transaction down to the keystrokes, depending on the purpose of the analysis.

For the purposes of this Technical Report, the hierarchy of terms defined in Table 1 is used.

NOTE Many jurisdictions use different terms to designate the logical levels of analysis of a function. In some cases, jurisdictions or organizations can choose to identify different or additional levels in the decomposition of function to transaction. Both the number of levels, and points at which they are identified, depend on jurisdictional practice and on the scope and scale of the work process analysis project itself. Terms such as "sub-function", "activity" and "action" can be used but have not been employed in this Technical Report in part to facilitate implementation.