

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
FACULTY OF COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION SCIENCE
DEPARTMENT OF RECORDS AND ARCHIVES MANAGEMENT

E-RECORDS READINESS IN ZIMBABWE'S PUBLIC SECTOR

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Abstract

The study investigated e-records readiness in Zimbabwe's public sector. The purpose of the study was to assess the level of capacity in government ministries in terms of e-records management. The specific objectives of the study were to determine the policies and responsibilities for e-records and information management in government ministries, to establish the e-records and information management tools and procedures used in government ministries, to establish the resources and level of professional training for the records staff in e-records management in government ministries, to determine the e-records management products and technologies in government ministries, to establish the internal and public awareness tools for records and information management, to determine the level of compliance of government ministries with records information policies and procedures and ascertain the role of the National Archives of Zimbabwe (NAZ) in the management of electronic records generated by government ministries. These objectives were adapted from the International Records Management Trust (IRMT) e-records readiness tool. Data was collected from twenty (20) ministries at headquarters level through questionnaires and interviews and analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. Interview data was qualitatively analysed using the process of thematic and content analysis. The key findings of the study revealed that the ministries in Zimbabwe were not yet e-records ready. All the surveyed institutions attained a readiness score of 30-60 in the IRMT e-records readiness tool rankings. The attained scores meant that ministries' e-records readiness was low and records/ information produced in digital form were at high risk of misuse and loss as there are no government/ institution-wide strategies and standards for e-records and digital preservation. It was recommended that government ministries should have e-records and information management policies and procedures that establish organisation-wide principles, guidelines and responsibilities for the creation, capture, management and preservation of e-records. NAZ needs to play a proactive role by stipulating the premises on which e-records can be created, maintained, and preserved within the creating departments and the archival institution and also revise the NAZ Act of 1986 so that it caters for e-records which are now being created and used by public sector institutions. A recommendation was also made for ministries and NAZ to ensure that they employ staff with the requisite expertise in e-records management and offer continuous training and development to current staff.