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DEPARTMENT OF RECORDS AND ARCHIVES MANAGEMENT

PROCESSING ARCHIVES AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF ZIMBABWE
(BULAWAYO)

BY

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A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE
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IN

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ABSTRACT

The research was meant to investigate the accumulation of unprocessed backlogs at the National Archives of Zimbabwe (NAZ) Bulawayo. NAZ Bulawayo had five thousand cubic feet of unprocessed backlogs which resulted in problems on access to public archives, client dissatisfaction, adding already high workload of archivists and processing staff. The major factor that led to the accumulation of unprocessed backlogs was funding which limited the institution to purchase new shelves and storage boxes for processing public archives. There were also minor causes that had fuelled the increase of unprocessed backlogs at NAZ, Bulawayo and these included unclear standing instructions, shortage of staff, shortage of records storage space and the traditional approach of processing public archives.

The findings of the study was that NAZ, Bulawayo does not have a written archival processing policy which guide it on archival processing procedures. The institution was not aware of the “More Product , Less Process” model proposed by Greene and Meissner” Refresher courses which are a pillar of professional development were not offered to all Archivist at NAZ, Bulawayo.

The researcher used a descriptive survey research design which required a sound methodology and well designed data collection instrument. The researcher used self administered questionnaires and telephone interviews instruments to collect data. Telephone interviews enabled the researcher to obtain in- depth information. The researcher was limited by time and financial constrain to cover all the processing aspects that take place at NAZ Bulawayo, therefore the research focussed on processing of public archives at the Bulawayo Public Archives Section.