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### ELECTRONIC DOCUMENTS LIFE CYCLE AT THE STATE UNIVERSITY

Enterprise Content Management (ECM) is the strategies, methods and tools used to capture, manage, store, preserve, and deliver content and documents related to organizational processes. ECM tools and strategies allow the management of an organization's unstructured information, wherever that information exists<sup>1</sup>.

ECM at Virginia Tech provides information technology support to the university in the area of secure electronic documenting, information routing, and storage. DMS currently provides access, management, configuration, coordination, enhancement, and maintenance support for the following systems:

- Web Content Management Services;
- Information Technology Acquisitions Systems;
- Enterprise Document Management Services;
- Enterprise Workflow Services;
- Enterprise Digital Object Repository Services;
- Bug and Issue Tracking Service.

Regardless of how a piece of content enters, it has a lifecycle that includes digital document entry, usage, retention, and disposal. Physically electronic documents exist in form of machine-readable records on digital or analog media. The Virginia Public Records Act (§ 42.1-77) broadly defines an electronic record as a record whose creation, storage, and access require the use of an automated electronic system or device. Ownership of hardware, software, or media used has no determination on whether a record is public.

Efficient and economic retention and disposal of public records for Virginia Tech is provided by Records Management Services (RMS). All university records including electronic documents are stored in the Records Center. Records transferred to Record Center must be identified by a record Retention Code and retention period in accordance with the Virginia General Schedules.

RMS is stored documents both at paper and digital formats. Paper records must be packed in special records storage boxes with lids so that they will fit the shelving in the Records Center.

Digital documents are recorded at high-density archive magnetic tape cartridges. Media is placed into waterproof containers (no more than 14 in.

high by 15 in. deep). Containers are stored by RMS in specially designed Vault Room to protect digital documents against disasters. Vault Room is a stable and secure storage environment: The room is maintained at a constant 70 F (21 C) degrees and 35% – 55% humidity. It's secured with intrusion alarms and motion detectors. The interior door to the building remains locked at all times. Constructed with a concrete floor, and walls, the Vault Room is rated to withstand as a minimum three hours of fire. Additionally the entire building has an automated fire suppression system and a fire alarm wired into the campus police office.

The standard procedure of departmental records transfer to RMS includes the following steps both for paper and digital documents:

a) Department Records Coordinator submits on-line a Records Transfer Request to RMS. Record transfer request includes Departmental Container Number, Title of Records , Retention Code, Retention Start and End Dates, First and Last Files Names.

b) The Records Center Supervisor reviews the transfer, communicates with the Department Records Coordinator, assigns RMS Container numbers, and issues labels.

c) Department Records Coordinator is responsible to have the containers labeled and delivered to the Records Center.

Retention Codes for records that need to be retained for a finite period of time are assigned according to Virginia Tech Records Retention Schedule. Virginia Tech State University is using State of Virginia guidance for documents retention and handling. Under Code of Virginia the Library of Virginia (LVA). LVA has the authority to issue regulations governing the retention and disposition of state and local public records.

The Records Analysts at the Library of Virginia make final decision which original digital documents should have permanent retention period. Media with these documents must be offered to the LVA prior to being destroyed.

Virginia Tech policy recommends the destruction of original university records including electronic documents when they are no longer needed by the University for administrative, legal, fiscal, or historical purposes. No original records may be disposed of without receiving an approved Certificate of Records Disposal from the University Records Manager. The Certificate of Records Disposal protects both office personnel and Virginia Tech by showing that public records are being destroyed in accordance with laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

LVA General Schedule No. 111<sup>2</sup> states that «deletion» of confidential or privacy-protected information in computer files or other electronic storage

media is not acceptable. Electronic records must be «wiped» clean or the storage media physically destroyed.

The common methods of digital media disposal at Virginia Tech RMS are «degaussing»<sup>3</sup> of magnetic media and destroying optical media by shredding.

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<sup>1</sup> What is Enterprise Content Management (ECM)? // Association for Information and Image Management. Retrieved September 20, 2010.

<sup>2</sup> Records Retention and Disposition Schedule General Schedule No 111 for All State Supported Colleges and Universities College and University Records [Electronic resource]. – Mode of access: [http://www.lva.virginia.gov/agencies/records/sched\\_state/GS-111.pdf](http://www.lva.virginia.gov/agencies/records/sched_state/GS-111.pdf). – Title from screen.

<sup>3</sup> Degaussing [Electronic resource] // Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. – Mode of access: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Degaussing>. – Title from screen.