Records Management in the Digital Age

Mr. Hitoshi FUKUI
Senior Vice-President
National Archives of Japan

Former Deputy Director-General for public records management at the Minister's Secretariat, Cabinet Office

【Abstract】

It is now coming up on five years since the Public Records and Archives Management Act (PRAMA), which generally governs Japanese public records management, came into full effect in 2011. The timing has us moving ahead with two streams of initiatives in regard to public records management. The first one involves efforts to revise Japan’s public records management system itself. The supplementary provisions to PRAMA state that “approximately five years after the enforcement of this Act, the Government shall review the scope of Administrative Documents and Corporate Documents as well as other matters, taking into consideration the state of enforcement of this Act, and, when it deems necessary, shall take necessary measures based on the findings of the review.” In light of this mandate, the Public Records and Archives Management Commission established within the Japanese government under PRAMA is now reconsidering our system as a whole with the goal of announcing an agreed-upon approach in March of this year. The second one aims to construct new facilities of the National Archives of Japan, which has been suffering from age-related deterioration of its main office, a lack of repository space, and similar issues for some time now. A bipartisan group of the Diet members was formed in 2014 with the goal of eventually building new National Archives facilities, leading the government to set up an investigative committee of experts on the matter that same year. The committee is currently in the processes of re-determining the kinds of functions and facilities to be fulfilled by the National Archives of Japan with a view to actually creating these new structures. In either stream, issues such as the handling of born-digital records and digitization of conventional public records are critical points of discussion, given that efforts related to the management of digital records are being made around the world and international conferences on public records management often take up topics that hinge on the advancement of digitization. This presentation will cover how Japan is setting up its public records management system to cope with the digital era reflecting the global progress of digitization, and will include moves leading to the construction of a new building for the National Archives of Japan.

【Biography】

Mr. Hitoshi FUKUI currently serves as Senior Vice-President of the National Archives of Japan. Prior to the current position, he was working as Deputy Director-General at the Minister's Secretariat, Cabinet Office and was responsible for Japanese public records management. Mr. Fukui began his public career in the Management and Coordination Agency (currently the Cabinet Office) in 1985 and has served in a variety of positions including Director of the Records and Archives Management Division at the Minister's Secretariat; Director-General of the General Affairs Department at the Okinawa General Bureau; and Director of the Accounts Division at the Minister’s Secretariat. He has also worked for the Reconstruction Headquarters in Response to the Great East Japan Earthquake and its successor, the Reconstruction Agency. He holds a bachelor’s degree in law from the University of Tokyo.
Public Records Management to be Targeted in the Digital Age

Hitoshi Fukui, former Deputy Director-General for public records management, Cabinet Office
September 8, 2016
International Council on Archives (ICA) Congress in Seoul

1. Introduction: Public Records and Archives Management Act “Public Records and Archives Management Act (PRAMA)” came into force in 2011

- Public records: "Intellectual resource to be shared by the people" supporting the basis of sound democracy
- Purposes:
  - Administrative organs’ appropriate and efficient operation
  - To ensure accountability to the people at present and in the future

Points of the records management system:
- Unified management rules stipulated by laws and regulations
- Use of experts’ knowledge
- Adoption of records schedule
- Enhancement of National Archives of Japan’s functions
- Ensuring compliance
- Promotion of use of historical public records and archives

1. Introduction: Review of the Records Management System


Enforcement of PRAMA Review of the system

5 years

● At present

1. Introduction: Efforts for a New National Archives of Japan Building

FY 2015 FY 2016 FY 2017 From FY 2018

Basic Concept Design etc.

Construction

Basic Plan

At present

Examine the functions required for the National Archives of Japan in the coming ages

1. Introduction: Two Major Efforts for Public Records Management

Review of the Public Records Management System

Building a New National Archives of Japan Facility

Public records management in Japan to be targeted for the digital age

2. Efforts to Review the Public Records Management System


Enforcement of PRAMA Review of the system

5 years

● At present

- Article 13 of the Supplementary Provision
  - Approximately five years after the enforcement of this Act, the Government shall review the scope of Administrative Documents and Corporate Documents as well as other matters, taking into consideration the state of enforcement of this Act, and, when it finds it necessary, shall take necessary measures based on the findings of the review.
The Tsukuba Annex of the National Basic Plan

3. Efforts to Build a New National Archives of Japan Facility: Present Status

3.1. Challenges:
- Aging buildings
- Limited repository space

3.2. Present Status:
- The National Archives of Japan (Roppongi) built in 1971
- The National Archives of Japan (Hiroshima) built in 1998
- The National Archives of Japan (Sapporo) built in 1986
- The National Archives of Japan (Sendai) built in 1990
- The National Archives of Japan (Tokyo) built in 1971

March 23, 2016
Public Records and Archives Management Commission

2 (1) Comprehensive Assessment

2 (2) Directions Related to Digital Records

Further discussion will be made for concrete measures.

Basic Concept for the Functions and Facility of the National Archives of Japan (Chairman: Mr. Oikawa, Executive Adviser of the Yomiuri Shimbun):
- The following matters were discussed at the “Research/Consideration Meeting on the Functions and Facility of the National Archives of Japan” (Chairman: Mr. Oikawa, Executive Adviser of the Yomiuri Shimbun):
  - Domestic research (museums, etc.)
  - Invitation of foreign experts to Japan (from France) in FY 2015
  - Overseas research (US, Europe, Australia, etc.) in FY 2014

Advantages of digital records:
- Physically smaller
- Higher cost of preservation and transfer of digital records without medium change
- Higher value of electronic documents
- Preservation to ensure long-term readability

Disadvantages of digital records:
- Easier information sharing and searching
- More digital records in the future

At present:
- The proportion of digital records to administrative documents: 5.2%
- The need for digital records in the future

Further discussion will be made for concrete measures.
"Basic Concept for the Functions and Facility of the National Archives of Japan"

1. Purpose/background
2. Basic stance for the new National Archives of Japan
3. Functions required for the National Archives of Japan:
   (1) Collection acquisition and information service
   (2) Exhibition and education
   (3) Preservation and conservation
   (4) Research support
   (5) Digital archives
   (6) Personnel development
   (7) Information exchange
4. Organization, administration and facility of the National Archives of Japan
5. Future consideration

March 31, 2016
Research/Consideration Meeting on the Functions and Facility of the National Archives of Japan

3 (1) Directions for the New National Archives of Japan

Directions for the new National Archives of Japan

March 31, 2016
Research/Consideration Meeting on the Functions and Facility of the National Archives of Japan

(1) To take an active part as a “forum” to hand down the form and memory of the nation to the future
(2) To strengthen its role as a base to promote efforts to preserve and use our historical public records and archives of the whole country
(3) To develop the facility and services to cope with the change of the times including the progress of digitization

3 (2) Creating the Digital Archive

National Archives of Japan Digital Archive
- Digitized records: 13%
- Efforts toward networking
  (Example: provision of standard archival specifications)
⇒ Recognized by foreign and domestic researchers as useful for Japan studies.

3 (3) Flexibility in Functions and Facilities to Cope with Digitization

As digitization advances...
3 (3) Flexibility in Functions and Facilities to Cope with Digitization

Specific example: Changes in the roles of the reading room

At present

- The reading room is simply a place for reading records.

As digitization advances...

In the future

- New roles are required
  - Place for consulting archivists for research studies
  - Place where researchers hold discussions

3. Efforts to Build a New National Archives of Japan Facility: Future Schedule

- FY 2015
- FY 2016
- FY 2017
- From FY 2018

Basic Concept
- Determine functions required for the National Archives of Japan in the coming ages

Basic Plan
- At present

Design etc.

Construction

4. Summary

Review of the Public Records Management System

New roles of the National Archives of Japan

Discussion will continue to seek how public records should be managed in the digital age.

Thank you very much.