

Hon Marian Hobbs

Minister Responsible for the National Library and Archives NZ



14 April 2005

Media Statement

Public Records Bill passes into law

Parliament has today passed new law to improve the accountability of government institutions and meet the recordkeeping challenges of electronic information technology.

The Public Records Bill replaces the 48-year-old Archives Act of 1957 and the document and archive provisions of the Local Government Act 1974.

From today all government agencies, including SOEs, Crown entities and local government will be covered by the legislation.

The Minister Responsible for Archives NZ Marian Hobbs said recordkeeping is essential for efficient government as it supports day-to-day operational, legal and administrative requirements.

"Records make government accountable to the Crown and the public," Marian Hobbs added. "They also protect the rights and entitlements of New Zealanders and help provide the stories of how we developed as a nation.

"The growth in e-mail and the Internet has created a new set of challenges, which the bill addresses by requiring agencies to create and maintain records and to make them available over time. Agencies will also need to seek the approval of the Chief Archivist before they destroy records."

The legislation provides a range of tools to strengthen practice and assess how agencies are meeting requirements.

Media contact:

Trevor Henry, press secretary, tel 04 471 9131; 021 843 679

e-mail: Trevor.Henry@parliament.govt.nz