

**Submission
No 18**

**INQUIRY INTO STATE RECORDS ACT 1998 AND THE
POLICY PAPER ON ITS REVIEW**

Name: Ms Ruth Medd

Date Received: 8 April 2020

8 April 2020

The Hon Shayne Mallard MLC
Chair, Legislative Council Standing Committee on Social Issues
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Shayne,

REVIEW OF THE STATE RECORDS ACT 1998 & HISTORIC HOUSES ACT 1980

I am pleased to make a submission to your inquiry.

The Board of Trustees for the Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales (trading as Sydney Living Museums, 'SLM') has made a submission to your committee; which as a Trustee I have endorsed.

This submission is my personal views on some of the benefits of the proposed changes; to the general public and the public purse. Adoption of the proposed changes will result in leadership and innovation within the combined State Records/ HHT organization. Above this, the proposed changes will result in better government outcomes.

Policy Outcome Four

A single institution will act as custodian of the documentary and built history of NSW

Sydney Living Museums and State Records have been operating together since the MOG changes following the most recent NSW State election.

This has involved

- A single role of Executive Director for HHT and State Records
- Joint activity on public programs
- Other operational activities

When looking at the leverage available from joining the two organizations legislatively it is clear from my perspective as a trustee that:

- State Records has a peerless collection of historical records that are not readily accessible to the public
- HHT has the locations and exhibition smarts to delight the public

AS a single organization they can produce a showcase of previously hidden gems in the State Records collection in public friendly locations

In managerial terms administrative efficiencies have emerged and I would expect continue to emerge post any legislative changes.

Examples of how collaboration is driving innovation and accessibility

The trustees saw a preview of the exhibition [*A thousand words*](#) at its March meeting. This exhibition is a joint initiative that is innovative in concept and design with delivery via an interactive online platform. Since that time the exhibition has been reconfigured as a fully online offering which is due to open as planned on 9 May.

March saw an interactive digital session teaching people how to access shipping passenger lists in the State Archives Collection via online delivery. Online sessions on other topics are planned

These examples augur well for the values add to the public from more fully amalgamating the two organizations.

Administrative efficiencies

It's not often that government samples the benefit of organizational change and then contemplates legislative change. To date a number of efficiencies have been identified, as well as opportunities. Should the legislative changes transpire then there should be more to achieve from both aspects.

Yours sincerely

Ruth Medd
Trustee HHT