

***Check Me Out! -
The RLG/NARA task force
on certifying digital
repositories***

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Introduction

- The background - how we got here
- The problem
- The group and its methods
- Some issues

Some material in this presentation taken from Robin Dale's presentation to Erpanet Roma, but...

This is **my** personal view, not RLGs

How we got here

- May 2002: RLG/OCLC report
- Well received
- Next problem: how do you decide who has these attributes?
- Solution: a task force to define a certification model & process

Summary of May 2002 report

- Executive summary & introduction
- Attributes of trusted digital repositories (TDR)
- Responsibility & digital preservation
- Deep infrastructure & OAIS
- Responsibilities of a TDR
- Recommendations
- Selected resources
- Appendices: OAIS;definitions;roster

The problem

- Charge: Create a standard certification process or a framework that can be implemented across domains or types of digital repositories
- From:
www.rlg.org/longterm/certification.html

The new problem?

- “The goal of this project is to design a digital archiving service that is capable of reliably storing, migrating, and providing access to digital collections.”
- “The challenge is to produce certification requirements, delineate a process for certifications, and identify a certifying body (or bodies) that can implement the process.”
- From: www.rlg.org/en/page.php?Page_ID=580

Tasks

- Identify a list of certifiable elements (attributes, processes, functions, activities) of a digital repository or types of repositories
- Create a standard certification process or a framework that can be implemented across domains or types of digital repositories.
- Develop a certification plan
- Define the conditions for revocation of certification and suggest appropriate action plans for endangered digital information

Subtitles

- Sub-title of original report was:
Meeting the needs of research resources

Does this restrict the scope of what we can or should do?

Members

Bruce Ambacher, NARA

Kevin Ashley, ULCC

Connie Brooks, Stanford

**Josh Coates, Internet
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Judith Cobb, OCLC

Dale Flecker, Harvard

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Julien Masanes, BNF

Nancy McGovern, Cornell

Don Sawyer, NASA

Johan Steenbakkers, KBR

RLG staff liaison:

Robin Dale, *Task Force Co-Chair*

Program Officer

How we work

- Regular conference calls (3-weekly)
- Email discussion & document exchange
- New: a WIKI for collaborative work
- Maybe more?

Open questions at outset

- Levels of certification?
- Self certification?
- Bit preservation?
- Information preservation?
- Certifiable elements?
- Certifying body/organization?
- Duration of certification?
- Consequences of revocation?

Emerging framework

- Toolkit
 - Self certification
 - “Independently administered” certification
- Certification
 - Baseline requirements
 - Additional levels or “modules” likely

Elements

- OAIS compliance
- Administrative responsibility
- Organisational viability
- Digital archives border
- Financial sustainability
- Technological suitability
- System security
- Procedural accountability

Methods

- Say what you claim to do
- Demonstrate that you can and do do it
- Currently working through peer-review exercises from members
- Requirements in each section;
- Certification metrics;
- Statements & documents

Example requirement

- 2.7: “The repository has written agreements with depositors that address all appropriate aspects of acquisition, maintenance, access and withdrawal”
- Demonstrate they exist
- Demonstrate they are adequate
- Demonstrate they are adhered to

Questions we want input on

- Who is this for - who cares?
- The potential depositor ?
- The potential accessor ?
- The regulatory body ?
- The customer of a 3rd-party provider ?

Is bit preservation certifiable ?

- One can clearly conduct bit preservation well, or badly
- Is it something worth certifying ?
- Is it so basic we should not consider it ?

How does audit happen

- Is peer review acceptable ? Achievable ?
- What will repositories pay for certification?
- What is their incentive to pay?
- Who bankrolls the process at the outset?

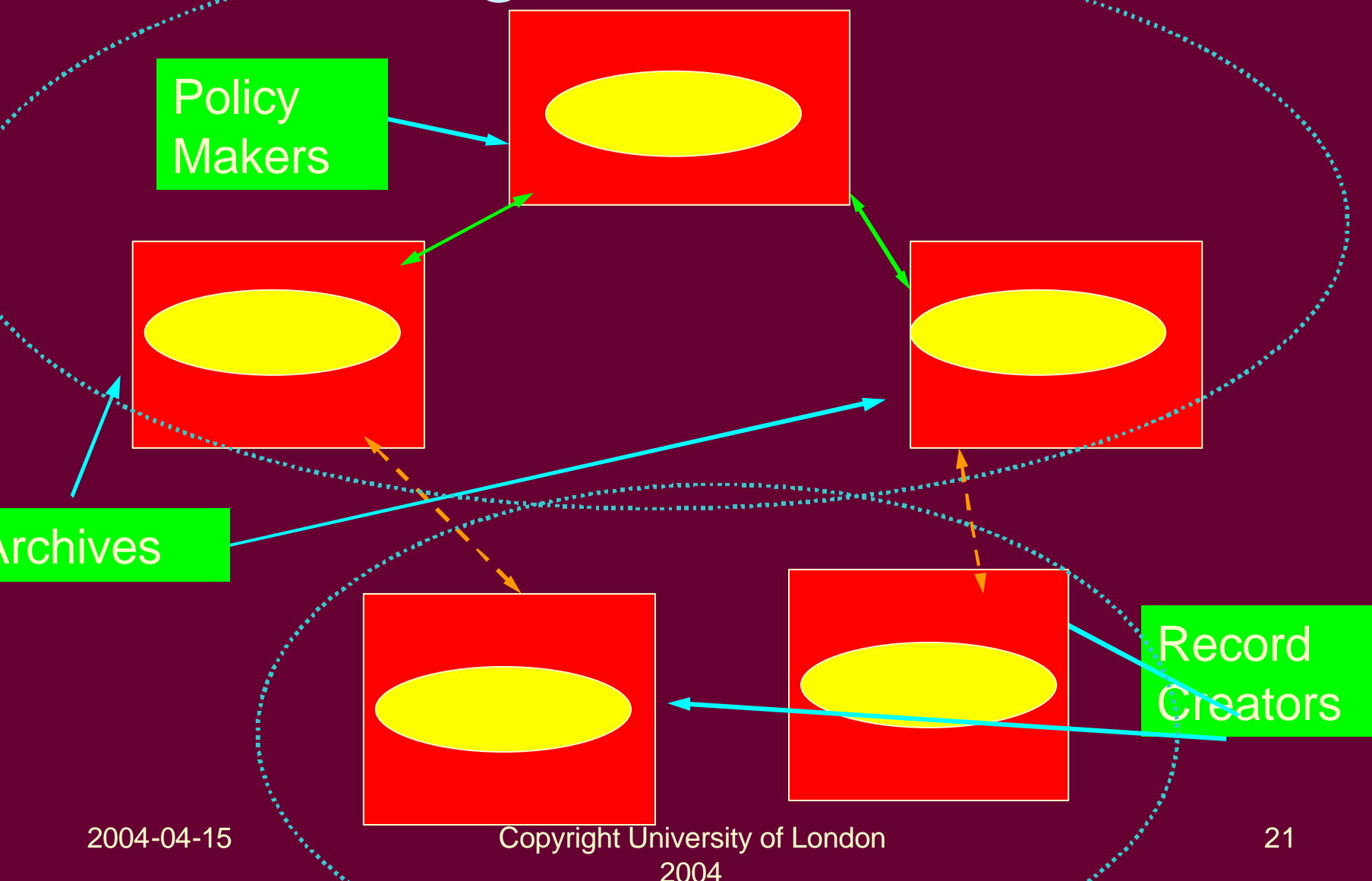
Overlap with other processes

- How relevant is ISO 9002 certification ?
- Or BS 7799/ISO 17799?
- Many potential organisations may have one or both, but not all
- They are expensive, and they cover many relevant areas
- How to accommodate this ?

The role of the collecting policy

- Clearly relevant to research libraries
 - but what about other sorts of repository ?
- Service providers work in a different organisational framework
- Collection policy may not control quality of what is preserved
- But we can audit how it is preserved

AHDS's organisational model



Distributed repositories

- Where a community adopts a system such as LOCKSS
- Well-controlled communities may be amenable to audit
- But responsibilities may still be unclear
- These models design institutional failure away
- Reliable - but not auditable?

Next steps

- Draft document(s) will be issued for public review this year
- Revision and adoption will follow
- Someone will need to take forward the creation of an organisational structure for certification