

*THE NHPRC PLANNING INITIATIVE*  
*AN EVALUATION*

PREPARED BY THE  
COUNCIL OF STATE HISTORICAL  
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# *THE NHPRC PLANNING INITIATIVE*

## *AN EVALUATION*

In the 1980s the National Historical Publications and Records Commission began funding statewide assessment studies of archival needs and conditions. The hope was that corrective action would follow the articulation of problems and solutions. In some cases, it did. But in many, the recommendations were so wide ranging and broadly defined that focused action was difficult. New Hampshire is but one of the states that detailed the problem: Its 1984 assessment identified 24 recommendations for state government records, 23 for local government records, 10 for historical records repositories and 12 for statewide supporting services and programs. A decade later, only 11 of the 69 recommended objectives had been achieved. The reason:

Since the late 1980s state budget reductions have compelled all state agencies, including the Archives, to protect their core missions, resulting in decreased attention to the Board and its recommendations from State Archives staff. This, combined with New Hampshire's strong tradition of local government autonomy, has meant that the board lacked both the resources and influence to implement state services or to knowledgeably advise other repositories.

Nonetheless, planning remained a concern of both the states and the NHPRC, and the NHPRC's 1992 long-range plan established as one of its top priorities:

To strengthen the efforts of state historical records coordinators and boards by offering grants for creating and updating state strategic plans for meeting records needs, based on the previous state assessments, and encompassing both documentary preservation and publication.

The intent was, in the words of Richard Cameron, "to encourage state boards to move beyond the 'archives happen' approach to a more active shaping of the archival landscape." The initiative hoped to address concerns that the 1980s efforts had not reached beyond the immediate archival and historical communities nor involved cooperative, regional or national approaches, and that planning had not become a standard operating procedure for the state boards.

Since the implementation of the new planning grants in 1993, thirty-six states have completed and adopted plans, five states and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico (including those grants made in November 1998) are working on plans. This report is the Council of State Historical Records Coordinators' first effort to evaluate the success of the NHPRC's 1990s planning initiative.

## METHODOLOGY

In order to evaluate the 1990s NHPRC planning initiative, the state coordinators at their January 1998 meeting outlined a series of questions to ask three groups of coordinators: those who completed new plans by the end of 1995 (Group I); those who completed new plans by the end of 1998 (Group II); and those who had not yet begun a planning process.

Those in Group I were asked for more detail because they have had time to see longer term results from their efforts. However they also represent the most diverse planning experiences. Some completed their plans under the state board travel and meeting expense program and used less elaborate planning mechanisms. Others used work done under National Endowment for the Humanities preservation planning projects. Their reported expenditures on planning ranged from \$5,000 to \$92,000. The coordinators hoped to answer the following questions:

1. How valuable to the states is the work done under the NHPRC planning initiative?
2. What are the best practices in state board planning?
3. Have the plans produced results?
4. Do the states have quantitative ways to measure results?
5. Why have some states and territories not participated in the initiative?
6. Are there common goals in the state plans that would lend themselves to collaborative regional or national efforts?

Richard Belding of Kentucky prepared and collected the survey for Group I. Chris LaPlante of Texas handled Group II. And Guy Rocha of Nevada and Conley Edwards of Virginia contacted those who had not begun planning. Victoria Irons Walch shared a content analysis of the early plans, which she prepared for the Wisconsin SHRAB as part of its planning project. Sandra Clark of Michigan compiled the responses for this report.

Of the 14 states who completed their plans prior to 1996, twelve returned completed surveys; however two states had begun a second planning effort. Because their responses reflected their more recent work, they are not included in the statistical portions of the report. Eleven of the 14 states that completed plans in 1996 and 1997 responded, as did 11 of the 12 that had not begun planning by January 1998.

## HOW VALUABLE TO THE STATES IS THE WORK DONE UNDER THE PLANNING INITIATIVE?

State coordinators in Group I and Group II were asked how they would rate their NHPRC planning effort in terms of “bang for the buck” on a scale of 1-5 with 5 being high. The average of the ratings in both groups was 3.9 and the mean was 4. Ninety percent of the coordinators recommended going through the planning process again. Only one coordinator in each group said that they would not do so. One commented that the process took too much staff and board effort for the results; and the other, that there were no resources to continue the effort or bring people together once the plan was completed.

The state coordinators were also asked to rate on a 1-5 scale their NHPRC planning experience with others in which they have participated. The average for Group I was 3.95; that for Group II was 3.64.

A third set of questions asked if the planning effort had made specific changes in the way the state board functioned. The percentages responding in the affirmative were:

SPECIFIC CHANGE	GROUP I	GROUP II
a. Increased commitment	90%	64%
b. Increased collaboration	80%	73%
c. Better self-definition	90%	73%
d. Increased activity	80%	73%
e. Planning without NHPRC support	20%	27%

Clearly there is strong support for state board planning, as well as a belief that such planning efforts strengthen a board. In one coordinator’s words:

The planning process is important because it builds coalitions, develops consensus, establishes a framework for activities and legitimacy for priorities. We consider the process so important, we included it in our new regrant and will require applicants to go through an initial process involving planning to identify needs and priorities.

However the response to item *e* is a reminder that the state boards are in most states created out of the core

mission of the NHPRC, not out of the core mission of the state archives. Their continued vitality through planning depends on the continued financial support of the NHPRC.

The coordinators in Group I were also asked the cost of not planning. Though none offered dollar figures, their responses made clear the value of their plans. Without planning, the state boards would be less focused. They would have no basis for regrant programs. They would lose opportunities to increase documentation in targeted areas and have less visibility, less cooperation, less collaboration.

Only one of the 21 coordinators in Group I and Group II recommended that the NHPRC discontinue funding planning, doing so on the basis that this should be an encouraged state-board-funded activity. Those in favor of continued funding cited the need for continuous improvement and adjustment of goals and objectives; the opportunity to hold board meetings around the state; and the opportunity to have local groups affect the plan and better understand the state board, the NHPRC and NHPRC grant possibilities.

Asked to choose 3, 5, 7, or 10 years as an optimal planning interval, the coordinators in Group I and Group II were fairly evenly divided: 17% recommended 3 years; 31% recommended 5 years; 19% chose 7 years; 33% chose 10 years or more. (Choices of 3-5 and 5-7 were split between the two numbers for these calculations.)

## WHAT ARE THE BEST PRACTICES IN STATE BOARD PLANNING?

The ten coordinators in Group I and the eleven in Group II were asked to rate the usefulness of eight planning practices as most useful, moderately useful and least useful. Their responses were scored and averaged using 2 points for “most useful,” 1 point for “moderately useful” and 0 points for “least useful.” In the following table, the number of states using a practice appears in parentheses before the average score.

PLANNING PRACTICE	GROUP I	GROUP II
a. Formal training in strategic planning	(6) 1.5	(9) 1.2
b. Assistance provided by a consultant	(5) 1.8	(7) 1.9
c. Public meetings or hearings	(7) 1.6	(10) 1.0
d. Input provided by focus groups	(6) 1.2	(7) 1.3
e. Input provided by task forces or white papers	(5) 1.2	(3) 1.3
f. Data gathered from surveys or questionnaires	(7) 1.5	(8) 1.1
g. Board assessment or analysis of previous plans	(9) 1.2	(10) 1.3
h. Board retreat for planning	(4) 2.0	(7) 1.7

Two practices stand out as having the most value to those that used them—hiring a consultant and planning in a retreat setting. Focus groups, task forces and analysis of the 1980s planning effort seemed less useful, even though board assessment of previous plans was the most used practice. The reasons for the discrepancies between the two groups on the value of public meetings and surveys are not clear.

Overall, the states in Group II tended to incorporate more options in their planning efforts (an average of 5.5 versus 4.9 for those in Group I). The states in both groups involved a widely varying number of people in their planning efforts ranging from 11 or 12 (presumably the board members) to 20 groups or 225 people.

The coordinators were also asked to rank their planning effort on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 representing the state coordinator doing all the work and 5 representing a board-led effort. The average ranking for the coordinators in Group I was 2.85, with four coordinators choosing 2 and three choosing 4. None chose 1 or 5. In Group II the

average was 3.45, with none choosing 1 or 2, and one choosing 5. This may reflect an overall increase in planning skills due to the training and sharing of experiences that have been part of the Council of State Historical Records Coordinators meetings.

State coordinators in Group I were asked what things worked well. They cited the push to make implicit goals explicit and efforts to eliminate unrealistic goals and to prioritize those that were attainable. The change from the 1980s emphasis on identifying problems to the 1990s focus on the potential for action is apparent here and in the plans. The average number of priorities identified by Vicki Walch in her analysis of the first 16 plans (including Wisconsin's pending plan) was 6.9—a much more realistic number than those found in the 1980s plans. The lowest number was 4; the highest was 10.

Clearly, it was difficult for some state boards to step away from problems they could not solve, but they found creative ways to identify these. One categorized objectives as “1. Possible to achieve with existing state and local resources, but only if time is available; 2. Possible to achieve with changes in administrative rules of, or relationships between existing agencies, and with minimal impact upon overall state or local budgets, if time is available; and 3. Possible to achieve only with new funds from governmental or private sources resulting in new fulltime positions, new or expanded facilities, or grant-funded programs.” Others offered to “assist,” “endorse,” “encourage” and “support” some things, while making it the board’s responsibility to “develop” or “establish” others.

While some states did not order their goals, finding them all to be of equal priority, many exercised the discipline of setting clear priorities among their goals and objectives.

Other practices cited as working well by the coordinators were retreat or day-long formats, using the NHPRC plan as a model, and efforts to reach beyond the board—surveys, public participation, bringing in outside groups, working with allied groups and having statewide meetings for stakeholders.

Coordinators in Group I were also asked about pitfalls in the planning process. They cited relationships with outside groups—failing to include them in the process, difficulty in sustaining their interest beyond the availability of grants and the tendency of the board to want to move faster than its constituents. One noted that combining planning with regular meetings of the board stretched the process out too long. Other problems were failure to focus on the doable and the difficulty of leveraging outside funds for regrant match. One coordinator noted difficulty in getting the board to view the process a means to an end rather than a requirement of doing business with the NHPRC.

## HAVE THE PLANS PRODUCED RESULTS?

One of the hoped for results of the NHPRC 1990s planning initiative was more inclusion of outside groups. Clearly, this result has been achieved. The eleven states in Group II reported involving a total of nearly 1,000 people. In one case, a State Records Commission has been created as a result of the consolidation of state archives and records management functions. In others new goals-based alliances have been formed involving libraries, a records association and other state departments. Board composition changes for Group II have included the addition of more women in one state and the involvement of the humanities council in another.

The Group I coordinators have had more time to observe changes in board composition and alliances. They reported additions to their boards of minorities and local government representatives, broader geographic representation, and representatives of new groups including land surveyors. In one state, two outside organizations used the NHPRC-funded plan to guide their activities.

The variety of collaborative ventures resulting from the Group I plans included:

- Partnership with the Florida Records Management Association
- Minnesota’s collaborations with more than 20 rural and Hispanic community organizations
- A pending project involving the North Dakota and Minnesota boards
- Ohio board work with the State Library of Ohio, the Ohio Public Library Information Network, the Western Reserve Historical Society, the state Department of Administrative Services and other state agencies

- Partnerships with the Society of North Carolina Archivists and the North Carolina African American Archive Group
- An agreement in Michigan between a university archive and the state archives on working with the governor's office on public and private gubernatorial records
- Sponsoring the formation of a state archives association in South Carolina
- In Vermont, work with land surveyors on land records and with museums and galleries on collections care

A second goal of the NHPRC 1990s planning initiative was to create plans that were used. The coordinators in Group I were asked to respond to two statements on a scale of 1-5 with 5 being "strongly agree." To the first statement, "Planning has become a continuing activity," the average on the scale was 3.9. To the statement, "The plan guided board discussion and activity," the average was 4.25. Given that one coordinator responded with a 1 to both statements, this indicates a strong confirmation that in most cases the plans are used and not put on the shelf to collect dust.

The focus on achievable goals and actions has also resulted in a variety of concrete programs to improve the preservation of and access to records. Responses from the Group I coordinators about which objectives were achievable and which were not made it clear that there is no nationwide pattern. Some of the greatest successes have come with regrant programs, but some states list this as an unachievable objective because of the inability to raise matching funds.

North Carolina and South Carolina both leveraged state funds to supplement regrant programs. While Michigan was unable to do this, its board members were enthusiastic enough about the objective of helping small community-based organizations improve their archival practices to volunteer to provide unpaid consultant services to forty of them as match for Michigan's regrant program.

Plans were linked to support for new archival buildings in South Carolina, New Hampshire and Delaware. Delaware reported:

Several Board members were early advocates with the Governor on this issue and key members of the Friends of Delaware Archives, Inc. initiated a petition drive that was a key to getting this project on the Governor's "front burner." Construction is now under way with a December 2000 completion date.

Ohio used its plan to leverage a state commitment to automation, electronic records and World Wide Web information. Total funding for the program from a State Library grant, a Library of Congress/Ameritech Grant and Capital Funding is at nearly \$2.5 million:

Capital funds have paid for implementation of significant portions of the plan. A state GILS with a records scheduling component, guidelines for management of electronic records, web site access to finding aids and records are some of the major areas addressed.

All but two of the states in Group I reported specific actions resulting from their plans. They included:

- An archival practices book
- A teleconference training series
- Published directories of records repositories
- A Local Government Records Management Improvement Fund state appropriation
- Education and training program re grants
- An annual conference on historical records
- General Fund appropriation for State Historical Records Advisory Board activities
- South Carolina Public Service Announcements on the value of archives and historic records

## DO THE STATES HAVE QUANTITATIVE WAYS TO MEASURE RESULTS?

The information reported above indicates that the 1990s NHPRC planning initiative has been successful in encouraging collaborative, action-oriented planning efforts. This is a marked change from the 1980s effort. However, in the area of measurable evaluation, there is clearly room for continued improvement.

Only two of the ten Group I states had easy-to-access statistics to report in response to questions about the number of records preserved, made more accessible or better cared for under the plan. Both states—North Carolina and Michigan—relied on estimates or numbers from regrant programs. North Carolina estimated 7,000-12,000 feet of records preserved; 5,000-10,000 feet of records made more accessible; and 10,000 feet of records better cared for. Michigan reported 19,000 photos and 10 feet of records made more accessible; and 19,000 photos and 380 feet of records receiving better care. Michigan noted that its numbers did not include all who received regrants since some did not report their final numbers. Nor did they include records in organizations like the one that came to a self-evaluation session, did not apply for a regrant, but did convince its township that it had to provide security and environmental controls for the community's historical records.

There are two clear problems with this method of measuring results: collecting the information is difficult and time consuming, and measures are not precise.

A similar lack of specificity was apparent in questions about dissemination of the plans. Most of the coordinators in Group I used words like "effective," or "wide" to describe this aspect of the planning process. They reported reaching librarians, archivists, historical societies, museums, genealogists, professional organizations, local governments, researchers, legislators and Native Americans. But none offered any numbers.

Five states in Group I reported leveraged funds resulting from their NHPRC planning efforts. They ranged in amounts from Delaware's and North Carolina's \$18 million building projects to North Carolina's and Michigan's \$115,000 and \$180,000 respectively in regrants and other grants. The total reported was \$23,078,000 in onetime expenditures and \$210,000 in annual expenditures.

Although the Council of State Historical Records Coordinators did not identify it as a measure in their 1998 meeting, another means of measuring the impact of the NHPRC and the state board efforts may be in the statewide surveys conducted first as part of the 1980s planning initiative, then as part of some 1990s planning efforts, and more recently as one of the coordinators' national projects.

Where those surveys focus on identifying problems, there seems to be little apparent change. North Carolina, for example, reported for records repositories across the state "a picture eerily similar to that presented in 1983. Large backlogs of unarranged and undescribed records continue as problems." The greatest need was space, followed by staff, education, funding, acidity in records, lack of emergency preparedness plans and problems with heat, ventilation and air-conditioning systems.

Where the surveys also focus, as did the just completed Council of State Historical Records Coordinators study on specific measures, a slightly different picture may emerge. Florida could report that the number of Florida institutions with a disaster plan in place had risen from 32.8% in 1987 to 49% in 1993; the number of repositories with a written statement of authority and/or a mission statement had risen from 44% to 78%; and the number with an acquisitions policy, from 43.2% to 76%.

As state boards work more closely with community and local government repositories, this type of measurement may be the best indicators of effective action.

Whatever measures are to be used, the NHPRC and the Council of State Historical Records Coordinators need to agree on a few, achievable measures and make a commitment to use them.

## WHY HAVE SOME STATES AND TERRITORIES NOT PARTICIPATED IN THE INITIATIVE?

The 12 state coordinators who had not participated in the 1990s NHPRC planning initiative by January 1998 were asked to identify "the reason why, or the circumstances that prevented participation in the process" and indicate whether their states planned to participate in the future

Nine of the 11 respondents cited board problems ranging from inactive boards to difficulty obtaining appointments, boards without the needed clout for effective action, and politically appointed boards that did not reflect the state's archival community. Six of the respondents cited competing priorities—some positive (a new building) and some negative (threatened closure and staff reductions). Of those citing one or both of these impediments to planning, five have now committed to the process, though one does not believe that it will produce valuable results.

Three of the state coordinators in this group do not value the NHPRC planning initiative and have chosen to not participate. They question the ability of State Historical Records Advisory Boards to plan and take effective, specific action; and they believe they can better use their resources in other types of planning and assessment.

From these responses and the two negative responses in Group I and Group II, two things are clear. First, planning cannot be effective if the organization doing the planning does not have the status, power or will to set collective priorities and take collective action. The diverse SHRAB conditions created by gubernatorial appointments and the varying strengths of state archival programs make it impossible to achieve 100% participation or consistency across the nation. Second, the impetus for and burden of statewide board planning lie with state archival programs. Such planning is a resource commitment that competes with everything from internal planning to accessioning, processing and referencing records.

## ARE THERE COMMON GOALS IN THE STATE PLANS THAT WOULD LEND THEMSELVES TO COLLABORATIVE REGIONAL OR NATIONAL EFFORTS?

Vicki Walch identified 18 priorities in the 16 state plans she reviewed. The top eleven were:

- Improved access to records and collections (14)
- Preservation (13)
- Education and training in archives and records management (12)
- Raising public awareness (11)
- Electronic records (10)
- Partnerships/cooperation (9)
- Statewide collecting strategies (6)
- Improved records programs (5)
- State government records (5)
- Local government records (5)
- Regrant Programs (5)

Her summary of the objectives and strategies under these goals suggests several areas where the Council of State Historical Records Coordinators or cooperating states might develop collaborative ventures.

Seven of the states talked about public education campaigns. This might be an effective area for either comparing materials or developing national materials that could be adapted to individual states.

Eight states were concerned with developing statewide databases and seven (including two not in the first group) with promoting the use of archival descriptive standards. This could be a fruitful area for sharing strategies and best practices for such things as finding a host agency and obtaining accurate, usable information and cooperation from small community-based repositories and local governments.

Three-fourths of the states (12) included education and training in their goals and objectives. Seven talked of advisory services for small repositories and five included regrant programs in their plans. Some planned on using materials from national professional organizations; others were developing their own materials. This would be an area where a group of archivists from several states with experience in what is effective with volunteer organizations, community repositories or local governments could assemble the materials that could be easily adapted for use in any state. Even putting all the materials created to date on line with an index could be useful.

The five states concerned with central preservation services and the four considering disaster planning should

be able to learn from each others' experiences.

Electronic records are a topic of concern for 10 states, with most of them concerned primarily with state government records. This is an area that has received a great deal of academic study and should be ripe for practical applications in the diverse situations represented by the various states. It is also an area where National Archives partnership and leadership might be appropriate.

While only five states listed a regrant program as a goal, ten included regrant programs to small repositories (8) and/or local governments (5) in their objectives. There is probably enough experience in this area by now to prepare some good best-practices and template materials for those considering such programs.

## SOME FINAL THOUGHTS

The NHPRC 1990s planning initiative is changing the way State Historical Records Advisory Boards work. Perhaps more than consciously intended, it is pushing them and the state archives that lead them towards taking responsibility for statewide coordination of archival planning. The parallel support of the Council of State Historical Records Coordinators offers the potential of creating an archival planning and support system that extends from the national level to the smallest community. This is particularly important in an era when all seem to realize that large archival repositories will never be able to collect, preserve and provide access to all of the important records created in the nation. Many of those records—some documenting corporations and individuals of national significance—will remain in the hands of volunteers, librarians and others not trained as archivists.

Most state archives have long had a focused, legislatively mandated mission—to preserve and make accessible the records of state and possibly local government. Some with a long association with a state historical society and/or library also have strong manuscript collections. Few have seen their core mission as being the leader of statewide historical records planning and advocacy, or as improving the condition of records held in community repositories throughout their states.

The NHPRC posits a role for the State Historical Records Advisory Boards of serving as a link between national archival efforts and local communities. It does this in the traditional federal-state relationship of state developmental assistance and review of grants (or National Register Nominations) before they reach a federal agency. But with its planning initiatives, it also asks the boards—and therefore the state archivists who serve as their coordinators—to take on statewide planning, advocacy and educational roles that might be performed in other history disciplines—or the archival discipline—by professional associations or advocacy organizations. In the field of historic preservation, this role is filled by state agencies—the State Historical Preservation Offices—but it is subsidized at a much higher level than that offered through NHPRC grants.

Where this NHPRC-encouraged stepping out of the state archives box is successful, it can result in much broader public support of the state archives program and an enhanced role for archives across the state. But because it is not an altogether comfortable role, it will continue to be greeted with different levels of enthusiasm and financial support from state to state.

The NHPRC's efforts to leverage a relatively small federal grant program into something that touches historical records throughout the nation is commendable and remarkably successful. To expand that success, the NHPRC will need to be clear in its expectations. It will need to encourage collaborations not only within and among the states but with the National Archives and national archival professional associations in providing best-practices information to all who protect and provide access to our nation's records. It may also need to consider leading efforts to raise the priority of this work with other funding organizations such as private foundations, the Institute for Museum and Library Services, and the national and state endowments for the humanities.

# A SUMMARY OF THE DISCUSSION OF SHRAB PLANNING

JANUARY 20, 1999

At its January 20 meeting, the Council of State Historic Records Coordinators (COSHRC) reviewed the NHPRC Planning Initiative Evaluation and added the following comments to that evaluation:

## THE VALUE TO THE STATES OF THE WORK DONE UNDER THE PLANNING INITIATIVE

One of the most important results of the planning initiative has been the opportunity to give voice to a broad range of individuals and groups with vital concerns in the preservation of our nation's heritage. In particular, the process has extended this voice to traditionally under-represented groups and to those who care for records at the grassroots level.

The COSHRC discussed possible ways to better answer the question of whether or not boards have embraced planning. One clear indicator of board vitality is projects that go beyond planning and reviewing NHPRC grant applications.

Another indicator is the number of boards that would continue if there were no NHPRC.

- Fifteen of the thirty-nine coordinators present indicated that they would definitely continue to work with their boards if there were no NHPRC.
- Another six said they would "probably" continue if there were no NHPRC.
- All noted that a large number of variables would effect any such decision.
- Only five have line item budgets for their boards.

## FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Looking to the future, some advocated NHPRC support of basic travel and operation of boards, suggesting that if planning were required as a precondition for receiving this support, the NHPRC could accomplish the same ends. Others noted that the advantage of NHPRC support of planning was in conducting major efforts involving such things as facilitators and focus groups.

The COSHRC also considered the emphasis that should be placed on planning in the short term.

- Members agreed that minimal effort should be placed on pushing states that are not ready for or enthusiastic about planning to proceed with planning efforts. A goal of 100% participation is not nearly as important as assisting states with plans in moving ahead with implementation.
- In the short term, the COSHRC members rated planning as "important" (18) or "somewhat important" (16), but not as the "most important" thing for the Commission to fund.
- Members agreed that the current system and guidelines are working well and should continue to be available

for those states ready to enter into a major planning effort.

## BEST PRACTICES

COSHRC members emphasized that many state planning efforts are just beginning to produce results. Everything in the current evaluation must be considered preliminary at best. However, most can see immediate benefits from the process and its inclusion of new and old players in thinking about the preservation and access of archival records in their states.

They also noted that the most difficult part of planning for the SHRABs remains keeping the focus on things the boards can do and defining clear products that will result from successful implementation of a plan. A second concern is that the plans cast a wide enough net to allow the states to respond to unforeseen opportunities and seek NHPRC support for their efforts in such cases.

## PRODUCING RESULTS AND QUANTIFYING THEM

COSHRC members cautioned that care must be taken in assuming cause and effect when attributing results to planning efforts. Plans are often only one element in the successful pursuit of improvement in the condition of archival records in a state.

They noted that with more time, they could put together more statistical information on outputs. Such outcomes as the number or percentage of institutions achieving certain archival standards over a period of time may be more revealing than the simple counting of feet of records processed.

Members strongly supported performance measures, set by NHPRC, that are consistent across similar grants and agreed upon at the beginning of a grant. They suggested including demonstration projects with evaluation measures in the planning process.

Finally, COSHRC members encouraged NHPRC staff to increase efforts to ensure wide dissemination of grant products.