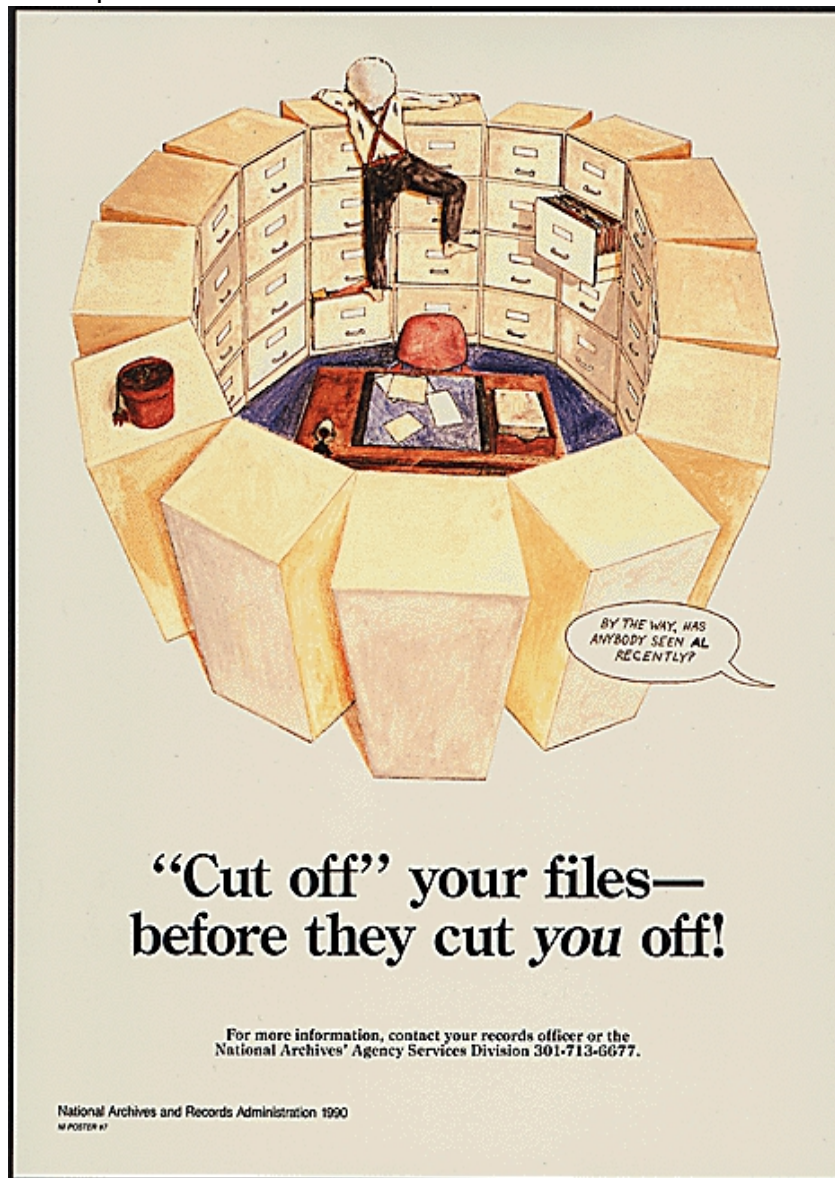


Written by

Tuesday, 07 June 2011 13:05 - Last Updated Tuesday, 07 June 2011 13:39

In Spain, a decree (http://www.boe.es/diario_boe/txt.php?id=BOE-A-2011-9736) which involves the disappearance of many of the government corporate bodies (Comisiones Calificadoras de Documentos) that elaborate and approved disposition authorities (most of them created in the past 10) has been enacted. Perhaps this may give a way to a rethinking on the elimination of records in the public sector. Following some reflections on this topic coming from the experience:



- For good records management is equally important knowing to keep the records as to dispose them when not needed. A **reliable and robust system for making decisions on the elimination of government records** is essential in order to the principles cited in the recent legislation: saving and efficiency.

- In our law, the determination of the period records to be retained or disposed is an **entire task of interpreting a large number of legislative provisions**

. Other cultures, for example in USA, do not understand that complications because their sources are less and more direct.

- The system established in all public administration in Spain, based on the “**Comisiones Calificadoras de Documentos**”, composed of different members from different points of view that meet once or twice a year to make decisions, which are then reflected in the appropriate legislative provisions, has not proven to be very agile and in some cases (perhaps the now eliminated), even unproductive. Some of the situations encountered:

- The Commissions thinking is driven by **paper records**, or as much digital copies, but have been far away from the unstoppable process of e-government.

- The necessary and quick decisions needed for the implementation of **e-government**, have not even noticed that these “Commissions” had something to do with the process. It is almost impossible to find reference in Decrees, Regulations and Ordinances governing the e-administration, some of them setting conditions and / or deadlines for retention of electronic records and files.

- The difficulty of the “Commissions” to meet, join in some cases with the lack of interest of its members, who almost always approves the reports from technical staff, could be increase the feeling that Commission are just **bureaucracy**.

- The origin of the Commissions in heritage conservation, and therefore associated with the **cultural work of archives**, often plays against the credibility of the system. More than once I have heard excellent IT managers complain or even refuse that the decisions on retention of electronic records can come from “culture” area.

- Despite all disadvantages, “Commissions” are a system of decision-making supported by an existing law and that is a **great support** to those who are dedicated to implementing records management frameworks in government.

- The absence of channels for decisions to dispose documents involves two equally bad consequences: **uncontrolled destruction or inoperative and expensive accumulation**. A lot of examples could be given for both.

I can imagine more than one scenario to create a more efficient system, and I am sure many other professionals working for the Administration also have. Does this change can be converted into **opportunity**?

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