

NRAO ONLINE 1

Part 1. PRIMARY.SOURCES. National Archives Australia. KNUCKEY SYTEM

Part 2 is the “Correspondence Records” talk by Phil Knuckey in Feb. 1958 in Sydney at a Divisional Clerks’ Conference.

Part 1:

Direct Copy of Series Note for National Archives of Australia, A10061, the “Knuckey System “ for correspondence for scientific and administrative activities for CSIR and CSIRO. (verbatim partial quote from NAA web site)

This series is the main correspondence file series of the Division of Plant Industry. It contains correspondence covering all the activities of the Division, both scientific and administrative. In the case of the former it generally records the establishment, operation and administration of scientific research rather than actual research data. The series also records the functions, aims and research programs of the Division. In 1928 the Division was known as the Division of Economic Botany and was divided into four main areas: plant pathology, plant physiology, genetics, and the investigation of certain agrostological problems.

In 1929, in order to more adequately describe the scope and functions of the Division, its title was changed to the Division of Plant Industry.

Much of the series is closely related to records created by CSIRO Headquarters regarding the Division. CISR/CSIRO Headquarters often recorded projects in tandem with divisions, including the Division of Plant Industry.

This series has an unusual system of arrangement and control, known in CSIRO as the “Knuckey system”, after Phillip Knuckey, the Headquarters records officer who developed the system. Although the Knuckey system wasn't introduced in the Division until 1972, many files dating back to 1928 which were regarded as significant were top numbered from the previous correspondence series.

The Knuckey system was developed to be used throughout the organisation and is widely used by other CSIRO Divisions. It contains double-letter prefixes followed by multiple numbers. Although the numbering system runs from “AA” to “ZZ” the division of Plant Industry only used the prefixes from “CP” to “YZ” (with gaps).

The first letter of the Knuckey system represents a major subject or functional area, eg “F” represents “Genetic Plant Breeding” and “P” represents “Staff”.

The second letter narrows the subject or functional area, eg “F” represents “Genetics Plant Breeding – Cytogenetics” while “FM” represents “Genetic Plant Breeding - Mutation Research”.

The prefixes are followed by multiple numbers which represent further refinements or subject, function or record class, eg “CP1” represents “Medicinal & Drug Plants, Arrangements to Conduct Investigations” while “CP2” represents “Medicinal & Drug Plants, Internal Reports”.

The system aimed at establishing unique numbers for individual files. Sometimes the second number was sufficient for this purpose, however, further numbers are usually required to identify individual case file

The alphabetical prefixes used by the Division and the subjects or functions that they represent are as follows: [a list of 86 categories followed, only one “TZ” buildings and grounds was used by RPL.] The RPL major series “KE” – technical files and correspondence- had no counterpart in the Division of Plant Industry.

[A few examples of the alphabetical prefixes for the Division of Plant Industry are shown below.]

The alphabetical prefixes used by the Division and the subjects or functions that they represent are as follows:

- CP - Medicinal & Drug Plants
- CT - Cotton Research
- EA - Environmental Protection, Pollution & Conservation
- EL - Alpine Ecology
- EM - Rangelands
- EN - Antarctic Research
- FK - Cytogenetics
- FL - Rhizobium Genetics
- FM - Mutation Research
- GN - Vegetable Investigations

GO - Baas Becking Biogeological Research Group
GS - Seeds
GX - Research on Species
JF - Plant Science Centre
JG - Cooperative Research Centre

In Part 2 below we show a copy of a presentation that Knuckey made at a Conference of Divisional CSIRO Clerks in February 1958. The correspondence records system was explained in detail, an effort to unify record keeping at the CSIRO over all divisions. The functions and operations system were outlined for this comprehensive filing system. Examples were the indexing system to be utilised for various topics. Key classification categories were: subject, personal and precedent. The talk contained (obvious) practical advice such as: “avoid keeping large bundles of non-current files in your office” and “keep each outwards letter to one subject as far as possible”.

Part 2 is the file: “Correspondence Records “ by Knuckey February 1958 page 1 to 10

COMMONWEALTH SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL
RESEARCH ORGANIZATION

SYDNEY

DIVISIONAL CLERKS' CONFERENCE

FEBRUARY 1958

CORRESPONDENCE RECORDS

P. KNUCKEY

CORRESPONDENCE RECORDS.

1. FUNCTIONS

- (A) To receive, despatch and distribute all correspondence handled whilst maintaining a suitable registration system for numbering and indexing.
- (B) To number and index all correspondence received and associate with papers already received on the same subject.
- (C) To distribute all recorded correspondence and maintain a marking off system, so that the papers can be located as required.
- (D) To file away papers after examining them to ensure that all action has been taken.

2. OPERATIONS.

The main operations include:-

- (A) Opening Mail, date stamping.
- (B) Marking off to Action Section or Action Officer.
- (C) Numbering.
- (D) Indexing, Personal, Subject or Precedent.
- (E) Creation of file or attaching previous correspondence.
- (F) Reference to Action Section or Action Officer.
- (G) Despatch of outwards correspondence
- (H) Examination to see that all action has been taken.
- (I) Resubmit as required.
- (J) Pending.
- (K) Filing.
- (L) Location of files as required.

3. FILING SYSTEMS.

There are two types of systems in operation in the Divisions and Sections (a) The Single Number System. (b) The Multiple System. They may be briefly described as follows:-

(A) The Single Number System.

Under this system each new file opened is allotted the next serial number, irrespective of its subject relationship to other files.

(B) Multiple Numbering System.

This system consists of a classified subject grouping with primary groups and sub-groups, so that each file is allotted a registration

number relating it to associated files. By its very nature this system requires a multiple number registration.

- (i) A number to indicate a principal subject classification.
- (ii) A number to indicate a subordinate subject classification.
- (iii) A number, in consecutive series, in the sub-class.

The advantages of the Multiple System over the Single Number System are:-

- (A) That all papers relating to the same subject are kept together and are accessible for immediate reference.
- (B) By the sectionising of the Records it is possible to remove temporary or permanent groups of files relating to the work of a Section which may be transferred elsewhere to another building or even another State.
- (C) It gives a complete continuous history of any particular subject.

4. INDEXING.

Three types of indexes are in use:-

- (A) The Subject Index.
 - (B) The Personal Index.
 - (C) The Precedent Index.
- (A) The subject Index consists of cards headed with the subject and providing columns for file number and the subject of the correspondence. The choice of subject headings on the cards is important since a good heading must express the topic exactly and concisely. Subject headings should be specific, technically correct and composed in terms of common usage.
- (B) The Personal Index:- This index is a record, in alphabetical order, of persons who are mentioned in correspondence, including the authors of letters; the personal index provides a quick reference to the file number of a subject, ^{with} which some person is closely associated, or when the person's name is the chief clue to the subject required.

- (C) The Precedent Index:- This index has been found useful to highlight determinations of principle or general policy decisions arising out of particular cases.

5. ACTION OFFICERS' RESPONSIBILITY TO RECORDS SECTION.

- (A) Learn as much as possible about the workings of the Correspondence Records Section, particularly as it effects your own activities.
 - (B) Make your personal acquaintance with the Records Staff who handle the work of your Section and invite them to submit their problems to you.
 - (C) Make sure that any letter, memorandum etc. which has not been registered when received by you, is referred to the Records Section as soon as possible.
 - (D) Keep each outwards letter to one subject as far as possible.
 - (E) Avoid holding large bundles of non-current files in your Office. Return them as soon as possible for filing or resubmission at a later date.
 - (F) Keep files in action only where they may be readily accessible to Record Staff, and do not place them in cupboards, table drawers etc.
 - (G) Return relevant file with outwards mail for despatch.
 - (H) See that file numbers are placed on outwards correspondence.
 - (I) Do not pass files to other sections or Officers or take files out of the building without advising Records Section.
 - (J) Do not remove papers from any file without advising Records Section.
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TYPE OF MULTIPLE SYSTEM IN OPERATION IN
A NUMBER OF DIVISIONS AND SECTIONS.

PRINCIPAL SUBJECT CLASSIFICATION.

AA - AZ.	Administrative.
BA - BZ	Committees, Conferences.
CA - CZ	Soils.
DA - DZ	Irrigation.
EA - EZ	Plants.
GA - GZ	Plant Pathology.
HA - HZ	Entomology.
JA - JZ	Food Preservation & Transport.
LA - LZ	Chemistry.
MA - MZ	Meteorology.
NA - NZ	Economics.
PA - PZ	Publicity.
ZA - ZZ	Investigations, General.

SUBORDINATE SUBJECT CLASSIFICATION.

ADMINISTRATIVE.

AA. Policy Procedure Instructions.
AB. Building and Land.
AE. Equipment.
AF. Finance.
AL. Library.
AS. Staff.
AT. Transport.
AV. Visits.

COMMITTEES, CONFERENCES.

BA.

SOILS

CA. Survey.
CB. Salt.
CC. Alkalinity.
CD. Organic Matter.
CE. Nitrogen.
CF. Analysis.
CG. Drainage and Reclamation.
CH. Cultural Practices.
CM. Underlying Strata.
CN. Erosion.
CP. Siltation.
CR. Soil Physics.
CZ. General

IRRIGATION.

DA. Water Supply.
DB. Water Distribution.
DC. Irrigation Frequency.
DD. Soils Irrigation Area Design.
DE. Farm Design Private Holdings.
DF. Regulations.
DG. Water Usage.
DX. Publicity.
DY. Enquiries.
DZ. General.

PLANTS.

EA. Sultanas.
EB. Currants.
EC. Wine Grapes.
ED. Table Grapes.
EE. Pastures.
EH. FODDER.
EJ. Manures.
EK. Drug Plants.

PLANTS.

EL.	Hormones.
EM.	Cultural Practices.
EN.	Nutrition.
EO.	Analysis.
EP.	Physiology.
ER.	Other Crops.
ES.	Systematic Botany.
ET.	Soil and Plant Relationship.
EU.	Rubber.
EV.	Vegetables
EW.	Weeds.
EX.	Other Fruits.
EY.	Citrus.
EZ.	General

PLANT PATHOLOGY.

GA.	Fungus Diseases.
GB.	Virus Diseases.
GC.	Bacterial Diseases.
GJ.	Bacteriacides.
GK.	Fungicides.

ENTOMOLOGY.

HA.	Field Pests.
HB.	Dried Fruit Pests
HC.	Grass Hoppers.
HD.	White Ants.
HE.	Silver Fish.
HF.	Flies.
HG.	Ants.
HH.	Mosquitoes.
HK.	Insecticides.
HV.	Mites and Spiders.
HW.	Eelworm.
HZ.	Insects General.

FOOD PRESERVATION AND TRANSPORT.

JA.	Dried Fruits.
JB.	Vine Fruits Dipping and Drying.
JC.	Tree Fruits, Drying.
JD.	Fruit Packing House Treatment.
JM.	Dehydration.
JP.	Preservation.
JS.	Storage and Transport.

CHEMISTRY.

LA.	Analysis.
LY.	Enquiries.

METEOROLOGY.

MA.	Records.
MB.	Meteorological Bureau Instructions.
MC.	Requests for Supplies.
MD.	Drought.
MF.	Frost.

ECONOMICS.

NA.	Citrus.
NB.	Dried Fruits Industry.
NC.	Horticulture.
ND.	Land Use.
NE.	Resources of Murray Valley.
NF.	Usage of Murray Waters.
NG.	Indian Agriculture.

PUBLICITY.

PA.

INVESTIGATIONS, GENERAL.

ZA.	General.
ZB.	Projects.
ZC.	Mildura University.
ZD.	Reports.

CONSECUTIVE NUMBER WITHIN SUBORDINATE CLASSIFICATION.

AF - FINANCE

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| 1. POLICY PROCEDURE INSTRUCTIONS. | 1 | PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS. |
| | 2 | OFFICIAL ENTERTAINMENT EXPENSES. |
| | 3 | DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY TO INCUR EXPENDITURE. |
| 2. ESTIMATES | 1 | SEPARATE FILE FOR EACH YEAR. |
| | 2 | |
| | 3 | |
| | 4 | |
| 3. STATEMENTS OF EXPENDITURE | 1 | SEPARATE FILE FOR EACH YEAR. |
| | 2 | |
| | 3 | |
| | 4 | |
| 4. SALARY SHEETS | 1 | SEPARATE FILE FOR EACH YEAR |
| | 2 | |
| | 3 | |
| 5. GRANTS | 1 | SEPARATE FILE FOR EACH GRANT. |
| | 2 | |
| | 3 | |
| 6. RECEIPT BOOKS | 1 | ISSUE OF |
| 7. ADVANCE ACCOUNT | 1 | INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING CONTROL OF |
| | 2 | APPOINTMENT OF SIGNING OFFICERS. |
| | 3 | COPIES OF CLAIMS FOR REIMBURSEMENT. |
| | 5 | ADVANCE FOR PAYMENT OF CASUAL LABOUR. |

CA - CZ

CA SOIL SURVEY^s.

- CA1 SOIL SURVEY^s. 1 ARRANGEMENTS TO CONDUCT INVESTIGATIONS.
2 INTERNAL REPORTS.
3 EXTERNAL REPORTS.
4 FINANCE.
- 15 PUBLICITY.
20 MISCELLANEOUS.
21 CHAFFEY IRRIGATION AREA
22 RED CLIFFS
23 GOL GOL SWAMPS
24 MILDURA
25 GOODNIGHT AREA.
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