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ISO copyright office
Case postale 56 • CH-1211 Geneva 20
Tel. + 41 22 749 01 11
Fax + 41 22 749 09 47
E-mail copyright@iso.org
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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

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In exceptional circumstances, when a technical committee has collected data of a different kind from that which is normally published as an International Standard ("state of the art", for example), it may decide by a simple majority vote of its participating members to publish a Technical Report. A Technical Report is entirely informative in nature and does not have to be reviewed until the data it provides are considered to be no longer valid or useful.

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ISO/TR 26122 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 46, *Information and documentation*, Subcommittee SC 11, *Archives/records management*.

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Introduction

All organizations, regardless of their size or the nature of their business, exist and act to achieve certain goals and objectives. To realize its own specific goals and objectives, each organization will determine and apply appropriate work processes which constitute the organization's business.

Every organization generates records from its work processes. These records constitute evidence of the organization's goals and objectives, of its decisions and of its transactions. To fully understand these "business records", it is necessary to understand the work processes that generated them. This understanding can also be used to identify the records that should be generated from work processes and to manage them through time as assets of the organization.

Work process analysis for records is undertaken to determine the requirements for records creation, capture and control. It describes and analyses what happens in a function in a specific business context. It cannot take place in the abstract but is dependent on accurate information gathering and a well-grounded understanding of the organization's context and mission.

This Technical Report is intended for:

- records professionals (or persons assigned within an organization for managing records) responsible for creating and managing records in either a business system or dedicated records application software;
- system/business analysts responsible for designing business processes and/or systems that will create or manage records.

For the purposes of this Technical Report, *work process analysis* involves identifying:

- a) the relationship between work processes and their business context;
- b) the relationship between work processes and the rules governing their application (as derived from the relevant regulatory environment);
- c) the hierarchical decomposition of work processes into their component or constituent parts; and
- d) the sequential interdependence between discrete work processes or single transactions

Analysis of work processes for the purposes of creation and control of records serves to:

- provide a clear identification of records creation requirements, facilitating automatic capture and management of records as the work is performed; and
- define business contextual links between records, and thereby lead to their logical arrangement and grouping, thus ensuring clear documentation of work processes and facilitating retrieval, retention and disposition of the records based on knowledge of the business.

Work process analysis supports the integration of the capture of records as the work is undertaken. Processing orders and accounts, payment of wages, managing assets, stock control or quality assurance systems and contract management are examples of work processes in which the creation of records is normally integrated with processing the transactions. Integrating records processes into automation protocols applied to work processes will ensure that organizations' records are created, captured and controlled systematically in their business systems.