



InterPARES 3 Project

International Research on Permanent Authentic Records in Electronic Systems

Diplomatic Analysis CS[##] [Title of Case Study] Case Study

INTRODUCTION

Paragraph 1—Description of the case study in general.

The InterPARES case study # ...

Paragraph 2—Description of the technological environment in which the digital entity(ies) to be analyzed exist.

The ... project/program/system/database ...

Paragraph 3—Identification and general description of the digital entity(ies) to be analyzed

The following text presents the results of the diplomatic analysis on the digital entity(ies) above indicated. The purpose of this analysis is to assess the status of the identified digital entity(ies) as record(s), to determine whether preservation has to focus on the stored or manifested form, and to determine the salient characteristics that need to be protected by a preservation plan.

IDENTIFICATION OF RECORD(S)

The current version of the InterPARES glossary defines a record as “a document made or received in the course of a practical activity as an instrument or a by-product of such activity, and set aside for action or reference.”¹ This definition implies that, to be considered as a record, a digital entity must present five necessary characteristics: stable content and fixed form, embedded action, archival bond, five persons, and five contexts. The application of the definition on the [digital entity] is therefore analyzed accordingly:

¹ InterPARES Terminology Database, http://www.interpares.org/ip2/ip2_terminology_db.cfm.

1. TO BE IDENTIFIED AS A RECORD, THE DIGITAL ENTITY MUST POSSESS STABLE CONTENT AND FIXED FORM,² AND BE AFFIXED TO A STABLE MEDIUM (OR PHYSICAL CARRIER).

- **The content of the [digital entity] is stable or not and why**
- **The documentary form³ of the [digital entity] is fixed or not and why**
- **The digital entity is affixed to a stable medium or not and why**

2. A RECORD MUST PARTICIPATE IN AN ACTION, DEFINED AS THE CONSCIOUS EXERCISE OF WILL BY A PHYSICAL OR JURIDICAL PERSON, AIMED TO CREATE, MAINTAIN, MODIFY OR EXTINGUISH SITUATIONS. A RECORD IS A NATURAL BY-PRODUCT OF THE ACTION.

State the name of action that caused the [digital entity] to be created and illustrate how it participates in the action.

3. A RECORD MUST POSSESS AN ARCHIVAL BOND WITH OTHER RECORDS WITHIN OR OUTSIDE THE SYSTEM. THE ARCHIVAL BOND IS DEFINED AS THE RELATIONSHIP THAT LINKS EACH RECORD TO THE PREVIOUS AND SUBSEQUENT RECORD OF THE SAME ACTION AND, INCREMENTALLY, TO ALL THE RECORDS WHICH PARTICIPATE IN THE SAME ACTIVITY.

State the name of the records or records aggregations with which the [digital entity] possesses an archival bond and the reason why. If no archival bond is identifiable, state whether it should exist or not.

4. RECORD CREATION MUST INVOLVE AT LEAST THREE PERSONS, WHETHER OR NOT THEY EXPLICITLY APPEAR IN THE RECORD ITSELF. THESE PERSONS ARE AUTHOR, ADDRESSEE AND WRITER; IN THE ELECTRONIC ENVIRONMENT, ONE MUST ALSO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT TWO ADDITIONAL NECESSARY PERSONS: THE CREATOR AND THE ORIGINATOR.

- **The record's author is the physical or juridical person having the authority and capacity to issue the record or in whose name or by whose command the record has been issued.**

Name the author and explain why

² Stable content means that the data and the message in the record are unchanged and unchangeable, meaning that data or message cannot be overwritten, altered, deleted or added to. Fixed form means that the record's binary content is stored so that the message it conveys can be rendered with the same presentation it had on the screen when first saved even if its digital presentation is different. If the same content can be presented on the screen in several different ways in a limited series of possibilities, we may have either different views of **the same stored record** having stable content and fix form (different documentary presentations, e.g. statistical data as a pie chart, a bar chart, or a table, from one digital presentation) or a **several manifested records** with stable content and fixed form derived from the same stored record. A situation of **bounded variability** occurs if there is no stored **record** but content data, form data and composition data that are quite separate and can only be connected by a query, **and** if changes to the form are limited and controlled by fixed rules, so that the same query or interaction always generates the same result, and we have different views of different subsets of content, due to the intention of the author or to different operating systems or applications.

³ In the InterPARES Terminology Database, cit., the definition of documentary form reads: The rules of representation according to which the content of a record, its administrative and documentary context, and its authority are communicated. Documentary form possesses both extrinsic and intrinsic elements.

- **The writer is the physical or juridical person having the authority and capacity to articulate the content of the record.**

Name the writer and why.

- **The addressee is the physical or juridical person(s) to whom the record is directed or for whom the record is intended.**

Name the addressee and why.

- **The creator is the person in whose fonds the record exists.**

Name the creator and why.

- **The originator is the person to whom the Internet account issuing or the server holding the record belongs.**

Name the originator and why.

5. A RECORD MUST POSSESS AN IDENTIFIABLE CONTEXT, DEFINED AS THE FRAMEWORK IN WHICH THE ACTION IN WHICH THE RECORD PARTICIPATES TAKES PLACE. THE TYPES OF CONTEXT ARE: JURIDICAL-ADMINISTRATIVE, PROVENANCIAL, PROCEDURAL, DOCUMENTARY, AND TECHNOLOGICAL.

- **The juridical-administrative context is the legal and organizational system in which the creating body belongs.**

- Juridical context:
- Administrative context:

- **The provenancial context refers to the creating body, its mandate, structure and functions.**

Provenancial context:

- **The procedural context comprises the business procedure in the course of which the record is created.**

Note that, to describe this context, it might be necessary to modl the activities that generate the digital entity(ies)in question.

- Procedures:
- Diplomatic analysis of Procedural Phases in the Creation of the [digital entity]

- a) **Initiative:** The introductory phase of any procedure is “constituted by those acts, written and/ or oral, which start the mechanism of the procedure.”⁴
 - b) **Inquiry:** This preliminary phase “is constituted by the collection of the elements necessary to evaluate the situation.”⁵
 - c) **Consultation:** This phase is “constituted by the collection of opinions and advice after all the relevant data has been assembled.”⁶
 - d) **Deliberation:** This phase is “constituted by the final decision-making.”⁷
 - e) **Deliberation control:** This phase is “constituted by the control exercised by a physical or juridical person different from the author of the document embodying the transaction, on the substance of the deliberation and / or on its forms.”⁸
 - f) **Execution:** “The documents created in this phase are the originals of those embodying the transactions.”⁹ In other words, the execution phase results in the issuing of the first record capable of producing the consequences intended by its author.
- **The documentary context is defined as the archival fonds to which a record belongs and its internal structure.**

Documentary context:

- **The technological context is defined as the characteristics of the technological components of an electronic computing system in which records are created.**

Technological context:

⁴ Luciana Duranti, *Diplomatics: New Uses for an Old Science*, 115.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid., 116.

CONCLUSIONS

Overall conclusions of the status of the digital entity under examination:

If the [digital entity] is not a record:

- Illustrate and explain the status of the digital entity(ies) as either data, a publication or a potential record:
- If preservation is required, describe the salient characteristics that need to be protected by a preservation plan.

If the [digital entity] is a record:

- Recommend and explain whether preservation has to focus on its stored or manifested form.
- Describe the salient characteristics that need to be protected by a preservation plan.