



# COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

## THE LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA

*serving the archival and research needs of Virginians since 1823*

SANDRA GIOIA TREADWAY  
Librarian of Virginia

### MEMORANDUM

TO: Sandra G. Treadway, Librarian of Virginia

FROM: Conley L. Edwards III, State Archivist and Director,  
Archival and Records Management Services Division

DATE: December 3, 2007

RE: Annual Report on Reducing the Archival Backlog

Per the Commonwealth's Appropriation Act, Chapter 3, Section 1-70, Item 234, Paragraphs B.1 and B.2, for the fiscal year ending 30 June 2007, the Library of Virginia annually receives \$650,000 in General Fund monies to support fifteen full-time positions "to relieve the 54-year backlog in processing significant archival, special, and other historical collections."

The following report is submitted in compliance with the Budget's instructions that the Librarian of Virginia and the State Archivist shall report annually to the Governor and to the Chairs of the Senate Finance and House Appropriations Committees on the Library's "progress to date in reducing its archival backlog."

This report is for the period 1 July 2006 through 30 June 2007, and thus covers the eighth fiscal year under the special program, instituted 1 July 1999.

---

**Staffing:** The Library's Archival Description Services and Local Records Services programs currently includes sixteen positions in Description Services and twenty-two positions in Local Records Services for assessing and processing local, state, and non-governmental archival records.

Of these thirty-eight positions, five are assigned to organizing and describing Private Papers collections, seven for State Records, and eleven for Local Records. One position is dedicated to coordinating electronic records, and six positions provide administrative coordination as well as processing assistance. Budget reductions in fiscal years 2002 and 2003 reduced project funding and staffing within the Appropriation Act, from \$787,943 annually in support of seventeen positions to \$650,000 each year and fifteen positions.

**Collections Processing:** For the twelve-month period 1 July 2006–30 June 2007, the Library processed 219.18 cubic feet (approximately 328,770 items) of Private Papers, an additional 620.97 cubic feet (approximately 931,455 items) of State Records, and 202.48 cubic feet (approximately 303,720 items) of Local Records Collections.

*Cubic feet processed for the period total 1,042.7 (approximately 1,563,900 items), or 86.9 cubic feet per month, exceeding the target of 904 cubic per year by 15%.*

The total does not include 1,310 megabytes of new electronic and digital collections received and processed, or the 47 Web sites now in the Library’s collection.

The average rate of processing over the first eight years of the program equals 1,087.2 cubic feet per year, or 90.6 per month—versus the annual target of 904 cubic feet, or 75.3 cubic feet per month. An overview of collections processed by category is provided as follows:

	<b>Local Records</b>	<b>State Records</b>	<b>Private Papers</b>	<b>Yearly total</b>
1999-00	446.9	332.5	233.2	1012.6
2000-01	485.4	344.5	233.0	1062.9
2001-02	570.0	393.5	228.9	1192.4
2002-03	448.4	409.0	227.0	1084.4
2003-04	361.9	282.3	169.0	813.2
2004-05	353.5	349.7	339.6	1042.8
2005-06	356.7	593.3	451.8	1401.8
2006-07	202.5	621.0	219.2	1042.7
To date	3224.5	3325.8	2101.7	<b>8652.8</b>

Multiple factors affected the processing total, all of which shed considerable light on several challenges facing this program. One key element over the past three years was the significant amount of staffing and funding increasingly required to address collections involving electronic media—either collections “born digital” or other media received damaged or in an unstable format. Both require reformatting to an appropriate digital yet archival-quality surrogate. For example, video tapes in various formats of General Assembly sessions, 1982-1994, were converted to DVD for access and preservation. There are few standards or guidelines for the archival processing of digital records and other institutions are watching the Library of Virginia as staff carefully develops our best practices. These sorts of activities—and expenses—are not captured in the overall project statistics.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a report on progress to date.

- C: Edward D.C. Campbell, Deputy Librarian, Library of Virginia  
 Ann N. Harris, Director, Finance and Administrative Services, Library of Virginia  
 Laura L. Wilborn, Information Processing Specialist, Division of Legislative Automated Systems,  
[reportdocs@leg.state.va.us](mailto:reportdocs@leg.state.va.us)