



## **The Social Sector**

**Research e-Datasaving and Sharing:  
Some Possible Ways Forward**

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**Carl Davidson  
*No Doubt Research Limited*  
August 2005**



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#### Key Recommendations

This paper follows from the SPEaR (2005a) paper *The Social Sector: Research e-Datasaving and Sharing Workshop Summary*, and outlines some possible ways forward for datasaving and sharing (DS&S) in the social sector. The key recommendations of this paper are:

- For SPEaR to facilitate a 'proof of concept' demonstration project of datasaving and sharing in operation in the social sector. This demonstration project would provide the opportunity to investigate and address the critical dimensions of successful datasaving and sharing in the sector. The project would involve a limited implementation of datasaving and sharing, with clear business goals, real users, and representative content, that can be extended or modified subsequently (Rankin, 2005:29). It is recommended that this demonstration project starts small, is restricted to public sector agencies, and only deals with the sharing of research data. One place to find qualifying projects is among those agencies bidding into the Cross Departmental Research Pool (CDRP).

To support this demonstration project, as well as to build a case for developing the demonstration project into sector-wide initiatives, it is recommended that SPEaR co-ordinates a series of four 'contributing' projects. These would:

1. Map the key data repositories and technologies in the social sector ('The Mapping Project');
2. Provide a systematic scan of international initiatives, protocols and processes that are driving change in this field ('The Scanning Project');
3. Propose an alternative models for measuring the 'value' of datasaving and sharing ('The Funding Project'); and
4. Clarify the restrictions placed on datasaving by current intellectual property laws ('The Regulatory Project').

In addition to these four projects, it is also recommended that SPEaR co-ordinates two critical discussions in the social sector about the 'opportunities' and 'threats' provided by increased datasaving and sharing. These discussions can be thought of as 'thought leadership' projects, and would cover:

1. How emergent technologies may change research practice in the social science; and
2. How social researchers might respond to the ethical consequences of increased datasaving and sharing.



## The Social Sector

### Research e-Datasaving and Sharing: Some Possible Ways Forward

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#### 1.0 This Paper

#### 1.1 Purpose

SPEaR has identified social datasaving and sharing as a priority area for sector-wide progress to capture and enhance the utility of social knowledge across the government and the wider social sector. The *Draft SPEaR Datasaving and Sharing Plan 2005-2006* outlines the aim of datasaving and sharing as:

To establish and maintain a future-proofing framework to ensure New Zealand social sector datasaving and sharing practice across all social agencies meets and exceeds international protocols for quality standards, while international access and connectivity are maximised.

The *Plan* also outlines seven objectives, these are to:

1. Build enduring relationships with international agencies and activities leading the field and document case studies;
2. Translate international knowledge on datasaving and sharing best practice into the NZ context;
3. Embed standards and protocols into research funding agencies to require quality practice;
4. Embed standards and protocols into researching agencies to develop quality practice;
5. Develop, invest and monitor coordination and infrastructural requirements for government and the wider sector;
6. Develop and monitor linkages with international datasaving and sharing whilst contributing effectively to international collaborations;
7. Develop and monitor linkages with national economic and environmental datasaving and sharing developments.

SPEaR's *Draft SPEaR Datasaving and Sharing Plan 2005-2006* also embodies a number of fundamental principles about datasaving and sharing. These are:

- Public access to publicly funded research and data should be made possible (unless there are sound reasons for preventing access);
- Data is a critical resource for social researchers, and researchers should have easy access to existing data records (unless there are sound reasons for preventing access);
- Gaining the most value from datasaving and sharing involves a recognition that the data to be saved and shared need to be supported by the appropriate infrastructure, and appropriate curation processes; and

- Effective datasaving and sharing involves improved data management processes among social researchers (i.e., that a commitment to datasaving and sharing has consequences for how social research is planned, organised, conducted, directed, and controlled).

## 1.2 Method

This paper follows from the SPEaR (2005a) paper *The Social Sector: Research e-Datasaving and Sharing Workshop Summary* and was compiled during June-August 2005, drawing on:

- Participation in a SPEaR Datasaving and Sharing Working Party meeting;
- Participation at the MoRST Workshop *Research e-Datasaving and Sharing* (Wellington, June 15<sup>th</sup> 2005);
- The process of compiling feedback from the Social Science stream at that MoRST workshop<sup>1</sup>;
- Consultation with some members of the SPEaR Datasaving and Sharing Working Party;
- Consultation with key stakeholders in the Social Science sector (including representatives from BRCSS; the State Services Commission, ICT Branch; MoRST; the National Library; and private sector IT and knowledge management experts); and
- A review of relevant secondary sources.

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<sup>1</sup> SPEaR (2005a) paper *The Social Sector: Research e-Datasaving and Sharing Workshop Summary*,

## 2.0 The Context for Datasaving and Sharing in the Social Sector

Responding to the challenge provided by the *Draft SPEaR Datasaving and Sharing Plan 2005-2006* requires a recognition of the varied and dispersed nature of New Zealand's social research sector.

This sector includes government departments and agencies; university departments; non-government organisations; and a number of (usually small) independent contractors<sup>2</sup>. This variety means the sector is characterised by different institutional arrangements, datasaving and sharing infrastructures, and (perhaps most importantly) different cultures and behaviours. In addition, there are currently few informatics<sup>3</sup> professionals in this sector, meaning that little emphasis is generally placed on the value of datasaving and sharing (and one where curatorial activities are seen as having less status than 'real' research skills).

An important consequence of the varied nature of the sector is that there is little sector-wide agreement about data management best practice<sup>4</sup>. However, within the sector there are already notable initiatives underway that are likely to play a significant role in shaping leading practice. These include initiatives being led by the National Library, the State Services Commission (ICT Branch), and Ministry of Research Science and Technology. Of particular relevance to the social sector is the role played by Statistics New Zealand, and the initiatives they are undertaking to better manage the official statistics system, and improve access to, and use of, official statistics.

### Official Statistics and *Statisphere*

*Statisphere* is a register of all statistics produced by government, and provides a comprehensive overview of all government statistics and facilitates access to them. *Statisphere* provides a single point of entry to official statistics. Although there are no statistics held on *Statisphere*, the site provides direct links to the agencies holding the relevant statistical collections ([www.statisphere.govt.nz/default.htm](http://www.statisphere.govt.nz/default.htm)).

<sup>2</sup> With a number of these independent contractors churning between self employment and regular employment, raising the possibility that data simply becomes lost to the broader sector.

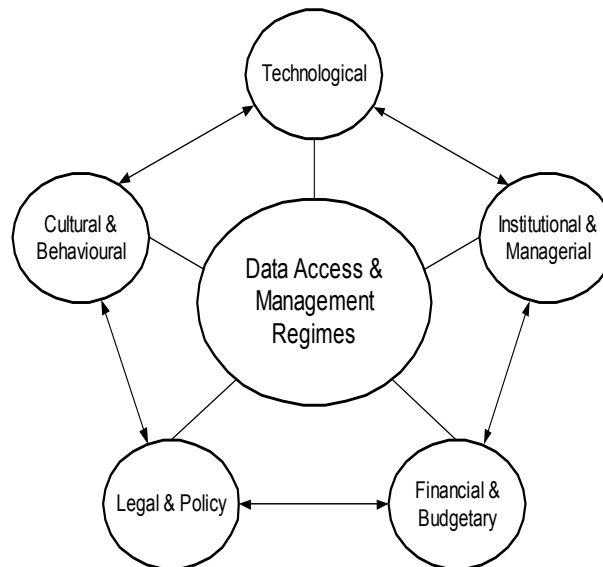
<sup>3</sup> 'Informatics' are defined as 'a field of study that focuses on the use of technology for improving access to and utilization of information' (Carver, 2005).

<sup>4</sup> Participants from the Social Science stream at the Ministry of Research Science and Technology workshop *Research e-Datasaving and Sharing* noted that there is little point in expending efforts on ways to better share data if there are no guarantees in place about the quality of those data.

### 3.0 Mapping a Way Forward

A framework that has proved useful for mapping future steps towards the vision of datasaving and sharing outlined in the SPEaR (2005b) *Draft SPEaR Datasaving and Sharing Plan 2005-2006* is that provided by the OECD's (2003) report *Promoting Access to Public Research Data for Scientific, Economic, and Social Development*. In this framework, 'five necessary components' for successful data access and sharing are introduced.

**Figure One: 'Five Necessary Components' for Successful Data Access and Sharing (OECD, 2003).**



These five domains (institutional and managerial elements; cultural and behavioural; technological; financial and budgetary; and legal and policy) provide a framework for locating and analysing where improvements to data access and sharing can be made. The OECD report is clear that the five domains differ in character across the traditions and practices of specific scientific disciplines, meaning that data access regimes may vary in significant ways (OECD, 2003:13). This paper makes use of this framework to identify where SPEaR might best focus its own datasaving and sharing efforts in order to realise the vision outlined in its *Draft SPEaR Datasaving and Sharing Plan 2005-2006*.

## 4.0 Institutional and Managerial Elements

### 4.1 The Need For Co-ordination in the Social Science Sector

As noted in Section 2.0 (above), there is a need to co-ordinate the various efforts occurring around datasaving and sharing in the social sector<sup>5</sup>. This co-ordination would fundamentally involve creating a consensus about the vision for datasaving and sharing in the sector. This consensus-building process would involve reaching agreement about questions such as:

- Who can sustain an ongoing commitment to this process?; and
- Which kinds of data need to be included in the saving and sharing process (and which kinds should be excluded?);

It seems appropriate that SPEaR takes the lead in co-ordinating this process. The key goal of this process would be to establish governance protocols for datasaving and sharing in the sector. These protocols would likely build from a commitment to a federated and interoperable approach (which enables local institutional decision-making while facilitating the emergence of national services which join up the local collections).

To support SPEaR's ability to take the lead in co-ordinating this process, there is a need to map the key data stores in the social sector. This mapping exercise would identify what data sets exist, where they are, and who is currently responsible for them. This mapping exercise would also identify the key players, their sources of funding, and the technologies being used.

### 4.2 How Helpful Are International Models of Datasaving and Sharing?

There is debate in the social sector about the extent to which New Zealand can model its datasaving and sharing regimes on those developed (or being developed) overseas. On one side of this debate are those who argue that alignment with international examples is the key to 'future proofing' local regimes. This alignment would involve drawing heavily on international examples, standards, and repository solutions. This alignment would not only ensure that New Zealand researchers are able to tap readily into the global 'data grid' but that international researchers can tap into local data sources. Implicit in this emphasis on international examples is the challenge to ensure local datasaving solutions do not become parochial<sup>6</sup>. This approach suggests that the best way ahead for local datasaving and sharing is to:

1. Adopt global standards (rather than attempting to adapt them to local applications); and
2. Identify global leadership for datasaving and sharing in the social sector and follow their lead.

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<sup>5</sup> Participants in the Social Science stream at the June MoRST workshop expressed a number of concerns about there being no shared vision for the initiatives taking place in the social science sector, and the subsequent duplication of effort this engenders.

<sup>6</sup> This view recognises that there is a need to focus on the local context but to also ensure that the sector is clear about where the local vision will take the sector (and that this vision needs to emphasise international compatibility and alignment).

In this approach, the key questions for SPEaR (or whoever adopts a leadership role in the social sector) become (i) to what extent do global metadata standards for social research exist?, and (ii) to what extent do data repositories solutions exist?

The alternative view is one which argues that, while there is much to be learned from international experiences, duplicating international models will fail to address local needs precisely because those models do not take account of the local institutional arrangements. This view notes the way social science is administered and funded in other countries, and the consequences this has for these countries' ability to create and mandate datasaving and sharing regimes. Cameron (2005) notes that the specialised nature of the United Kingdom's various Research Councils means that data policies and practices have been tailored to the unique needs of their different research areas and constituents. For instance, the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), through its *Datasets Policy*, provides:

- Funding to assist in the preparation of data for archiving;
- A compulsion for researchers funded by the Council to deposit copies of machine-readable quantitative data and machine and non-machine-readable qualitative data within three months following the completion of their research grant (where the data must be of a standard where they can be interpreted by a third party); and
- Supports a centralised data store (the Economic and Social Data Service situated at the University of Essex).

Moreover, much of this infrastructure has been in place for a significant period of time (for instance, the data archive was established in the mid 1980s). In contrast, the challenge for datasaving and sharing in the social sector locally needs to focus on getting the infrastructure in place.

The logical conclusion is that SPEaR needs to carry out a systematic international scan of key initiatives, protocols and processes that are driving change in this field. A series of case studies outlining what is happening (or emerging) in the sector (and beyond) would provide useful demonstrations of what datasaving and sharing can achieve, as well as helping making the case for the value of datasaving and sharing (which could usefully feed in to the business case for datasaving and sharing, see below).

## 5.0 Cultural and Behavioural

### 5.1 The Changing Nature of Social Research

Rankin (2005) notes that datasaving and sharing is ultimately a question of ‘cultural change’ in organisations. He notes that ‘sustaining the cultural change programme is [the] greatest challenge’. There is perhaps a greater cultural ‘shift’ required in the social sciences than in any other science sector. This is because many social researchers are concerned that data sharing (in particular) has the potential to undermine the guarantee of confidentiality that is at the heart of social research (Tolich and Davidson, 1999)<sup>7</sup>.

As a consequence, there is clearly a need for someone in the Social Research sector to lead a discussion about the way that technology in general, and datasaving and sharing in particular, may change the way that social research is carried out. This discussion could be couched in terms of ‘future proofing social research’ or ‘preparing for the future’. As well as focusing on the ‘threats’ posed by new technology (see below), this discussion could focus on the ‘opportunities’ the new technology presents. For instance, it could:

- Identify the kinds of research questions that datasaving and sharing will enable the social sector to address; and
- Explore the value to be found in data re-use and repurposing.

In addition, this discussion could explore the kinds of incentives researchers might need to focus on datasaving and sharing, as well as the kinds of skills researchers might need to effectively save and share data (as well as make the best use of other data).

Facilitating this discussion is an obvious way that SPEaR can contribute to datasaving and sharing in the social sector. Equally, the 2006 Social Policy Research and Evaluation (SPRE) conference provides an obvious forum to host this discussion, or to report on its progress.

### 5.2 Taking the Fear Out of Data Sharing

As noted above, for many social researchers data sharing is interpreted as more of a threat than an opportunity. This is because data sharing (and particularly data matching) is seen as potentially undermining the ability of researchers to deliver on their promise of confidentiality. This promise of confidentiality is technically a ‘quasi proprietary’ right (the ‘duty of confidence’) and remains in place as long as the information remains confidential (i.e., in contrast to copyright and patents which expire after a certain period). This means that researchers have an obligation to ensure that the data gathered in confidence are not combined in future in ways that enable the participants in the research to be identified. For many researchers, delivering on this guarantee is seen as inviolable<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> This was a key concern among participants at the June MoRST workshop.

<sup>8</sup> In a famous case in the United States, a sociological research, Rik Scarce, was sent to jail for refusing to identify the participants in his research. At the time Scarce was jailed, he was a sociology PhD student whose data had been subject to subpoena. His response to the subpoena and his rationale for refusing to release his data are presented in Scarce, 1995.

In countries further down the datasaving and sharing path than New Zealand, the tension between the goals of integrated, seamless public services (requiring more extensive data sharing) and of privacy protection, now represents a major challenge for policy-makers, regulators and service managers (Bellamy et al, 2005). In the United Kingdom, for instance, the government has moved from a strategy based on assuming that extending data sharing and enhancing of privacy are compatible goals, to one that more explicitly acknowledges the tensions involved. This has seen recent efforts focusing on providing sufficient safeguards to allow both goals to be pursued.

It is clear that what is required locally is a discussion within the social sector about how best to address this issue. This discussion would include a consideration of social researchers' commitments under the Treaty of Waitangi when researching with Maori. The goal of this discussion would be the articulation of some preliminary principles to guide data sharing in the social science sector. These preliminary principles could then be used to structure a more systematic consultation with stakeholders within the sector. Interestingly, hosting this kind of discussion is one of the most recent workstreams commissioned by the ESRC's National Centre for e-Social Science. This project, hosted at the Centre's Oxford Node, focuses on the social, institutional, ethical and legal issues surrounding e-Science infrastructures and research practices<sup>9</sup> and provides an obvious starting point for seeding the local discussion.

Facilitating this discussion is another obvious way that SPEaR can contribute to datasaving and sharing in the social sector. Again, the 2006 Social Policy Research and Evaluation (SPRE) conference provides an obvious forum to host this discussion, or to report on its progress.

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<sup>9</sup> See <http://www.ncess.ac.uk/>

## 6.0 Legal and Policy

The question of 'sharing' social research data raises critical questions about who 'owns' those data. Currently under New Zealand law there are multiple ways to 'own' and restrict access to intellectual property. In line with international experience, this means that local intellectual property law is 'a crowded and confusing place' (Hawkins, 2001). For those involved in social research and evaluation (as either the purchaser or the contractor), the complexity of intellectual property rights means there is often confusion over questions such as:

- Who owns research data, and particularly the data gathered in confidential interviews?;
- Who should have the right to publish information gained through a research project?; and
- What is the impact of digital copying and publishing technologies (such as publishing on the Internet) on traditional intellectual property arrangements?

As noted in Section 5.2, there is also the requirement for local social scientists to honour their obligations under the Treaty of Waitangi. This means treating Maori intellectual property differently from other kinds of intellectual property – with consequences for how knowledge is stored, who has access to it, and how it is subsequently used. These issues are made exponentially more complex when the question of international sharing, using, and repurposing of data are raised.

The final issue in regard to intellectual property are the implications of various Statutes. As intellectual property law is common law, it is subordinate to statutory laws such as the Privacy Act (1993), the Official Information Act (1982), and the Archives Act (1957)<sup>10</sup>. These Acts are not necessarily very well understood by local researchers, and may have important consequences for the kind of data that are stored<sup>11</sup>. These consequences apply as much to administrative data as they do research data. There is clearly a need to clarify what researchers can and cannot do, and should and should not do in regard to data sharing and intellectual property. Facilitating this discussion is another obvious way that SPEaR can contribute to datasaving and sharing in the social sector.

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<sup>10</sup> This Act states that data collected on behalf of a Ministry should not be disposed of without the authority of the Chief Archivist. Other research (Opie, 2003) has noted that third parties collecting data on behalf of government typically have limited understanding of the relevant archiving issues and obligations. This is not helped by the fact that there are some 'grey areas' about where government agency boundaries end when others are doing work on their behalf.

<sup>11</sup> For instance, researchers might take *methodological* precautions to ensure it is impossible to identify individual respondents in their data (in some research designs, researchers need never ask for or know the names of participants in the first place; where names are collected, primary data can be made anonymous at the earliest opportunity by having all links to identifiers severed). A second approach involves researchers anticipating the *legal* strategies that might be used to assert 'evidentiary privilege' to break the researcher's duty of confidence to their research participants (Palys and Lowman, 2000). In New Zealand, a recent seminar on 'Intellectual Property and Evaluation' (Minter Ellison Rudd 2004) was clear that researchers should resist any attempts to break this duty of confidence. The key message at this seminar was that any conflict of interest between the requirements of this duty of confidence and the Official Information Act etc. would be resolved by the courts.

## 7.0 Technological

At the June MoRST workshop, the notion of a federated system for datasaving and sharing was seen as both inevitable and desirable to participants in the social sciences stream. However, there was less agreement about what this federated system would look like in practice. For some of the stakeholders consulted for this paper, the ultimate goal of a federated system is one that shares computing resources and facilities as well as data. This approach, commonly described as 'grid technology', is seen by some as the next iteration of the World Wide Web (WWW). It enables users to access computer resources, facilities, and software on demand. The notion of the 'grid' goes beyond simple communication between computers, and aims ultimately to turn the global network of computers into one vast computational resource. While the 'grid' is beyond the reach of current technology, a number of countries have published 'roadmaps' to achieve national and trans-national Grid roll-outs and a number of pilot-scale grids have been established (Cameron, 2005). At the recent *First International Conference on e-Social Science*, Mochmann (2005) argued that 'computing GRID technology will allow seamless integration of evidence from different sources and will support visualisation in socio-graphic maps' and called for 'the interoperability of data bases [to] be improved by metadata standards and appropriate documentation of measurement instruments as well as of related data'.

Debates about the role of 'grid' technologies maybe premature in New Zealand (although there is perhaps much to learn from the international pilots), but participants in the June MoRST workshop identified 'technology' in the broader sense as critical to effective datasaving and sharing. This included ensuring sector-wide interoperability standards for middleware<sup>12</sup> and informatics. For instance, a number of participants stressed the need for metadata standards. It is the recommendation of this paper that ways to address these questions are explored in a SPEaR-facilitated 'proof of concept' demonstration project (see Section 9.0, below).

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<sup>12</sup> 'Middleware' is defined by Carver (2005) as 'software that sits between two or more types of software and translates information between them ... in the context of research data middleware applications often include tools that enable indexing, archiving, discovery, analysis, integration, management and preservation of large heterogeneous distributed data repositories'.

## **8.0 Financial and Budgetary**

Participants in the June MoRST workshop were clear that it is hard to make a compelling business case for datasaving and sharing within the current public sector financial planning environment. This is because the benefits may not accrue to the organisation which bears the costs of preparing the data for sharing, and the benefits (when and where they accrue) may be intangible and, hence, difficult to monetise. All of these mean it is hard to make a strong cost-benefit argument for investment in datasaving and sharing. A number of participants noted that this was a microcosm of a larger problem with financial management across the public sector, and that alternative approaches were much more likely to recognise the benefit inherent in datasaving and sharing (for instance, Murphy, 2002). Equally, other participants talked about the 'perverse signals' of the Public Finance Act which militate against datasaving, and mean that departments and agencies lose sight of the 'big picture' value offered by datasaving and sharing as a whole.

As a consequence, there is clearly an opportunity for SPEaR to facilitate a project looking at alternative models for measuring the 'value' of datasaving and sharing. This might involve working with an agency such as the New Zealand Institute of Economic Research (NZIER) to create alternative models for building the business case for datasaving and sharing projects. It may also draw on the international case studies (see 4.2), as well as the evaluation of the 'proof of concept' demonstration project (see 9.1).

## 9.0 Action Plan

### 9.1 The 'Proof of Concept' Demonstration Project

The key recommendation of this paper is for SPEaR to facilitate a 'proof of concept' demonstration project of datasaving and sharing in operation in the social sector. This demonstration project would involve a limited implementation with clear business goals, real users, and representative content, that can be extended or modified subsequently (Rankin, 2005:29). Rankin describes such demonstration projects as:

[A]n opportunity to investigate and address the policy, people, process and promotion issues, as well as the technology... choosing software with the lowest barrier to entry, provided that it meets the institution's needs, will allow the institution to focus most of its efforts on managing the cultural change. (Rankin, 2005:29).

This demonstration project would start small, focusing on a small number of key agencies motivated to share their data. One place to find these is among those agencies bidding into the Cross Departmental Research Pool (CDRP). The Cross Departmental Research Pool was established to fund research cross-portfolio research projects, and a key aim of the CDRP is to build data sharing relationships across government agencies<sup>13</sup>.

Limiting this demonstration project to central government agencies in the first instance is critical to ensure alignment around funding for datasaving and sharing, and agreement regarding data ownership, use, and repurposing. For instance, because universities work under a different public records regime than government agencies (with the responsibility for the research records being with the individual academic, and a key part of academic freedom), including them in the initial demonstration project would unnecessarily multiply the issues being addressed.

The key steps in this demonstration project would be to:

1. **Establish** a Governance Group for the demonstration project. This would be facilitated by SPEaR and include representatives from the State Services Commission's ICT Branch, and CDRP-funded agencies. SPEaR's role, as facilitator would be to broker the key relationships needed for the demonstration project, as well as to focus on the content of the project. The State Service's Commission ICT Branch would provide guidance on the technology to be used (see below).
2. **Identify** a small number of potential research projects that could provide the basis of the datasaving and sharing demonstration. As noted above, a place

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<sup>13</sup> For instance, *Project Pipeline* is a CDRP funded project that brings together the Ministry of Justice, Police, Department of Corrections, CYFS, The Treasury, Crown Law, Legal Services, State Services Commission. This project was established to overcome the fragmentation of forecasting carried out in the justice sector. Currently, forecasting and modelling activities in this sector are conducted by isolated units across a number of different agencies. This results in forecasts that are inconsistent between agencies, forecasts that do not take into account the impact of policy changes on other agencies and forecasts that are generally not shared. *Project Pipeline* addresses this problem by developing a more sophisticated, systematic and cross-sectoral approach to justice sector modelling, which will have benefits for policy development, planning, management, and resource allocation within the justice sector.

to start could be with those projects bidding into the Cross Departmental Research Pool (CDRP) for the 2006/7 year. Identifying the potential projects would involve the Governance Group working with MoRST, FRST, and the agencies bidding into the CDRP.

3. Once potential projects have been identified, the Governance Group would **communicate** the vision for the datasaving and sharing demonstration project (including how research data are currently shared between government agencies, and how this could be improved).
4. Working with these potential projects, the Governance Group would **recruit** the most suitable project to serve as a the demonstration project<sup>14</sup>.
5. Once the most suitable project has been identified, and the participants recruited to the demonstration project, the next task is to **develop and build** a consensus around what datasaving and sharing would look like for this project.
6. Next, the Governance Group will need to **assign and oversee** a number of specific project tasks. These include (i) conducting a technology inventory and assessment of databases of the participating agencies; (ii) reviewing current standards and procedures; (iii) detailing the operating system features to be developed; (iv) designing how the required technologies, standards, and procedures will be developed, configured and deployed<sup>15</sup>; and (v) agreeing how the risks associated with the demonstration project will be managed.
7. A key role for the Governance Group will be **co-ordinating** the proof of concept implementation. As well as the technology, standards and procedures outlined above, this will also include (i) a communication strategy for the demonstration project (which will ensure that key stakeholders through the social sector are kept informed about the progress of the demonstration project); and (ii) an evaluation strategy to assess the lessons learned from the demonstration project.
8. Finally, the Governance Group will need to **scope** a strategy for scaling the datasaving and sharing procedures used in the demonstration project beyond projects and to institutions.

Rankin (2005:30) argues that a demonstration project will need people to fulfil the following roles:

1. A process change champion who embeds the new policies and procedures into existing processes;
2. An advocate who promotes the benefits at all levels of the institution and in particular to authors;
3. A cataloguer who works with (or on behalf of) authors to enhance the description of research outputs;

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<sup>14</sup> One way to manage the risk associated with the DS&S demonstration project would be to recruit multiple projects. While this would spread the risk, it would also multiply the amount of work that SPEaR needs to co-ordinate.

<sup>15</sup> A likely way forward here to align the technology used in the demonstration project with that chosen by the National Library. Failing this, there is an opportunity to use a system hosted by the State Services Commission's ICT branch.

4. A solution architect who installs, configures and adjusts the chosen software and hardware; and
5. A sponsor who ensures the project has visibility, priority and ongoing commitment.

Although the Governance Group would work to support each of these six functions, it is most likely to fulfil the second role in the demonstration project.

In sum, this proof of concept demonstration project would provide some initial ideas about:

1. The standards and processes needed for effective datasaving and sharing in the social sector;
2. Examine technology options;
3. Test a range of incentives to effect the cultural change required; and
4. Consider the current legal and policy disincentives to effective data sharing.

## **9.2 Supporting Recommendations**

To support the demonstration project, as well as to build a case for developing the demonstration project into sector-wide initiatives, it is recommended that SPEaR co-ordinates a series of four 'contributing' projects. These projects would:

1. Map the key data stores in the social sector. This mapping exercise would identify what data sets exist, where they are, and who is currently responsible for them. This mapping exercise would also identify the key players, their sources of funding, and the technologies being used ('The Mapping Project').
2. Provide a systematic scan of international initiatives, protocols and processes that are driving change in this field. A series of case studies outlining what is happening (or emerging) in the sector (and beyond) would provide useful demonstrations of what datasaving and sharing can achieve ('The Scanning Project').
3. Propose an alternative models for measuring the 'value' of datasaving and sharing. This might involve working with an economist to create alternative models for building the business case for datasaving and sharing projects. It may also draw on the international case studies (see 4.2), as well as the evaluation of the 'proof of concept' demonstration project (see 9.1) ('The Funding Project'). and
4. Clarify the restrictions placed on datasaving by current intellectual property laws. This project would provide clear guidance about what researchers can and cannot do, and should and should not do in regard to data sharing and intellectual property ('The Regulatory Project').

In addition to these four projects, it is also recommended that SPEaR co-ordinates two critical discussions in the social sector about the 'opportunities' and 'threats' provided by increased datasaving and sharing. These discussions can be thought of as 'thought leadership' projects, and would cover:

1. How emergent technologies may change research practice in the social science. A key element of this discussion will be a consideration of the way that datasaving and sharing practices will influence normative practices for

social researchers. The 2006 Social Policy Research and Evaluation (SPRE) conference provides an obvious forum to host this discussion, or to report on its progress.

2. How social researchers might respond to the ethical consequences of increased datasaving and sharing. This would cover social, institutional, ethical and legal issues surrounding datasaving and sharing. Again, the 2006 Social Policy Research and Evaluation (SPRE) conference provides an obvious forum to host this discussion, or to report on its progress.

*No Doubt Research Limited*  
22 August 2005

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