

Enhancing record-keeping

Information Management Agenda soon to safeguard govt information

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PUTRAJAYA: The wide use of computers in government offices has not enhanced efficiency. Instead, it has led to civil servants neglecting to keep proper records of their work and department transactions.

Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Mohd Sidek Hassan revealed yesterday that such neglect had made it harder to trace official documents, particularly when an officer in charge was transferred, went on leave or retired.

In a move to prevent the loss of such institutional memory and enhance record-keeping, Mohd Sidek said all public offices were now required to implement the government-wide Information Management Agenda, designed to simplify its working environment.

Mohd Sidek pointed out that traditionally, government record-keeping was based on conventional methods such as in paper form and documents were filed and given reference numbers based on the date and subject matter.

"These documents are part of a

department's institutional memory and are a source for all reference, information and knowledge.

"Apart from this, a copy of any letter is also kept in a floating file and distributed to all department heads for their attention and comments.

"But nowadays, many government staff have either forgotten this method or do not know how to do it. This means that there are many matters of which we do not have a complete record.

"Government officers today are given their own computers and all

documents or letters prepared by them are stored individually in there and not filed accordingly," he said in his speech at the launch of the National Record Management Convention here.

Mohd Sidek said such neglect was worrying because if this continued to happen, a department's institutional memory would be lost and there would no longer be any source for reference on historical facts, which were important as a base for procedural matters, particularly during negotiations for contracts or agreements.

Mohd Sidek said the National Archives Department would be the lead agency in the Information Management Agenda.

The department has been tasked to come up with better management of electronic records in public offices.

"The Electronic Records Management System will ensure that all our records are complete, valid, reliable and trustworthy," he said.

He added that this would ensure more accountability and integrity on the part of departments and agencies.