

## **Lesley Strathie's public response to the IMA Report**

The National Archives today published their report assessing HMRC's information management. HMRC welcome this report which highlights areas of good practice in HMRC, recognises the considerable improvements we have made in this area and sets a clear direction for the future.

Information is critical to HMRC's role in making sure that the money is available to fund the UK's public services and helping families and individuals with targeted financial support. We recognise that our role gives us privileged access to information and are committed to protecting it and using it well. HMRC has 91 million customers and we manage millions of items of information every day. Improving the way we do that makes life easier for our customers and reduces costs for them and for us.

The National Archives' report recognises the good progress we have made so far, acknowledges our commitment to driving continuous improvement over the long term and provides a helpful focus for the next stage of our work in this area. It covers: Governance and Leadership; Records Management; Access to Information; Compliance with responsibilities and the department's culture in relation to information management. It praises senior management's commitment to information management and describes HMRC's approach to information security as best practice saying:

"HMRC should be proud of its achievements in raising levels of understanding, awareness and compliance in relation to information security and assurance."

HMRC is building on the good work done so far to drive further immediate improvements and drive longer term change. Information management is an area where the landscape changes quickly, particularly in the area of digital records where storage requirements, tools and techniques are continually evolving. Key areas highlighted by the National Archives for HMRC to focus on going forward are:

- a more consistent approach to identifying records that no longer need to be kept;
- storage of information that allows ease of access to accredited users; and
- the long term continuity of Digital Records taking account of developments in IT.

HMRC have published our action plan setting out how we will respond to the National Archives' recommendations. This summarises the work that is planned over the coming 3 years and shows how ongoing improvements in information management will help HMRC deliver on our strategy.