

Introduction

Registers of Scotland and National Archives of Scotland (NAS) have undertaken a joint project to introduce, among other things, a technical change to the method of compiling the record volume of the Register of Sasines.

At present, record volume is created on microfiche. We propose to discontinue microfiche production and to begin creating records in the form of electronic images instead.

A Statutory Instrument is required to empower the Keeper to create images instead of microfiche. A key part of the process of obtaining the necessary legislation is the consultation of stakeholders. A number of key users of the Sasine records were consulted and

Parties responding to the consultation

Landownership Scotland
59 Hainburn Park
Edinburgh EH10 7HH

Law Society of Scotland
26 Drumsheugh Gardens
Edinburgh EH3 7YR

Miller & Bryce Limited
5 Logie Mill
Beaverbank Office Park
Logie Green
Edinburgh EH7 4HH

Oswalds
24 Great King Street
Edinburgh EH3 6QN

J & R A Robertson
15 Great Stuart Street
Edinburgh EH3 7TS

Scottish Records Advisory Council
General Register House
2 Princes Street,
Edinburgh

Shepherd & Wedderburn

Saltire Court
20 Castle Terrace
Edinburgh EH1 2ET

Summary of responses

Of the seven responses to the consultation paper, none offered any adverse comment. Four noted the proposed technical change and offered no comment. Two expressed support in general terms for the proposal and one expressed support whilst also raising specific issues, as follows:

- Microfiche records are of variable quality – close attention should be paid to the quality of the scanned images being used to compile new record volume.
- In future, obsolescent storage technology may affect customers' ability to access electronic images.
- Computers needed to access electronic images of deeds may exacerbate the shortage of space in General Register House.
- Consideration should be given to scanning deed plans in colour.

Response to issues raised

- Existing microfiche cameras are at the end of their operational lives. Scanning technology has matured to the extent that the image quality achieved is expected to be superior to microfiche.
- NAS is conscious that information technology becomes obsolete comparatively quickly. NAS is aware that it will be necessary to remaster records held in electronic form from time to time as new technology evolves.
- Registers of Scotland and NAS will cooperate to convert existing records to electronic form, including records currently held on microfiche. This will reduce the need for desk space to examine physical volumes and in time will enable customers to access records without needing to visit General Register House at all.
- It is intended that all deed plans will be scanned in colour.

Conclusion

The results of the consultation process will be given to Ministers, together with the proposed Statutory Instrument, for consideration. For further information please contact the project manager at Registers of Scotland, Erlend Greig.

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