



MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Minnesota State Archives

LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE LIBRARY State Information Systems Project

An Inventory of Its Records

OVERVIEW OF THE RECORDS

Agency:	Minnesota. Legislature. Legislative Reference Library. State Information Systems Project.
Series Title:	Records,
Dates:	1982-1992.
Quantity:	2.0 cu. ft. (2 boxes).
Location:	126.C.8.9B – 126.C.8.10F

ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY OF THE STATE INFORMATION SYSTEMS PROJECT

The State Information Systems Project [SISP] was established by the Minnesota Legislature in 1983 [Laws 1983, c301, sec57] and assigned to the Legislative Reference Library. The goal of the project was to create a directory of information databases, both automated and manual, used by state agencies. The hope was that SISP would reduce costs, improve communication among agencies, and permit more efficient use of resources and personnel. SISP would minimize duplication by allowing agencies to share data and databases, as well as information about hardware, software, and other equipment. Fees for consultants, who often had been used in the past to locate data as well as recommend computer systems, could be greatly reduced and even eliminated.

SISP personnel began the project by contacting each agency and requesting that they designate one person as a liaison to SISP. The liaison was intended to be a person familiar with that agency's records as well as with computers, and was to be responsible for filling out SISP inventory forms and returning them to SISP. Staff at the SISP office then would enter the data from the forms into the SISP database.

Each record within the database contained the agency name and division, brief content description of the database, subjects covered, geographic area covered, publications resulting from the database, hardware and software used, location of database, funding sources, and contact person. It was hoped that queries by subject, agency name, and geographic area would be the most helpful and widely used.

One result of SISP's activities was a microfiche publication of the database in June 1985, as well as two other publications on county data (1986) and on Minnesota business and industry (1988). The Legislative Reference Library continued to maintain, edit, and update the SISP database until 1992 when it was transferred to the Information Policy Office of the Department of Administration. A team was established to evaluate the usefulness of SISP and report its findings to the Legislature and the Commissioner of Administration. They concluded that, while many of SISP's goals were valid public policy, SISP was not being used as an information management tool since it did not contain data requested by most users. SISP's effectiveness as an information locator, though not a primary goal, also was seriously flawed. As a result of this evaluation report, the 1993 Legislature did not renew funding for SISP.

SCOPE AND CONTENTS OF THE RECORDS

The records contain both administrative files and agency files. The administrative files, arranged alphabetically, include correspondence with legislators and other interested people, internal staff memoranda, budget information (brief), and procedure manuals and definitions used by SISP staff. There are also periodic status reports and publications produced from the SISP database. The agency file, though somewhat repetitive in content, do document the interaction between each individual agency and SISP staff.

INDEX TERMS

These records are indexed under the following headings in the catalog of the Minnesota Historical Society. Researchers desiring materials about related topics, persons or places should search the catalog using these headings.

Topics:

Information services and state--Minnesota.

Information storage and retrieval systems—Executive departments—Minnesota.

Places:

Minnesota—Information services.

Organizations:

Minnesota. Dept. of Administration. Information Policy Office.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

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See the Chicago Manual of Style for additional examples.

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DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE RECORDS

Note to Researchers: To request materials, please note both the location and box numbers shown below.

Administrative Files, 1982-1992.

Location	Box	
126.C.8.9B	1	Budget, FY 1982-1987. Correspondence: Legislators and staff, 1983-1992. Other, excluding agencies, 1985-1992. Evaluation Report, November 1992 Written by the Information Policy Office, Dept. of Administration. Feist, Linda (LRL director's files): October 1983 - July 1984. August - December 1984. 1985-1986. General information on SISP, 1982-1992. Informational brochures, [undated]. Memos: 1982-1986. 1987-1992. Procedures and definitions: Definition of an Information System, [undated]. Directory Manual, [undated]. Forms used, 1982-1992. Instructions for Information System Inventory Form, [undated]. Procedures, 1985-1988. Procedures Manual, [undated]. State agencies (lists), 1986-1991. State Information Project Directory Plan, July 1984. Subject categories, 1986-1992. Providing Access to Government Data Valuable to Policy-Making Process, [ca. 1987]. Publications and articles: Information Resources Management in Minnesota, [ca. 1985]. Directory of State of Minnesota Information Systems (microfiche), June 1985. County Data: A Guide. December 1986. Minnesota Business and Industry Information Guide, June 1988.

Administrative Files (cont.):

Location	Box	
126.C.8.9B	1(cont.)	Status Reports: August 1988 - April 1992. Monthly. 1984-1990. Statutes concerning SISP, 1983-1990. University Computer Center, 1984-1986.

Agency Files, 1982-1992.

Location	Box	
126.C.8.9B	1(cont.)	Abstractors Board - Harmful Substance Compensation Board. 52 folders.
126.C.8.10F	2	Health Department - Zoological Garden.