

Appendix C: Trustworthy Information Systems Project Methodology

Work on the Trustworthy Information Systems project got fully underway in March 1998 and advanced in two stages, culminating in the production of this handbook.

The first phase consisted of researching and compiling the criteria set. A wide range of sources concerned with legal, audit, records management, and archival requirements and standards were surveyed (refer to Section 11, *Bibliography*). Common items of concern in each area came together in the criteria set, which stands within the particular framework of Minnesota's laws and policies.

Once the criteria set was in draft form, attention turned to field testing with respect to actual government information systems (refer to *Appendix F*). Over the course of the testing phase, the set was applied to five different systems. In each case, State Archives staff met with agency personnel knowledgeable about the particular system under scrutiny and led the examination process. One State Archives staff member walked the group, item-by-item, through the criteria while another transcribed the interview information into a chart on a laptop computer. Participants were queried as to whether each criterion was considered important and whether it was currently implemented or planned for future implementation. With each system, the criteria set was supplemented with general questions relevant to that particular function and/or agency. Results were shared with each agency for review and comment as well as for its own internal use.

The findings from the testing phase formed the basis for the formalized process for determining the trustworthiness of information systems presented in this handbook. As the criteria set is applied to more systems, State Archives staff anticipate that the examination process will be refined and that new versions of the handbook will be released as necessary. Additionally, the criteria set will be revised and updated as appropriate to maintain its currency. With the Handbook online, State Archives staff will cease to take such an active role in the examination process, although they will continue to be available for consultation.