

THE DOCUMENT CONTROL TRIBUNE

Issue no. 12 - March 2017



**RETENTION OF RECORDS:
DO YOU KNOW YOUR OBLIGATIONS?**

SPECIAL FEATURE

**WHAT DOES YOUR BOSS
EXPECT FROM YOU?**





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EDITORIAL

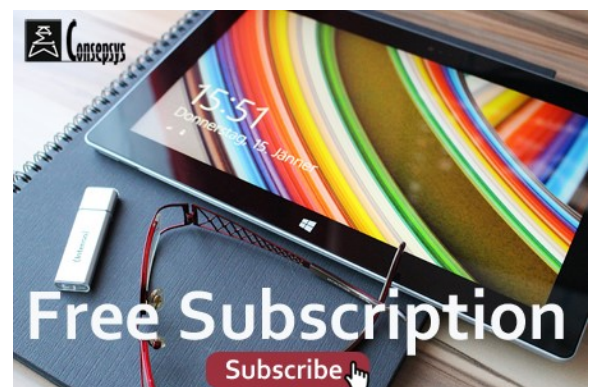
In this special issue, we cover a key concern of Document Control professionals: what do their managers expect from them? How to ensure that their expectations are met? The first step is about understanding their point of view.

To that end, we have interviewed various managers of Document Control professionals, from various industries, countries, companies and we have asked them what they expect from their team.

We have also asked them why they think that Document Control is important and how it contributes to the success of their company.

As an important building block of a business or an organisation, Document Control holds a responsibility to understand its core activities and to ensure that DC activities and practices are aligned with its overall objectives.

Earning respect from team leaders, managers and organisations requires that Document Control professionals step up to the same standard of professionalism as that of their interfaces, such as engineers, scientists, pilots and architects, just to name a few.



RETENTION OF RECORDS: DO YOU KNOW YOUR OBLIGATIONS?

Document Control and Records Management are sister disciplines: they are from the same family, but each of them is different (in terms of scope, role, focus, and processes).

The Document Control discipline does however share a common challenge with Records Management: determining the retention time and means required for the records of the company.

What's a record?

A record is "a piece of evidence about the past, especially a written or other permanent account".

In the Document Control profession, the usual types of records that we manage are documents (including drawings, management documents, technical documents, contractual documents etc.).

How long should we keep the company's documents?

The question is simple and recurrent. However, there is unfortunately not one single answer to that. The truth is... it depends!

It depends on a variety of factors, but the first one being the country (and sometimes the state inside the country) where the company is based and/or operates.

Every country has a different legislation, and this means that every country has different requirements; in terms of duration but also in terms of type of record to be kept, and format.

Other influencing factors include the category of documents (financial records, technical documentation, contracts, etc.), the industry (some industries are more regulated than others e.g. pharmaceutical, aviation, military, nuclear, etc.) as well as the culture and the processes of the company itself.

The level of complexity (and risks of non-compliance) is high, and the best go-to person to ask about it in a company is the legal department / lawyer of the company.

Should we keep the paper copy of a document, if we have the electronic version of it?

Here again, it is important to check the specific requirements applicable in each situation. However, more and more countries are accepting electronic records in lieu of paper copies for most documents (it is even easier in this case to state which ones have to be retained in paper copies, than those who can be kept in either format).

"Should we keep the paper copy of a document, if we have the electronic version of it?"

For example, HMRC (UK's tax organisation) accepts electronic copies (or scanned copies) of companies receipts and evidence. In this case, no need to keep the paper copy in addition to the electronic copy, as long as the electronic files are safe and backed up.

Is it safer to keep electronic copies instead of hardcopies?

When thinking about this, most of us will think that it is safer indeed to have documents in an electronic format as opposed to the hardcopy, because paper can easily be destroyed by fire, water, wind etc.

And it is true that, if you only have a hard copy of a document, once it is lost or destroyed, it is

lost forever. But it does not necessarily mean that, automatically, because it's an electronic document, this kind of damages cannot occur. Indeed, electronic documents are stored on servers. And a server can also be damaged by fire or flood.

So the only way to make sure that your documents are really safe is to ensure that your company has a good back up strategy (with servers in separate locations for example), with on-time replication as well as a disaster recovery strategy.

Who's job is it to take care of that?

Unfortunately, in many companies, the level of awareness on these sub-

jects is very low and oftentimes no one really owns this process.

The Document Control group is one of the stakeholders though, and therefore they should be involved in the process definition and implementation.

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THE 2017 SALARY SURVEY ANALYSIS REPORT IS OUT!

The ConsepSys Salary Survey for Document Control professionals is a survey conducted by ConsepSys and open to all Document Control professionals (all industries, countries, experience levels).

The survey runs every year, and it aims at proposing a useful tool for Document Control Professionals around the world, especially when it comes to negotiating salary, benefits or career evolution. Or it can simply be useful to benchmark oneself within the professionals of the same industry, country or experience.

ConsepSys gathers analysis data on the salary levels but also on experience, work environment, typical tasks, compensation levels and compositions, benefits, etc.

By design, ConsepSys wanted to have a study with no barriers: no barrier of country, industry, language, etc. It is itself a challenge, as this means that we need to gather as many contributions from as many different people as possible so that the survey could bring value to as many Document Control professionals in the world.

This year, ConsepSys has run the data gathering part of the salary survey from the 27th of October 2016 to the 25th of January 2017. Calls for contributions were widely communicated through mailing campaigns & social networks. We have also been able to rely on great efforts from the community of Document Control Professionals to spread the word around them.

Who contributed?

We received 694 contributions to the survey. Out of these 694, 587 were complete and could be used for the survey. This represents an increase of 40% on contributions compared to last year's survey. That shows just how much the community of Document Control professionals is mobilized behind the ConsepSys survey.

Participants from 50 countries contributed to the survey.

What does the full report contain?

After the data gathering phase, ConsepSys mobilized their team to work on the analysis of the data. As you know data in itself brings little value. It needs to be analysed and re-

ported to make sense and bring value.

The result of the analysis of data is a [40-page report](#), that was published at the end of February 2017 and includes:



Average salary, salary per country, salary per industry, salary per job title, types of jobs, typical bonuses & benefits, factors that have an impact on the salary, etc.

Thanks to numerous contributions from specific countries, ConsepSys was also able to include a special additional one-page focus on data for: United Kingdom, United States, Euro zone countries, United Arab Emirates, Malaysia, Singapore, Qatar and Saudi Arabia.

How can it be useful?

Along the years we have received many testimonies on how useful the survey report is, and we are committed to continuing supporting the community of Document Control Professionals in their personal development as well as career evolution.

Readers of the ConsepSys Salary Survey have reported that it helps them in many different areas, including negotiating salary and benefits, seeing how they could improve their profile, preparing a career move to different industries or different countries, planning a career evolution or comparing with others.

It is also used by HR departments and recruitment agencies to benchmark and gather data for recruitment and most importantly retention of talented professionals.

The 2017 Salary Survey Report for Document Control Professionals is available for download on ConsepSys website at www.consepSys.com/salary

DC Salary Survey Report

Download



Special Feature

WHAT DOES YOUR BOSS EXPECT FROM YOU?

For this special feature, we have investigated and asked various managers of Document Controllers what they expect from their team and how Document Control fits into the Company.

Document Control is critical to most companies: protection of companies' interests, traceability, collaboration, information sharing, retrieval of documents and data, protection of critical information, company reputation, regulatory and contractual compliance and protection... are all excellent reasons why Document Control can be vital to a business.

But are Document Controllers aware of what their boss expects from them? How to ensure that you meet your manager's expectations?

Providing a service to the business

Document Control is a service function as much as a control function. In this frame, managers often expect from their team the qualities of a service provider. Hazel, who is Information Management Coordinator in an Energy & Services company in the UK said that she expects her Document Controllers to be "hard working, diligent, helpful, flexible and pro-active".

Hazel also told us that one of the qualities that she expects is the understanding of the Company's assets. And this is an important point, that has been stressed by many managers.

Mark, for example, who is Quality Manager in Singapore, and in charge of a team of a Document Controllers, explained that his best Document Controllers are "those who understand the business of the Company, and who pro-actively propose solutions based on best practices to tackle the specific challenges of the Company".

Every Company is specific, and a good Document Controller knows how to adapt his/her practices to the specifics of the Company while ensuring DC best practices are protected.

Compliance-oriented and good gatekeeper

But Document Control is much more than a clerical position,

and its value to the business is not only a support / service one, but is directly linked to the protection of the Company's assets and interests: by ensuring that the critical documentation and information of the company is safe, filed, checked, registered, traceable and put through the companies gated processes, Document Control ensures that the assets are protected and that, in case of a safety and / or legal incident we are able to provide evidence and information on the incident.

John, who is Document Control Manager in the aviation industry in the US, told us how critical Document Control has been in the past: "Within a few hours, we were able to provide flight and pilot records to the authorities. Without Document Control we would have never been able to provide the right information in such a short amount of time".

This is also why, when talking to different managers, the words "discipline", "knowledge of the rules", "compliance", "gatekeeping" comes also so often in the discussion.

A vital discipline

Throughout the interviews that we ran with various managers of Document Controllers, we were glad to see how important Document Control is to them and the companies they represent. This awareness goes a long way in the promotion of our discipline, throughout industries, countries and companies.

Top 5 expectations from Managers of Document Controllers

1. **Service-Oriented**
2. **Pro-Activeness**
3. **Quality Mindset**
4. **Knowledge of Best Practices**
5. **Compliance**

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Special Feature

MEET A MANAGER OF DOCUMENT CONTROLLERS



JOSEPH ADEBOYE

Business Integration IM Manager
at Sakhalin Energy Investment Company Ltd.

Joseph tells us how important Document Control is and what he expects from his Document Control team

Can you tell us a bit about you?

I have an honours Bachelor's Degree in Electronics and Computer Engineering (B. Eng Hons) and a Master's in Business Administration (MBA).

I have been in the Oil & Gas industry since 1992 in various roles ranging from core IT/IM to business interface in subsurface and production engineering.

I have also worked in several countries – Nigeria, United Kingdom, Netherlands and Russia.

What is your current role?

I am the Business Integration IM* Manager. I am responsible for managing Projects Information for my company.

I manage a team of IM* Leads, Document and Data Controllers.

The team specifies and controls information (documents and data) during the project phase, and ensures handover of the same to Asset Operations without quality degradation, at the end

of the project. We also feed DC resources into capital projects.

How does Document Control fit into your department / company (reporting lines)?

Document Controllers report through IM* Leads and the IM* Manager into the Projects Engineering Manager, who in turn reports to the Production Director.

Why is Document Control important to your company?

How do Document Controllers contribute to protecting the interests of your company?

Document Control enables the company to demonstrate compliance with regulatory requirements, which can have an impact on our licence to operate.

It also ensures that asset information can be trusted by operations and that assets can be operated safely by managing the process that evergreens this information with every project activity.

It prevents costly reworks in plant modification activities by ensuring that new designs are based on high-quality information.

What is the scope of Document Control under your responsibility?

All Brownfield projects design documents – number allocation, review and approval; vendor documents review and approval for internal procurement; storage/archiving for contractor-sourced ones; processing all red-line-marked-up documents for as-building.

What qualities do you expect of a Document Controller?

Discipline, knowledge of the rules and firmness in enforcing them.

Diligence and thoroughness – avoiding mistakes – and ability to communicate effectively with a wide range of stakeholders.

Some understanding of project engineering processes.

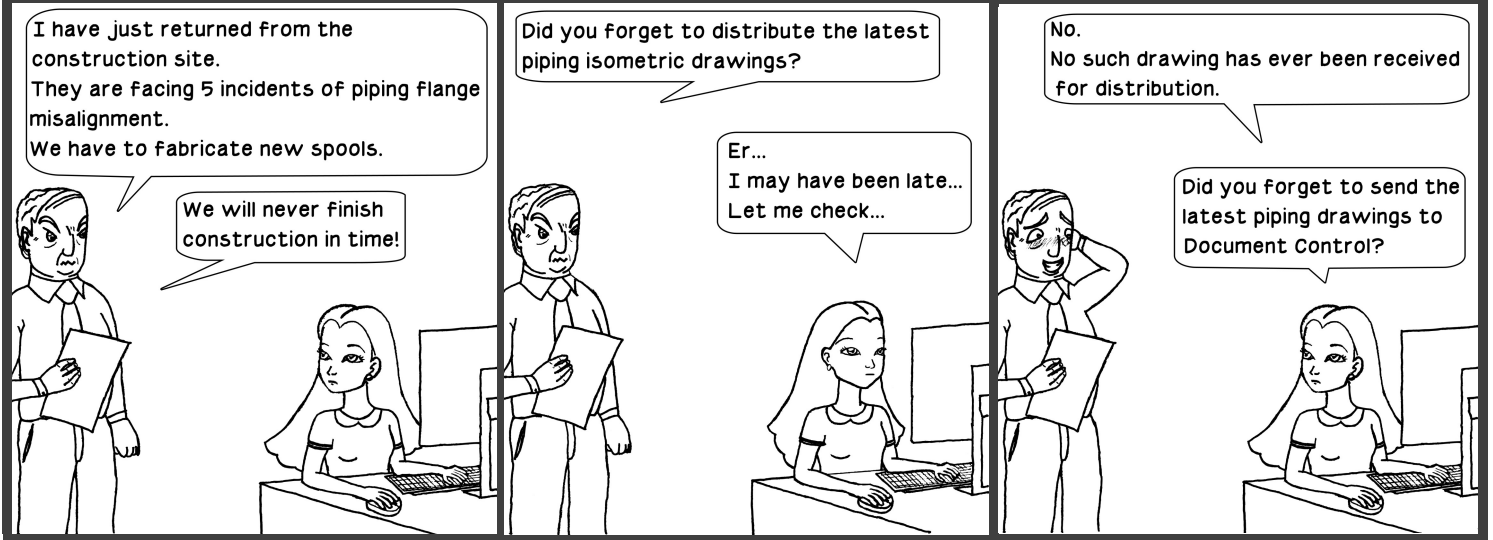
* IM: Information Management

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“Hanging in there” with **D. Ceecee** - the Document Controller by Tuffmee

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PORTRAIT OF A DOCUMENT CONTROLLER



JESUS RODRIGUEZ

Laboratory Support Specialist Technician in Avista Pharma in Agawam, Massachusetts, USA

Jesus attended the Certified Document Controller Course with ConsepSys in Houston in December 2016.

Can you tell us a bit about you?

My name is Jesus Rodriguez, I am a 23 years old Puerto Rican, living in Massachusetts. I have been working for Avista Pharma for almost 2 years.

I grew up in Juana Diaz, Puerto Rico and moved to the USA in 2010 pursuing educational opportunities. During this time, I graduated high school and started my college career in Religion and Business Administration at Liberty University Online (Class of 2018).

During my spare time, I like to write, go to the movies, and honestly sleep!

I am an author, a speaker, and a Certified Document Controller!

What is your current role?

I recently transitioned from being Document Control Specialist, so my current role at Avista Pharma is "Laboratory Support Specialist Technician".

During my time as Document Control, I was responsible for collecting "Certificates of Analysis" from our laboratories. Jointly with our Quality Department, we would perform Quality checks and ensure that the data generated was accurate.

We also performed internal audits, issued Quality event documentation, assigned controlled information to individuals and departments and spear-

headed a 7-year purge of controlled documents.

Can you describe your professional experience?

I am presently pursuing a Bachelor's Degree in Religion and Business Administration at Liberty University.

I have worked with non-profit organizations, and retail industries prior to being hired at Avista Pharma in 2015.

Which ConsepSys course did you attend and when?

I completed the Certified Document Controller course provided by ConsepSys on their 2016 class in Houston, Texas.

"The course shed some amazing insight on the do's and don'ts. Back at work, I was able to revise our procedures and establish a better and more effective way to keep our data integrity"

In the beginning of 2016, I expressed to my supervisor the desire to expand my knowledge on my field and presented the proposal for me to be part of this course.

I was informed that I could pursue this opportunity to learn more about the position and to bring back information to better our systems and department.

What did you think about the course? How did it help you in your current role and career development?

After successfully completing the course, I went back home and was able to have a better understanding of my role and importance on my position.

This course shed some amazing insight on the do's and don'ts and I was able to communicate with our team, revise procedures and establish a better and more effective way to keep our data integrity.

During my transition, I was able to impart the information I learned to my "protégé" and was able to leave a leg-

acy in the Document Control department.

This course has helped me achieve my goal and bring our quality to a new level. It also allowed me to be moved to a new position to implement the same knowledge and quality!

Thank you ConsepSys!

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BACK TO BASICS: WHAT IS A DOCUMENT?

It may sound obvious or very simple. But then, the more you talk to different people, the more you understand that they have different perceptions and sometimes different definitions.

Using the correct terminology for concepts and day to day elements is the first step to improving Document Control practices and to communicate around them, across companies, industries, countries.

Our discipline, the Document Control profession, is all about 'controlling documents'. So let's focus for a minute on the basics here: What is a document?

The definition of a document is "a piece of written, printed, or electronic matter that provides information or evidence or that serves as an official record".

So the definition clarifies a few elements:

- A printed document is a document, and so is an electronic document
- A document provides information or evidence
- A document can be used as an official record (see [our article on 'Retention of Records'](#))
- The definition is large and does not restrict the type of information contained in a document.

To clarify even further, there are different **categories** of documents. For example, management documents, technical reports, construction drawings, design documents, correspondence, letters, contracts etc., all fall under the definition of what is a document.

We sometimes happen to hear things such as: "OK, so that's how we manage a document. What about for a drawing?".

Although it is understandable where the question comes from (the **process** for a management document sometimes differs from that of a drawing), it is important to understand that from the Document Control stand point, a drawing is a document.

And as such, the drawing must comply with Document Control rules (for example, it must bear a number, it must be registered, it must be identifiable, it must show revision index, date, and status, etc.), exactly as other categories of documents must comply with it too.

Obviously, this concept can be deepened with other concepts, such as those of 'controlled documents', 'document category' and 'processes'.

To find more Document Control Definitions, we recommend the '[Glossary of Document Control Terms](#)'

JULIE TCHAO

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