

*Case Study*

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# Western Sydney Records.

Records success with Government.



“The Records Management Team has gained industry respect for it's depth of knowledge and for providing innovative solutions.”

Dexion's recently released Ultima™ shelving range will be playing a key role in ensuring vital NSW government records will be securely stored for at least the next 40 years.

This Australian-developed and manufactured storage product was manufactured at Dexion's Kings Park manufacturing facility.

Western Sydney Records Centre is a Government Records Repository (GRR) responsible for storing and managing records on behalf of the NSW state government, Government departments, local councils, schools and hospitals.

In June this year, State Records' \$18.64 million Stage 6 building at Kingswood, in Western Sydney, was handed over.

According to Associate Director, John Burke, the records centre provides a central warehousing function for the NSW Government.

“We provide a central warehousing function here, managing 2 million boxes - and we have to ensure they are stored and retrieved in the most efficient manner.”

The Kingswood site, which is an hour's drive west of the Sydney CBD, has been operating for 30 years; in that time, approximately every two years there has been a significant extension to the facility to cater for the increased number of records it has to hold.

The latest Stage 6 building was handed over on June 23 on budget and on time.

Its commissioning brings the total floor area of the site to 50,000 square metres with total storage capacity equivalent to 485,000 linear metres.

The storage capacity of Stage 6 is 760,000 Type 1 boxes, the equivalent of 137,000 linear metres, and which has increased on-site storage capacity by nearly 40%. This capacity is projected to meet the storage needs of GRR clients for the next five years.

Dexion has been involved in four of the recent extensions, providing a different solution each time. Some time ago Dexion recognised the need for a team that



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specialised in records and archive storage. Under the management of Mark Barraclough, National Business Development Manager, the Records Management Team has gained industry respect for its depth of knowledge and for providing innovative solutions.

“This is the fourth major installation that Dexion has been involved with, so over the years they have developed a good understanding of our business and our specific requirements,” said Burke.

“We rely on them to proactively contribute on how the storage element of the business can work more efficiently and how we can continue to drive greater occupational health and safety initiatives through the organisation.”

For example, while previous extensions have been based on a two floor design, the Stage 6 building comprises three floors and uses low-level shelving.

This means that most staff are able to access all shelves without the use of ladders, which were identified as an occupational health and safety risk.

This approach, combined with the new computerised repository management system (RS-SQL), should result in significant efficiency savings and lower staff costs, said Bourke.

For Dexion, Stage 6 was the first major project for its recently released Ultima shelving range, which was manufactured on Dexion’s newly installed production line at its Australian manufacturing facility.

The shelves had to be specially designed and manufactured to a dimension of 900mm wide by 800mm deep to handle the dimensions of the Type 1 storage boxes. The flexibility of the new production line makes this type of ‘tailor made’ solution possible.

Prior to placing the order samples of the new shelf were thoroughly tested by the records centre, to ensure the system was capable of coping with the load carrying claims made by Dexion.

A total 70,000 shelves were installed each with a 60 micron thick powder coat to meet

the Records Centre’s requirements that shelving cope with day to day wear and tear for at least the next 40 years.

Chequer plate has been added to the end of each line of shelving as reinforcement and to provide additional buffers for the picker trolleys.

“Strategically, we can’t view the role of this facility in the short term; when we design and construct, we have to think in terms of 40 or 50 year windows,” said Burke.

“That’s why it took three years to design and develop Stage 6”.

Compared with earlier stages at the Records Centre, Stage 6 includes a number of improvements:

- Architectural enhancements relating to the higher use of insulation in the building envelope.
- Use of concrete floors throughout.
- Increased compartmentalisation within storage areas.



- Fitting of a gas fire suppression system, rather than water sprinklers, to minimise the prospects of damage to records.

According to Burke, these changes are positive additions to previous styles and are driven by the need to maximise security, improve climatic stability and reduce future maintenance costs.

In addition, government requirements that agencies favour options using longer-term building life-cycle costings have provided strategies useful to State Records, although these have increased initial capital outlay.