



## AL3068 - The Verne Harris Collection

Call Number: AL3068  
Title: The Verne Harris Collection  
SubTitle:  
Creator: Inventory prepared by Ethel Kriger, October 2004; updated by Esmerelda Dirks, August 2006  
Origination: TRC Archive Project  
Inclusive Dates: 1996-2002  
Bulk Dates:  
Extent: 0.2 linear metres (2 archival boxes)  
Language: English  
Acquisition: Accession Number: 04-010  
Access Restrictions: This collection is open for research  
Use Restrictions: Copyright restrictions may apply. See SAHA copyright statement for Use Restrictions.  
Copyright: Finding Aid: © The South African History Archive (SAHA)  
Abstract: Verne Harris was Deputy-Director: Planning, Coordination and Transformation of the National Archives of South Africa. He was the official liaison between the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and the National Archives as a function of his portfolio. Harris was Director of the South African History Archive (SAHA) from 2001 to 2004.

### Introduction

Verne Harris generated the records that constitute this collection in the period from 1996 to 2002.

They effectively document three areas of his involvement with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).

However, five discrete groups of records make up the collection.

First of all, as Deputy-Director: Planning, Coordination and Transformation of the National Archives of South Africa, Harris was the official liaison between the TRC and the National Archives as a function of his portfolio. This responsibility required of him to drive the necessary processes for the transfer of the TRC archive from its various offices to the custody of the National Archives.

The records that document this function include

Proposals for an appropriate documentation classification system

Proposals for management, transfer and control of TRC records

Discussions and proposals relating to the management of the electronic records of the TRC

Discussions with the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) relating to the video archives of the TRC

Secondly, in August 1997 the TRC established a Joint Committee to investigate the destruction of records by the National Intelligence Service (NIS) and other government civilian intelligence bodies, the former Department of Prison Services and the Security Branch of the South African Police (SAP).

The Joint Committee comprised representatives of the TRC, the National Intelligence Agency (NIA), the South African Secret Service (SASS), the South African Human Rights Commission and the National Archives. The Joint Committee met to receive written reports, briefings and verbal reports from identified key role-players.

The committee also conducted on-site inspections of records and records management facilities of the various agencies under investigation. Harris represented the National Archives, seconded to that position by the then serving National Archivist, Marie Olivier.

The Joint Committee completed its investigation in March 1998. Apart from the completed reports on the destruction of official records by the bodies under investigation, this group of records includes

The case of Brian Currin vs. the State President and Others in the matter of the unlawful destruction of state records (1993)

Submission by the South African Society of Archivists to the Minister of Justice recommending the investigation of the illegal destruction of state records (1995).



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Thirdly, Harris was employed by the TRC in 1998 as an outside researcher to write its report on the destruction of state records by the security establishment. Harris' report 'The Destruction of Records' is included in Volume 1 Chapter 8 of the Final Report of 1998.

He also formulated the recommendations pertaining to the archiving of the Commission's materials and public access to them, as well as to the implementation of archival legislation to prevent future unauthorized and illegal destruction of records.

These recommendations are to be found in Volume 5 Chapter 8 of the Final Report of 1998. The records that document the process of Harris' writing this report include amongst others

Minutes of meetings pertinent to the contents of the report

Newspaper article on the destruction of state records

Statutes and archival (disposal) policies relevant to the report

The final report in various stages of editing.

Harris' concern with making the archives of the TRC as widely accessible as possible is documented in the correspondence on the proposal for the digitization of the TRC archive. The ensuing records constitute the fourth group of records.

Finally, a number of largely unrelated records document the recognition of the TRC-related expertise that Harris had developed during the years that he was involved in TRC processes.

### Notes

Materials collected from TRC Archival Audit.

#### The TRC Archival Audit

SAHA and Historical Papers, University of Witwatersrand have embarked on a project to locate and retrieve records relating to the Truth and Reconciliation Committee (TRC). The project entailed conducting an archival audit of all existing TRC records in order to identify and locate documentation in danger of being lost.

In the process of conducting the archival audit, SAHA and HP located many collections from individuals and organizations that participated in the TRC process. Selections from these materials as well as TRC related material found in the freedom of Information Collection and other pre-existing SAHA and HP collections, were digitized and can be accessed online at <http://truth.wvl.wits.ac.za/>.

A guide to archival resources relating to South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission can also be found at: [http://truth.wvl.wits.ac.za/trc\\_directory.pdf](http://truth.wvl.wits.ac.za/trc_directory.pdf)

### Classification

- A: THE TRC AND THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES
  - A1: TRC: DOCUMENTATION CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM
  - A2: TRANSFER OF TRC RECORDS TO THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES
  - A3: CORRESPONDENCE WITH SOUTH AFRICAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION (SABC) REGARDING VIDEO ARCHIVES OF THE TRC
  - A4: STATUS OF TRC RECORDS
  - A5: TRANSFER AND MAANGEMENT OF TRC RECORDS
  - A6: DOCUMENTATION RELATING TO THE TRANSFER OF TRC RECORDS TO THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES
  - A7: ELECTRONIC RECORDS SYSTEMS OF THE TRC



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- B: TRC INVESTIGATION INTO THE DESTRUCTION OF RECORDS
  - B1: BRIAN CURRIN vs. THE STATE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA AND OTHERS  
re: THE UNLAWFUL DESTRUCTION OF STATE RECORDS
  - B2: SUBMISSIONS WITH REGARD TO THE PROMOTION OF NATIONAL UNITY AND RECONCILIATION  
BILL
- C: DRAFTING OF THE REPORT ON THE DESTRUCTION OF RECORDS
  - C1: MATERIALS UPON WHICH 'INTRODUCTION' IS BASED
  - C2: DOCUMENTATION ON THE THEME OF THE LAW AND MANAGEMENT OF STATE RECORDS
  - C3: DOCUMENTATION UPON WHICH AN ANALYSIS OF THE DESTRUCTION OF STATE RECORDS BY  
THE SECURITY ESTABLISHMENT IS BASED
  - C4: DOCUMENTATION USED FOR GAINING AN OVERVIEW OF THE DESTRUCTION OF STATE  
RECORDS
  - C5: MATERIALS FOR THE ANALYSIS OF THE DESTRUCTION OF STATE RECORDS
  - C6: OUTLINE OF REPORT
  - C7: DRAFT FINAL REPORT. FULL TEXT
  - C8: THE DESTRUCTION OF RECORDS
  - C9: RECOMMENDATIONS
  - C10: VOLUME ONE CHAPTER EIGHT
  - C11: CORRECTED COPY
- D: DIGITIZATION OF THE TRC ARCHIVE
- E: MISCELLANEOUS

### Inventory

- A: The TRC and the National Archives
  - A1: Documentation classification system
    - A1.1: Transparencies of the documentation classification system of the TRC
    - A1.2: List of main files/directories; list of sub-files/sub-directories No date
    - A1.3: Records control schedule No date
    - A1.4: Verne Harris: Managing Information Resources in the NGO Sector: Basic Principles. Article exploring the  
core elements of approach to information management No date
    - A1.5: Correspondence re: State Archives visit to Cape Town TRC offices for seminar of 4 ? 5 November 1996  
[5 November 1996]
    - A1.6: Draft proposal for TRC document classification, management, transfer and controls. Submitted by  
Shanaaz Isaacs. 1999/06  
[1999]
  - A2: Transfer of TRC records to National Archives
    - A2.1: Memo recommending a visit to all TRC offices by representatives of the National Archives to discuss  
classification to facilitate transfer, 1996/10/04  
[96/10/04]
    - A2.2: Minutes of planning meeting for transfer of TRC records, 1997/11/04  
[97/11/04]
    - A2.3: Correspondence re: transfer of TRC records to National Archives, 13 March to 8 April 1998  
[8 April 1998]
    - A2.4: Position paper: Truth and Reconciliation Commission records: custody and access, Date of fax  
transmission: 30 April 1998  
[30 April 1998]



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- A2.5: Report: 'Records of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission' by Trudy Huskamp Peterson, 1998/07/11  
[98/07/11]
- A3: Transfer of records from SABC
  - A3.1: Handwritten notes relating to transfer, No date
  - A3.2: Correspondence re: video archives about TRC hearings 1997/04  
[1997]
  - A3.3: Circular within Directorate of National Archives: Report on meeting between National Archives and SABC re: SABC TRC records, 1997/07/12  
[97/07/12]
  - A3.4: Correspondence re: SABC documentation of TRC processes 1997/07/24  
[97/07/24]
  - A3.5: Submission to Head of Repository: TRC videotapes, 1998/11/27  
[98/11/27]
- A4: Status of TRC records
  - A4.1: Status of TRC Records: Account to CEO, 1999/03  
[1999]
- A5: Transfer and management of TRC records
  - A5.1: Submission to members of Directorate of National Archives: 'Managing the records of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission' 1999/03/31  
[99/03/31]
  - A5.2: E-mail correspondence with H-Net re: project to assist with the effective processing and use of the TRC archive, 1999/04/26  
[99/04/26]
  - A5.3: Proposed agenda for meeting: TRC and National Archives, 1999/06/09  
[99/06/09]
  - A5.4: Documents relating to training of staff tasked with preparing the TRC records for transfer to the National Archives, 1999/06/24  
[99/06/24]
  - A5.5: Correspondence between National Archivist and CEO of TRC re: 'sensitive' records of TRC, 29 June to 13 July 1999 AND 10 March 2000  
[13 July 1999]
  - A5.6: Correspondence re: preparation of transfer modalities and access guidelines for TRC records, 2000/03/20  
[00/03/20]
  - A5.7: Confirmation of correspondence of 20 March 2000  
[20 March 2000]
  - A5.8: Status report of the TRC records (2000) and a proposal relating to access to all intellectual assets under the control of the Documentation Centre of the TRC for the information of the Directorate of National Archives, 2000/09/06  
[00/09/06]
- A6: Documentation relating to the transfer of TRC records
  - A6.1: Incomplete list of TRC records at Cape Town TRC office, 2000/06/05  
[00/06/05]
  - A6.2: Schedule of tasks relating to preparations for the transfer of TRC records to the National Archives completed between 15 May and 2 June 2000  
[2 June 2000]
  - A6.3: List of records of East London Group 3, 2000 (?)



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[2000]

### A7: Electronic records of the TRC

- A7.1: Notes on discussion with Manager: TRC Information Systems on the archival management of the TRC's electronic records, 1997/12/03  
[97/12/03]
- A7.2: Minutes of discussion with TRC regarding the preservation of electronic records systems, 1999/08/16  
[99/08/16]
- A7.3: Submission to the Director-General of the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology from the National Archivist: Archival Preservation of the Electronic Records Systems of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission: Request for Assistance, 1999/08/26  
[99/08/26]
- A7.4: Notification of meeting the company Zyteck re: TRC database, 1999/12/02  
[99/12/02]
- A7.5: Project summary of programme on Information Technology Research. 2001/01/22  
[01/01/22]
- A7.6: Annotated e-mail correspondence re: modalities for TRC electronic records, 2001/01/25  
[01/01/25]
- A7.7: E-mail correspondence with David Wallace, School of Information of the University of Michigan re: assistance with devising an archival strategy for the TRC's electronic records 2001/02  
[2001]
- A7.8: E-mail notes of meeting with D Wallace re: plan of action for archival strategy for electronic records. 2001/02  
[2001]
- A7.9: E-mail: Discussion of electronic records project proposals, 2001/03/10  
[01/03/10]
- A7.10: Wallace's response to project proposals. 2001/03/12  
[01/03/12]
- A7.11: Submission to the Director-General of the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology from the National Archivist: 'Archival Custody of Electronic Records of Truth and Reconciliation Commission: Acceptance of Assistance of Michigan State University and H-Net' requesting authorization of assistance for devising an archival strategy for the TRC electronic records, No date

### B: TRC investigation into the destruction of records

#### B1: Research/support documentation used in investigation

##### B1.1: Brian Currin vs. State President and Others

- B1.1.1: Filing sheet, notice of motion and founding affidavit in the matter between Brian Currin (Applicant) and the State President of the Republic of South Africa (1st Respondent) the Minister of national Education (2nd Respondent), the Director of Archives (3rd Respondent) and the Director-General of the National Intelligence Service (4th Respondent) declaring that official records are beings destroyed otherwise than in accordance with the Archives Act, Number 6 of 1992, 1993  
[1992, 1993]

##### B1.2: Society of Archivists and Ministry of Justice

- B1.2.1: Correspondence between the South African Society of Archivists and the Ministry of Justice regarding a submission on the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Bill with respect to the destruction of official records. 1995/02/16  
[95/02/16]
- B1.2.2: Draft of the submission, No date



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- B1.2.3: Copy of the Bill with comments of the authors of the submission No date
- B2: Reports of the TRC Joint Committee
- B2.1: Final Report of the Joint Committee investigating the destruction of Security Branch (SAP) records. 1997/11  
[1997]
- B2.2: Report of the Joint Committee investigating the destruction of records by the Department of Correctional (formerly Prison) Services 1997/12  
[1997]
- B2.3: Report on the Department of Justice: Directorate: Security Legislation Fax transmission: 10 December 1997  
[10 December 1997]
- B2.4: Final Report of the Joint Committee investigating the destruction of records by the National Intelligence Service (NIS and other government civilian intelligence bodies 1998/03  
[1998]
- C: Drafting of the report on the destruction of records
- C1: Materials upon which the ?Introduction? is based
- C1.1: Destruction of Documents Project; methodological/contextual problems; article :'Public Access to Official Records and the Records Management Function of the South African Archives Service' by Verne Harris
- C2: Documentation on the theme of the Law and the Management of State Records
- C2.1: Archives Act and Regulations; correspondence from the Security Secretariat re: the disposal of sensitive state records; minutes of NICOC meeting held at Embassy House in Pretoria on Monday, 7 August 1995; Protection of Information Act No 84. of 1982; Bureau of State Security Act No. 104 of 1978;  
[7 August 1995]
- C3: Documents used to undertake analysis of the destruction of state records by the Security Establishment
- C3.1: Correspondence re: Management of military records in terms of the Archives Act; Memorandum: The Management of Classified Records: An Overview by M Olivier (1996); correspondence re: destruction of military intelligence records;  
[1996]
- C4: Documentation used for gaining an overview of the destruction of state records
- C4.1: Currin application and settlement; correspondence between Charles Villa-Vicencio of the Research Division of the TRC and Marius Ackermann, Legal Division of the National Intelligence Agency; correspondence relating to the destruction of military intelligence records correspondence (in Afrikaans); correspondence between the National Archives and Home Affairs; articles relating to the disposal of state sensitive documentation; various approaches to disposal authorities and the Archives Act
- C5: Materials used for the analysis on the destruction of state records
- C5.1: Excerpts from articles dealing with the destruction of state records; Transitional Executive Council Act No. 151 of 1993  
[1993]
- C6: TRC Report on the Destruction of Records - An Outline'. (with handwritten notes) No date
- C7: Draft Final Report. Full text (including corrections) as handed in to the TRC by Verne Harris 1998/03/25  
[98/03/25]
- C8: 'The Destruction of Records'. Final proof edited for the TRC 1998/04/20  
[98/04/20]
- C9: Printed copy of 'Volume FIVE Chapter EIGHT. Recommendations' No date
- C10: Printed copy of 'Volume ONE Chapter EIGHT. The Destruction of Records' No date
- C11: Errata: TRC Report on Records Destruction Fax transmission: 10 March 2000



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[10 March 2000]

### D: Proposal for digitization of TRC archive

- D1: Correspondence between Charles Villa-Vicencio, former Director of the TRC Research Unit and Verne Harris, former outside researcher for the TRC requesting that Harris draws up a proposal for the digitization of TRC records. Attached: correspondence in that regard with Alex Boraine, 2001/03/16  
[01/03/16]
- D2: Correspondence between Charles Villa-Vicencio, former Director of the TRC Research Unit and Alex Boraine, former Deputy-Chairperson of the TRC re: proposal for the digitization of TRC records attached to the request to Harris to draw up a proposal 2000/04/18  
[00/04/18]
- D3: E-mail confirmation of request 2001/03/19  
[01/03/19]
- D4: 'Facilitating a Centre of Memory: A Proposal for the Digitization of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Archive' by Verne Harris 2001/05/01  
[01/05/01]

### E: Miscellaneous

- E1: Copy of Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act No. 34 of 1995  
[1995]
- E2: Report: Records of the TRC by Trudy Huskamp Peterson. Contents: 1998/07/11  
[98/07/11]
  - E2.1: Access policy
  - E2.2: Archival considerations
  - E2.3: Other issues
- E3: E-mail correspondence with History Workshop of the University of the Witwatersrand re: invitation to participating in a conference on the TRC. 5 - 6 July 1999  
[5 - 6 July 1999]
- E4: TRC statement on status of its progress with regard to amnesty, reparation and rehabilitation, human rights violations and legal assistance. 1999/12/09  
[99/12/09]
- E5: Request for access to database of the TRC to obtain lists for the South African Stress and Health Study (SASH), 2000  
[2000]
- E6: 'TRC papers moved amid tight security'. Article in Mail & Guardian by Marianne Merten, October 26 to November 1 2001  
[November 1 2001]
- E7: E-mail correspondence re: publication of Harris? article on TRC 2002/04/29  
[02/04/29]
- E8: Presentation: 'Remembering, Forgetting and the TRC Archive' by Verne Harris. No date