

PRINCIPLES & GUIDELINES FOR RECORDING, DOCUMENTATION AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT OF THE BUILT CULTURAL HERITAGE

François LeBlanc, Head, Field Projects
The Getty Conservation Institute
1200 Getty Center Drive Suite 700
Los Angeles, California 90049-1684
www.getty.edu/conservation - fleblanc@getty.edu

KEY WORDS

PRINCIPLES, GUIDELINES, HANDBOOK, RECORDING, DOCUMENTATION

ABSTRACT

RecorDIM (**Recording, Documentation and Information Management**) is an international 5-year (2002-07) partnership between heritage conservation organizations or institutions working together to bridge the gaps that currently exist between the **information users** (researchers, conservation specialists of all trades, project managers, planners etc.) and the **information providers** (photographers, heritage recorders, photogrammetrists, surveyors, etc.). The founding partners of this initiative are ICOMOS, CIPA Heritage Documentation and the Getty Conservation Institute. More than twenty other partners have now joined the initiative.

Twenty-five important gaps between users and providers of documentation were identified by a group of experts meeting in Los Angeles in 2002. Within the framework of this RecorDIM initiative, the Getty Conservation Institute has accepted to tackle the following gaps: 1) the publication of a manual on Principles and Guidelines for the recording, documentation and information management of the built cultural heritage 2) the publication of a Handbook on the same subject 3) the creation and support of a web presence 4) the participation in training activities in this field. This article describes the two publications in preparation.



Participants to the first RecorDIM roundtable, from left to right:

Back Row: Albini Soucy, Mitchell Bishop, Kalandar Kamalkhan, Carolina Castellanos, Paul Box, Paul Bryan, Giora Solar, Françoise Descamps, Shin Maekawa, Mary Hardy, Chris Gray

Front Row: Rand Eppich, Robin Letellier, Jack Vandenberg, Marieke Kipers, Werner Schmid, Peter Waldhaüsl, Blaine Cliver, François LeBlanc, Jovo Grobovsek, Lori Wong

(Not in the photo: Jeanne Marie Teutonico and Gaetano Palumbo)

THE TEAM

The Getty Conservation Institute team for the preparation of the Principles & Guidelines publication is made up of:

Francois LeBlanc, Head, Field Projects

Rand Eppich, Project Specialist

Werner Schmid, Technical Editor, Conservator, Italy

Robin Letellier, Principal Author, Heritage 3D Inc.

Editorial Board: Kate Clark (UK), John Fidler (English Heritage), Giora Solar (ICOMOS), Frank Matero (Penn. Univ.), Alejandro Alva (ICCROM).

BACKGROUND

Good conservation decisions are based on good information.

Art. 16 of the Venice Charter written in 1964 states the importance of precise documentation for all conservation projects.

Article 16.

In all works of preservation, restoration or excavation, there should always be precise documentation in the form of analytical and critical reports, illustrated with drawings and photographs. Every stage of the work of clearing,

consolidation, rearrangement and integration, as well as technical and formal features identified during the course of the work, should be included. This record should be placed in the archives of a public institution and made available to research workers. It is recommended that the report should be published.

Gaps between suppliers and users of documentation were identified at a round-table of experts organized at the Getty Center in Los Angeles during 2002. One of the important gaps acknowledged by the experts is the lack of comprehensive principles and guidelines written specifically for decision makers and heritage site managers.

The Getty Conservation Institute has agreed to tackle this challenge and is preparing a publication that will describe and illustrate these principles and guidelines.

This publication will target decision makers and heritage managers responsible for programs and activities in the field of conservation that need to identify, select and implement documentation strategies for their countries, region, community or site.

It will draw from a manuscript prepared by Robin Letellier, CIPA Heritage Documentation Vice-President and renowned expert in this field, and information pre-published by ICOMOS. It will be illustrated by examples that demonstrate the practical application of a variety of strategies and tools that address specific recording and documentation issues.

The bibliographic research done for the Handbook will serve as a basis for the references to be included in this publication. The publication's format will be A4 in landscape layout and the first draft should be available during the summer of 2005.

PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES PUBLICATION

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- Initiated by CIPA & ICCROM for ICOMOS
- To increase the level of conservation practices at the national and international levels

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- Overview of RecorDIM Capacity Building tools and mechanisms developed to date
- Overview of other outputs from RecorDIM Task Groups:
 - Metric Survey Training Guidelines
 - Monuments Watch Decision Making Tools
 - 'Base-line data' Guidelines for Monitoring WHS
 - GIS for Heritage Sites Management
 - Etc...

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- Working Groups
- Task Groups
- Symposia and workshops
- National Delegates

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Back Matter

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- Overview of existing charters and guidelines
- Internet links

A DOCUMENTATION HANDBOOK

Good Information For Good Conservation

The Getty Conservation Institute Team for the Handbook is made up of:

Rand Eppich, Project Specialist and Technical Editor
Francois LeBlanc, Head, Field Projects
Amel Chabbi, Graduate Intern
Claudia Cancino, Associate Project Specialist

Good conservation decisions are based on good information. Yet information to support decisions that affect the World's cultural heritage is often missing, incomplete, inconsistent, or under-utilized. According to UNESCO officials, more than two-thirds of the monuments on the World Heritage Site list are not adequately documented. In the Arabic-speaking countries of North Africa, only 1 in 12 of the World Heritage Sites have been surveyed. One reason for the lack of reliable and accurate information is a misunderstanding of tools and techniques readily available.

The Getty Conservation Institute is preparing a handbook that will illustrate documentation tools through case studies. This publication will focus on mid-career architects, archaeologists, planners, and managers working in conservation that need to identify and select documentation tools. It will draw from pre-published examples that demonstrate the practical use of a variety of tools that solve specific conservation issues. This collection of examples from around the world will serve as a reference guide to the conservation community.

In research preparation for this handbook the question arose that such a book may already exist; however these publications are often very detailed, lengthy, and limited in scope. These books also use technical terms, have a European or North American focus, and do not always include cultural heritage examples. In addition, a professional would have to collect and maintain an entire library.

Our methodology for the creation of this handbook is based on an extensive literature review that illustrates a wide range of case studies. This review will lead to a final selection of contributors for the handbook. The case studies will be revised and remodeled to fit the specific format of the handbook.

Each example will be presented in four parts. First, the conservation issue will be stated in the form of a compelling question. The history and issues of the site or building will follow. The tool or technique used will be succinctly described in terms of cost, time and level of difficulty without using technical terminology. Finally, the last part will explain how the documentation tool has answered the conservation issue.

The format and layout of the Handbook have been carefully considered to allow busy professionals and field

personnel to quickly draw parallels to their own projects. This will help them in making decisions on how to gather and use such information. It will also include further references to existing published materials and to practicing experts in the field of documentation.

Through our literature review of nearly 300 articles, we have been able to identify issues that are recurring and come across as essential for the subcategories of the handbook. For some of these issues, we have been able to select contributing authors; for others, we are pursuing our literature search to be able to find articles that reflect the standards we have set for the handbook contributions.

HANDBOOK CATEGORIES

Conservation

1. How should documentation and recording for managing heritage have an integral and pivotal role when addressing and solving a conservation issue?
(Foreword and Preface)
2. How to choose a recording tool to meet a conservation project's goal?
(Introduction: tools overview to understand their purpose, capabilities and limitations)

Architecture

3. How can traditional building techniques be preserved in the face of modernization?
(Tool: Video)
4. The impact of water drainage on a site or building.
(Tool: Site Survey)
5. How to rapidly record the damage incurred on adobe structures following a natural disaster to assess the extent of the damage and prescribe conservation measures?
(Tool: Basic Manual Survey and Rectified Photography)
6. Creation of a permanent record for posterity
(Tool not selected yet)

Finishes and Decorative Surfaces

7. The understanding of plaster decay and changes of conditions through time
(Tool: Rectified photography + CAD)
8. Evaluation of previous interventions (i.e.: color changes, rapid assessment, etc.)
(Tool: controlled photography)
9. Evaluation substrate conditions in renderings or plasters
(Tool: Infrared photography)

Engineering

10. How to monitor a building's structural failures in seismic-prone areas? (Monitoring cracks, etc.)
(Tool: Photogrammetry)
11. How to monitor building movement over time?
(Tool: Instrument Survey)

Planning and Landscapes

12. How to prioritize interventions and treatments for large-scale sites?
(*Tool: Geographical Information Systems*)
13. Managing conservation in a living historic city center. (i.e. inventories, zoning, city evolution, etc.)
(*Tool: Inventories*)

Archaeology and Cultural Landscapes

14. The understanding of the architecture of underground or unexcavated structures
(*Tool: Remote Sensing*)
15. How to monitor remote archaeological sites?
(*Tool: Aerial photography*)
16. How to manage complex information within an ancestral cultural landscape that is still used by aborigines today while respecting their beliefs?
(*Tool: Customized Databases*)

Other categories, conservation issues, recording, documentation, and information management tools may be added according to availability of pertinent material. The first case studies will be written during the spring of 2005 and the publication's manuscript should be available during the spring of 2006.