

Merger of National Archives of Scotland and General Register Office for Scotland

John Swinney, Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Sustainable Growth announced last week that the National Archives of Scotland and the General Register Office for Scotland will merge. This follows an options appraisal by officials of the two organisations and Registers of Scotland, which looked at different combinations of amalgamation between the three.

The NAS-GROS merger builds on existing close working relationships between the two bodies, particularly the service for family history under the highly successful ScotlandsPeople brand. This grew from the idea that the public understood little and cared less about organisational differences; what they wanted was access to information through one portal. Merger will allow further integration and improvement of public services. Combining resources will create a stronger organisation with wide skills in acquiring, processing and making available records and information. NAS will benefit from access to GROS expertise in geographic exploitation of data, GROS will benefit from NAS expertise in long term preservation of both digital and paper records. There will also be further sharing of central services, building on the existing close working that already covers accommodation services, training and development, records conservation, records management and library services.

The existing record keeping functions of NAS and the registration and statistical functions of GROS will continue. Staff of both bodies are part of the Scottish Government main bargaining unit and there will be no change to their terms and conditions as a result of the merger.

No date has been set for completing the merger, but work is already underway to share finance services, and detailed work in other areas will begin shortly.

NAS and GROS have also agreed with Registers of Scotland to develop a programme of joint working which is likely to include greater data sharing and co-operation in long term digital preservation.

George MacKenzie
Keeper of the Records
National Archives of Scotland

Duncan Macniven
Registrar General
General Register Office for Scotland

23 November 2010