

## THE ISSUES OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY IMPACT

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The rapid development and the wide spread of the computer-based information technology portend an unsettling of accustomed conventions, obligations and privileges, as well as an emergence of new options and pressures in a wide range of our individual economic, social and political lives. This situation pertains also to our responsibilities as information professionals, ranging from the entirely technical, to the practical and moral aspects of our duties of information work.

One of the characteristics of the information technology impact is that information handling methodology is being diversified and adapted to each individual field of endeavour and interest, using the new technology for its own effectiveness and efficiency, and no longer being bound by established information service techniques, methods, concerns and ethics.

The professional concerns of the traditional information service can no longer serve as safeguards against the use of the information technology for ends and in ways that may not always be acceptable, or in the best interests of the society and individual freedom.

As a profession, and as a professional association, we, CAIS/ACSI, are at the cross-road. We are facing new situations in our social environment with respect to the erosion of work, the integrity of information, the effect of boundless propagation of information, the consequences of massive monitoring of actions of individuals, the socially blind brilliant technological developments, the privacy issues and the moral concerns.

What is our role in this environment? Do we accept that each area of endeavour which has the technological capability, is within its rights to pursue the handling and control of information on its own terms? Is there a more pervasive role to play for our profession and for CAIS/ACSI than solely to promote the enhancement of information, methodology and technology?

Are we concerned? Are there things that we should urgently do?