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The role of the National Library of South Africa in the national digitisation

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NATIONAL library OF SOUTH AFRICA

an agency of the
Department of Arts and Culture

The role of the NLSA in the national digitisation initiatives

Antenie Carstens
Preservation Services



LEGISLATIVE MANDATE

OBJECTS OF THE NLSA

"The objects of the National Library are
to contribute to socio-economic, cultural, educational, scientific and innovative development by:
collecting, recording, preserving and making available the national documentary heritage
and promoting an awareness and appreciation thereof,
fostering information literacy,
and facilitating access to the world's information resources".



Size of NLSA collections

- 3.3 million book titles
- 63 000 periodical titles
- 80 000 newspaper bound volumes
- 55 000 maps
- 230 000 photographs
- special collections



Heritage Collections

- Primary source of SA published documentary heritage
- Wealth of information
- Books, periodicals, newspapers, maps, special collections, government publications, foreign official publications

Sechaba: 1 (1) 1967



Reprographic and Digital Services





Preservation

- Microfilming (master copy)
- Photographic negatives / positives
- Photographic paper prints
- Limited number of fragile documents / newspapers as needed
- Maps
- Paintings



On demand

- Microfilming for clients
- Microfilm / duplication
- Film / negative scanning
- Photographic prints
- Maps
- Rare books (UCT music Dept)
- Paintings



Current ongoing projects

- Selected Black press newspapers (these are previously banned publications)
  - (low volume = less than 10 000 pages each)
- Indian Opinion (1930 – 1949) (17 000 pages)
- Currently digitise an average of 15,000 pages per year
- Allocated two terabytes of digital content to date



Equipment

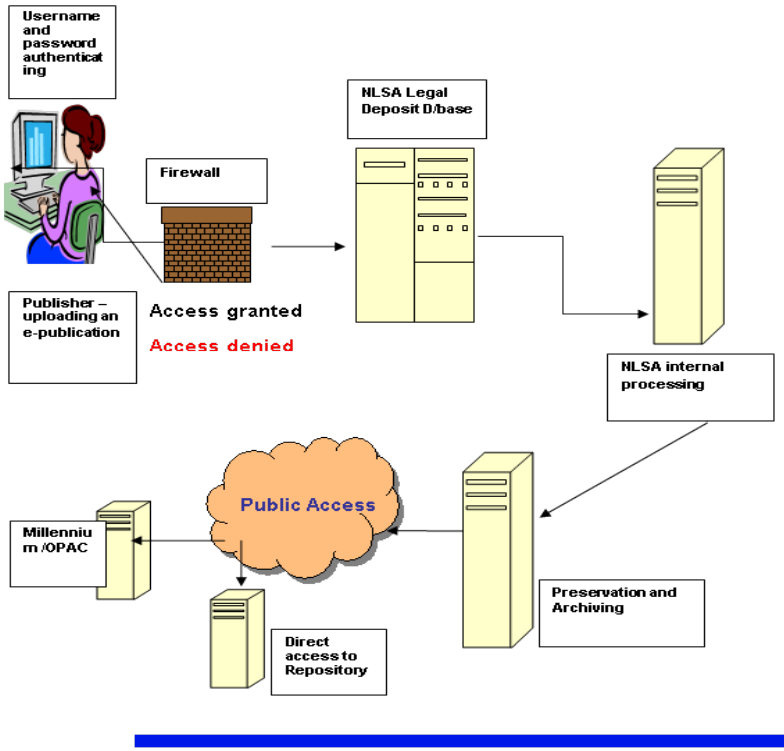
- Film / negative scanner
- Flatbed scanner (A3)
- Large format scanner (A0)
- Digital camera
- Digital video camera



Deposit of e-publications

- Model developed
- Accept original digital works
- Web-based protocol

e-deposit model





Future plans

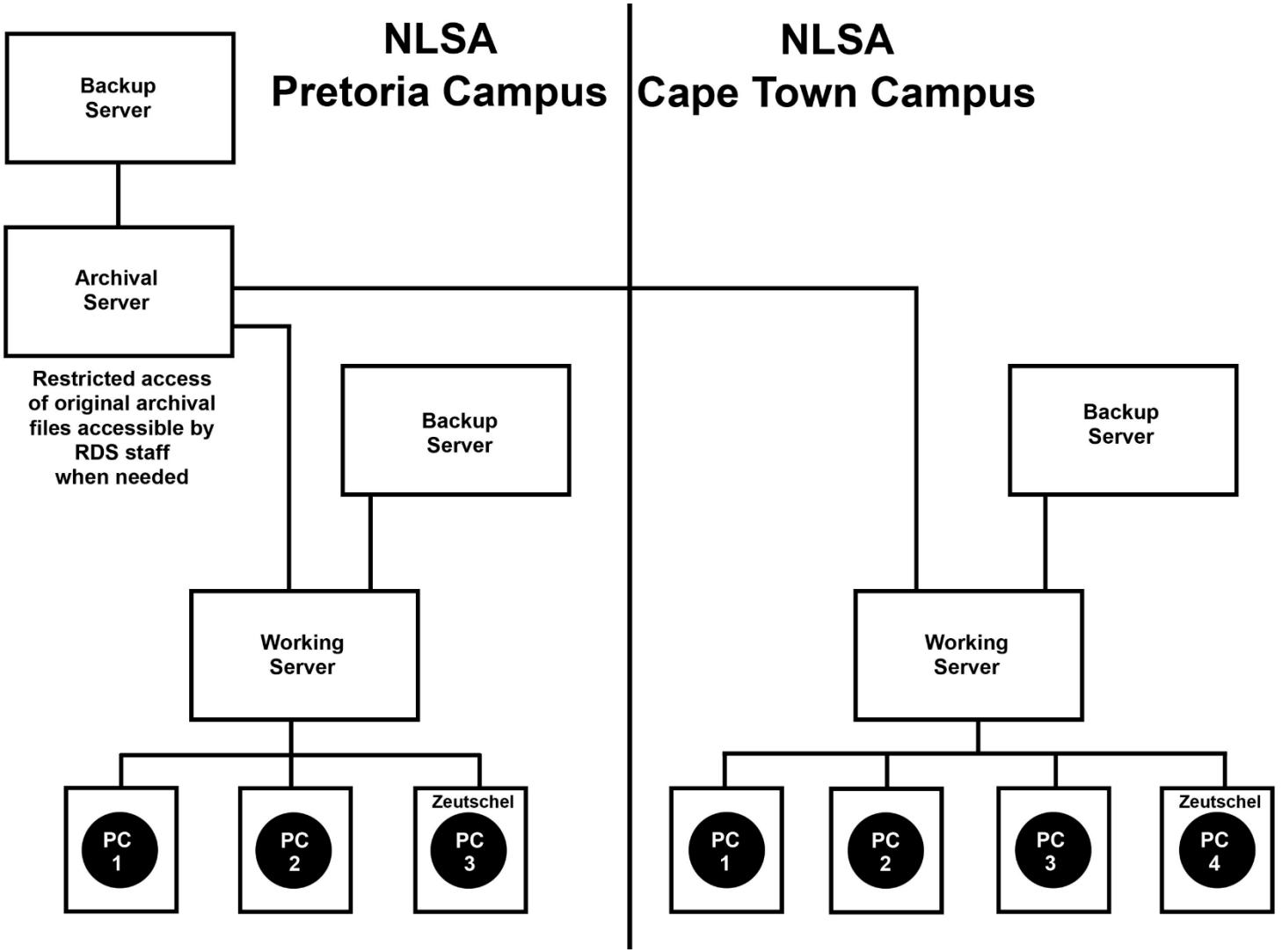
- SA newspapers
- Approx 7.5 million pages
- Black Press
- 200 000 pages
- Estimated space requirement of two petabytes



Challenges and Opportunities

- Keeping up with the ever changing digital climate including but not limited to:
  - Physical space
  - Requisite skills and competencies
  - Technological requirements

Digitisation IT needs





Policy development

- NLSA digitising policy in draft stage
- SA National digitisation policy yet to be finalised by DAC



CASE STUDY
(Western Cape Provincial Government)

- Substantial funding for the next three years for digitising archive holdings
- Proper infrastructure to be implemented

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Thank you!

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