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Press Release

For Immediate Release

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PRIA Releases Microfilm Best Practices White Paper

Morrisville, NC – The Property Records Industry Association (PRIA) membership and board approved a “best practices” White Paper produced by the Archival, Backup and Disaster Recovery Committee at the organization’s recent Annual Conference. The document, “Recording Electronic Images on Roll Microfilm” describes the practices, processes and standards necessary to produce preservation microfilm from digitized documents.

This White Paper is the result of two years of discussion with recorders and industry professionals. It is a “living document” and will be periodically reviewed and revised as technology evolves.

Many county recorders are scanning their documents rather than filming them for daily access. For preservation purposes however, recorders want to transfer the scanned images to microfilm using a raster image recorder like Kodak’s Archive Writer. This document is intended to provide that guidance for recording digitized image on microfilm.

The document begins with the importance of capturing a quality image as the first step in any preservation plan. Among the key ingredients cited to assure consistent, high quality image files are: 1) the use of MS44-1993 to measure and compare a scanner's output, 2) an understanding of the scanner's capabilities and 3) regular maintenance.

Microfilm produced today will likely be scanned to recover lost images rather than used to view or print pages. Instilling structure and order in the film content is critical to creating "scanner friendly" film. Unlike conventional microfilming, electronic imaging technology possesses the tools to perform quality control, organizational and editing functions so the image file can be perfected before being committed to film. The document stresses the importance of using these tools so that when microfilm is called on to restore images, the scanning can be done quickly, efficiently, and cost effectively.

The film used in today's raster image recorders has a potential life expectancy of at least 500 years. For it to reach that potential, it must be processed and stored correctly. The importance of testing processed film for acceptable levels of residual fixer, as well as maintaining proper temperature, humidity, and air quality standards are explained.

The approved standards can be accessed at the PRIA website:

<http://www.pria.us/archivalcomm.htm>

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The Property Records Industry Association is a coalition of government and business participants of the property records industry, cooperating to formulate positions on issues of common interest.

PRIA works to identify problems, opportunities and solutions that will make property records systems more efficient, effective and responsive to the public. PRIA also works to identify areas of consensus within the industry, leading to recommendations for national standards pertaining to recordable documents. For more information on PRIA, visit www.pria.us.