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NSW POLICE SERVICE

CORPORATE RECORDS AND HEADQUARTERS LOGISTICS

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Police Headquarters
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14-24 College Street
Darlinghurst NSW 2010

To: Executive Director *7/7/98*
Management Services

Tel: [REDACTED]
Fax: [REDACTED]

From: Denis Comber
Corporate Archivist

Our Ref:

Your Ref:

Date: 7 July 1998 NSWP/D/98/12660

Subject: Premier's Memorandum No. 98-16 'Records Management Standards and Policies'.

On the 18 June 1998 a request from the Executive Director, Management Services, for advice to regarding Premier's Memorandum No. 98-16 'Records Management Standards and Policies' was received by Corporate Records and Headquarters Logistics.

In consultation with David Brumby, Corporate Archivist, arrangements were made for this officer to evaluate the Standards and assess their impact on the Service (see Tab A).

Denis Comber
Manager
Corporate Records and Headquarters Logistics

*David for
information, rotation
Please also see
me.
D. Comber
15.7.98*

CONFIDENTIAL**Background**

The Archives Authority of NSW under Premier's Memorandum No. 98-16 has issued the following standards and policies. They apply to Public Offices as defined in s.2 of the Archives Act, 1960:

- *Full and Accurate Records (Standard 1)*
- *Records Management Programs (Standard 2)*
- *Electronic Recordkeeping (Policy 1)*
- *Electronic Messages as Records (Policy 2)*

The NSW Police Service is required to conform to these and other Recordkeeping standards and policies of the Archives Authority of NSW. These standards and policies are based on national and international best practice, and comply with the Australian Standard AS 4390 *Records Management*. They will become mandatory standards and policies under *the State Records Act, 1998* and will be monitored by the forthcoming State Records Authority (SRA).

Such standards and policies are intended to function as minimum performance standards, measurable by public offices and auditors. They will later be supported by mechanisms for monitoring and reporting compliance. A summary of these standards and policies is provided at the end of this document.

Summary of issues:

The NSW Police Service does not fully conform with all of the published standards and policies of the Archives Authority of NSW as listed in Premier's Memorandum No. 98-16 'Records Management Standards and Policies'. The main area of concern focuses on the electronic records as systems for the management of hardcopy records have already been addressed and standards for their management are currently in place.

The impact of new standards was recognised in May 1997 and Commissioner's Task Force 3 initiated a joint survey into the NSW Police Service's primary [mainframe] software systems in November 1997. The survey [to be tabled mid-July 1998] has revealed that the Service does not have a clear policy on electronic recordkeeping and the management of electronic records. Consequently, non-conformity with these standards and policies has and will contribute to the following inadequacies in recordkeeping and records management in the NSW Police Service:

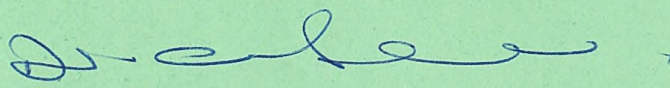
- Staff may not be creating records documenting all the transactions they carry out, or capturing all necessary information, due to perceived deficiencies in knowledge levels relating to recordkeeping standards.
- Some units of the Service have improvised with unsupported 'ad-hoc' desktop software applications such as Microsoft Access and Excel where mainframe systems have proved inadequate in creating informal recordkeeping systems which do not conform to the standards and policies of the Archives Authority of NSW
- A lack of clear policies on electronic records may be contributing to unauthorised disposal of records and the creation of systems with recordkeeping inadequacies.

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In addition, the current investigation into a complaint about the acquisition of 'in house' developed software applications will identify a wide range of issues related to the effective control and management of non-mainframe based computed packages. Initial investigations, coupled with the secondary findings of the above-mentioned survey of mainframe systems, will provide sufficient evidence to justify the implementation of significant reforms in the development and acquisition of future software applications.

Recommendations

- The NSW Police Service should conform to the recordkeeping standards and policies of the Archives Authority of NSW by initiating the findings in its reports into the management of all electronic records.
- That Corporate Records and Archives work with ITS to produce recordkeeping standards for current and new electronic applications.
- The standards and policies of the Archives Authority of NSW should be incorporated in the next revision of the *Information Records Management Resource Manual*.
- Corporate Records and Archives continue to develop policies and implement information and records management reforms within the Service.


Denis Comber
Manager 11/1/98

Executive Director
Management Services

agreed

13/7/98

CONFIDENTIAL**Summary of Standards and Policies of the Archives Authority of
NSW*****Full and Accurate Recordkeeping (Standard 1)***

This standard establishes principles for making and keeping full and accurate records of all the functions and activities of the NSW Police Service. The standard is applicable to both hard copy and electronic records.

The standard is intended to function as:

- An authoritative statement of the basic responsibilities of public offices in applying best practice in recordkeeping and in complying with the requirement to keep full and accurate records
- A benchmark which can be used by Ministers, investigative bodies, the courts and any other person or body to whom or which the public office is accountable, to assess whether adequate records have been made, maintained and managed in specific cases and investigations
- A foundation upon which public offices can develop internal policies, business rules, systems and practices
- The primary standard which sits at the top of the Authority's framework of standards and codes of best practice

The standard identifies that records should be:

- Compliant
- Reliable
- Systematic
- Managed
- Routine
- Made
- Retained
- Completed
- Comprehensive
- Adequate
- Accurate
- Authentic
- Useable
- Inviolable

Comment:

The NSW Service does not have a policy on the creation of full and accurate records. A policy of full and accurate records should be included with the next revision of the *Information Records Management Resource Manual*.

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Records Management Programs (Standard 2)

This standard establishes the main provisions which should be addressed by public offices when they establish a records management program. The standard identifies that a records management program should be:

- Identifiable
- Supported by policy
- Planned
- Assigned
- Located
- Organised
- Staffed with skilled people
- Implemented
- Measured

A compliance checklist to assist public offices and auditors in assessing their performance against these requirements accompanies the standard.

Comment:

Commissioner's Task Force 3 established a records management program for the NSW Police Service in 1994. The policy is documented in the *Information Records Management Resource Manual*. However, the Services records management policy does not conform to the standard and would need to be revised, for example:

- The creation of full and accurate records is not addressed
- There is no policy on informal record systems or electronic records systems

Electronic Recordkeeping (Policy 1)

The purpose of this policy is to establish Government-wide policy on the keeping of records in the electronic environment. This policy establishes principles which agencies should follow in developing practices and systems for recordkeeping in the electronic environment. The policy applies to the whole NSW Public Sector, including those agencies that are not subject to the Archives Act 1960. The policy identifies that:

- Agencies' electronic records are official records
- Electronic recordkeeping should comply with recognised best practice
- Electronic recordkeeping should be built into business processes and tools
- Business conducted by electronic means should be adequately documented to meet identified recordkeeping requirements
- Electronic records should be maintained in electronic form
- Electronic records should be maintained in reliable recordkeeping systems
- Electronic records should be managed effectively as part of a comprehensive records management program

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- Maintaining and providing access to electronic records over time is a shared responsibility

Issues:

Commissioner's Task Force 3 identified during a recent survey of NSW Police Service's primary software systems that the Service does not have a clear policy on electronic recordkeeping. A policy on electronic recordkeeping should be included in the next revision of the *Information Records Management Resource Manual*.

Electronic Messages as Records (Policy 2)

The purpose of this policy is to establish Government-wide policy on the management of electronic messages as records. The policy applies to the whole NSW Public Sector, including those agencies that are not subject to the Archives Act 1960. The policy identifies that:

- Electronic messages are records
- Electronic messages are to be captured and maintained as functioning records
- Electronic messages must be captured into an identifiable recordkeeping system
- Electronic messages must be effectively managed
- Electronic messages must be appropriately accessible
- Management of electronic messages as records must be supported by internal policies, procedures and guidelines

Issues:

Commissioner's Task Force 3 identified during a recent survey of NSW Police Services primary software systems that the Service does not have a policy on electronic messages. A policy on electronic messages should be included in the next revision of the *Information Records Management Resource Manual*.



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NSW POLICE SERVICE

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

NSW Police Service

NSWP/D/98/12660

Commissioner's Office



MINISTERIALS - HON BOB CARR - PREMIER - PREMIERS
MEMO NO 98/16 - RECORDS MANAGEMENT STANDARDS
AND POLICIES

Police Headquarters
Avery Building
14-24 College Street
Darlinghurst NSW 2010
Box 45 GPO Sydney 2001

Tel: [REDACTED]

Fax: [REDACTED]

Ref: RMS

TO: Executive Director, MANAGEMENT SERVICES.

FROM: Bruce Ings, Commissioner's Office, Eaglenet 55451.

DATE: 15 June 1998.

SUBJECT: PREMIER'S MEMORANDUM NO. 98-16 "RECORDS MANAGEMENT STANDARDS AND POLICIES".

The attached papers are referred for:-

- information and appropriate attention.
- attention and reply direct on the Commissioner's behalf.
- advice.

Please note the attached correspondence:-

- has been acknowledged.
- should be acknowledged, particularly if it is envisaged that a final reply will be delayed.
- Other comment:-

[Signature]
Commissioner.

NOTE: All Officers are reminded of the importance of promptly and properly attending to all correspondence referred to the Service and the need to include appropriate reference numbers, contact details, etc., in replies issued.

Manage Corporate Records/HQ Logistics.

Your advice/comments please on this matter to allow provision of advice to Ex Dir & GP. 15/6/98

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Premier of New South Wales
Australia

MEMORANDUM NO. 98-16

RECORDS MANAGEMENT STANDARDS AND POLICIES

(Memorandum to all Ministers and Chief Executives)

New State Records legislation will require public offices to make and keep full and accurate records of their activities and to establish and maintain a records management program in conformity with standards and codes of best practice. This legislation is intended to replace the *Archives Act 1960*.

In preparation for this legislation, and in response to requests from departments and agencies for guidance in these matters, the Archives Authority of NSW has developed records management standards for the NSW Government.

These standards are defined in two key documents -

- *Full and Accurate Records*, and
- *Records Management Programs*.

The purpose of issuing the standards now is to enable agencies to assess their records management practices and prepare to meet their obligations under the new legislation. The two key standards have been designed for a regime of monitoring and reporting that will be introduced progressively under the new legislation, taking into account agencies' capacity to comply.

At the same time, two key policy statements have been developed to implement effective strategies for electronic recordkeeping across Government.

These policy documents are -

- *Electronic Recordkeeping*, and
- *Electronic Messages as Records*.

The purpose of issuing these documents is to establish a clear policy direction in which agencies, supported by practical guidance from the Archives Authority, can establish effective practices for recordkeeping in the electronic environment. In conjunction with the standards and codes of best practice developed for the new legislation, they form part of a coherent Government-wide framework for records management. The implementation of the standards and policies will reduce costs in the longer term by reducing the danger of exposure to risks associated with poor recordkeeping.

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The standards and policies are based on nationally accepted best practice for records management as described in the relevant Australian Standard (AS 4390-1996, *Records Management*) and have been the subject of wide consultation with agencies. They have been reviewed by the Chief Executives' Committee and approved by the Archives Authority. It is therefore appropriate that the standards be implemented in New South Wales.

A copy of each of the standards and policies is attached. Additional copies are available from the Archives Authority and, with the exception of the Australian Standard on records management, the Authority's World Wide Web site at www.records.nsw.gov.au and through *Service.NSW*. Guidance and training are also available from the Authority.

In issuing these standards and policies, I wish to emphasise the Government's firm view that good government recordkeeping, and its effective management, are essential to sound management of government business, to the delivery of quality services to the people of NSW, and to public accountability. The Government expects the same high standards to apply to agencies' recordkeeping practices as to other aspect of public management. I urge Ministers to ensure that these standards and policies are implemented in their portfolios.



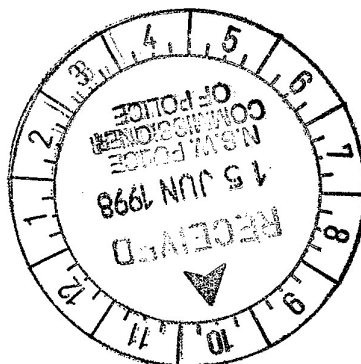
Bob Carr
Premier

Issued: The Archives Authority of New South Wales
Contact: David Roberts, Principal Archivist

<http://www.records.nsw.gov.au>

Date:

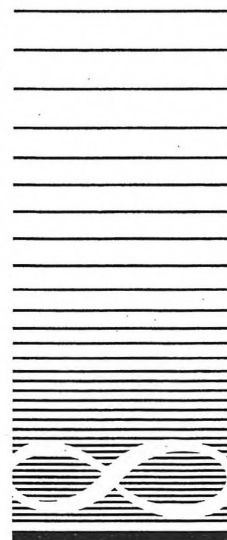
09 JUN 1998



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Electronic Recordkeeping



THE ARCHIVES
AUTHORITY OF
NEW SOUTH WALES

Records Management
Policy



1

Issued
APRIL 1998

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POLICY ON ELECTRONIC RECORDKEEPING

THE ARCHIVES AUTHORITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES
Sydney, Australia
Issued
April 1998

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POLICY ON ELECTRONIC RECORDKEEPING

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The purpose of this statement is to establish Government-wide policy on the keeping of records in the electronic environment.

Scope

This policy applies across the whole of the New South Wales public sector, including those agencies that are not subject to the *Archives Act, 1960*. It should be applied in conjunction with the *Policy on Electronic Messages as Records* and the standards, codes of best practice and guidelines on recordkeeping noted as referenced documents below.

Background

The Government is committed to improving the quality and keeping of official records so that they facilitate the transaction, monitoring and auditing of official business. Consequently new State records legislation will require agencies to make and keep such records as may be necessary to fully and adequately record their functions and operations. Agencies will need to comply with standards, codes of best practice and guidelines on recordkeeping issued under this new legislation.

At the same time the Government is committed to delivering responsive and accessible government services to the community through improved use of information technology. The Government's vision and comprehensive strategies for planning, management and use of information management and technology are set out in the *Information Management and Technology Blueprint for NSW*. Business conducted in the electronic environment needs to be documented appropriately to meet a variety of operational, accountability and community requirements. This involves electronic recordkeeping: making and keeping records in the electronic environment. Improved electronic recordkeeping is essential to the success of the Government's goals for information management and technology.

This policy establishes principles which agencies should follow in developing practices and systems for recordkeeping in the electronic environment. The Archives Authority, through its Electronic Recordkeeping Project, is developing a range of more detailed guidelines, manuals, training and other support to help agencies implement this policy.

The policy was issued as an exposure draft in April 1996 and revised to take account of agencies' comments. The resulting final draft was reviewed by the Chief Executives' Committee and approved by the board of the Archives Authority in December 1997.

Further background to this policy is available in the Authority's 1995 discussion paper, *Documenting the Future: Policy and Strategies for Electronic Recordkeeping in the New South Wales Public Sector* and in the Authority's standards on *Full and Accurate Records and Records Management Programs*

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Policy on Electronic Recordkeeping

This policy conforms to *Corporate Memory in the Electronic Age: Statement of a Common Position on Electronic Recordkeeping*, issued by the Australian Council of Archives, the peak body of archives institutions, in May 1996 and endorsed by the Archives Authority as the basis for policy and strategies for electronic recordkeeping in the New South Wales Government.

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this standard the following definitions apply. The definitions are taken from Australian Standard AS 4390, *Records Management, Part 1, General*.

Record

Recorded information, in any form, including data in computer systems, created or received and maintained by an organisation or person in the transaction of business or the conduct of affairs and kept as evidence of such activity.

Recordkeeping

Making and maintaining complete, accurate and reliable evidence of business transactions in the form of recorded information.

[Thus it is an umbrella term encompassing:

- the creation of records in the course of business, and including the use of means to ensure the creation of adequate records
- the design, establishment and operation of recordkeeping systems, and
- the management of records through recordkeeping systems in their business context (traditionally regarded as the domain of records management) and as archives (traditionally regarded as the domain of archives administration).]

Electronic records

Records communicated and maintained by means of electronic equipment.

Recordkeeping systems

Information systems which capture, maintain and provide access to records over time.

Appraisal

The process of evaluating business activities to determine which records need to be captured and how long the records need to be kept, to meet business needs, the requirements of organisational accountability and community expectations.

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Policy on Electronic Recordkeeping

POLICY

1 Agencies' electronic records are official records

- 1.1 Electronic records generated or received by an agency or a government employee in the course of official duties are to be treated as *official records*. For agencies subject to the Archives Act 1960 these are *public records* as governed by the Act.
- 1.2 As records of government agencies, electronic records, like records in other formats, are subject to legislation such as the Freedom of Information Act and to legal processes such as discovery and subpoenas. The records may also be required by Royal Commissions, the Courts, auditors and other people or bodies to whom or which they may be subject.

2 Electronic recordkeeping should comply with recognised best practice

- 2.1 Agencies should keep and manage their electronic records in compliance with standards, codes of best practice and guidelines to be issued under forthcoming State records legislation and with Australian Standard AS 4390, *Records Management*. The Government expects the same standards of recordkeeping to apply in the electronic environment as in the paper environment.
- 2.2 Electronic recordkeeping should comply with recognised authority sources influencing recordkeeping that are relevant to an agency's business environment, such as the AS/NZS ISO 9000 series of quality systems Standards.

3 Electronic recordkeeping should be built into business processes and tools

- 3.1 Agencies should make recordkeeping a routine part of business in the electronic environment by building it into business processes and tools.
- 3.2 Agencies should make use of the opportunities afforded by business process re-engineering exercises, the replacement or upgrading of information systems and quality systems certification to help ensure that this occurs.

4 Business conducted by electronic means should be adequately documented to meet identified recordkeeping requirements

- 4.1 Agencies should ensure that they adequately and properly document those aspects of their business that are conducted in the electronic environment by making and keeping electronic records.

- 4.2 Agencies should ensure that these records satisfy identified business needs, accountability requirements and community expectations.

5 Electronic records should be maintained in electronic form

- 5.1 The Government's objectives for using information management and technology to deliver government services to the people of New South Wales will be supported by maintaining electronic records in electronic form where it is appropriate to do so. Electronic records are more accessible and generally have greater value than printed versions of them. Some kinds of electronic records, such as compound documents, cannot be maintained in hard copy form without loss of content or meaning.

- 5.2 As agencies make more use of information management and technology to deliver services, conduct business and manage their information resources, they should establish ways of maintaining records generated in the electronic environment, and their associated metadata, in electronic form.

6 Electronic records should be maintained in reliable recordkeeping systems

- 6.1 Agencies should systematise electronic recordkeeping practices through the design and operation of reliable electronic recordkeeping systems. These may be dedicated recordkeeping systems or business systems and processes which incorporate recordkeeping and, thereby, function as recordkeeping systems. Only reliable recordkeeping systems produce authentic and trustworthy records.
- 6.2 This principle requires that agencies establish policies, business rules, formal methodologies and procedures incorporating sound recordkeeping practices for recordkeeping in the electronic environment. These should conform to Government-wide standards, formats and models.
- 6.3 Agencies should identify all their electronic recordkeeping systems, document them, including changes made over time, and assign responsibilities and delegations regarding their development, modification, operation and use.

7 Electronic records should be managed effectively as part of a comprehensive records management program

- 7.1 Agencies should ensure that policies, practices and systems for the management of electronic records are fully integrated into their records management programs. While electronic records should be regarded as a mainstream part of records management, compliance with this principle is likely to require specific and systematic attention.
- 7.2 Where electronic records and records in other forms document the same business activities or matters, agencies should manage these records in such a way that all relevant records can be easily retrieved and the relationships between the records are clear.

8 Maintaining and providing access to electronic records over time is a shared responsibility

- 8.1 Maintaining electronic records and providing official and public access to them over time, including as State archives, involves shared responsibilities between agencies and the Archives Authority of New South Wales. Agencies should cooperate with the Authority to establish arrangements for the long-term management of electronic records and for providing access to them.
- 8.2 Establishing and operating effective electronic recordkeeping systems and practices within agencies requires a multidisciplinary approach. Agencies should make effective use of the necessary range of expertise available in the agency and elsewhere. This includes expertise in records management, information management and technology, business systems analysis and design, risk assessment, auditing and the law.

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Policy on Electronic Recordkeeping

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FURTHER INFORMATION

Referenced documents

Policy on Electronic Messages as Records, Archives Authority of New South Wales, 1998

Standard on Full and Accurate Records, Archives Authority of New South Wales, 1998

Standard on Records Management Programs, Archives Authority of New South Wales, 1998

Australian Standard AS 4390—1996: *Records Management*

Documenting the Future: Policy and Strategies for Electronic Recordkeeping in the New South Wales Public Sector, Archives Authority of New South Wales, 1995

Corporate Memory in the Electronic Age: Statement of a Common Position on Electronic Recordkeeping, Australian Council of Archives, 1996

Information Management and Technology Blueprint for NSW: A Well-Connected Future, Department of Public Works and Services, 1997

Exemptions

There are no general exemptions from this policy.

Exclusions

There are no general exclusions from this policy.

Funding

No special conditions for funding exist for implementing this policy.

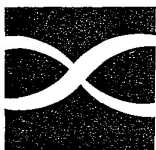
Enquiries

Enquiries regarding this policy should, in the first instance, be directed to:

The Archives Authority of New South Wales
Level 3, 66 Harrington Street
The Rocks Sydney NSW 2000

Telephone: (02) 9237 0120
Facsimile: (02) 9237 0119
E-mail: govrec@records.nsw.gov.au
Web site: <http://www.records.nsw.gov.au>

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Electronic Messages as Records



THE ARCHIVES
AUTHORITY OF
NEW SOUTH WALES

Records Management
Policy

2

Issued
APRIL 1998

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POLICY ON ELECTRONIC MESSAGES AS RECORDS

THE ARCHIVES AUTHORITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES
Sydney, Australia
Issued
April 1998

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POLICY ON ELECTRONIC MESSAGES AS RECORDS

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AUSTRALIA
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Web site: <http://www.records.nsw.gov.au>

ISBN 0-7313-8801-1

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish Government-wide policy on the management of electronic messages as records.

Scope

This policy applies across the whole of the New South Wales public sector, including those agencies that are not subject to the *Archives Act, 1960*. It should be applied in conjunction with the *Policy on Electronic Recordkeeping* and the standards, codes of best practice and guidelines on recordkeeping noted as referenced documents below.

Background

The Government is committed to improving the quality and keeping of official records so that they facilitate the transaction, monitoring, and auditing of official business. Consequently new State records legislation will require agencies to make and keep records to adequately and properly document their business. Agencies will need to comply with government approved standards and codes of best practice on recordkeeping. The Archives Authority will provide guidelines, training and other forms of support to help agencies do so.

At the same time the Government is committed to delivering responsive and accessible government services to the community through improved use of information technology. The Government's vision and comprehensive strategies for planning, management and use of information management and technology are set out in the *Information Management and Technology Blueprint for NSW*. Business conducted in the electronic environment needs to be documented appropriately to meet a variety of operational, accountability and community requirements. Among other things, this involves agencies capturing and managing those electronic messages which document substantive business as official records for as long as required. Some electronic messages can be identified as ephemeral and therefore only need to be kept for a short time.

This document is based on national and international best practice. It complies with the Australian Standard AS 4390 *Records Management (Part 3 Strategies, 8.4.1 Electronic Mail)* and the principles in *Corporate Memory in the Electronic Age: Statement of a Common Position on Electronic Recordkeeping* issued by the Australian Council of Archives. A number of other governments have adopted similar policies and guidance including in Australia the Commonwealth and Victorian Governments and, overseas, those of the United States of America, Canada, New York State and British Columbia.

The policy was issued as an exposure draft in April 1996 and revised to take account of agencies' comments. The resulting final draft was reviewed by the Chief Executives' Committee and approved by the board of the Archives Authority in December 1997.

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Issued April 1998

Policy on Electronic Messages as Records

Further background to this policy is available in the Authority's 1995 discussion paper, *Documenting the Future: Policy and Strategies for Electronic Recordkeeping in the New South Wales Public Sector* and in the Authority's standards on *Full and Accurate Records* and *Records Management Programs*.

The Archives Authority, through its Electronic Recordkeeping Project, is developing guidelines, training and other support to help agencies implement this policy. Specifically, *Managing the Message: Guidelines on Managing Electronic Messages as Records* provides practical guidance in support of this policy.

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this standard the following definitions apply. The definitions are taken from Australian Standard AS 4390, *Records Management*, Part 1, *General*, except definitions marked *.

Electronic messaging*

A general term covering all forms of electronically-mediated communication. This includes electronic mail for text messages and an equivalent service that uses recordings of spoken messages, known as voice messaging. It may also include computer conferencing and videotext. Also used as synonymous with electronic mail. (Tony Gunton, *The Penguin Dictionary of Information Technology*, Third edition, Penguin Books, London, 1994, p.100)

Record

Recorded information, in any form, including data in computer systems, created or received and maintained by an organisation or person in the transaction of business or the conduct of affairs and kept as evidence of such activity.

Electronic records

Records communicated and maintained by means of electronic equipment.

Official records*

Includes public records as defined in the *Archives Act, 1960* and the records of agencies subject to this policy that are not covered by that Act.

Recordkeeping

Making and maintaining complete, accurate and reliable evidence of business transactions in the form of recorded information.

Recordkeeping systems

Information systems which capture, maintain and provide access to records over time.

Disposal

A range of processes associated with implementing appraisal decisions. These include the retention, deletion or destruction of records. They may also include the migration or transmission of records between recordkeeping systems, and the transfer of custody or ownership of records.

Transaction

The smallest unit of business activity. Uses of records are themselves transactions.

POLICY

1 Electronic messages are records

- 1.1 An electronic message is a form of business communication. The sending of an electronic message is a business transaction and therefore a record.
- 1.2 Records sent and received by a government employee in the course of official duties are to be treated as *official records*. For agencies subject to the *Archives Act, 1960* these are *public records* as governed by the Act.
- 1.3 As records of government agencies, electronic messages, like records in other formats, are subject to legislation such as the *Freedom of Information Act, 1989* and to legal processes such as discovery and subpoenas. The records may also be required by Royal Commissions, the Courts, auditors and other people or bodies to whom or which they may be subject.

2 Electronic messages are to be captured and maintained as functioning records

- 2.1 In order to function as a record, electronic messages require the preservation of their structure, context and content.

Structure refers both to the software instructions for the layout (format) of the message and the links to attachments and related documents for a particular transaction. Content refers to the content of the message as received. Context refers to the information documenting the source and destination of the message and gives the message meaning (found, for example, within header information for electronic mail).

- 2.2 In order to maintain their value as evidence, electronic messages must be inviolate, that is, they cannot be altered or manipulated, for as long as they are retained.

3 Electronic messages must be captured into an identifiable recordkeeping system

- 3.1 Electronic messages required as evidence of substantive business activity should be captured directly into an electronic recordkeeping system.
- 3.2 If the preferred method of capturing records above cannot be satisfied an agency must satisfy one of the following options:
 - recordkeeping functionality can be built into the electronic messaging system
 - electronic mail and voice mail, with appropriate contextual detail, can be printed or transcribed and filed into a paper-based recordkeeping system.
- 3.3 Back-up stores of electronic messages within messaging systems and ad-hoc saving of messages to directories are not to be considered a form of recordkeeping system.

4 Electronic messages must be effectively managed

- 4.1 Effective practices for managing electronic messages as records will help ensure that an agency can meet its business needs, accountability requirements and community expectations through recordkeeping.
- 4.2 Records should be retained for as long as required to meet identified recordkeeping requirements and no longer. Ephemeral messages, therefore, are records which only need to be retained for a short time and may not need to be captured into a recordkeeping system.
- 4.3 Agencies subject to the *Archives Act, 1960* should dispose of electronic messages as records in accordance with the provisions of that Act.
- 4.4 Electronic messages should be managed in accordance with sound data management practices.

5 Electronic messages must be appropriately accessible

- 5.1 Electronic messages must be readily accessible to meet business and accountability requirements.
- 5.2 Electronic messages must be accessible for as long as they are required to be retained.

6 Electronic messages must be appropriately protected

- 6.1 Arrangements for maintaining electronic messages as records should operate in accordance with Government-approved policies, such as those protecting personal or commercially sensitive information from unauthorised disclosure.

7 Management of electronic messages as records must be supported by internal policies, procedures and guidelines

- 7.1 Corporate level policies, procedures and guidelines should cover the following:
 - ownership of the messaging system and messages received or sent
 - legislation that directly affects the agency's recordkeeping and legal processes
 - conditions for use of the corporate messaging facilities, including any private use
 - responsibilities for management of the messaging system and of electronic messages as records
 - capture, management and disposal of electronic messages as records
 - security and access requirements.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Referenced documents

IM&T Guideline: Use of the Internet for Electronic Messaging, NSW Office of Information Technology, 1997

Policy on Electronic Recordkeeping, Archives Authority of New South Wales, 1998

Standard on Full and Accurate Records, Archives Authority of New South Wales, 1998

Standard on Records Management Programs, Archives Authority of New South Wales, 1998

Australian Standard AS 4390—1996: *Records Management*

Documenting the Future: Policy and Strategies for Electronic Recordkeeping in the New South Wales Public Sector, Archives Authority of New South Wales, 1995

Corporate Memory in the Electronic Age: Statement of a Common Position on Electronic Recordkeeping, Australian Council of Archives, 1996

Exemptions

There are no general exemptions from this policy.

Exclusions

There are no general exclusions from this policy.

Funding

No special conditions for funding exist for implementing this policy.

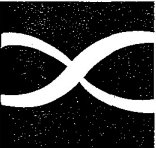
Enquiries

Enquiries regarding this policy should, in the first instance, be directed to:

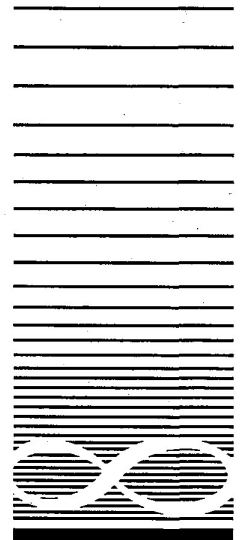
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Full and Accurate Records



THE ARCHIVES
AUTHORITY OF
NEW SOUTH WALES

Record Management
Standard

1

Issued
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STANDARD ON FULL AND ACCURATE RECORDS

THE ARCHIVES AUTHORITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES
Sydney, Australia
Issued
1998

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STANDARD ON FULL AND ACCURATE RECORDS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This standard was prepared for issue under new State records legislation, a key provision of which will require public offices to make and keep full and accurate records of their activities. Pending proclamation of the legislation, the standard is issued to promote best practice in recordkeeping and to enable public offices to prepare to meet their obligations under the new legislation.

The standard applies to public offices as defined in s.2 of the *Archives Act, 1960*. Following proclamation of the new State records legislation, the standard will continue to apply until it is reissued or replaced under the terms of that legislation. The requirement to make and keep full and accurate records applies in all technological environments in which Government business is conducted, including the electronic environment.

The principles in this standard are drawn from current national and international best practice, notably Australian Standard AS 4390—1996: *Records Management, Part 3: Strategies*, Clause 5.3, and the work of the University of Pittsburgh's *Recordkeeping Functional Requirements Project*. The Archives Authority acknowledges this valuable basis for the standard.

This standard is part of a framework of standards and codes of best practice, supported by guidelines, training and other forms of advice and assistance, as summarised in the framework on the inside front cover of this standard.

The standard establishes principles for making and keeping full and accurate records. In short, the principles are that:

1. **Recordkeeping should be *compliant*:** recordkeeping should comply with legal and administrative requirements.
2. **Recordkeeping should be *reliable*:** recordkeeping systems, procedures and practices should work reliably to ensure that records are credible and authoritative.
3. **Recordkeeping should be *systematic*:** records should be made, maintained and managed systematically.
4. **Recordkeeping should be *managed*:** recordkeeping must be managed through an identifiable records management program.
5. **Recordkeeping should be *routine*:** recordkeeping systems should be used when transacting business.
6. **Records should be *made*:** records should be made to document and facilitate the transaction of business and captured into recordkeeping systems.
7. **Records should be *retained*:** records should be retained for as long as they are needed.

8. **Records should be *complete*:** a record should contain not only the content, but also the structural and contextual information necessary to document a transaction. It should be possible to understand a record in the context of the organisational processes that produced it and of other, linked records.
9. **Records should be *comprehensive*:** records should document the whole of the business of a public office.
10. **Records should be *adequate*:** records should be adequate for the purposes for which they are kept.
11. **Records should be *accurate*:** records should correctly reflect what was communicated, decided or done.
12. **Records should be *authentic*:** records should be what they purport to be.
13. **Records should be *useable*:** records should be identifiable, retrievable, accessible and available when needed.
14. **Records should be *inviolable*:** records should be securely maintained to prevent unauthorised access, destruction, alteration or removal.

Public offices must comply with each of the principles in this standard. However, the standard is concerned with outcomes rather than with prescribing specific recordkeeping practices. Consequently, the examples should be viewed as guidance to help comply with each principle, rather than as minimum compliance requirements. Other standards will establish specific requirements in relation to aspects of certain of these principles. The examples are followed by sources of further guidance relevant to the principle, where available.

Besides their formal role, the principal purpose of this and other standards, codes of best practice and other forms of guidance is to promote recordkeeping best practice across the New South Wales public sector. This means that the building of systematic recordkeeping into business processes and systems should be done in such a way as to support and not hinder people's work.

INTRODUCTION

Background

New State records legislation will establish a requirement for public offices to make and keep full and accurate records of their activities. This standard was prepared for issue under that legislation. Pending its proclamation, the standard is issued to promote best practice in recordkeeping and to enable public offices to prepare to meet their obligations under the legislation.

The standard was issued as an exposure draft in May 1996 and revised to take account of public offices' comments. The resulting final draft was reviewed by the Chief Executives' Committee and approved by the board of the Archives Authority in December 1997.

The principles in this standard are drawn from current national and international best practice, notably Australian Standard AS 4390—1996: *Records Management, Part 3: Strategies, Clause 5.3*, and the work of the University of Pittsburgh's *Recordkeeping Functional Requirements Project*. The Archives Authority acknowledges this valuable basis for the standard.

As described in the Australian Standard, records should be full and accurate to the extent necessary to:

‘...facilitate action by employees at any level of the public office, and their successors;

...make possible a proper scrutiny of the conduct of business by anyone authorised to undertake such a scrutiny; and

...protect the financial, legal and other rights of the organization, its clients and any other people affected by its actions and decisions.’ (Australian Standard AS 4390—1996: *Records Management, Part 3: Strategies, Clause 5.3*).

The requirement to make and keep full and accurate records applies in all technological environments in which Government business is conducted, including the electronic environment.

Purpose

The purpose of this standard is to establish principles to guide public offices in applying best practice in recordkeeping and in complying with the requirement noted above.

The standard is intended to function as:

- an authoritative statement of the basic responsibilities of public offices in relation to recordkeeping
- a benchmark which can be used by Ministers, investigative bodies, the courts and any other person or body to whom or which the public office is accountable, to assess

whether adequate records have been made, maintained and managed in specific cases and investigations

- a foundation upon which public offices can establish internal policies, business rules, systems and practices
- an overarching standard at the top of a framework of standards and codes of best practice on specific matters which the Archives Authority will introduce progressively.

Application

This standard applies to public offices as defined in s.2 of the *Archives Act, 1960*. Following proclamation of the new State records legislation, the standard will continue to apply until it is reissued or replaced under the terms of that legislation.

Framework of standards and code of best practice

The new State records legislation will permit the State Records Authority (to be established under the legislation) to approve standards and codes of best practice for records management by public offices. This standard is one of the first in a series that will be issued progressively in preparation for, and subsequently under, the legislation. The standards and codes of best practice are supported by guidelines, training and other forms of advice and assistance. The elements in this framework are summarised graphically on the inside front cover of this standard and are described in more detail in the following paragraphs.

Standards

In this framework, standards will be mandatory under the new legislation and are intended to function as minimum performance standards, measurable by public offices and auditors. They will be supported by mechanisms for monitoring and reporting compliance. They are designed to focus on outcomes, rather than specific practices.

Pending passage and proclamation of the legislation, there is no formal requirement for monitoring and reporting compliance with this standard. Public offices should expect their compliance with the standard to be assessed in any case where the quality of their recordkeeping is called into question.

Codes of best practice

These codify and describe best practice, functioning as a benchmark against which an organisation can measure its practices and systems. While it is not intended that these be subject to formal compliance monitoring under the new legislation, failure to comply would leave a public office open to criticism in an investigation where recordkeeping practices were an issue.

Guidelines and manuals

These represent practical guidance in support of the standards and codes of best practice.

Training and support

These are a means of providing further guidance and assistance to public offices and their staff for practical application. They include the Authority's training courses and records storage and related consultancy services offered by the Government Records Repository.

Structure

This standard establishes principles for making and keeping full and accurate records. In short, the principles are that:

1. recordkeeping should be *compliant*
2. recordkeeping should be *reliable*
3. recordkeeping should be *systematic*
4. recordkeeping should be *managed*
5. recordkeeping should be *routine*
6. records should be *made*
7. records should be *retained*
8. records should be *complete*
9. records should be *comprehensive*
10. records should be *adequate*
11. records should be *accurate*
12. records should be *authentic*
13. records should be *useable*
14. records should be *inviolable*.

This standard is arranged according to these principles. Each principle is stated and explained, followed by examples of means of complying with the principle. Public offices must comply with each of the principles in this standard. The standard is concerned, however, with outcomes rather than with prescribing specific recordkeeping practices. Consequently, the examples should be viewed as guidance to help comply with each principle, rather than as minimum compliance requirements. Other standards will establish specific requirements in relation to aspects of certain of these principles. The examples are followed by sources of further guidance relevant to the principle, where available.

For more information

For further information about recordkeeping standards, codes of best practice and associated guidance, contact:

The Archives Authority of New South Wales
Level 3, 66 Harrington Street
The Rocks Sydney NSW 2000

Telephone: (02) 9237 0120
Facsimile: (02) 9237 0119
E-mail: govrec@records.nsw.gov.au
Web Site: <http://www.records.nsw.gov.au>

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this standard the following definitions apply. The definitions are taken from Australian Standard AS 4390—1996: *Records Management*, Part 1: *General*, except definitions marked *.

Accountability

The principle that individuals, organisations and the community are required to account to others for their actions. Organisations and their employees must be able to account to appropriate regulatory authorities, to shareholders or members, and to the public to meet statutory obligations, audit requirements, relevant standards and codes of practice, and community expectations.

Appraisal

The process of evaluating business activities to determine which records need to be captured and how long the records need to be kept, to meet business needs, the requirements of organisational accountability and community expectations.

Business activity

Umbrella term covering all the functions, processes, activities and transactions of an organisation and its employees. Includes public administration as well as commercial business.

Capture

A deliberate action which results in the registration of a record into a recordkeeping system. For certain business activities, this action may be designed into electronic systems so that the capture of records is concurrent with the creation of records.

Disposal

A range of processes associated with implementing appraisal decisions. These include the retention, deletion or destruction of records in or from recordkeeping systems. They may also include the migration or transmission of records between recordkeeping systems, and the transfer of custody or ownership of records.

Documents

Structured units of recorded information, published or unpublished, in hard copy or electronic form, and managed as discrete units in information systems.

Electronic records

Records communicated and maintained by means of electronic equipment.

Evidence

Information that tends to prove a fact. Not limited to the legal sense of the term.

Function

The largest unit of business activity in an organisation or jurisdiction.

Information systems

Organised collections of hardware, software, supplies, policies, procedures and people, which store, process and provide access to information.

Metadata*

Data describing data and data systems. In electronic recordkeeping, this means data that must be captured along with electronic records to enable them to be understood and to support their management and use. (*Documenting the Future: Policy and Strategies for electronic recordkeeping in the New South Wales Public Sector*, Archives Authority of New South Wales, 1995, Appendix 1: Glossary)

Public office*

Any department, office, commission, board, corporation, agency, or instrument of any kind, performing any functions of any branch of the Government of New South Wales, and any office or body proclaimed under subsection (3) to be a public office for the purposes of this Act, but does not include any local authority that has not been proclaimed as aforesaid. (*Archives Act, No. 46 of 1960*, section 2(1))

Recordkeeping

Making and maintaining complete, accurate and reliable evidence of business transactions in the form of recorded information.

Recordkeeping systems

Information systems which capture, maintain and provide access to records over time.

Records

Recorded information, in any form, including data in computer systems, created or received and maintained by an organisation or person in the transaction of business or the conduct of affairs and kept as evidence of such activity.

Records continuum

The whole extent of a record's existence. Refers to a consistent and coherent regime of management processes from the time of the creation of records (and before creation, in the design of recordkeeping systems), through to the preservation and use of records as archives.

Records management

The discipline and organisational function of managing records to meet operational business needs, accountability requirements and community expectations.

Transaction

The smallest unit of business activity. Uses of records are themselves transactions.

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THE PRINCIPLES

1 RECORDKEEPING SHOULD BE COMPLIANT

Recordkeeping should comply with legal and administrative requirements.

Explanation

Every public office operates in an accountability environment where the organisation as a whole, its chief executive and/or individual employees are accountable for decisions and actions. This environment can include:

- statutory rights and obligations
- audit requirements
- accountability to Ministers and boards for the carriage of programs
- possible scrutiny by investigative bodies like Royal Commissions, the Independent Commission Against Corruption, Parliamentary Committees and the Ombudsman
- possible administrative or judicial review
- industry-based codes of practice
- management and reporting arrangements within the organisation, and
- the relationships of staff members and supervisors.

Every public office should be aware at the corporate or program level of the accountability requirements which bear upon it and how they affect recordkeeping and should take steps to comply with those requirements. Employees must understand how they are affected. There may be an audit requirement, for example, to keep evidence of receipt of payment for 7 years: recordkeeping will be compliant if recordkeeping practices ensure that adequate evidence of payment exists for the requisite period.

Examples of compliance with the principle

1. Legislation, regulations and formal directives to which the public office or program is subject have been systematically and comprehensively identified and documented.
2. Statements of best practice established by Government or applying in the industry in which the public office operates have been identified and are incorporated into standard operating procedures for all programs and supporting activities.
3. These sources are documented and kept up to date and associated recordkeeping requirements are identified.
4. Business rules and procedures governing work practices reflect obligations imposed by these recordkeeping requirements.
5. The procedures, forms and documentation for transactions which are governed by external rules/regulations routinely include references to those external rules and their currency.

For further guidance

Australian Standard AS 4390—1996: *Records Management, Part 2: Responsibilities* and *Part 3: Strategies*

2 RECORDKEEPING SHOULD BE RELIABLE

Recordkeeping systems, procedures and practices should work reliably to ensure that records are credible and authoritative.

Explanation

To document business transactions fully and accurately, it must be possible to demonstrate that records are what they purport to be. Thus, the recordkeeping system must operate in such a way that the records retrieved from it are credible and authoritative. This requires that recordkeeping systems, procedures and practices work reliably.

Examples of compliance with the principle

1. Recordkeeping systems, procedures and practices (and those aspects of business processes and systems which involve recordkeeping) are operating routinely at the time of the transactions documented by the records.
2. Procedures, guidelines and tools (such as classification schemes and disposal authorities) for performing recordkeeping processes are regularly vetted in accordance with approved review/audit programs and tested to minimise uncertainty, ambiguity and the need to exercise subjective judgement in routine tasks.
3. Standard procedures exist for reporting failures of any kind in recordkeeping systems, including systems failure in electronic recordkeeping and computerised records management systems.
4. Recordkeeping systems are subject to regular performance audits.

For further guidance

Australian Standard AS 4390—1996: *Records Management, Part 3: Strategies, Appendix C: Check List for Performance Testing of Records Management Systems*

3 RECORDKEEPING SHOULD BE SYSTEMATIC

Records should be made, maintained and managed systematically.

Explanation

Records that will meet business needs, accountability requirements and other organisational needs cannot be made, maintained or managed in the absence of system. *Laissez faire* recordkeeping is inevitably poor recordkeeping. The constant evolution of business practices and processes, the dismantling of centralised recordkeeping systems and the increasing use of electronic information and communications systems in business have broken down the systems on which we could once rely to ensure that recordkeeping took place. All too often inadequate or no new systems have been established in their place.

Recordkeeping practices must be systematised through the design and operation of recordkeeping systems and of business systems and processes which incorporate recordkeeping. A recordkeeping system must have accurately documented policies, assigned responsibilities and formal methodologies for its management.

All records, regardless of format and the technological environment in which they are generated, should be captured into, and maintained in, identifiable recordkeeping systems. These systems do not have to be large or centralised or accessible by everyone in the organisation. They can be based on workgroups; they can be designed to meet the specific needs of business units; they can control access and security to meet requirements for confidentiality. They do not have to be dedicated recordkeeping systems: they can be business application systems which incorporate the functionality required to keep records. There is, however, no justification for keeping official records outside the public office's recordkeeping systems.

Examples of compliance with the principle

1. Recordkeeping systems are implemented and operating in all areas of the organisation.
2. Policies, rules and procedures require all recordkeeping in the organisation to take place through recordkeeping systems.
3. Support for recordkeeping is integrated into policies, business rules, standard operating procedures and the design of work processes and of information, business application and communication systems.
4. Policies, business rules, standard operating procedures, system administration procedures, and user guidance and instructions governing the operation and management of each recordkeeping system are documented and kept up to date.
5. Changes to recordkeeping systems are documented and auditable.

6. The commissioning and decommissioning of recordkeeping systems is documented.
7. Policies, business rules and standard operating procedures instruct employees (including agents and contractors) performing work in unstructured processes to make appropriate records of the transactions in which they participate.
8. Employees (including agents and contractors) receive appropriate training and guidance in the use of recordkeeping systems.
9. Written guidelines and training are provided to help employees (including agents and contractors) and workgroups meet their recordkeeping responsibilities.

For further guidance

Australian Standard AS 4390—1996: *Records Management, Part 2: Responsibilities* and *Part 3: Strategies*

4 RECORDKEEPING SHOULD BE MANAGED

Recordkeeping must be managed through an identifiable records management program.

Explanation

Recordkeeping systems must have accurately documented policies, assigned responsibilities, and formal methodologies for their management. This applies equally to dedicated recordkeeping systems and to business application systems functioning as recordkeeping systems.

New State records legislation will require public offices to establish and maintain a records management program in conformity with standards and codes of best practice formulated by the State Records Authority (to be established under the legislation). This requirement is the subject of a separate standard.

Examples of compliance with the principle

1. Records management operations and systems are organised according to the needs and structure of the public office, the nature of its business and the prevailing technological and regulatory environments.
2. The records management program is identifiable from all other corporate programs.
3. The records management program is supported by corporate policy.
4. The records management program is planned and allocated appropriate resources.
5. Formal responsibility for all aspects of the records management program is appropriately assigned.
6. The records management program is appropriately located within the organisational structure of the public office.
7. The records management program is staffed by personnel with appropriate skills and knowledge.
8. The records management program is implemented throughout the organisation.
9. The records management program is regularly measured.

For further guidance

Standard on Records Management Programs, Archives Authority of New South Wales, 1998

5 RECORDKEEPING SHOULD BE ROUTINE

Recordkeeping systems should be used when transacting business.

Explanation

Making records and capturing them into recordkeeping systems should be a normal part of work. Building recordkeeping into business processes and systems should be done in such a way as to support, and not hinder, peoples' work.

Business processes and systems should be designed to make it easy, or even automatic, to make appropriate records of all transactions.

Electronic business technologies provide unprecedented opportunities to put this principle into effect. Provided that the necessary specifications, based on identified recordkeeping requirements, can be furnished, it is feasible to design business application systems which automate all or most of the recordkeeping associated with using them. This kind of approach is particularly valuable when it can be applied in conjunction with business process re-engineering and/or the re-design of electronic information systems.

Examples of compliance with the principle

1. Adequate recordkeeping is a part of all business processes.
2. Business application systems and electronic information systems used in business processes are designed or modified to make the capture of records as easy as possible or, where possible, entirely transparent to the user.
3. Records are created in a recordkeeping system only through the execution of a business transaction.
4. It is possible to show that all recordkeeping systems and/or documented exception procedures have been operating at all times.

6 RECORDS SHOULD BE MADE

Records should be made to document and facilitate the transaction of business and captured into recordkeeping systems.

Explanation

Records document decisions and actions taken in the course of conducting the business of a public office. Records should emanate directly from the transaction of business. In many cases, the very ways in which people and organisations do business results naturally in the creation and accumulation of records. In other cases, a record must be made on purpose because conducting the transaction does not, by itself, generate a record.

Records may be made as the means by which a transaction occurs. For example, a contract itself has a legal effect; an electronic message itself conveys information. Alternatively records may be made to record what was decided or done. For example, minutes of a meeting are made after the meeting. In either case, the record is then kept as evidence of the transaction.

Records need to be captured into recordkeeping systems that can maintain and demonstrate the connection between the record and the transaction(s) that generated it or which it was made to document.

Examples of compliance with the principle

1. The functions and activities of the public office which require records to be made are identified and documented.
2. Inwards communications (such as electronic messages, faxes, telephone conversations and correspondence) with external persons and bodies are kept.
3. Copies of outwards communications with external persons and bodies are kept.
4. Internal communications are kept.
5. Minutes or other records are made of meetings, consultations, and deliberations involving the making of decisions or the transaction of business.
6. Records are made of oral decisions or commitments.
7. Records are made of the individual exercise of a discretionary judgement.
8. Policy and procedures for the capture of records into the recordkeeping systems of the public office are established and implemented.
9. All records are captured as a matter of course into the public office's recordkeeping systems.

For further guidance

Australian Standard AS 4390—1996: *Records Management, Part 3: Strategies, Clause 8: Cases*

7 RECORDS SHOULD BE RETAINED

Records should be retained for as long as they are needed.

Explanation

Records should be retained for as long as they are needed to meet business needs, the requirements of organisational accountability and community expectations. The length of time for which a record must be retained is determined by the requirements for retention of evidence that are associated with the business activity which the record documents. These requirements should be identified systematically through an appraisal process.

A record is retained so long as its content, and the structure and context supporting the meaning of content, are needed. Deletion of content or structure should only occur when authorised.

The disposal of records should take place only in accordance with relevant law. The retention and disposal of public records is governed by the *Archives Act, 1960*. The new State records legislation will have similar provisions.

The process of disposing of records should be accountable, documenting the nature and time of disposal action and the identity of the person taking the action. Only authorised people should take disposal action. This applies equally in the electronic environment, where such techniques as building audit trails into electronic recordkeeping systems can be used to document authorised disposal action.

Examples of compliance with the principle

1. Records appraisal and disposal practices are established and maintained in accordance with the disposal provisions of the *Archives Act, 1960*.
2. Records disposal takes place in an accountable process.
3. It is possible to identify that the disposal action occurred, when it occurred, who took the action, and that the person was authorised to do so.
4. Audit trails record the disposal of electronic records in electronic recordkeeping systems.

For further guidance

Australian Standard AS 4390—1996: *Records Management, Part 5: Appraisal and disposal*

How to Dispose of Public Records, Archives Authority of New South Wales, 1993

Destruction of Records: a Practical Guide, Archives Authority of New South Wales, 1996

Guidelines for the Destruction of Ephemeral, Facilitative and Duplicate Records, Archives Authority of New South Wales, 1996

8 RECORDS SHOULD BE COMPLETE

A record should contain not only the content, but also the structural and contextual information necessary to document a transaction. It should be possible to understand a record in the context of the organisational processes that produced it and of other, linked records.

Explanation

A record comprises content, structure and context.

The *structure* of a record, that is, the relationships between the data elements comprising a record, provides an essential part of its meaning. In a letter, for example, structural data includes the different components of the letter (addressee, data, text, sender, etc.) and the order in which they appear. If they appear in a different order, or if some do not appear at all, the letter will make no sense. Maintaining structure is a particularly important requirement for electronic records.

The use of standard templates for the creation of documents provides a common structure, which is easier to maintain than multiple structures. Records in the form of electronic documents must be maintained in ways which retain layout, formatting and other elements of the document's structure. Thus it is not enough to retain a richly formatted document as an ASCII file: it must be retained in a format which enables the record to be rendered with its structure intact. The information content and structure of electronic records must be retained in reconstructable relations, particularly when migrating them to new software environments.

The *context* in which records were created and used in the course of business should be apparent. To document decisions and activities, it is necessary to be able to show who did what, where, when, how, and why. In some kinds of records the *content* and the *contextual information* (who took part in the transaction, when, as part of what larger activity) are separate data elements, which must both be maintained. Thus it is not enough to keep just the content of electronic mail messages: contextual data, such as the name and position of sender and recipient, date and time of sending, whether and when it has been read, copies sent to other people, and links to replies must also be captured and maintained.

A record must also carry the contextual linkages to other records that are necessary to understand the transaction in which it was created and used. The links between records which document a sequence of activity must be maintained.

Examples of compliance with the principle

1. The date (and time, if necessary) of a transaction is always part of the record.
2. Inwards communications are date-stamped (and time-stamped, if necessary) on receipt.
3. Document templates are used to date- and time-stamp a document on creation and to standardise the form/structure of documents.

4. Sufficient information about the business activity context in which records are made and used, and other metadata, is maintained to enable records to be understood when they are retrieved.
5. The chronological relationship between individual records which form a cumulative record of business activity is preserved.
6. An electronic mail message that is a reply to a previous one contains the previous message or a reference to it.

For further guidance

Australian Standard AS 4390—1996: *Records Management, Part 3: Strategies*

9 RECORDS SHOULD BE COMPREHENSIVE

Records should document the whole of the business of a public office.

Explanation

Records should be made of all facets of the public office's operations. Recordkeeping should not be selective, so that some parts of the business have no records at all. Recordkeeping should take place in all technological environments in which the public office carries out its business.

Records must be made for all those business transactions for which a requirement for evidence exists. While evidence of some types of transactions need only be maintained for a short time, this does not diminish the requirement for evidence during that period of time.

Public offices should ensure that the operations of outsourced functions are documented adequately to satisfy recordkeeping requirements to which the public office is subject.

Examples of compliance with the principle

1. A public office has developed and promulgated common corporate policy and standards relating to recordkeeping throughout the public office.
2. Employees understand their obligations to make and keep records in the course of their duties.
3. Employees (including agents, contractors etc.) receive appropriate training and guidance in the use of recordkeeping systems.
4. Recordkeeping systems operate to capture and maintain records documenting all aspects of a public office's business, including business which is carried out electronically.
5. Records are made for all business transactions for which any requirement for evidence exists.

For further guidance

Australian Standard AS 4390—1996: *Records Management*, Part 2: *Responsibilities* and Part 3: *Strategies*, Clause 8: *Cases*

10 RECORDS SHOULD BE ADEQUATE

Records should be adequate for the purposes for which they are kept.

Explanation

Records are kept to support future business activity and to meet accountability requirements. A record must be adequate to the extent necessary to:

- facilitate action by employees (including agents and contractors) at any level and by their successors
- make possible a proper scrutiny of the conduct of business by anyone authorised to undertake such scrutiny, and
- protect the financial, legal and other rights of the organisation, its clients and any other people affected by its actions and decisions.

What is adequate will depend on the purpose of the record, that is, the requirement for evidence or other organisational need that it must meet. For example, a major policy initiative will be extensively documented, while a routine administrative action can be documented with an identifiable minimum of information.

There must be adequate evidence of the conduct of business activity to be able to account for that conduct within the context of relevant accountability requirements. The principal way of ensuring that this evidence exists is to keep full and accurate records.

Examples of compliance with the principle

1. A public office has identified what constitutes adequate evidence to meet or support each identified accountability requirement. This process can include a risk assessment, covering the likelihood of needing the evidence and the consequences of not having it.
2. The reasoning behind any decision based on a risk assessment is documented and the decision authorised at an appropriate level.

For further guidance

Australian Standard AS 4390—1996: *Records Management*, Part 3: *Strategies*, Clause 8: *Cases*

11 RECORDS SHOULD BE ACCURATE

Records should correctly reflect what was communicated, decided or done.

Explanation

Recordkeeping procedures and practices must be designed to ensure that a record correctly reflects what occurred. Business processes and systems should be designed to make it easy, or even automatic, to make accurate records of transactions.

Falsifying information in a record is illegal.

Examples of compliance with the principle

1. Business rules and codes of conduct require employees (including agents, contractors etc.) to make records which accurately reflect the transactions which they intend to document.
2. Originals of inwards communications (or legally admissible copies) are kept.
3. Copies of outwards communications are signed or initialled.
4. Minutes of meetings are signed when confirmed.
5. Records creation requirements are considered in the design or redesign of any business process or system.
6. Quality control measures are built into the design of recordkeeping systems, to ensure the accuracy of data entered into them.

12 RECORDS SHOULD BE AUTHENTIC

Records should be what they purport to be.

Explanation

It must be possible to prove that records are what they purport to be and that their purported creators, including the senders of communications, indeed created them. The recordkeeping system must operate so that the records derived from it are credible and authoritative. It should be possible to show that the recordkeeping system was operating normally at the time the records were captured by the system.

Ensuring that a record is authentic does not necessarily make it any more reliable. An authentic record can contain false or inaccurate information which may render it unreliable. Ensuring authenticity, however, minimises risk.

Examples of compliance with the principle

1. The authorised creators of records and their authorised roles in business activity are documented and kept up to date.
2. Information systems used for the conduct of business or for recordkeeping contain safeguards to prevent unauthorised users from conducting transactions or making records of them.
3. Recordkeeping systems operate normally on any given business day.
4. Recordkeeping systems should be secure to preserve the evidential quality of records.
5. Migration of records from one system to another should be controlled and documented to preserve the evidential quality of the records.

13 RECORDS SHOULD BE USEABLE

Records should be identifiable, retrievable, accessible and available when needed.

Explanation

To be able to be used, records must be maintained in such a way that they can be quickly and easily identified and retrieved when they are required. Availability is different, however, from accessibility. Records are not available unless retrieval systems are adequate, but access to records may be tightly restricted (for example, for security or privacy reasons). It is not necessary that access to records be unrestricted to comply with this principle.

It is necessary, however, that the records be clearly in the control of a public office and available to meet its information and evidential needs when required. Small local and personal records systems which render the records inaccessible to others needing access to them (for example, in an employee's filing cabinet, on a personal computer's hard drive or in a small, unmanaged peer to peer network), should be discouraged. Official records should not be maintained personally or privately by employees. Even if access to records is limited to one person, it must be possible to demonstrate that, in the event of sudden death or removal, procedures are in place to ensure that the records automatically and routinely become available to that person's successor.

In situations where the entire record may not be made accessible for legitimate reasons, a copy should be provided with relevant portions of the record masked and a record made of its use linked to the original record. In designing recordkeeping systems, privacy and other confidentiality requirements must be identified to ensure that records are useable while meeting those requirements.

To be useable, it must be possible to transmit a record to another system without loss of content, context and structure.

Examples of compliance with the principle

1. A public office knows what records it has and what records it no longer has.
2. A public office knows where all its records are.
3. Records are captured into corporate recordkeeping systems.
4. Records are registered, classified and otherwise controlled using systems and methods which verify their existence and enable them to be retrieved quickly and easily when needed.
5. Each record can be uniquely identified.
6. Paper-based records are managed in filing systems and are not allowed to circulate unattached or uncontrolled around the organisation.
7. Recordkeeping systems incorporate effective searching and retrieval tools.

8. Records are maintained in such a way that they can be adduced as evidence under the relevant evidence legislation and court rules.
9. The creation or use of masked records is documented and included in the audit trail.
10. Electronic records are maintained and accessible to users in electronic form.
11. Where records are maintained in technologically dependent forms, including microform or digital images, the equipment and software necessary to render them in human-readable and useable form is available and maintained over time.
12. Alternatively, where records are maintained in technologically dependent forms, they are migrated to new technological environments with minimal loss of functionality and ensuring their continued authenticity.
13. Recordkeeping systems incorporate adequate security controls to deny access to unauthorised users.
14. Records can be understood by all who are entitled to have access to them.

For further guidance

Australian Standard AS 4390—1996: *Records Management, Part 4: Control*

14 RECORDS SHOULD BE INVIOATE

Records should be securely maintained to prevent unauthorised access, destruction, alteration or removal.

Explanation

Records should be kept using facilities, materials and methods which promote their survival undamaged for as long as they are needed. Records should be protected from tampering, unauthorised alteration, and from accidental or intended damage or destruction. The protection can include the physical security of premises, the selection of appropriate materials and systems, and procedures which hinder loss or unauthorised alteration.

No information in a record may be deleted, altered or lost once the transaction which it documents has occurred. Of course, records can legitimately be destroyed, but, while they exist, they must be inviolate.

The new State Records legislation will provide that a person must not, among other things, damage or alter a State record, outside certain strictly defined exceptions. Such exceptions would include the correction of incomplete, incorrect, misleading or out of date personal information under the *Freedom of Information Act, 1989*.

Where information is added to an existing record, for example by annotating it, (this addition is really part of a new transaction) the added information should be initialled and dated. For an electronic record, an appropriate annotation tool should be used. That is, additional information should never be added to a record in such a way that it appears to be part of the original record.

Examples of compliance with the principle

1. Recordkeeping systems and storage facilities are protected from unauthorised access, destruction or theft, or from accidental damage by fire, flood, and vermin.
2. For file based records, folios are numbered as they are attached to the file, to hinder their unauthorised removal, and their attachment is recorded on the file's minute sheet and/or using records management software.
3. Storage media and related technologies and practices for maintaining electronic records are specified, designed, operated and maintained in such a way that records cannot be altered. This can include the use of WORM disk storage systems, software and hardware based security controls and audit trails.
4. Electronic records are captured and maintained in a records data store to which users have read-only access.
5. Records appraised as requiring long-term retention are stored in an air-conditioned, dust-free environment, with stable and controlled temperature and humidity.

6. Records are maintained with appropriate security or other access restrictions. Where access to records is restricted for security, privacy, commercial or other reasons, measures to ensure such restrictions operate effectively and consistently.
7. Sound data management practices are in place, especially regular backups, copying programs, and the exercising and cleaning of storage media.
8. Disposal decisions are recorded, authorised and monitored.

For further guidance

Australian Standard AS 4390—1996: *Records Management, Part 6: Storage*

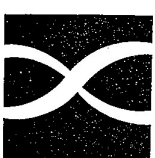
Handle with Care: A Guide to the Care of Records, Archives Authority of New South Wales, 1993

IM&T Blueprint Memorandum Number 3.3: Security, NSW Office of Information Technology, 1997

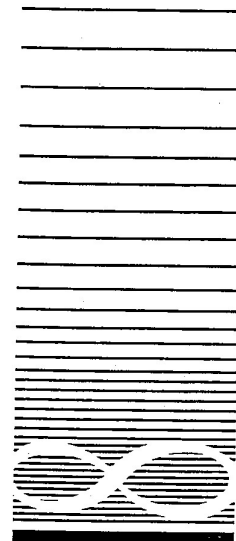
IM&T Guideline: Security of Information Systems, NSW Office of Information Technology, 1996

IM&T Guideline: Security of Electronic Information Systems, NSW Office of Information Technology, 1997

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Records Management Programs



THE ARCHIVES
AUTHORITY OF
NEW SOUTH WALES

Record Management
Standard

2

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STANDARD ON RECORDS MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS

THE ARCHIVES AUTHORITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES
Sydney, Australia
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STANDARD ON RECORDS MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This standard was prepared for issue under new State records legislation, a key provision of which will require public offices to establish and maintain a records management program in conformity with standards and codes of best practice approved by the State Records Authority that is to be established under the legislation. Pending proclamation of the legislation, the standard is issued to establish principles to guide public offices in establishing and maintaining those programs and to enable public offices to prepare to meet their obligations under the new legislation.

The standard applies to public offices as defined in s.2 of the *Archives Act, 1960*. Following proclamation of the new State records legislation, the standard will continue to apply until it is reissued or replaced under the terms of that legislation.

This standard is part of a framework of standards and codes of best practice, supported by guidelines, training and other forms of advice and assistance, as summarised in the framework on the inside front cover of this standard.

This standard outlines nine principles which should be addressed by public offices when they establish a records management program. In short, these are:

1. **Identifiable:** the records management program should be identifiable from all other corporate programs.
2. **Supported by policy:** the records management program should be supported by corporate policy.
3. **Planned:** the records management program should be planned.
4. **Assigned:** formal responsibility for all aspects of the records management program should be appropriately assigned.
5. **Located:** the records management program should be appropriately located within the organisational structure of the public office.
6. **Organised:** records management operations and systems should be organised according to the needs and structure of the public office, the nature of its business and the prevailing technological and regulatory environments.
7. **Staffed with skilled people:** the records management program should be staffed by personnel with appropriate skills.
8. **Implemented:** the records management program should be implemented throughout the organisation.
9. **Measured:** the records management program should be regularly measured.

Each principle is stated and explained, and is followed by minimum compliance requirements. The requirements are followed by sources of further guidance relevant to the principle, where

available. A compliance checklist forms an attachment to the standard to assist public offices and auditors in assessing their performance against these requirements.

Besides their formal role, the principal purpose of this and other standards, codes of best practice and other forms of guidance is to promote recordkeeping best practice across the New South Wales public sector. This means that the building of systematic recordkeeping into business processes and systems should be done in such a way as to support and not hinder people's work.

INTRODUCTION

Background

New State records legislation will require public offices to establish and maintain a records management program in conformity with standards and codes of best practice approved by the State Records Authority that is to be established under the legislation. This standard was prepared for issue under that legislation. Pending its proclamation, the standard is issued to promote best practice in recordkeeping and to enable public offices to prepare to meet their obligations under the legislation.

The standard was issued as an exposure draft in May 1996 and revised to take account of public offices' comments. The resulting final draft was reviewed by the Chief Executives' Committee and approved by the board of the Archives Authority in December 1997.

Purpose

The purpose of this standard is to set minimum requirements for public offices' records management programs and to establish principles to guide public offices in establishing and maintaining those programs.

Application

This standard applies to public offices as defined in s.2 of the *Archives Act, 1960*. Following proclamation of the new State records legislation, the standard will continue to apply until it is reissued or replaced under the terms of that legislation.

Framework of standards and code of best practice

The new State records legislation will permit the State Records Authority (to be established under the legislation) to approve standards and codes of best practice for records management by public offices. This standard is one of the first in a series that will be issued progressively in preparation for, and subsequently under, the legislation. The standards and codes of best practice are supported by guidelines, training and other forms of advice and assistance. The elements in this framework are summarised graphically on the inside front cover of this standard and are described in more detail in the following paragraphs.

Standards

In this framework, standards will be mandatory under the new legislation and are intended to function as minimum performance standards, measurable by public offices and auditors. They will be supported by mechanisms for monitoring and reporting compliance. They are designed to focus on outcomes, rather than specific practices.

Pending passage and proclamation of the legislation, there is no formal requirement for monitoring and reporting compliance with this standard. Public offices should expect their

compliance with the standard to be assessed in any case where the quality of their recordkeeping is called into question.

Codes of best practice

These codify and describe best practice, functioning as a benchmark against which an organisation can measure its practices and systems. While it is not intended that these be subject to formal compliance monitoring under the new legislation, failure to comply would leave a public office open to criticism in an investigation where recordkeeping practices were an issue.

Guidelines and manuals

These represent practical guidance in support of the standards and codes of best practice.

Training and support

These are a means of providing further guidance and assistance to public offices and their staff for practical application. They include the Authority's training courses and records storage and related consultancy services offered by the Government Records Repository.

Structure

A public office should establish and maintain its records management program in accordance with a number of principles. In short, a records management program should be:

1. identifiable
2. supported by policy
3. planned
4. assigned
5. located
6. organised
7. staffed with skilled people
8. implemented, and
9. measured.

This standard is arranged according to these principles. Each principle is stated and explained and is followed by minimum compliance requirements. The requirements are followed by sources of further guidance relevant to the principle, where available. A compliance checklist forms an attachment to the standard to assist public offices and auditors in assessing performance against these requirements.

1.6 For more information

For further information about recordkeeping standards and code of best practice and associated guidance, contact:

The Archives Authority of New South Wales
Level 3, 66 Harrington Street
The Rocks Sydney NSW 2000

Telephone: (02) 9237 0120
Facsimile: (02) 9237 0119
E-mail: govrec@records.nsw.gov.au
Web Site: <http://www.records.nsw.gov.au>

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this standard the following definitions apply. The definitions are taken from Australian Standard AS 4390—1996: *Records Management*, Part 1: *General*, except definitions marked *.

Accountability

The principle that individuals, organisations and the community are required to account to others for their actions. Organisations and their employees must be able to account to appropriate regulatory authorities, to shareholders or members, and to the public to meet statutory obligations, audit requirements, relevant standards and codes of practice, and community expectations.

Business activity

Umbrella term covering all the functions, processes, activities and transactions of an organisation and its employees. Includes public administration as well as commercial business.

*Corporate Governance**

Corporate Governance is the system or process by which companies are directed and controlled. Corporate Governance is concerned with the way that the directors control the activities of the company and ensure that the managers to whom they delegate many functions are accountable. A good system of Corporate Governance should enable responsibility to be clearly defined. Directors...have responsibility for the governance of their companies. (Bryce Hardman, 'Corporate Governance — A Practical Guide for Directors and Secretaries', *Australian Company Secretary* (July 1996))

Documents

Structured units of recorded information, published or unpublished, in hard copy or electronic form, and managed as discrete units in information systems.

Evidence

Information that tends to prove a fact. Not limited to the legal sense of the term.

Function

The largest unit of business activity in an organisation or jurisdiction.

*Public office**

Any department, office, commission, board, corporation, agency, or instrument of any kind, performing any functions of any branch of the Government of New South Wales, and any office or body proclaimed under subsection (3) to be a public office for the purposes of this Act, but does not include any local authority that has not been proclaimed as aforesaid. (*Archives Act, No. 46 of 1960, section 2(1)*)

Recordkeeping

Making and maintaining complete, accurate and reliable evidence of business transactions in the form of recorded information.

Recordkeeping systems

Information systems which capture, maintain and provide access to records over time.

Records

Recorded information, in any form, including data in computer systems, created or received and maintained by an organisation or person in the transaction of business or the conduct of affairs and kept as evidence of such activity.

Records continuum

The whole extent of a record's existence. Refers to a consistent and coherent regime of management processes from the time of the creation of records (and before creation, in the design of recordkeeping systems), through to the preservation and use of records as archives.

Records management

The discipline and organisational function of managing records to meet operational business needs, accountability requirements and community expectations.

Transaction

The smallest unit of business activity. Uses of records are themselves transactions.

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THE PRINCIPLES

1 IDENTIFIABLE

The records management program should be identifiable from all other corporate programs.

Explanation

The records management program consists of a unique group of activities. Each public office should establish and maintain a records management program for performing these activities that is identifiable from other corporate programs through policy statements, corporate planning documents, the allocation of resources and the assignment of responsibility.

Minimum compliance requirements

A compliant public office will be able to demonstrate that the records management program is:

- distinguished from all other programs by having a separate policy statement adopted at the corporate level
- included as a result area in corporate plans
- allocated appropriate resources to enable the program to be established and maintained
- the responsibility of a single identified senior manager.

2 SUPPORTED BY POLICY

The records management program should be supported by corporate policy.

Explanation

Each public office should develop and implement a records management policy. The records management policy should be documented, authorised and promulgated throughout the public office. It should encompass all aspects of recordkeeping and records management, including recordkeeping in the electronic environment.

As the Australian Standard notes, the objective of the policy should be ‘...the creation and maintenance of records with appropriate evidential characteristics.’ (AS 4390—1996: *Records Management*, Part 2: *Responsibilities*, Clause 5.1.1)

The policy should ‘...identify the chief executive officer or a senior management delegate who shall have defined authorities for compliance to external recordkeeping standards, which may or may not include legislative requirements, and be responsible for internal practices.’ (AS 4390—1996: *Records Management*, Part 2: *Responsibilities*, Clause 5.1.2) The assignment of responsibility for the records management program is discussed further under Principle 4.

Minimum compliance requirements

A compliant public office will be able to demonstrate that a records management policy:

- exists in the form of one or more identifiable policy statements
- is authorised at an appropriate senior level
- is promulgated throughout the public office
- is known by staff
- is reviewed at regular intervals
- is addressed in the public office’s operating procedures, business rules, manuals and employees’ *Code of Conduct*
- identifies any legislation, standards, codes of best practice or other external requirements to which the public office is subject that affect recordkeeping
- is consistent with ethical standards which are binding upon the occupations or professions of those employed by the public office
- identifies the senior manager having defined authorities for compliance to external recordkeeping standards and responsible for internal practices
- defines the authorities, responsibilities, roles and interrelationships of all personnel who manage or perform recordkeeping processes.

For further guidance

Australian Standard AS 4390—1996: *Records Management, Part 2: Responsibilities*, Clauses 5.1.1 & 5.1.2

3 PLANNED

The records management program should be planned.

Explanation

Like any other corporate program, a records management program should be planned, managed and monitored. It should have its own documented plans, developed in accordance with standard requirements for such documents operating in the public office. A records management program will have both a short-term operational plan and a long-term strategic plan.

The program should also be represented in corporate-level planning documentation as a result area, with outcomes, strategies, planned improvements and initiatives, key staff and performance indicators.

Minimum compliance requirements

A compliant public office will be able to demonstrate that a records management program:

1. has a documented operational plan
2. has a documented strategic plan
3. is incorporated into the public office's corporate-level planning documentation.

4 ASSIGNED

Formal responsibility for all aspects of the records management program should be appropriately assigned.

Explanation

Formal responsibility for the records management program should be assigned to an appropriate senior management delegate. This person will perform the role of Corporate Records Manager, which is to:

- establish records management policies for the organisation as a whole
- establish corporate standards for recordkeeping and records management
- measure performance of business units and workgroups against those standards
- provide consulting services to business units
- develop corporate electronic records management strategies
- work with other managers of information resources to develop a coherent information architecture across the organisation, and
- work with other accountability stakeholders, including auditors, FOI officers and executive management, to ensure that recordkeeping systems support organisational and public accountability.

This role should be distinguished from that of operational, business unit or workgroup level records managers and recordkeeping system administrators, who are assigned identifiable responsibilities for operational records management activities, systems and services, but often carry these out among a range of other duties.

In large organisations, the Corporate Records Manager position should be a dedicated position. In smaller organisations, the position may have other responsibilities as well.

In particular, public offices should consider the relationship between the role of Corporate Records Manager and that of Chief Information Officer (CIO). Much of the Corporate Records Manager's role in relation to records management across the organisation parallels that of the CIO in relation to the organisation's information resources as a whole. In addition to the role described above, the Corporate Records Manager should form part of the information management team and contribute to the CIO's work of planning and managing the public office's information resources, regardless of the organisational location of the records management program. In smaller organisations, it may be appropriate to assign the role of Corporate Records Manager to the CIO.

Depending on the size of the organisation, the Corporate Records Manager should be a qualified recordkeeping professional (see Principle 7) or should have immediate access to advice from such a professional.

The responsibilities of all employees in relation to recordkeeping should also be assigned and promulgated. The fundamental recordkeeping responsibilities of public sector employees

have already been articulated in other places. The Ombudsman's *Good Conduct and Administrative Practice: Guidelines for Public Authorities and Officials* define public officials' recordkeeping responsibilities. The *New South Wales Public Sector Code of Conduct* requires that, in the performance of their duties, public officials should '... maintain adequate documentation to support any decision made'.

To take employees' recordkeeping responsibilities beyond the fundamental level, it is necessary to incorporate them into policies, business rules and procedures, build them into the design of jobs and incorporate them in position profiles and descriptions. Employees need to be educated about their responsibilities.

Minimum compliance requirements

A compliant public office will be able to demonstrate that:

1. responsibility for the records management program is assigned to an appropriate senior management delegate, designated the Corporate Records Manager
2. operational records management responsibilities are formally assigned at appropriate levels
3. the recordkeeping responsibilities of individual employees have been documented and communicated to all staff.

For further guidance

Australian Standard AS 4390—1996: *Records Management, Part 2: Responsibilities*, Clauses 5 and 8

IM&T Blueprint Memorandum Number 3.2: Chief Information Officer (CIO), NSW Office of Information Technology, 1997

IM&T Guideline: Chief Information Officer (CIO), NSW Office of Information Technology, 1997

Good Conduct and administrative practice: guidelines for public authorities and officials, NSW Ombudsman, section 2.3.10, pp. 2.7-2.8

5 LOCATED

The records management program should be appropriately located within the organisational structure of the public office.

Explanation

The records management program should be appropriately located in the organisational structure to support the key objectives of the program and to perform its organisation-wide role effectively. Increasingly this will involve location with either:

- the informational management area, under the executive direction of the Chief Information Officer, or
- the 'Corporate Governance' or similar accountability-oriented area

rather than with the corporate services area.

Regardless of its organisational location, staff of the records management program should develop partnerships and other links with other key information management and accountability stakeholders in the organisation, such as information management and technology specialists, FOI Coordinators, auditors, lawyers, archivists and librarians.

Minimum compliance requirements

A compliant public office will be able to demonstrate that the records management program:

1. is organisationally located in the most appropriate way to support its key objectives and to perform its organisation-wide role effectively
2. has identified and developed relationships with other key information management and accountability stakeholders in the organisation.

For further guidance

Australian Standard AS 4390—1996: *Records Management, Part 2: Responsibilities*

6 ORGANISED

Records management operations and systems should be organised according to the needs and structure of the public office, the nature of its business and the prevailing technological and regulatory environments.

Explanation

Many models exist for organising records management operations and services. These range from traditional centralised registry systems to highly devolved workgroup-level systems. In determining a model which best suits it, a public office should consider such issues as its organisational structure, the nature of its business, its operating and technological environment, who needs to use which types of records, security and confidentiality requirements across the organisation or within particular areas, geographical spread and accommodation.

Minimum compliance requirements

A compliant public office will be able to demonstrate that:

1. an organisational model for the records management program has been chosen for identified and rational reasons
2. the organisational basis of the program is documented and known to staff.

7 STAFFED WITH SKILLED PEOPLE

The records management program should be staffed by personnel with appropriate skills and knowledge.

Explanation

A public office should ensure that it has people with the pool of skills necessary to achieve the records management program's key objectives. This means appointing suitably skilled staff to positions exercising records management responsibilities throughout the organisation and monitoring and developing the skills of existing and future staff.

Sources of education and training in records management include graduate and post-graduate university courses, TAFE courses, short course training offered by the Archives Authority and other organisations and a variety of continuing education opportunities.

The Corporate Records Manager should have relevant qualifications or immediate access to advice from someone with such qualifications (see Principle 4). These may include:

- postgraduate qualifications in the discipline of recordkeeping
- extensive industry experience
- eligibility for professional membership of relevant professional bodies
- experience implementing organisation-wide policies and standards, and
- appropriate managerial competencies and skills.

National Competency Standards for records and archives have been developed. Once these are finalised and endorsed nationally, the Archives Authority expects them to provide the basis for defining competencies in records management in the New South Wales Government.

Minimum compliance requirements

A compliant public office will be able to demonstrate that:

1. the Corporate Records Manager has relevant qualifications or has immediate access to advice from someone with such qualifications
2. other records management staff have qualifications appropriate to their positions
3. professional development for records management staff is encouraged in corporate policy and practice
4. records management staff are capable of performing the full range of tasks associated with their positions
5. records management staff are familiar with current best practice
6. a skills audit of records management staff is performed at regular intervals
7. a training needs analysis is performed at regular intervals

8. a staff development and training program is in place and available to records management and other staff
9. selection criteria for records management positions are reviewed at regular intervals to ensure currency and compliance with best practice.

8 IMPLEMENTED

The records management program should be implemented throughout the organisation.

Explanation

Implementing a records management program involves a series of tasks and actions, many of which are specified in this standard. Public offices should implement their programs systematically under the direction of a manager assigned this responsibility. It may be helpful to form a Steering Committee with representatives from major business units to oversee the implementation of the program across the organisation.

Minimum compliance requirements

In addition to meeting the other requirements in this standard, a compliant public office will be able to demonstrate that:

1. the authorities, responsibilities and interrelationships of all employees who manage or perform recordkeeping processes are defined
2. business rules and standard operating procedures state the recordkeeping responsibilities of identified positions and/or of people performing identified tasks in business processes
3. records management systems and procedures have been developed and promulgated
4. corporate strategies for making and keeping records in the electronic environment are developed and implemented
5. the success of the implementation has been assessed following its completion.

9 MEASURED

The records management program should be regularly measured.

Explanation

A public office needs to measure the performance of its records management program both to ensure that it is effective and to meet external reporting requirements. This measurement can include:

- regular program-based monitoring and reporting against plans and objectives
- formal program evaluations and operational audits
- auditing compliance with standards and codes of best practice issued by Government
- auditing compliance with other external requirements affecting recordkeeping, and
- measuring the satisfaction of customers of records management services.

New State records legislation will require each public office to make arrangements with the State Records Authority (to be established under the legislation) for the monitoring by the Authority of the public office's records management program and to report, in accordance with arrangements made with the Authority, on the implementation of the program.

Minimum compliance requirements

A compliant public office will be able to demonstrate that:

1. the performance of the records management program is regularly reviewed and assessed against its plans and objectives
2. mechanisms have been established to monitor organisation-wide compliance with standards and codes of best practice issued by Government and with other external requirements affecting recordkeeping
3. the results of reviews are documented and any corrective action required is taken.

For further guidance

Australian Standard AS 4390—1996: *Records Management, Part 3: Strategies*, Appendix C: *Check List for Performance Testing of Records Management Systems*

Records Management Checklist for Local Government, Archives Authority of New South Wales, 1993

COMPLIANCE CHECKLIST

1 Identifiable

- 1.1 Does the records management program have a separate policy statement adopted at the corporate level? Yes No
- 1.2 Is the records management program included as a result area in corporate plans? Yes No
- 1.3 Has the records management program been allocated appropriate resources to enable it to be established and maintained? Yes No
- 1.4 Is the records management program the responsibility of a single identified senior manager? Yes No

2 Supported by policy

- 2.1 Does the records management policy exist in one or more identifiable statements? Yes No
- 2.2 Is the records management policy authorised at an appropriate senior level? Yes No
- 2.3 Has the records management policy been promulgated throughout the public office? Yes No
- 2.4 Is the records management policy known by the staff of the public office? Yes No
- 2.5 Is the records management policy reviewed at regular intervals? Yes No
- 2.6 Is the records management policy addressed in the public office's operating procedures, business rules, manuals and employees' *Code of Conduct*? Yes No
- 2.7 Does the records management identifies any legislation, standards, codes of best practice or other external requirements to which the public office is subject that affect recordkeeping? Yes No
- 2.8 Is the records management policy consistent with ethical standards binding upon the occupations and professions of those employed by the public office? Yes No

2.9 Does the records management policy identify the senior manager having defined authorities for compliance to external recordkeeping standards and responsible for internal practices? Yes No

2.10 Does the records management policy define the authorities, responsibilities and interrelationships of all personnel who manage or perform recordkeeping processes? Yes No

3 Planned

3.1 Does the records management program have a documented operational plan? Yes No

3.2 Does the records management program have a documented strategic plan? Yes No

3.3 Is the records management program is incorporated into the public office's corporate-level planning documentation? Yes No

4 Assigned

4.1 Is the responsibility for the records management program assigned to an appropriate senior management delegate? Yes No

4.2 Are operational records management responsibilities formally assigned at appropriate levels? Yes No

4.3 Are recordkeeping responsibilities of individual employees documented and communicated to all staff? Yes No

5 Located

5.1 Is the records management program organisationally located in the most appropriate way to support its key objectives and to perform its organisation-wide role effectively? Yes No

5.2 Have the relationships with other key information management and accountability stakeholders in the organisation been identified and developed? Yes No

6 Organised

- 6.1 Has an organisational model for the records management program been used? Yes No
- 6.2 Is the organisational basis for the records management program documented and known to staff? Yes No

7 Staffed with skilled people

- 7.1 Does the Corporate Records Manager have relevant qualifications or immediate access to advice from someone with such qualifications? Yes No
- 7.2 Are other records management staff appropriately qualified for their positions? Yes No
- 7.3 Is professional development encouraged through corporate policy and practice? Yes No
- 7.4 Are records management staff capable of performing the full range of tasks associated with their positions? Yes No
- 7.5 Are records management staff familiar with current best practice? Yes No
- 7.6 Is a skills audit of records management staff performed at regular intervals? Yes No
- 7.7 Is a training needs analysis performed at regular intervals? Yes No
- 7.8 Is a staff development and training program in place and available to records management and other staff? Yes No
- 7.9 Are selection criteria for records management positions reviewed at regular intervals to ensure currency and compliance with best practice? Yes No

8 Implemented

- 8.1 Are the authorities, responsibilities and interrelationships of all employees who manage or perform recordkeeping processes defined? Yes No

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- 8.2 Do business rules and standard operating procedures state the recordkeeping responsibilities of identified positions and/or of people performing identified tasks in business processes? Yes No
- 8.3 Have records management procedures been developed and promulgated? Yes No
- 8.4 Are corporate strategies for making and keeping records in the electronic environment developed and implemented? Yes No
- 8.5 Has the success of the implementation been assessed following its completion? Yes No
- 9 Measured**
- 9.1 Is the records management program regularly reviewed and assessed against its plans and objectives? Yes No
- 9.2 Have mechanisms been established to monitor organisation-wide compliance with standards and codes of best practice issued by Government and with other external requirements affecting recordkeeping? Yes No
- 9.3 Are the results of reviews documented and any required corrective action taken? Yes No