

Australian Capital Territory

Territory Records (Records Disposal Schedule – Records Created Prior to 1931) Approval 2017 (No 1)

Notifiable instrument NI2017—395

made under the

Territory Records Act 2002, s 19 (Approval of schedules for the disposal of records)

1 Name of instrument

This instrument is the Territory Records (Records Disposal Schedule – Records Created Prior to 1931) Approval 2017 (No 1)

2 Commencement

This instrument commences on the day after notification.

3 Approval

I approve the Records Disposal Schedule – Records Created Prior to 1931.

Danielle Wickman
Director of Territory Records
19 July 2017



Records Disposal Schedule

Records Created Prior to 1931

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INTRODUCTION

The *Records Disposal Schedule – Records Created Prior to 1931* is the official authority for the disposal of these ACT Government Records.

It is one of a series of records disposal schedules authorised by the Director of Territory Records in accordance with the provisions of the *Territory Records Act 2002*. It is used in conjunction with other Territory records disposal schedules.

Disposal of Territory records is regulated through the approval of Records Disposal Schedules. A Records Disposal Schedule authorises the destruction of some records and identifies others that must be retained as Territory archives, regardless of when those records are created. Records Disposal Schedules also set minimum periods after which other records may be destroyed. Schedules may be applied to existing records held by an agency, or to records created in the future.

Archives authorities have a responsibility to strike a balance between protecting the needs of future researchers by retaining significant archival records, and making efficient and economical use of public monies by ensuring that records are not retained unnecessarily. Appraisal and disposal of government records is intended to ensure that the Territory does not continue to expend resources to maintain records that do not have significant ongoing value to the community.

However, the quantity of early Commonwealth and New South Wales Government created records about the ACT that remain in the ACT's custody may be limited. It may not be efficient to use resources to identify which of these records are eligible for destruction amongst this small category. Selection of a date before which all records may be retained without further examination, no matter their perceived archival value, allows for their efficient management and acknowledges their relative scarcity.

The Director of Territory Records has selected the year 1930 as an appropriate date before which all Government records in the ACT's custody must be retained. This is the year of the appointment of the first ACT Advisory Council. Before this time records specifically relevant to the ACT community may be less easily identified, and few such records are likely to have made their way into ACT custody.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Records Disposal Schedule is to suspend the application of all other records disposal schedules where they apply to records maintained by ACT Government Agencies that were created prior to 1 January 1931.

SCOPE

This Records Disposal Schedule applies to records created prior to 1 January 1931 by the Commonwealth and New South Wales Governments, in the custody of and maintained by ACT Government Agencies. It applies to records in any format, including electronic records.

AUTHORITY

The Director of Territory Records, in consultation with stakeholders and the Territory Records Advisory Council, has approved this Records Disposal Schedule for use. The schedule does not take effect until it has been incorporated into an agency's Records Management Program that has been signed off by the Principal Officer of the agency.

Even so, officers using this Records Disposal Schedule should apply it with caution. They should be aware that the authorisations for disposal are given in terms of the *Territory Records Act 2002* only. Officers must not dispose of records in contravention of this Records Disposal Schedule or other requirements.

This Records Disposal Schedule will remain in force until a new schedule supersedes it or the Director of Territory Records withdraws it from use.

GUIDELINES FOR USE

A records disposal schedule generally specifies retention periods: that is, how long records are to be retained by the agency before being destroyed or retained as Territory Archives. This Schedule acts to suspend any previously authorised retention periods for records that are of a type described in this Schedule.

An agency must take all reasonable steps to ensure that no legal action is contemplated in relation to its records and must not dispose of any records where it is aware of possible legal action for which the records may be required as evidence or if there is a current records disposal freeze in effect.

Ordinarily, records disposal schedules have a hierarchical structure that reflects government activity in terms of functions and activities, rather than by subject. This also reflects a close relationship to the Territory Whole of Government Thesaurus originally based on the Territory Version of Keyword AAA. Records disposal schedules are designed to be applicable to all ACT Government records regardless of titling conventions used, so that records which have not been titled using the terminology represented by a records disposal schedule may still be sentenced with relative ease.

This Schedule does not follow the usual structure, but instead describes a specific category of records for which destruction is not currently authorised. The category is based on the particular characteristic of the record or the circumstance in which they may be required, rather than the more usual function and activity hierarchy.

Coverage of authority

The *Records Disposal Schedule – Records Created Prior to 1931*:

- covers all remaining records created before 1 January 1931 by the Commonwealth and New South Wales Governments in the administration of the Australian Capital Territory (previously known as the Federal Capital Territory) and maintained by the ACT Government; and
- is applicable to records created and maintained in any format.

Layout of the schedule

This Records Disposal Schedule begins with an introduction incorporating definitions of the terms used.

Entry No.

This is the disposal class number allocated by the Territory Records Office. The barcode is the same as the Entry No. and may be used in an automated recordkeeping system.

Description of Records.

This is the description of the records documenting the Top Term, Activity and Transactions.

Disposal Action.

This is the minimum period a record must be kept for and may describe a trigger event from which the disposal date can be calculated.

Application of the schedule

All records created prior to 1 January 1931 by the Commonwealth and New South Wales Governments, and maintained by the ACT Government, are automatically deemed to be Territory Archives. All records meeting these criteria must be retained by the ACT and may not be destroyed or have their ownership transferred outside the ACT Government.

FORMAT OF RECORD

This Records Disposal Schedule is applicable to any record that performs the function prescribed, irrespective of format. Records may include:

- cards;
- registers;
- files;
- microfilm;
- COM (computer output microfiche);
- any other formats.

UPDATING THE RECORDS DISPOSAL SCHEDULE

Records Disposal Schedules are reviewed and updated from time to time. For suggested amendments or alterations to this schedule please contact the Director of Territory Records.

ASSISTANCE IN USING THE RECORDS DISPOSAL SCHEDULE

Agencies requiring any assistance in the interpretation or implementation of any Records Disposal Schedule are encouraged to contact the Director of Territory Records.

DEFINITIONS

Agency

The Executive, an ACT Court, the Legislative Assembly Secretariat, an administrative unit, a Board of Inquiry, a Judicial or Royal Commission, any other prescribed authority, or an entity declared under the regulations of the *Territory Records Act 2002* to be an agency.

Appraisal

The process of evaluating business activities to:

- determine which records need to be captured;
- determine how long the records need to be kept to meet business needs; and
- meet the requirements of organisational accountability and community expectations.

Business Classification Scheme

A hierarchical scheme for identifying and defining the functions, activities and transactions an agency performs in the conduct of its business, and the relationships between them.

Disposal

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

Principal Officer

The Chief Executive of an administrative unit, or its equivalent in other types of agencies.

Records

Information created, received, and maintained as evidence and information by an organisation or person, in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transition of business. This recorded information must be maintained or managed by the agency to provide evidence of their business activities. Records can be in written, electronic or any other form.

Records of an Agency

Information created, received, and maintained as evidence and information by an organisation or person, in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transition of business. This recorded information must be maintained or managed by the agency to provide evidence of their business activities. Records can be in written, electronic or any other form.

Records Disposal Schedule

A document approved by the Director of Territory Records, which sets out the types of records an agency must make and how long they must be kept.

Records Management Program

A document that complies with Section 16 of the *Territory Records Act 2002* by setting out the means by which an agency will manage its records, and is approved by the agency's Principal Officer.

Recordkeeping Systems

Information systems that capture, maintain and provide access to records over time. While the term is often associated with computer software, Recordkeeping Systems also encompass policies, procedures, practices and resources that are applied within an agency to ensure that full and accurate records of business activity are made and kept.

Scope Note

An explanation of terms used in describing the records and the context in which they were made and used.

Sentencing

The process of applying appraisal decisions to individual records by determining the part of a Records Disposal Schedule that applies to the record and assigning a retention period consistent with that part.

Territory Archives

Records preserved for the benefit of present and future generations.

RECORDS DISPOSAL SCHEDULE

