

Australian Capital Territory

Territory Records (Records Disposal Schedule - Ombudsman Complaint Records) Approval 2003 (No 2)*

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made under the

Territory Records Act 2002, s 19

I revoke the Records Disposal Schedule - Ombudsman Complaint Records NI 2003 – 368 and approve the Records Disposal Schedule - Ombudsman Complaint Records No 2, NI 2003 - 458

David Wardle
Director of Territory Records
10 November 2003

*Name amended under Legislation Act 2001 s 60



Records Disposal Schedule Ombudsman Complaint Records

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INTRODUCTION

The *Records Disposal Schedule – Ombudsman Complaint Records* is the official authority for the disposal of complaint records created by the ACT Ombudsman.

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 to be used in conjunction with the *Territory Administrative Records Disposal Schedule (TARDiS)*.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Records Disposal Schedule is to provide for the authorised disposal of complaint records created by the ACT Ombudsman.

SCOPE

This Records Disposal Schedule applies to all ACT Government agencies as defined in the *Territory Records Act 2002*.

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.

STRUCTURE AND RELATIONSHIP TO THE TERRITORY VERSION OF KEYWORD AAA

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.

Retention periods set down in this schedule are *minimum* periods only and an agency may keep records for a longer period if considered necessary for business requirements. Reasons for longer retention could include legal requirements, administrative need or agency directives. An agency *must not* dispose of any records where it is aware of possible legal action for which the records may be required as evidence.

The *Records Disposal Schedule - Ombudsman Complaint Records* has a hierarchical structure that reflects its arrangement according to functions and activities, rather than by subject, and its close relationship to the Territory Version of Keyword AAA. The

Records Disposal Schedule is designed to be applicable to all Ombudsman complaint records regardless of titling conventions used, so that records, which have not been titled using the terminology represented by this Records Disposal Schedule, may still be sentenced with relative ease.

Territory Version of Keyword AAA

The Territory Version of Keyword AAA is the general administrative thesaurus produced by the Territory Records Office. The structure and terms used in this Records Disposal Schedule are closely related to those used in the Territory Version of Keyword AAA, which is based on functional analysis of business activity. This methodology (i.e. the analysis of business activity) produces a *hierarchical* model of an organisation's business activity. The hierarchical model also represents a *classification scheme* for the records that document functions, activities and transactions.

The disposal actions listed in this Records Disposal Schedule were determined through the process of appraisal in accordance with *Territory Records Office Standard for Records Management No.2 - Appraisal*. Appraisal is based upon the same type of analysis of business activity employed in the classification scheme used in the Territory Version of Keyword AAA. Essentially, appraisal involves attaching *record retention periods* and *disposal decisions* (and even records creation requirements and rules) to the same classification scheme.

GUIDELINES FOR USE

Coverage of authority

The *Records Disposal Schedule – Ombudsman Complaint Records*:

- covers all Ombudsman Complaint records;
- is intended to be used in conjunction with TARDiS;
- specifies the *minimum* period records should be kept (retention periods);
- specifies whether, upon the expiry of the retention periods, the records may be destroyed or are required as Territory Archives; and
- is applicable to records created and maintained in any format, including electronic or formats such as microfiche.

Layout of the schedule

This Records Disposal Schedule begins with an introduction incorporating definitions and the business classification scheme. Then each of the functions and activity disposal sets or ‘disposal classes’ relating to the functions are described. These are followed by a composite list of classes designated ‘Retain as Territory Archives’. The functions and activity disposal sets show the following details:

Function This is the broad level business function and is displayed in bold capital letters at the top of each page. It is the highest level in the business classification scheme. It is followed by the scope note, which provides definitions of the function and a collective view of the business activities that make that function unique.

Activity Activities are the processes or operations that make up the business function. They are set in bold and italics below the function statement. This is the second level of the business classification scheme. The scope of the activity encompasses all of the transactions that take place in relation to this activity. Activities can relate to many functions with the scope notes covering all of these relationships (eg the activity ‘Policy’ is linked to all of the functions. However, each function and activity set represents a unique unit.

Entry No. This is the disposal class number allocated based on the function and activity set and the class number of the record. 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 business function, activity and transactions. The descriptions can relate to one record such as a register or a group of records documenting a particular set of transactions.

Disposal Action

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

‘For’ Statements ‘For’ statements provide guidance on the inter-related links to other function and activity sets. ‘For’ statements positioned under the activity scope note belong to the particular function/activity set and all the records descriptions. The ‘For’ statements underneath a particular description relate to that record description alone.

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;
- microfiche;
- COM (computer output microfiche);
- electronic records, including various electronic media, and
- any other formats.

Electronic records

Refers to records created, communicated and maintained by means of electronic equipment. Information could be maintained/stored in a number of ways - on the database (the main database, or a special archives database); on magnetic media; on optical disks; or on separate hardcopy (paper, COM).

Electronic records must be readily accessible for the length of the specified retention period. Routine treatment (such as wiping, updating, alterations or rerecording) does constitute disposal.

DESTRUCTION OF RECORDS

When the approved disposal date for the destruction of records has been reached, appropriate arrangements for their destruction should be made. It is the responsibility of each agency to ensure that its records are destroyed in a secure and appropriate manner as indicated in the agency Records Management Program.

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.

RELATED LEGISLATION

The following legislation is related to the record classes covered by this Records Disposal Schedule

Territory Records Act 2002

Ombudsman Act 1989

Complaints (Australian Federal Police) Act 1981

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.

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 transaction 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

Records, in writing, electronic or any other form, under the control of an agency or to which it is entitled to control, kept as a record of its activities, whether it was created or received by the agency.

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 which 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 which 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 which 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.

BUSINESS CLASSIFICATION SCHEME

Ombudsman Complaint Management

The function of achieving equitable outcomes for complaints from the public and fostering improved and fair administration by ACT agencies.

Cases

This activity descriptor should be used where there is a need to keep a number of activities together on one file, for legislative or operational reasons. Case files relate to particular incidents, persons, organisations or clients.

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Entry	Description of Records	Disposal Action
1.1.1 ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■	Complaints where: Formal reports have been made under: Section 18 - Reports by ombudsman; or Section 19 - Reports to Chief Minister; or Section 20 - Special reports to Legislative Assembly; or Section 21 - Reports to the Legislative Assembly; of the <i>Ombudsman Act 1989</i> . Or Formal reports have been made under: Sections 31 - Reports by Ombudsman; or Section 32 - Reports to Prime Minister; or Section 33 - Special reports to Parliament; of the <i>Complaints (Australian Federal Police) Act 1981</i> ; Or The complaint is significant.	Retain as Territory Archives
1.1.2 ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■	Record of complaints received orally (by telephone or in person); or In writing where it is decided that the associated issues are not of sufficient significance to warrant the raising of a formal file; or Of complaints outside the Ombudsman's jurisdiction.	Destroy 2 years after action completed
1.1.3 ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■	All other complaints	Destroy 5 years after action completed