

Public Record Office Victoria

PROS 19/07 RETENTION AND DISPOSAL AUTHORITY FOR CONVERTED OR DIGITISED RECORDS

Issue Date: 1 August 2019

About this Standard

This Retention and Disposal Authority (RDA) applies to original or source records that have been converted or digitised.

This RDA can be used by all public offices.



**Public Record
Office Victoria**



1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this Authority

The purpose of this Authority is to provide a mechanism for the disposal of public records in accordance with the *Public Records Act 1973*.

The Authority:

- identifies records which are worth preserving permanently as part of Victoria's archival heritage
- prevents the premature destruction of records which need to be retained for a specified period to satisfy legal, financial and other requirements of public administration, and
- authorises the destruction of original or source records not required permanently.

1.2 Context of this Authority

Public Record Office Victoria Standards

This Authority should be used in conjunction with the Standards issued by the Keeper of Public Records under Section 12 of the *Public Records Act 1973*. Copies of all relevant PROV standards, specifications and regulatory advice can be downloaded from <https://prov.vic.gov.au/>. These documents set out the procedures that must be followed by Victorian public offices.

Disposal of records identified in the Authority

Disposal of public records identified in this Authority must be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of Public Record Office Standards.

It is a criminal offence to unlawfully destroy a public record under s 19(1) of the *Public Records Act 1973*.

The destruction of a public record is not unlawful if done in accordance with a Standard established under s 12 of the *Public Records Act 1973*.

This Standard (also known as an Authority) authorises the disposal of public records as described within its provisions. However, disposal is not authorised under this Standard if it is reasonably likely that the public record will be required in evidence in a current or future legal proceeding.

For the purposes of this Retention and Disposal Authority, a 'legal proceeding' has the same meaning as the *Evidence (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1958*, and includes any civil, criminal or mixed proceeding and any inquiry in which evidence is or may be given before any court or person acting judicially, including a Royal Commission or Board of Inquiry under the *Inquiries Act 2014*.

If the public office identifies that public records must be retained under other applicable legislation for a period that exceeds the retention period specified under the Standards, then the longer retention period must apply.

Normal Administrative Practice

The destruction of some public records is permitted without final authorisation under normal administrative practice (NAP). NAP covers the destruction of ephemeral material of a facilitative nature created, acquired or collected by public officers during the course of their duties.

The following material may be destroyed under NAP:

- working papers consisting of rough notes and calculations used solely to assist in the preparation of other records such as correspondence, reports and statistical tabulations
- drafts not intended for retention as part of the office's records, the content of which has been reproduced and incorporated in the public office's record keeping system
- extra copies of documents and published material preserved solely for reference.

Transfer of records to Public Record Office Victoria

Contact Public Record Office Victoria for further information on procedures for transferring permanent records to archival custody.

1.3 Use of Other Authorities

In applying the disposal sentences set out in this Authority, reference should be made to other current Authorities where applicable. Where there is a conflict between two Authorities (for instance this Authority and the General Retention and Disposal Authority for Records of Common Administrative Functions), consult the Public Record Office Victoria for advice.

1.4 Explanation of Authority Headings

Class number

The class number or entry reference number provides citation and ease of reference.

Description

The description of each record class is specified in this entry. A record class is a group of records that relate to the same activity, function or subject and require the same disposal action.

Status

This entry provides the archival status of each class - either permanent or temporary.

Custody

This entry specifies whether the records are to be retained by the public office or transferred to the Public Record Office Victoria (PROV). The transfer and storage of public records identified in this Authority must be in accordance with the requirements of the PROV Standards.

2 Establishment of Standard

Pursuant to Section 12 of the *Public Records Act 1973*, I hereby establish these provisions as a Standard (also known as a Retention and Disposal Authority) applying to Public Offices, all.

This Standard as varied or amended from time to time shall have effect from the date of issue unless revoked.

[signed]

Justine Heazlewood
Keeper of Public Records

Date of Issue: 1 August 2019

3 Retention & Disposal Authority

1.0 Original or source records that have been converted or digitised

Conversion is the process of changing records from one medium to another. This may be from one physical format to another physical format, from a physical format to a digital format, or from one digital format to another digital format.

Digitisation involves the conversion of a physical or analogue record to a digital representation. Digitisation is one means of converting an original or source record and is usually carried out through scanning or photographing the source record.¹

No.	Description	Status	Disposal Action
1.1	All original or source records created on or after 1 January 2000 .	Temporary	Destroy after confirming the *Conditions below have been met.
1.2	Original or source records created before 1 January 2000 , which are specified as ' Temporary ' in a current PROV Retention and Disposal Authority (RDA).	Temporary	Destroy after confirming the *Conditions below have been met.
1.3	Original or source records created before 1 January 2000 , which are specified as ' Permanent ' in a current PROV RDA.	Conditional	Do not destroy unless your public office has received specific authorisation from PROV.
1.4	Original or source records created before 1 January 2000 , which are not covered by a current PROV RDA.	Conditional	Do not destroy unless your public office has received specific authorisation from PROV.

¹ Definitions adapted from Queensland State Archives, *Glossary*, January 2018, <https://www.forgov.qld.gov.au/glossary> (viewed 3 April 2019).

*Conditions

1. The converted/digitised record is the official record of the business of the public office. Public offices must ensure that all records that have been created as a result of conversion or digitisation have the degree of authenticity, reliability, integrity and useability necessary to meet the purposes of the original or source record.
2. Public offices must maintain the converted/digitised record in accordance with PROV recordkeeping standards and the minimum retention period outlined in the relevant RDA.
3. Digitisation processes must meet requirements outlined in the *PROS 19/05 S1 Digitisation Specification*.
4. The original creation date of the converted/digitised record is to be captured in the record's metadata.
5. Original or source physical or analogue records **created on or after 1 January 2000** cannot be destroyed if the original medium conveys meaning, or has unique or significant cultural, artistic or historical attributes that may be lost or diminished if the records are converted, copied or digitised. Non-exhaustive examples include:
 - records concerning an adopted child or a child under the care of the State, e.g. hand-written correspondence, reports and photographs
 - hand-rendered artworks or designs
 - records associated with and/or signed by famous or prominent individuals, e.g. Heads of State.

If uncertain, please seek guidance from PROV.
6. Original or source physical or analogue records **created before 1 January 2000** which are specified **Permanent or are not covered** by a current PROV RDA cannot be destroyed without specific approval from PROV. *Please seek guidance from PROV.*

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