

State Archives and Records Authority of New South Wales

Functional Retention and Disposal Authority: FA273

This authority covers records documenting the function of veterinary practitioners registration and animal hospital licensing

Issued to Veterinary Practitioners Board of New South Wales

This functional retention and disposal authority is approved under section 21(2)c of the *State Records Act 1998* following prior approval by the Board of the State Archives and Records Authority of New South Wales in accordance with section 21(3) of the Act.

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Functional Retention and Disposal Authority

Authority no FA273

SR file no 08/0183,
21/0128

Scope

This functional retention and disposal authority covers records documenting the function of veterinary practitioners registration and animal hospital licensing from 1924 onwards.

Public office

Veterinary Practitioners Board of New South Wales

Approval date

19/12/2008

Reissued date

19/04/2021

No changes to disposal classes or actions.

About the Functional Retention and Disposal Authority

Purpose of the authority

The purpose of this functional retention and disposal authority is to identify those records created and maintained by NSW public offices which are required as State archives and to provide approval for the destruction of certain other records created and maintained by NSW public offices, after minimum retention periods have been met.

The approval for disposal given by this authority is given under the provisions of the *State Records Act 1998* only and does not override any other obligations of an organisation to retain records.

The retention and disposal of State records

The records retention and disposal practices outlined in this authority are approved under section 21 (2)(c) of the *State Records Act 1998* (NSW). Part 3 (Protection of State Records) of the Act provides that records are not to be disposed of without the consent of the State Archives and Records Authority of New South Wales (State Archives and Records NSW) with certain defined exceptions. These exceptions include an action of disposal which is positively required by law, or which takes place in accordance with a normal administrative practice (NAP) of which State Archives and Records NSW does not disapprove. Advice on the State Records Act can be obtained from State Archives and Records NSW.

The authority sets out how long the different classes of records generated by an organisation must be kept to meet its legal, operational and other requirements, and whether the records are to be kept as State archives. State Archives and Records NSW reviews and approves organisations' retention and disposal authorities under the *State Records Act*. It is the duty of a public office, in submitting a draft retention and disposal authority for approval, to disclose to State Archives and Records NSW any information which affects the retention of the records covered by the authority.

State Archives and Records NSW's decisions take into account both the administrative requirements of the public office in discharging its functional responsibilities and the potential research use of the records by the NSW Government and the public. One of State Archives and Records NSW's functions is to identify and preserve records as State archives. These are records which document the authority and functions of Government, its decision-making processes and the implementation and outcomes of those decisions, including the nature of their influence and effect on communities and individual lives. Criteria for the identification of State archives are listed in *Building the Archives: Policy on records appraisal and the identification of State archives*. The Policy also explains the roles and responsibilities of State Archives and Records NSW and of public offices in undertaking appraisal processes and disposal activities.

Implementing the authority

This functional retention and disposal authority covers records controlled by the public office and applies only to the records or classes of records described in the authority. The authority should be implemented as part of the records management program of the organisation. Two primary objectives of this program are to ensure that records are kept for as long as they are of value to the organisation and its stakeholders and to enable the destruction or other disposal of records once they are no longer required for business or operational purposes.

The implementation process entails use of the authority to sentence records. Sentencing is the examination of records in order to identify the disposal class in the authority to which they belong. This process enables the organisation to determine the appropriate retention period and disposal action for the records. Advice on sentencing can be obtained from State Records.

Where the format of records has changed (for example, from paper-based to electronic) this does not prevent the disposal decisions in the authority from being applied to records which perform the same function. The information contained in non paper-based or technology dependant records must be accessible for the periods prescribed in the classes. Where a record is copied, either onto microform or digitally imaged, the original should not be disposed of without authorisation (see also the *General Retention and Disposal Authority – Original or source records that have been copied*). Public offices will need to ensure that any software, hardware or documentation required to gain continuing access to technology dependent records is available for the periods prescribed.

Disposal action

Records required as State archives

Records which are to be retained as State archives are identified with the disposal action 'Required as State archives'. Records that are identified as being required as State archives should be stored in controlled environmental conditions and control of these records should be transferred to State Archives and Records NSW when they are no longer in use for official purposes.

The transfer of control of records as State archives may, or may not, involve a change in custodial arrangements. Records can continue to be managed by the public office under a distributed management agreement. Public offices are encouraged to make arrangements with State Records regarding the management of State archives.

Transferring records identified as State archives and no longer in use for official purposes to State Archives and Records NSW's control should be a routine and systematic part of a public office's records management program. If the records are more than 25 years old and are still in use for official purposes, then a 'still in use determination' should be made.

Records approved for destruction

Records that have been identified as being approved for destruction may only be destroyed once a public office has ensured that all other requirements for retaining the records are met. Retention periods set down in this authority are *minimum* periods only and a public office should keep records for a longer period if necessary. Reasons for longer retention can include legal requirements, administrative need, government directives and changing social or community expectations. A public office **must not** dispose of any records where the public office is aware of possible legal action (including legal discovery, court cases, formal applications for access) where the records may be required as evidence.

Once all requirements for retention have been met, destruction of records should be carried out in a secure and environmentally sound way. Relevant details of the destruction should be recorded. See [Destruction of records](#).

Organisations should review functional retention and disposal authorities regularly to ensure that they remain relevant as the organisation's functions and activities, operating environment and requirements for records change. Retention requirements may change over time. This can occur when:

- business needs or practices change
- new laws, regulations or standards are introduced
- new technology is implemented
- government administration is restructured and functions are moved between entities, or
- unforeseen or new community expectations become apparent.

State Archives and Records NSW recommends that organisations check any functional retention and disposal authorities more than 5 years old to ensure that the retention periods and disposal actions remain relevant.

Regardless of whether a record has been approved for destruction or is required as a State archive, a public office or an officer of a public office **must not** permanently transfer possession or ownership of a State record to any person or organisation without the explicit approval of State Archives and Records NSW.

Administrative change

This retention and disposal authority has been designed to link records to the functions they document rather than to organisational structure. This provides for a stable retention and disposal authority that is less affected by administrative change. The movement of specified functions between branches or units within the public office does not require the authority to be resubmitted to State Archives and Records NSW for approval. However, when functions move from one public office to another the public office that inherits the new function should contact State Archives and Records NSW to discuss use of any existing retention and disposal authority approved for use by a predecessor organisation.

Amendment and review of this authority

State Archives and Records NSW must approve any amendment to this authority. Public offices that use the authority should advise State Archives and Records of any proposed changes or amendments to the authority.

State Archives and Records recommends a review of this authority after five years to establish whether its provisions are still appropriate. Either the public office or State Archives and Records NSW may propose a review of the authority at any other time, particularly in the case of change of administrative arrangements or procedures or to operating environments which are likely to affect the value of the records covered by this authority.

In all cases the process of review will involve consultation between State Archives and Records NSW and the public office. If the process of review reveals that this authority requires amendment, the necessary amendments should be made and approved.

Contact Information

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Functional Retention and Disposal Authority Veterinary practitioner registration and animal hospital licensing

Authority no: FA273

Dates of coverage: 1924+

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No	Function/Activity	Description	Disposal Action
1.0.0	ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS	The function of managing Annual General Meetings of registered veterinarians. For meetings of the Board and Board Sub- committees see <i>General Retention and Disposal Authority – Administrative Records – GOVERNING BODIES – Meetings</i> .	
1.1.0	Meetings	The activity of organising and conducting annual general meetings of registered veterinarians.	
1.1.1		Master set of minutes, agenda and attachments tabled at annual general meetings.	Required as State archives
1.1.2		Records relating to administrative arrangements for annual general meetings, including meeting notifications, catering arrangements, and venue bookings.	Retain until ceases to be of administrative or reference use, then destroy
2.0.0	INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION	The function of providing information to the veterinary profession and consumers of veterinary services.	
2.1.0	Publishing	The activities associated with publishing information for practitioners and other interested persons. <i>See General Retention and Disposal Authority – Administrative records – COMMUNITY RELATIONS – Marketing for records relating to general promotional or explanatory information about the organisation and its services.</i> <i>See General Retention and Disposal Authority – Administrative records – GOVERNMENT RELATIONS – Reporting for final, approved versions of published</i>	

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		<p>and unpublished reports to government relating to the organisation's core functions and performance, such as annual reports.</p> <p>See <i>General Retention and Disposal Authority – Administrative records – PUBLICATION</i> for records relating to producing material for the website.</p>	
2.1.1		<p>Final versions of publications produced to inform veterinary practitioners or to advise consumers on matters or developments relating to standards of professional competence, registration, and other regulatory requirements, complaints and disciplinary processes etc.</p> <p>Records include practitioners' newsletters, bulletins and guidelines.</p>	Required as State archives
2.1.2		<p>Records relating to the development of publications produced to inform veterinary practitioners and consumers of veterinary services.</p> <p>Records include background research and substantive drafts.</p>	Retain minimum of 3 years after action completed, then destroy
3.0.0	HOSPITAL LICENSING	<p>The function of licensing veterinary hospitals that perform major surgery involving the administration of anaesthetic to an animal. This includes inspections conducted as part of the licensing process.</p> <p>See REGISTRATION – Complaints for complaints against practitioners.</p> <p>See <i>General Retention and Disposal Authority – Administrative records – GOVERNMENT RELATIONS – Advice</i> for records relating to the provision of advice to the Minister or other government organisations concerning the licensing of veterinary hospitals.</p> <p>See <i>General Retention and Disposal Authority – Administrative records – STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT – Legislation</i> for records relating to the development,</p>	

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		implementation and review of legislation and regulations concerning the licensing of veterinary hospitals and the practice of veterinary science.	
3.1.0	Applications	The activities associated with receiving, assessing and processing applications for veterinary hospital licenses. See HOSPITAL LICENSING - Approvals for records relating to approved applications	
3.1.1		Records relating to applications for veterinary hospital licenses that are not approved. Records include application and supporting documentation, and advice to or correspondence with the applicant concerning the outcome of the application.	Retain until ceases to be of administrative use, then destroy
3.2.0	Approvals	The activities associated with managing the approval of licences to operate a veterinary hospital.	
3.2.1		Summary records relating to licensed veterinary hospitals. These records are currently maintained in the registration database, which records details of the hospital including name, address and contact details, owners details, and nature of services provided.	Retain in agency
3.2.2		Records relating to the licensing of veterinary hospitals (eg hospital files). Records include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • licence applications • superintendent nominations • inspection reports 	Retain minimum of 5 years after licence ceases or after last action, whichever is longer, then destroy

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No	Function/Activity	Description	Disposal Action
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • floor plans of premises • applications to change name or transfer licences. 	
4.0.0	REGISTRATION	<p>The function of registering veterinary practitioners and specialists who are able to practice in NSW. This includes the management of complaints about practitioners.</p> <p><i>See General Retention and Disposal Authority – Administrative records – GOVERNMENT RELATIONS – Advice for records relating to the provision of advice to the Minister or other government organisations concerning the registration of veterinary practitioners or the practice of veterinary science.</i></p> <p><i>See General Retention and Disposal Authority – Administrative records – STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT – Legislation for records relating to the development, implementation and review of legislation and regulations concerning the practice of veterinary science.</i></p>	
4.1.0	Applications	<p>The activities associated with receiving, assessing and processing applications for registration. This includes interstate and overseas practitioners applying to practice in NSW.</p> <p><i>See REGISTRATION - Registered practitioners for records relating to approved applications.</i></p>	
4.1.1		<p>Records relating to applications for registration that are not approved. Records include application and supporting documentation, and advice to or correspondence with the applicant concerning outcome of the application.</p>	Retain minimum of 1 year after last action, then destroy
4.2.0	Registered practitioners	<p>The activities associated with the management of registered practitioners.</p>	

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No	Function/Activity	Description	Disposal Action
4.2.1		<p>Summary records relating to the registration status and history of individual veterinary practitioners or specialists.</p> <p>Records include the register maintained on a database that records name, registration number and contact details, qualifications, employment details, summary of complaints received, specialisations, details from annual returns.</p>	Required as State archives
4.2.2		<p>Records relating to the registration of veterinary practitioners or specialists where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no summary records exist (eg practitioner's files pre date establishment of current registration database), or • the practitioner has made a significant or unique contribution to the profession, for example membership of the Board, university heads of departments, pioneering specialist, or • the practitioner has been deregistered. <p>Records include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • registration documents • correspondence • summaries of any complaints lodged. 	Required as State archives
4.2.3		<p>Records relating to veterinary practitioners or specialists where a summary record exists and where the practitioner has not made a significant or unique contribution to the profession and has not been deregistered.</p> <p>Records include:</p>	Retain minimum of 10 years after registration expires or ceases, or death of veterinary

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No	Function/Activity	Description	Disposal Action
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • registration documents • correspondence • summaries of any complaints lodged. 	practitioner, then destroy
4.3.0	Complaints	<p>The management of complaints against veterinary practitioners. Includes the management of hearings but not appeals, which are dealt with by the Administrative Decisions Tribunal.</p> <p><i>See General Retention and Disposal Authority – Administrative Records – GOVERNING BODIES – Meetings for records of the sub-committee convened to examine and make recommendations concerning complaints received.</i></p>	
4.3.1		<p>Summary records relating to complaints received and investigated by the Board.</p> <p>Records include the detailed summary sheets compiled for each complaint that are maintained in a separate run, and record complaint number, details of practitioner and complainant, type of complaint, and outcome.</p>	Required as State archives
4.3.2		<p>Summary records maintained in a database of complaints received and investigated by the Board.</p> <p>Records include the database that records complaint number, details of practitioner and complainant, type of complaint, and outcome.</p>	Retain in agency
4.3.3		<p>Records relating to complaints that result in disciplinary action. This includes cases resulting in a fine, reprimand, caution or recommendation to the Administrative Decisions Tribunal for de-registration. Records include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the original complaint and other correspondence with the complainant 	Retain minimum of 10 years after last action, then destroy

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No	Function/Activity	Description	Disposal Action
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • correspondence between the Board and the practitioner • recommendations of hearings • correspondence prepared in relation to appeals • notification of appeal results, and • a summary of the complaint. 	
4.3.4		<p>Records relating to complaints that do not result in disciplinary action. This includes cases that are dismissed, withdrawn, or deemed to be warranted but where no caution or reprimand is issued. Records include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the original complaint and other correspondence with the complainant • correspondence between the Board and the practitioner • a summary of the complaint • recommendations to the Board. 	Retain minimum of 5 years after action completed, then destroy