

Publications
Annual Report
Greeting cards
For The Record eNewsletter
For the Record December 2014
Now&Then eNewsletter
Vital Signs magazine
Microform purchase

For the Record December 2014



Managing records in the New South Wales public sector

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[General retention and disposal authority for copied records](#) | [Frequently asked questions](#) | [Records of meetings](#) | [Dealing with wet records](#) | [Recent FutureProof blog posts](#) | [Records Managers Forums](#) | [Training in 2015](#) | [Seasons greetings](#)



General retention and disposal authority: original or source records that have been copied

The Board of the State Records Authority approved the *General retention and disposal authority: original or source records that have been copied* at its December meeting. This authority will supersede the *General retention and disposal authority: imaged records* (GA36).

The authority will be issued for use in January and all public offices will be contacted directly by State Records to advise when it can be used. GA36 can continue to be used until it is superseded.

Frequently asked questions

We have added a new section to our recordkeeping advice page which lists some of the questions we are frequently asked by our colleagues in the State government, university, health and local government sectors. The [Frequently asked questions](#) page contains the following:

- ▶ Are scanned records legally admissible?
- ▶ Is a scanned signature legally admissible?
- ▶ Do I need to make and keep records of my organisation's activities on social media?
- ▶ Do I have to capture records in an EDRMS?
- ▶ Do Councils need to create hard copy Minutes of Council to comply with the State Records Act?
- ▶ Does State Records provide software loadable versions of its disposal authorities?
- ▶ Can State Records provide advice about how long private organisations and individuals should keep their records?
- ▶ Does State Records regulate business classification schemes?
- ▶ Will there be a one-to-one relationship between a BCS and a functional retention and disposal authority for my agency?
- ▶ How long do I need to retain voice recordings for?
- ▶ Are drafts official records?
- ▶ What is NAP?

Creating and capturing records of meetings

In reviewing recent reports of watchdog agencies, a common recordkeeping issue was again brought to our attention. This issue is the failure to create and capture records of meetings, particularly meetings pertaining to high risk business areas where consultation is undertaken and decisions are made. The failure to create and capture records documenting meetings, consultation, actions, decisions, guidance or advice into the appropriate system exposes organisations to a high level of risk or embarrassment, particularly in an area of business which is open to dispute. It is therefore important that public offices ensure that all staff are aware that they must document meetings where official business is discussed, where advice is given, or where decisions or commitments are made.

The failure to keep notes/minutes of meetings is also a breach of the *State Records Act 1998*, section 12(1) which requires all public offices to 'make and keep full and accurate records of the activities of the office'. The importance of creating and capturing records of meetings and decisions involving public officials is critical to good public administration.

Dealing with wet records

Disasters and unfortunate incidents can strike with little warning, so having quick access to information to help in the recovery action and a plan for how to react before the event occurs is essential. State Records has information on our website that will help you to be prepared, including:

- ▶ [Conservation Tip No. 6: Dealing with wet records](#). This advice outlines the salvage and handling of wet records.
- ▶ [Disaster management](#), an advice page which is designed to provide quick and easy access to information you might need if you are dealing with a disaster. It covers managing a disaster, managing recovery, and damaged records.

Recent FutureProof blog posts

Recent blogs on FutureProof include:

- ▶ [The challenges currently facing public offices](#), such as:
 - ▶ Coordination of services in conjunctions with other States and the Commonwealth
 - ▶ Delivery of services through non-government partnerships
 - ▶ The technology industry's prioritisation of cloud computing platforms
 - ▶ The information management challenges of mergers
 - ▶ Managing the consolidation of legacy systems
 - ▶ Legacy data retention and disposal considerations
- ▶ [Managing information in cloud systems](#)

Resources from Records Managers Forums

The regular Records Managers Forum promotes communication between NSW public sector records managers and provides an opportunity to exchange news, discuss issues of current concern and highlight achievements and projects in NSW Government organisations. Themes for past forums have included the NSW Government's ICT Strategy, digital recordkeeping systems implementation, information management and the Cloud, and the new Digital State Archives.

Podcasts and presentations from the forums are available from the [Futureproof blog](#), including recent presentations by:

- ▶ Cathy McInnes, Principal Review Officer, Information and Privacy Commission, about the operation of the *Government Information (Public Access) Act*.
- ▶ Sonya Sherman, Principal Policy Officer Strategic Policy, Office of Finance and Services, about the work of the Accelerating Digital Government Taskforce and the recent Digital +, NSW Government ICT Strategy update 2014-2015
- ▶ Catherine Robinson, Senior Project Officer Government Recordkeeping, State Records NSW, about the new Standard on records management for the New South Wales public sector.

Please note: attendance at the Forum is restricted to staff working in the State government, local government, university and health sectors.

Training in 2015

The [Training Calendar](#) for 2015 will be available early in the new year.

Seasons greetings

We wish our colleagues all the best for the Christmas season and look forward to working with you in 2014.



