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For the Record June 2014



Managing records in the New South Wales public sector

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Introducing State Records' Digital State Archive

Following a three year project to put in place the infrastructure, processes and tools for accepting, preserving and making born digital records of the NSW Government available as archives, the State Records Digital State Archive is moving to normal operations.

What is the Digital State Archive?

The Digital State Archive is a repository for digital records of NSW Government that are required as State Archives. Digital archives are any digital information that is kept as evidence of official business and 'required as State archives' in an [authorised retention and disposal authority](#). Digital archives could be in the form of:

- documents, spreadsheets, PPTs
- case management systems
- email
- scanned copies of paper records or digitised A/V material
- EDRMS records.

Examples of digital records already transferred to the archive include the contents of an information management system used by a Special Commission of Inquiry, a database for the registration of businesses and digital records of former Premiers.

Is it about digitisation?

No. State Records NSW has a separate digitisation program and many NSW Government agencies digitise their own paper records. The Digital State Archive is chiefly concerned with *born digital records*, which are official records such as emails and office documents that were created and managed completely in a digital form. These records have challenges for long term preservation and use as a result of changing technologies and the need to manage them in context, using metadata.

The Digital State Archive team needs to ensure that the archive's contents are permanently accessible so we implement a range of *digital preservation* techniques including assessing the long term viability of particular file formats, analysing metadata and adopting remedial strategies as needed. The records are then monitored and additional preservation actions may be applied over time.

Transferring records to the Digital State Archive

Any digital records that have been identified as being 'required as State Archives' in an authorised retention and disposal authority are eligible for transfer to the Digital State Archive. These records should no longer be in active use by the public office, however they can be of any age. The records must be covered by a current Access Direction.

The Digital Archives team takes a project based approach to the transfer of records to the archive. Agencies can initiate a project by contacting the Digital Archives team and providing some initial information about the records to be transferred. The team will then work with the agency on a plan to migrate the records into the archive.

We will not require agencies to convert records to a special format or submit particular metadata for the digital records being transferred. Rather, depending on the risks associated with the digital records in question, we may work with the agency on creating additional access or preservation copies of records prior to transfer, or do this ourselves. Metadata is a vital asset for ensuring the integrity and meaning of digital archives and we will work with agencies to identify the sources of metadata in their digital recordkeeping systems. We will map that metadata to a common set of terms in our Metadata Registry (see below). This mapping process supports an integrated view of the Digital Archive and will support discovery.

Access to records in the Digital State Archive

We will be offering online access to digital records that have been safely preserved in the archive and which are in the open access period. Information in the Digital Archive is subject to the same [rules for public access under the State Records Act 1998](#) as any other State archives. Those records in the archive that are closed to public access will only be able to be accessed with the permission of the controlling agency (normally the agency that transferred them).

What advice will be available?

In July, we will be releasing advice and tools that will assist agencies proposing to transfer records to the Digital State Archive. These are:

- the Digital Archives Migration Methodology – a structured approach to migrating records to the archive
- Digital State Archive FAQs
- Preservation Pathways Registry – a registry of file formats that uses The National Archives (UK)'s registry [PRONOM](#), and indicates State Records' decisions for converting to new formats for preservation or access purposes
- Metadata Registry – here we progressively register preferences for published metadata terms (e.g. Dublin Core) to represent common metadata elements in the digital archives. We progressively coin new terms (by providing a URI and description) to represent metadata elements in the digital archives for which no suitable published term can be identified.

Want to know more?

To learn more about State Records' approach, read these posts on the FutureProof blog:

- [What we reckon about keeping digital archives: High level principles guiding our approach](#)
- [Migrating Business Systems Migrations to the Digital Archive \(a research paper from the Digital Archives team\)](#)

You can also contact the Digital Archive team at digitalarchives@records.nsw.gov.au or call (02) 9673 1788.

Revised Recordkeeping in the NSW Public Sector webpage

Our revised webpage went live early in May. The [new webpage](#) is structured around Rules (our legislation, policies, standards, retention and disposal authorities and procedures), Advice (where existing advice around the one topic has been centralised and streamlined, and additional advice has been developed), and Resources (which contains resources for local government, the public health sector, public schools, universities, ICT professionals, CEOs etc).

One new feature is an A- Z index which will take you directly to the page you may be interested in, whether it is cloud computing, email, digitisation or metadata. The index is a work in progress so if you have suggestions for additional entries please let us know.

We no longer have numbered Guidelines or Recordkeeping in Briefs, but much of the content from these is now available in the advice pages. Some of our older content has not been brought over to the new site as it was outdated. If you can't find what you are looking for, have a look at the new advice and resources pages, and the index, and please get back to us with any questions at govrec@records.nsw.gov.au.

What is information management?

Describing the role and value of records and information in today's organisations can be challenging. If asked to explain your role in the organisation, it can be easier to define it in terms of information management. State Records has developed some advice about [information management](#) on the revised Recordkeeping website that defines what good information management needs to be and specific responsibilities of information managers.

Identifying information risks that might be impacting on high risk business

The threat and impact of information risks are significantly increasing. Common information risks that could be occurring in high risk business areas include:

- information that cannot be generated and maintained in a useable form
- information that is incomplete
- information that is meaningless
- information that cannot be trusted
- information that cannot be authenticated
- information that is inaccessible
- information that does not survive for as long as it is needed by the business area
- information that is overwhelming and unmanaged and inhibits rather than enables business process.

Areas in your organisation that perform core, strategic, highly accountable or high value business operations are likely to be classed as high risk business. Because these areas are likely to be performing key aspects of government business, it is critical that good information exists to account for and support these operations, in both the short and long term. To identify high risk areas of business in your organisation you can:

- identify areas that perform core, strategic, highly accountable or high value business operations
- use your organisation's corporate risk register to flag existing areas of identified corporate risk
- look at business areas that are adopting a lot of new technologies and services
- focus on business areas under transition
- focus on areas adopting BYOD (bring your own device) approaches
- talk to managers and staff about any information-related concerns they may have in their specific business areas

After identifying areas of high business risk, you should then identify:

- what information is required to support these business areas
- the technology used to support high risk business areas
- whether necessary business information is being impacted by information risk.

If it is, appropriate strategies need to be developed.

Further information about identifying information risks that might be impacting on high risk business, the strategies that can be deployed to mitigate these risks, and some case studies about mitigating information risk [are all available on the Future Proof blog](#).

Preparing for digital business transformations and transitions

Digital transitions are when business operations (and the information about these operations) move to different and often multiple forms of digital systems.

In digital transitions, business is moving to environments where it is transacted using mobile devices, apps, transaction specific systems, large scale enterprise resource planning systems, project-based collaborative tools, social media systems, as well as a very wide range of other possible tools.

Organisations are embracing the opportunities and efficiencies they can bring with gusto. However, a key challenge that is gradually becoming clearer is that managing information through digital transition is actually very difficult. How do you actually know what you need to make and keep when the nature of the information is shifting so profoundly, and when information is moving to so many diverse and complex environments, and how are you going develop strategies to ensure it is made and kept?

There is [digital transition advice on the Future Proof blog](#) that shows that:

- digital transition involves reinvention
- transition involves a reappraisal and reassessment of business information needs. Transitioning to digital business frameworks cannot simply be a driver for digitising existing paper processes and replicating current work patterns in digital systems. Digital transition involves being aware that digital operating environments are fundamentally different to their paper equivalents and different management approaches may be necessary
- metadata is critical in digital transitions
- you need to manage information volumes
- there are lots of transitions to the cloud going on that need good information governance
- digitisation needs to be a very considered support for digital transition
- with transition, don't build for legacy, build for the future.

State Records is working with some public offices currently undergoing significant digital transformation, to help them redefine and manage their core high risk/high value business information through their business transformation.

If you would like to talk about digital transformation, or share some lessons you have learned from digital transition processes in your organisation, please contact State Records on govrec@records.nsw.gov.au.

Communicating messages about the importance of retention and disposal to non records audiences

State Records has developed some advice for its new look website, to try and explain to non records audiences why information retention and disposal need to be considered at:

- system design
- system procurement
- system implementation
- transitions to cloud services
- contract negotiations for cloud services
- portability planning for cloud services
- business process outsourcing
- application development

We would really appreciate feedback about this advice, [Making decisions about how long to keep digital information](#), and how it can be improved to help communicate these important messages more broadly. If you have any feedback, please contact State Records on govrec@records.nsw.gov.au.

Future Proof blog posts

To celebrate Information Awareness Month and International Archives Day, the Future Proof blog has been running hot, with 10 posts published.

In addition to the posts referenced above, other blog posts published in the last two months include:

- [NARA's summary of records management automation processes](#)
- [Information management by design – introducing the new digital content on the State Records website](#)
- [Cloud email – what is happening with the information?](#)
- [Ants and archives and leveraging expertise for strategic information management](#)
- [Making decisions about how long to keep digital information](#)
- [Deep Time – perspectives on managing long term value information](#)

In the last quarter, the most popular posts on the blog have been:

- [Disposal of digital information – why it's not occurring and how we might be able to start improving things](#)
- [Thinking more about moving email to the cloud](#)

Managing Digital Records: An Overview

The training course *Managing Digital Records* has recently been revised to provide participants with an understanding of the challenges and opportunities for digital recordkeeping within emerging information environments. The course uses a range of case studies to focus on the frameworks, systems, approaches and evolving tools which impact on digital information management. For further information see the [Managing Digital Records course outline](#).

Coming Soon! The new Administrative Requirements Portal

The Government regularly issues guidance and directions to support government sector performance – collectively termed 'Administrative Requirements'. These include statutory and conventional directions such as Premier's Memoranda, Circulars and Directions from the Department of Premier and Cabinet, NSW Treasury, the Office of Finance and Services, State Records NSW, and the Public Service Commission. Topics include government sector employment matters, procurement of goods and services by agencies, records management, financial management policy and reporting, industrial relations, and shared services.

The new **Administrative Requirements Portal** will provide a centralised repository where anyone can search more easily for or subscribe to announcements on administrative directions, policies and guidance issued by government entities. This has been a joint project undertaken by Department of Premier and Cabinet, NSW Treasury, the Office of Finance and Services, State Records NSW, and the Public Service Commission, in response to a Commission of Audit recommendation to streamline access to government information and reduce duplication and administrative burden.

The Portal will be accessible from the Recordkeeping page on the State Records website as well as on the websites of the four other agencies responsible for issuing Administrative Requirements and the NSW Government website.

What it means to you

- Administrative Requirements will now be more easily searchable.
- You can receive email alerts about Administrative Requirements that relate to your work and interests by subscribing to particular topics on the Portal. You can also subscribe to a type of document (e.g. Premier's Memorandum) or an issuing entity (e.g. State Records) in order to keep abreast of changes in your field.

For further information, contact Catherine Robinson Senior Project Officer, Government Recordkeeping on catherine.robinson@records.nsw.gov.au or 8257 2991

SharePoint and information management

At the EDRMS Implementers Group meeting on 7 May, there was extensive discussion around using SharePoint 2013 out of the box for information management purposes.

Janet Villata from Austrade gave an excellent presentation on information management tips to consider when implementing SharePoint 2013, and a [summary of her presentation](#) is available on Future Proof.

Strategies for managing social media information

The extensive social media information management advice that State Records has provided for several years on its Future Proof blog, has now been consolidated, updated and made available on the State Records website.

[Strategies for managing social media information](#) is a comprehensive tool to help public offices determine:

- whether they have to develop strategies for managing their social media information
- how they should approach the management of social media information, and
- tools they may be able to use to manage social media information

If you have questions about this advice, or additional suggestions you think should be included in it, please contact State Records govrec@records.nsw.gov.au.

Disposal authorities approved

State Records recently approved authorities for the Office of the Legal Services Commissioner, Screen NSW, the Audit Office and industrial relations compliance for NSW Government procurement of construction services. Copies of our retention and disposal authorities are available on the [Retention and Disposal Authorities](#) page on our website.

