



RECORDS MANAGEMENT

TITLE:	RECORDS MANAGEMENT
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	MANAGER HR, CUSTOMER & COMMUNITY SERVICES
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STATEMENT OF INTENT

Sorell Council is committed to an efficient and effective records management system to ensure that its business need for evidence, accountability and information about its activities are met.

- 1.1 Council records are a corporate asset, vital both for ongoing operations and also in providing valuable evidence of business decisions, activities and transactions.
- 1.2 Council records must be managed and maintained regardless of their format in an authorised Records Management System.
- 1.3 Council is required to create and maintain authentic, reliable and useable information, documents and records, and protect their integrity for as long as they are required by:
 - Ensuring that full and accurate records are created and maintained for each business process.

- Preserving records, whether physical or electronic, safely and securely.
 - Ensuring that electronic records are saved and stored in Council's recordkeeping system, or other approved system, with appropriate metadata captured and naming convention guidelines used to enable their efficient retrieval and use.
 - Ensuring records are accessible over time to support the conduct of business, and that they are only retained for as long as required by Council and relevant legislation.
 - Assigning responsibilities for recordkeeping.
- 1.4 Council aspires to proactively implement systems and processes which will enable records and information to be stored in an electronic format wherever possible.
- 1.5 Council's Total Administrative Record and Document Information System (TARDIS) is an approved system for the management of electronic and physical records in accordance with the requirements of the Archives Act and complies with the standards described in Australian Standard AS ISO 15489.1 - Records Management.

OBJECTIVE

The objectives of this policy are:

- To ensure effective management of Council records, covering the creation and maintenance of authentic, reliable and useable records.
- To ensure Council's records support the accountability and transparency of its business functions and activities for as long as those records are required.
- To provide evidence of Council's commitment to best practice records management.
- To set out the responsibilities of staff, clarifying their accountability for records and information management (refer to 'Responsibilities' section in this document).
- To ensure that records and information management is undertaken in accordance with business and legislative requirements.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the management and maintenance of records through their life cycle from creation, receipt or capture, to preservation and disposal under the provision of the Archives Act 1983. It includes records in any format held in Council's information systems (TARDIS).

This policy applies to all employees, elected members and contractors (hereinafter referred to as employees) who:

- Access corporate information;
- Create corporate information;

- Have responsibilities for corporate information including storage maintenance retrieval dissemination and disposal; and
- Have management responsibilities for officers who perform these tasks.

The key distinction between Council records and other types of information is that Council records provide evidence of business activities (refer to 'Definitions' section in this document for definition of a record).

Records exist in a variety of formats including, but not limited to paper documents, electronic messages, word processed letters, web-pages, information in databases, photographs, film, charts etc.

Regardless of format, records must be created, captured, maintained, secured and disposed of in accordance with the requirements of this Policy (refer to 'guidelines' and associated business rules).

DEFINITIONS

A comprehensive glossary of record keeping terms is provided by the Tasmanian Archive and Heritage Office

Destruction Authority - A once-off authorisation from the State Archivist for the destruction of non-scheduled records.

Disposal - A range of processes associated with appraisal decisions. These include the retention, deletion or destruction of records in or from recordkeeping systems. They may also include the migration or transmission of records between recordkeeping systems, and the transfer of custody or ownership of records.

Indexing - The process of establishing access points to facilitate retrieval of records and/or information (AS 14389 Part1 Clause 3.11).

Metadata - In records management, recordkeeping metadata is data that describes the context, content and structure of records and their management through time (AS ISO 15489 Part1 Clause 3.12). Metadata is attached to records when they are created, and added to as a result of different processes, such as sentencing and disposal.

Record - Information created, received and maintained as evidence and information by an organisation or person, in the pursuance of legal obligations or in the transaction of business (AS ISO 15489 Part 1 Clause 3.15).

Retention and Disposal Schedule - Documents authorized by the State Archivist that set out appropriate retention periods for classes of records. There are two main types:

- *Functional* retention and disposal authorities authorize the retention and disposal of records unique to a specific organisation.
- *Common* retention and disposal authorities authorize the retention and disposal of records common to more than one organisation.

Such records may include:

- General administrative records
- Common records that relate to unique functions, and
- Records relating to the unique functions of like organisations such as local councils.

State Archive – State archive means any State record or any other record which is deposited and preserved permanently in the Tasmanian Archive and Heritage Office (TAHO).

State Record– State record means –

- a) a Crown record: or
- b) a record of a State authority which relates to the business or affairs of that authority; or
- c) a record of a local authority which relates to the business or affairs of that authority; or
- d) any other record that was at any time a record mentioned in paragraph (a), (b) or (c) – but does not include a record of the Parliament of Tasmania.

Sorell Council’s record management system:

TARDIS – is the Total Administrative Record and Document Information System for Sorell Council also known as Magiq Documents

Magiq Documents – is a complete suite of enterprise wide document, records and content management software based on the Microsoft.NET architecture. The web based environment ensures documents & content are available to users simply using their web browser anywhere, anytime. Records are maintained for as long as they are required to effectively and efficiently support Council’s business functions and activities.

PROCEDURE

- Local Government (Council) records are State records and, as such, are required to be managed in accordance with the Archives Act 1983.
- Council records are Council’s corporate memory, providing evidence of actions and decisions and represent a vital asset to support our daily functions and operations. Records support policy formulation, decision-making and protect the interests of Council.

- In addition to this, records help us to make good use of precedents and organisational experience. They support consistency, continuity, efficiency and productivity in program delivery, management and administration.
- State legislation and Australian Standards (refer to legislation section below) provide details of the conditions and standards by which records management practices at Council will be guided. They provide a code of best practice for the management of information and records within Council.
- It is the responsibility of all employees to recognise any information that will form part of Council's corporate memory and to manage that information in accordance with the requirements of this policy and associated business rules.
- Information managed in this way will ensure that records are accessible, authentic, accurate, complete, meaningful and stored in a secure manner.
- Council records may only be destroyed in accordance with the Local Government Retention and Disposal Schedule DA2200 which is authorised for use by Tasmanian Archive and Heritage Office (TAHO). It is an offence to destroy or remove state records from the custody of the creating authority without the permission of TAHO. The retention and disposal of Council information is administered by Council's Manager HR, Customer & Community Services.
- Source records converted, managed and reproduced using Council's TARDIS and in compliance with Council's Records Management Policy can be taken to be true copies in accordance with the objectives of AS 15489.1 Section 7.2 – Characteristics of a Record.

GUIDELINES

Creation and maintenance of records

Business records must be created and captured by everyone subject to this policy. Business records should provide a reliable and accurate account of business decisions and actions. Therefore it is necessary to include all necessary information to support business needs including the names, dates and time, and other key information needed to capture the business context.

Records can be folders, documents or data created, received or maintained as evidence and information of work done for or on behalf of Council Records may be either hard copy or electronic.

Examples of Council records include (but are not limited to):

- Agendas, minutes and papers;
- Compliance case files;
- Complaint correspondence;
- Contracts and agreements;

- Correspondence received from members of the public, private and public sector organisations that require action;
- Documents related to events organised with or for external organisations, students etc;
- Facilities hire forms and documentation;
- Media releases and articles;
- Personnel recruitment and appointment documentation;
- Policies and guidelines;
- Reports and submissions;
- Risk management registers and documentation;
- Training program documentation.

Ultimately, if the record contains a business transaction or evidence of any decision that has been made on behalf of Council it must be kept for the required time as per an approved Retention and Disposal Schedule authorised by the State Archivist.

Where no Retention and Disposal Schedule exists for the records they must be retained until such a time as they can be either destroyed according to a Destruction Authority authorised by the State Archivist, or transferred to TAHO.

Records that do not have to be kept

Some records do not belong in Council's recordkeeping system, including:

- External advertising material;
- Externally published newsletters that do not contain material created by or referencing Council;
- Internal e-mails received by "carbon copy" (cc) or "blind carbon copy" (bcc);
- Junk e-mail;
- Personal items including e-mail;
- Rough notes, working papers and calculations used solely to assist in the preparation of other records such as correspondence, non-auditable reports and statistical tabulations;
- Copies of any documents, preserved solely for reference;
- Published material preserved solely for reference;
- Electronic revisions of documents in the agency's recordkeeping system which can be purged/deleted when finalising documents.

Documents of this nature may be destroyed, as defined by TAHO Retention and Disposal Schedule for short-term value records (DA2158).

Systems used to maintain records

Records generated within Council in the course of normal business practice or received from an external source are to be registered and captured in TARDIS.

The following business systems are endorsed for the capture and storage of information and records. These include:

- Total Administrative Record and Document Information System (TARDIS) – **Magiq Documents**;
- Local Government Information System (property management, rates management, animal control and pet registration, development applications, receipting and direct debit, building registrations, cemetery registrations, septic tank registrations and pensioner remissions) – **PropertyWise**;
- Vaccination recording and reporting system – **VacciWise**;
- Financial Management System – **Microsoft Dynamics NAV**;
- Asset Management System – **Assetic**;
- Geographic Information System – **Spectrum Spatial Analysis**;
- Waste Management – **Konect**;
- Social Media Archiving – **Brolly**.

These endorsed systems appropriately support information and records management processes such as creation and capture, storage, protection of integrity and authenticity, security, access and retention, destruction and transfer.

Corporate records must not be maintained in email folders, shared folders, personal drives or external storage media as these lack the necessary functionality to protect business information and records over time. Records created when using mobile devices may need to be captured into an endorsed system.

Access to records: sharing corporate information within Council

Information is a corporate resource to which all staff may have access, except where the nature of the information requires restriction. Access restrictions should not be imposed unnecessarily but should protect:

- individual staff, or client privacy;
- sensitive material such as security classified or material with dissemination limiting markings, for example any records information security classified 'Closed Session' or above.

When handling information, employees are reminded of their obligations outlined in their statements of duties and under the Code of Conduct.

Release of publicly available information

In accordance with Council's obligations under the Right to Information Act 2009, access to publicly available information is provided on our website and in physical form at the Council Office. This is the responsibility of the Manager HR, Customer & Community Services.

The public have legislative rights to apply for access to information held by our organisation under the Right to Information Act. This applies to all information held by Council, whether in officially endorsed records management systems or in personal stores such as email folders or shared and personal drives.

Responses to applications for access under Right to Information legislation are the responsibility of the Manager HR, Customer & Community Services.

Councillor's – Notwithstanding the right to access publically available information, access to corporate information shall otherwise be in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993 s 28A. 'Information and documents relating to functions' which states:

- (1) A councillor, in writing, may request the general manager to make available any information or document or a copy of any information or document in the possession of the council that may be required for the purpose of performing any of the councillor's functions.
- (2) A councillor who makes a request under subsection (1) is to –
 - (a) state in writing the relevance of the information or document to any of the councillor's functions; and
 - (b) declare that he or she would not have, or would be unlikely to have, any pecuniary interest in the matter to which the information or document relates if the matter were to be an item on the agenda of a meeting of the council or a council committee.
- (3) The general manager may refuse the request of a councillor if –
 - (a) the general manager believes that the request would unreasonably extend the resources of the council; or
 - (b) the councillor has declared an interest under section 48; or
 - (c) the councillor has failed or refused to make a declaration under subsection (2)(b); or

- (d) the general manager considers that the information or document requested is not required for the purpose of performing any of the councillor's functions.
- (4) If the general manager refuses the request the general manager is to advise the councillor in writing, stating the reasons for the refusal.
- (5) The general manager is to make any information or document made available to a councillor under this section available to any other councillor on request.

Retention or destruction of records

Council records are destroyed when they reach the end of their required retention period set out in Records Retention and Disposal Schedules issued by TAHO. Retention periods in disposal schedules take into account all business, legal and government requirements for the records. Council uses the following schedules to determine retention, transfer and destruction actions for its records.

Disposal Schedule for functional records of Local Government: (2017: Disposal Authorisation 2200).

Disposal Schedule for Short Term Value Records (2009: Disposal Authorisation 2158).

Disposal Schedule for Source Records (20012: Disposal Authorisation 2159).

Records cannot be disposed of other than in accordance with all relevant Retention and Disposal Schedules and Destruction Authorities authorised by the State Archivist. In addition to this, records cannot be disposed of without the approval of both the Manager HR, Customer & Community Services and the Manager of the business unit that is responsible for the records.

Some records can be destroyed in the normal course of business. These are records of a short-term, facilitative or transitory value that are destroyed as short term value records. Examples of such records include rough working notes, drafts not needed for future use or copies of records held for reference.

Central to Councils accountability process is the requirement it maintains a Register of Records Destroyed. This is the agency's formal evidential record of destruction and must be retained permanently by the agency. The Register must be clearly identified as the Register of Records Destroyed under Section 20(2)(b) of the Archives Act 1983.

Transfer of Records

At times certain records may be required to be transferred out of the custody of Council. This occurs when records of archival value are no longer being actively used and/or are 25 years or older.

In this instance Council transfers them to Tasmanian Archives and Heritage Office (TAHO).

Another instance where records may be transferred is when records are affected by administrative change and are transferred to an inheriting agency or to a private body. In either case, permission must be sought from TAHO before the records are transferred.

Monitoring the Records Management program

Records will be monitored for breaches of this Policy by the Manager HR, Customer & Community Services who will facilitate training as required.

Day-to-day records management audit activities will be coordinated by the Records Officer.

Responsibilities

All employees are responsible for the management of all records created in the course of their work. This includes complying with this Policy at all times.

Employees must always be mindful that all records created in the course of their employment are the property of Council.

Specific responsibilities and accountabilities for information and records management at Council include:

The General Manager:

- Recognises, encourages and adopts records and information management as a key function of the organisation; and
- Ensures that the Information and Records Management program satisfies operational and legislative requirements and obligations.

Managers:

- Ensuring their staff are aware of, and comply with, their information management responsibilities;
- Are responsible for ensuring that all employees are aware of this policy; and
- for taking appropriate remedial action when this policy is contravened.

Employees:

- All employees are responsible for:
- Creating records that document their activities and decisions and saving them into TARDIS.
- Ensuring email records are saved into TARDIS.
- Ensuring paper records are scanned to electronic format and saved in TARDIS in a timely manner.
- Must familiarise themselves with Council's Records Management Policy, principles and procedures; and
- not use information acquired through the organisation improperly.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Document Naming Convention Guidelines.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

The following legislation underpins the operation of this policy:

- Archives Act 1983 - establishes the requirement for Tasmanian government agencies to create and keep State records.
- Local Government Act 1993 - Imposes a duty on Councils to create a wide variety of records.
- Australian Standard AS ISO 15489 - provides clear guidelines for the establishment and application of records management practices, procedures and systems.
- Right to Information Act 2009 - provides for greater access to information held by Tasmanian government bodies and encourages proactive disclosure of information held by the agency as well as giving the public access to information upon request.
- Personal Information Protection Act 2004 - sets out rules about information handling, including how the agency may collect, use, store and disclose personal information.
- Disposal Schedule for functional records of Local Government: (2017: Disposal Authorisation 2200).
- Disposal Schedule for Short Term Value Records (2009: Disposal Authorisation 2158).
- Disposal Schedule for Source Records (20012: Disposal Authorisation 2159).

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