



Australian Government

National Archives of Australia

Records Authority
2011/00551805

General Records Authority No. 32
Small Collection Management

October 2011

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
APPLICATION OF THIS AUTHORITY	3
CONTACT INFORMATION	4
AUTHORISATION	5
SMALL COLLECTION MANAGEMENT	6

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INTRODUCTION

The National Archives of Australia has developed this Records Authority to set out the requirements for keeping or destroying the records relating to the management of small collections. The Authority is intended to have broad application for agencies that manage small or incidental collections.

This Authority is based on the identification and analysis of the business of managing small collections. It takes into account the legal and organisational records management requirements for agencies that manage small collections, and the interests of stakeholders, and the National Archives of Australia.

The Authority sets out those records that need to be retained as national archives and specifies the minimum length of time that temporary records need to be kept. This Authority gives agencies that manage small collections permission under the *Archives Act 1983*, for the destruction of the temporary records described after the minimum retention period has expired. Retention periods for these temporary records are based on: an assessment of business needs; broader organisational accountability requirements; and community expectations.

As changes in circumstances may affect future records management requirements, the periodic review of this Authority is recommended. All amendments must be approved by the National Archives.

APPLICATION OF THIS AUTHORITY

1. This Authority should be used in conjunction with Records Authorities issued to agencies for their core business and other General Records Authorities issued by the Archives.
2. The Authority does not apply to agencies that have a special responsibility for managing and developing cultural collections. The Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, the National Gallery of Australia, the National Library of Australia, the National Portrait Gallery, and other such institutions are excluded from using this GRA. Agencies that manage cultural collections can apply to the Archives to use the Cultural Collections Records Authority (2011/00275285). Where there is uncertainty about which records authority to use, please contact the Archives.
3. The Authority does not cover collection items. Items in the collection that are Commonwealth records are subject to the *Archives Act 1983*.
4. This Authority is to be used to sentence records. Sentencing involves the examination of records in order to identify the individual disposal class to which they belong. This process enables sentencers to determine how long records need to be kept. Advice on sentencing is available from the National Archives.
5. The Normal Administrative Practice (NAP) provision of the *Archives Act 1983* gives agencies permission to destroy certain records without formal authorisation. This usually occurs where records are duplicated, facilitative or for short-term use only. NAP does not replace arrangements agreed to in this Authority but can be used as a tool to assist in identifying records for destruction together with an agency's Records Authority or Authorities, and with AFDA and AFDA Express. The National Archives recommends that agencies develop and implement a Normal Administrative Practice policy. Advice and guidance on destroying records as a normal administrative practice and on how to develop an agency NAP policy is available from the National Archives' website at www.naa.gov.au.
6. Where the method of recording information changes (for example from a manual system to an electronic system, or when information is migrated from one system to a new system) this Authority can still be applied, providing the records document the same core business. The information must be accessible for the period of time prescribed in this Authority. Agencies will need to maintain continuing access to the information, including digital information, for the periods prescribed in this records authority or until the information is transferred into the custody of the National Archives.

7. In general, retention requirements indicate a minimum period for retention. Agencies may extend minimum retention periods if it considers that there is an administrative need to do so, without further reference to the National Archives. Where an agency believes that its accountability will be substantially compromised because a retention period or periods are not adequate, it should contact the National Archives for review of the retention period.
8. From time to time the National Archives will place a freeze on some groups of records relating to a particular topic or event which has gained prominence or provokes controversy. While the freeze is in place no records relating to the topic or event may be destroyed. Further information about disposal freezes and whether they affect the application of this Authority is available from the National Archives website at www.naa.gov.au.
9. Records which relate to any current or pending legal action, or are subject to a request for access under the *Archives Act 1983* or any other relevant Act must not be destroyed until the action has been completed.
10. Records in the care of agencies should be appropriately stored, managed and preserved. Agencies need to meet this obligation to ensure that the records remain authentic and accessible over time. Under Section 31 of the *Archives Act 1983*, access arrangements are required for records that become available for public access including those records that remain in agency custody.
11. Appropriate arrangements should be made with the National Archives when records are to be transferred into custody. The National Archives accepts for transfer only those records designated as national archives.
12. Advice on how to use this Authority is available from your agency's records manager. If there are problems with the application of the Authority that cannot be resolved, please contact the National Archives.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For assistance with this authority or for advice on other records management matters, please contact National Archives' Agency Service Centre.

Queen Victoria Terrace
Parkes ACT 2600
PO Box 7425
Canberra Mail Centre ACT 2610

Tel: (02) 6212 3610
Fax: (02) 6212 3989
Email: recordkeeping@naa.gov.au
Website: www.naa.gov.au

AUTHORISATION

RECORDS AUTHORITY 2011/00551805

Person to whom notice of authorisation is given:

Heads of institutions subject to the *Archives Act 1983* that manage small collections

Purpose:

Authorises arrangements for the disposal of records in accordance with Section 24(2)(b) of the *Archives Act 1983*

Application:

Small collection management records

This authority gives permission for the destruction, retention or transfer to the National Archives of Australia of the records described. This authority will apply only with the consent of the agency currently responsible for the business documented in the records described.

Authorising Officer



Margaret Chalker
Assistant Director-General
Government Information Management
National Archives of Australia

Date of issue:

26 October 2011

SMALL COLLECTION MANAGEMENT

The core business of managing collections acquired by the agency through donation, purchase or as an outcome of operational activities. Covers developing, controlling and managing the collection including developing policies and collection management systems and undertaking conservation measures. Also includes using collection items in exhibitions, both temporary and permanent, and undertaking collection promotion through public programs and commercial activities.

Activities undertaken to **develop, control and manage the collection** include:

- acquiring collection items (eg by purchase, donations or transfers);
- managing incentive programs (eg Cultural Gifts program);
- accessioning, registering, cataloguing, labelling and storing items;
- undertaking preventative conservation (eg environmental monitoring);
- undertaking conservation treatment on individual collection items;
- providing access (eg reference services and undertaking digitisation programs);
- managing intellectual property rights issues;
- undertaking de-accessioning activities (eg by transfer, gift, exchange, sale); and
- updating the history of items in the collection (eg damage to items from security breaches).

Activities undertaken to **develop and manage exhibitions** include:

- consulting stakeholders, undertaking research and deciding on a theme;
- planning and designing an exhibition and developing models and layouts;
- identifying collection objects for the exhibition and organising loans;
- preparing labels, constructing infrastructure and setting up the exhibition;
- arranging travelling programs and loaning items for other exhibitions;
- maintaining and repairing the exhibition; and
- evaluating and reporting on the exhibition.

Activities undertaken to **develop and manage public programs** include:

- undertaking research and market surveys;
- seeking funding and sponsorships;
- managing visitors and tours, seeking feedback and handling complaints;
- managing events (eg openings, launches, seminars, lectures, conferences etc);
- developing education resources and programs;
- designing, manufacturing and selling commercial products;
- marketing and liaising with the media; and
- managing volunteer, Friends and member programs.

General activities include:

- providing and receiving advice and answering enquiries;
- establishing and managing agreements and joint ventures;
- auditing;
- managing committees and meetings;
- delegating powers and authorising actions;
- planning, developing policies, procedures and standards;
- managing risks; and
- reporting, evaluating and reviewing.

Excludes: records of the agencies with a responsibility to develop and manage cultural collections. Refer to Note 2 in the Application of this Authority.

SMALL COLLECTION MANAGEMENT

For developing and managing small one-off exhibitions and public events, use AFDA/AFDA EXPRESS – COMMUNITY RELATIONS.

For managing general acquisition of equipment and services and for tendering and contracting arrangements, use AFDA/AFDA EXPRESS – PROCUREMENT.

For publishing education resources, exhibitions programs and catalogues and producing other publications for sale, use AFDA/AFDA EXPRESS – PUBLICATION.

For placing digitised collection items on the agency's website and for developing online exhibitions, use AFDA/AFDA EXPRESS – PUBLICATION.

For seeking grant funding to support agency exhibitions (eg Visions of Australia grants), use AFDA/AFDA EXPRESS – COMMUNITY RELATIONS.

For administering a grant management/scholarship/fellowship programs relating to small collection management, use GRANT MANAGEMENT.

For developing an agency service charter to support small collection management activities, use AFDA/AFDA EXPRESS – STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT.

For legal advice relating to small collection management issues, including intellectual property rights, use AFDA/AFDA EXPRESS – LEGAL SERVICES.

For financial transactions carried out to support the core business, use AFDA/AFDA EXPRESS – FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT.

For accidents involving volunteers, use AFDA/AFDA EXPRESS – COMPENSATION AND OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY.

For security arrangements of public programs and managing security instances, use AFDA/AFDA EXPRESS – PROPERTY MANAGEMENT.

Class No	Class description	Disposal action
53314	<p>The following significant framework records which guide and direct the overall management of the business:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>policies</u> (eg collection, exhibition, public program, Friends/members, sponsorship policies); • <u>strategic planning</u> documents; • <u>evaluations</u>, <u>reviews</u> and <u>reports</u> resulting in changes to framework policies and strategic planning; • strategic <u>exhibition committee records</u>; <p>and, the following records relating to the development, management and control of the collection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>acquisition documents</u> (eg assessments, justifications, agreements, transfers of ownership, cultural gift agreements, sale documents); • <u>descriptive information</u> (eg contextual, provenance, physical details); • <u>control records</u> (eg catalogues, acquisition registers); • <u>specialist records</u> (eg scientific and technical research reports and investigations on collection management; topics); 	Retain as national archives

SMALL COLLECTION MANAGEMENT

- (cont)
- professional standards developed by the agency;
 - master set of manuals, handbooks and procedures documenting collection management processes;
 - de-accessioning records;
 - item history update records eg security breaches where items are damaged;

and, the following records relating to the **development and management of major or controversial exhibitions including travelling exhibitions** (eg attracting wide public appeal, located in a prime public space, displaying objects recognised for their historic, artistic, social and subject significance):

- stakeholder consultations;
- final designs, layouts and concept documents;
- joint venture agreements;
- research;
- captions and lists of exhibits;
- photographs of the exhibition;
- summary records of sponsors;
- key records of openings (eg programs, opening speeches, guest lists, photographs, advertising material);
- final reports evaluating major exhibitons;

[For records of other exhibitions, use SMALL COLLECTION MANAGEMENT – Class 53319]

and, the following records relating to the **development and management of public programs**:

- unpublished addresses given at lectures, seminars etc by well known public figures or experts in their field; and
- final reports evaluating public program activities.

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|-------|---|---|
| 53315 | Records documenting outward loans of items including: | Transfer to new owner when item is de-accessioned or destroy if item is destroyed |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • loan <u>agreements</u>; • <u>handling instructions</u>; and • pre and post loan <u>condition reports</u>. | |
| 53316 | The following temporary records with long term administrative requirements : | Destroy 20 years after action completed |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • records documenting <u>collection valuations</u>; • <u>acquisitions that do not proceed</u>; • <u>inward loan records</u> (eg loan agreements, handling instructions, pre and post loan condition reports); and • records documenting <u>preventative conservation activities</u> (eg monitoring conditions of the collection, rehousing items, pest control activities, summaries of environmental monitoring). | |

[For records of daily monitoring of environmental conditions use SMALL COLLECTION MANAGEMENT – Class 53319.]

SMALL COLLECTION MANAGEMENT

53317	The following records: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>digitised copies</u> of collection items; and • records documenting <u>conservation treatment on individual collection items</u>. 	Transfer to new owner when item is de-accessioned or destroy if item is destroyed
55514	Records documenting <u>intellectual property rights</u> over collection items.	Destroy 7 years after rights lapse
53318	The following short term temporary records : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>event administration records</u> (eg registrations, staff rosters, visitor bookings); • records documenting <u>temporary access to collection items</u> (eg movement records); • <u>general enquiries</u> (eg about the collection, events etc); • merchandise <u>dispatch records</u>; and • <u>public surveys</u> from which data has been summarised. 	Destroy 1 year after action completed
53319	Records documenting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • routine operational administrative tasks supporting the core business; and • collection management activities other than those covered in classes 53314-8 and 55514. 	Destroy 7 years after action completed