



**Australian Government**  

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**National Archives of Australia**

Records Authority

**Australian Federal Police**  
***(Criminal Records)***

Job no 2010/00191393

April 2010

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**TABLE OF CONTENTS:**

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>APPLICATION OF THIS AUTHORITY</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>CONTACT INFORMATION</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>AUTHORISATION</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>CRIMINAL RECORDS</b>	<b>10</b>

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## INTRODUCTION

The Australian Federal Police and the National Archives of Australia have developed this Records Authority to set out updated requirements for keeping or destroying records for the core business area of CRIMINAL RECORDS. It represents a significant commitment on behalf of the Australian Federal Police to understand, create and manage the records of its activities.

This Authority is based on the identification and analysis of the business of the Australian Federal Police. It takes into account the agency's legal and organisational records management requirements, and the interests of stakeholders, the agency and the National Archives of Australia.

This Authority gives the Australian Federal Police permission under the Archives Act 1983, for the destruction, retention or transfer to the National Archives of Australia of the records described. The Authority sets out those records that need to be retained as national archives and the minimum length of time that temporary records need to be kept. Retention periods for these temporary records are based on: an assessment of business needs; broader organisational accountability requirements; and community expectations, and are approved by the National Archives of Australia on the basis of information provided by the agency.

The Australian Federal Police may use the following tools to dispose of their records:

- this Records Authority covering its agency specific records;
- general records authorities, such as the Administrative Functions Disposal Authority (AFDA), covering business processes and records common to Australian Government agencies; and
- normal administrative practice (NAP) which allows for the destruction of records where the records are duplicated, unimportant or for short-term use only.

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.

Advice on using this Authority and other records management matters is available from the National Archives' website at [www.naa.gov.au](http://www.naa.gov.au) or by contacting the Agency Service Centre at [recordkeeping@naa.gov.au](mailto:recordkeeping@naa.gov.au) or (02) 6212 3610.

## APPLICATION OF THIS AUTHORITY

1. This Authority consists of amendments to the 2006/446344 Records Authority of the Australian Federal Police and should be used in conjunction with it. The amendments consist of:
  - two new temporary records classes to be added to the existing core business of CRIMINAL RECORDS (previously known as the function of CRIMINAL RECORDS in Records Authority 2006/446344);
  - termination after issue of this Authority of the following classes from CRIMINAL RECORDS in Records Authority 2006/446344: 15170; 15171; 15181; 15182; 15183; 15184; 15185. These classes can no longer be used to sentence or destroy records after the date of issue of this Authority.
2. The Australian Federal Police will need to review 2006/446344 sentencing decisions on relevant records that have not been destroyed where this Authority provides for longer retention periods.
3. This Authority should be used in conjunction with the Administrative Functions Disposal Authority (AFDA) issued by the National Archives to cover administrative records common to Australian Government agencies.
4. This Authority should be used in conjunction with general disposal authorities issued by the National Archives that cover other types of records that may be created by the Australian Federal Police, such as encrypted records and source records that have been copied.
5. 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.
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 used to sentence the records created, providing the records document the same core business. The information must be accessible for the period of time prescribed in this Authority. The Australian Federal Police will need to ensure that any software, hardware or documentation required to enable continuing access to the information is available for the periods prescribed.
7. In general, retention requirements indicate a minimum period for retention. The Australian Federal Police 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 the Australian Federal Police 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. The Australian Federal Police may destroy certain records without formal authorisation as a normal administrative practice. This usually occurs where the records are duplicated, facilitative or for short-term use only. NAP does not replace the arrangements agreed to in records authorities. Advice and guidance on destroying records as a normal administrative practice is available from the National Archives' website at [www.naa.gov.au](http://www.naa.gov.au).
9. From time to time the National Archives will place a freeze on some groups of records to prevent their destruction. 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](http://www.naa.gov.au).
10. Records in the care of the Australian Federal Police should be appropriately stored and preserved. The Australian Federal Police needs 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 are in the open access period (currently after 30 years).

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 the Australian Federal Police 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                      Tel: (02) 6212 3610  
Parkes ACT 2600                                Fax: (02) 6212 3989  
PO Box 7425                                      Email: [recordkeeping@naa.gov.au](mailto:recordkeeping@naa.gov.au)  
Canberra Mail Centre ACT 2610              Website: [www.naa.gov.au](http://www.naa.gov.au)

**AUTHORISATION  
RECORDS AUTHORITY**

**Person to whom notice of  
authorisation is given:**

Commissioner  
Australian Federal Police  
GPO Box 401  
Canberra ACT 2601

**Purpose:**

AUTHORISES ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE DISPOSAL OF  
RECORDS IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 24(2)(b) OF THE  
ARCHIVES ACT 1983

**Application:**

Maintenance project - 2 new classes added to the core business of  
CRIMINAL RECORDS to replace the following terminated classes in  
Records Authority 2006/446344: 15181, 15182, 15183, 15184, 15185,  
15170, 15171

This authorisation gives permission for the destruction, retention or transfer to the National Archives of Australia of the records described. The authority will apply only if these actions take place with the consent of the agency responsible for the core business documented in the records.

**Authorising Officer**

**Date of issue:**



*25 April 2010*

Margaret Chalker  
Assistant Director-General  
National Archives of Australia



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## CRIMINAL RECORDS

The function of recording the results of criminal prosecutions and providing details of, or extracts from, criminal records as appropriate to Australian government law enforcement agencies both Federal and State, other government agencies, prosecution, judicial services, international law enforcement agencies and individuals.

*This records authority adds 2 new classes which relate to processing requests for information supporting law enforcement activities and National Police Checks.*

*The following classes in CRIMINAL RECORDS have been terminated in Records Authority 2006/446344: 15170; 15171; 15181; 15182; 15183; 15184; and 15185. These terminated classes can no longer be used to sentence or destroy records after the date of issue of this Authority.*

<b>Class number</b>	<b>Description of records</b>	<b>Disposal action</b>
21584	Requests for information supporting law enforcement activities other than National Police Checks. Includes working documents and responses to requests.	Destroy 5 years after action completed
21585	National Police Check applications and responses. Includes applications containing fingerprints, working documents and responses.	Destroy 3 years after action completed