



**Australian Government**

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**National Archives of Australia**

**General Records Authority 37**

2022/00304018

**Research & Development**

2022



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SUPERSEDED

## INTRODUCTION

The National Archives of Australia has developed this general records authority to set out the requirements for keeping or destroying records relating to the core business of Research & Development.

This authority is based on the identification and analysis of the business of Research & Development. It takes into account legal and organisational information management requirements, and the interests of stakeholders, Australian Government agencies and the National Archives.

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 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 information management requirements, this authority will occasionally require amendment by the addition of new classes or variation to existing classes. The National Archives will notify agencies of any such changes.

## APPLICATION OF THIS AUTHORITY

1. This authority supersedes the 2016 version of General Records Authority 37 (Records Authority 2014/00675051). The superseded records authority cannot be used to sentence records after the date of issue of this authority.
2. This authority is intended to provide general coverage for the records of agencies that undertake research and development activities as a core business. This authority should only be used if the agency's current records authority does not include relevant classes, or if activities are not appropriately covered in another general records authority. In some situations there may be unique requirements relating to an agency's research and development activities that will necessitate specific coverage within an agency's own records authority.

This authority is not intended to cover records of research undertaken by an agency to support the operation of a non research and development core business. For example, research undertaken by the Health Department into aged care quality provision would be covered by the relevant aged care core business in the Department's own records authority and not by this general records authority.

3. Records relating to major research and development projects, specialised research facilities and equipment, and specialised research-related software-based technology solutions previously covered under general records authority temporary classes other than class 61721, must be resentenced upon issue of this authority. These classes potentially contain records to be retained as national archives that were previously identified as being of temporary value.
4. This authority is to be used to determine how long records must be kept. Records are matched to the relevant core business and records class in the authority.
  - Where the minimum retention period has expired and the records are not needed for agency business they should be destroyed as authorised in this authority.
  - Records that have not reached the minimum retention period must be kept until they do.
  - Records that are identified as 'Retain as national archives' (RNA) are to be transferred to the National Archives for preservation.
5. This authority should be used in conjunction records authorities issued to agencies for their core business and other general records authorities issued by the National Archives, such as:
  - the Administrative Functions Disposal Authority (AFDA) Express Version 2 issued by the National Archives to cover business processes and records common to Australian Government agencies; and

- General Records Authority 31 - Destruction of source or original records after digitisation, conversion or migration (2015).
6. 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 Express Version 2. The National Archives recommends that agencies develop and implement a NAP policy. Advice and guidance on destroying records as a normal administrative practice and on how to develop a NAP policy is available from the National Archives' website at [www.naa.gov.au](http://www.naa.gov.au).
  7. Records that are reasonably likely to be needed as evidence in a current or future judicial proceeding or are subject to a request for access under the *Archives Act 1983*, the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* or any other relevant act must not be destroyed until the action has been completed.
  8. Records subject to a disposal freeze must not be destroyed until the freeze has been lifted. 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).
  9. Where the method of recording information changes (for example from an analogue system to a digital system, or when information is migrated from an existing 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. The agency 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.
  10. In general, retention requirements indicate a minimum period for retention. The agency 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 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.
  11. Records coming within 'Retain as national archives' classes in this authority have been determined to be part of the archival resources of the Commonwealth under section 3C of the *Archives Act 1983*. The determination of Commonwealth records as archival resources of the Commonwealth obliges agencies to transfer the records to the National Archives when they cease to be current and, in any event, within 15 years of the records coming into existence, under section 27 of the *Archives Act 1983*.
  12. 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.
  13. 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. Records created digitally after 1 January 2016 can be transferred in digital formats only.
  14. Advice on how to use this authority is available from the agency's information 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 information management matters, please contact National Archives' [Agency Service Centre](#).

## AUTHORISATION

Records Authority 2022/00304018

### Notice of authorisation

Person to whom notice of authorisation is given:

Heads of Commonwealth institutions under the *Archives Act 1983* responsible for Research & Development records.

### Purpose

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

Determines records classed as 'Retain as national archives' in this records authority to be part of the archival resources of the Commonwealth under section 3C of the *Archives Act 1983*.

### Application

All core business records relating to Research & Development.

### Authority

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.

This document has been authorised through a digital workflow (R662962022).

Authorising Officer	Date of issue
Yaso Arumugam Assistant Director-General, Data and Digital National Archives of Australia	13 July 2022

## RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

The core business of supporting, commissioning and/or contributing to the seeking of new knowledge and the application of that knowledge for policy, programs, advice and other practical and innovative uses, including the development of new products, services and processes.

Note: Care should be taken when using this authority as in some situations there may be unique business and/or recordkeeping requirements relating to an agency's research and development activities that will necessitate specific coverage within an agency's own records authority. For example, building, maintaining and operating specialised research vessels, such as the ice breaker *RSV Nuyina*, will be outside the scope of the specialised research equipment described in this records authority.

The **core activities** include:

- developing, implementing and reviewing research and development policies, procedures, principles, protocols, rules, standards, frameworks, strategies and programs;
- planning research and development programs and projects, including modelling and forecasting;
- evaluating research and development program proposals in relation to identified needs and priorities;
- liaising with stakeholders, including consulting with the scientific community, industry and the general public;
- developing, designing and applying methodologies for scientific experimentation and observations, including for applied research and evidence-based research;
- undertaking and managing research and development projects, including conducting formal experiments and observations and the gathering of specimens and samples collections;
- establishing and managing joint venture and collaboration projects with government agencies, private industry, research providers and other organisations;
- collecting, collating, managing, maintaining, processing and analysing research data, including applying quality control and quality assurance processes. Includes ingesting data received through exchanges with other entities;
- reporting on progress and outcomes of research and development projects, including providing or receiving final research reports and project deliverables;
- commercialisation relating to research and development projects, including identifying, developing, implementing, reviewing and revising new business opportunities, products and services resulting from research outcomes (eg research publications, research data products). Includes licensing research outcomes and related intellectual property;
- negotiating, establishing, implementing and monitoring agreements and contracts, including joint ventures. Includes agreements with research and development providers and funders and agreements with external research data providers;
- promotion and support of research and development, including development assistance for research projects;
- disseminating research and development findings and providing access to research data, including publication via the agency's website;
- designing, developing, building or procuring, establishing, installing, testing, calibrating and configuring, operating, managing, maintaining, and decommissioning and disposal of specialised facilities (eg laboratories) and specialised equipment (eg tools, instruments, laboratory equipment) operated by the agency to support the core business. Includes creating and maintaining manuals for purpose built facilities, equipment and instruments;

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- designing, developing, establishing, managing, maintaining and decommissioning and disposal of specialised software-based technology solutions that are commissioned, built or significantly customised by the agency to specifically meet unique requirements relating to the core business;
- managing and caring for animals used for research purposes, includes breeding, supplying, housing, monitoring and disposing of animals;
- arranging and attending research and development conferences, symposia, seminars and workshops;
- preparing and presenting speeches; and
- management of research misconduct.

The performance of the core business is supported by **general activities** such as:

- providing and receiving advice;
- planning, conducting and facilitating audits;
- managing and participating in committees, meetings, forums, reference groups and other bodies;
- project management;
- planning and reporting;
- fulfilling compliance requirements, including fiscal, legal, regulatory or quality standards and requirements. Includes quality management accreditation (eg ISO17025 – Testing and calibration laboratories);
- reviewing and evaluating;
- delegating powers and authorising actions;
- handling enquiries, complaints and feedback; and
- identifying, assessing and managing risks.

### **Cross references to AFDA Express Version 2**

*For advice, briefs and submissions to the portfolio Minister and other government bodies, cabinet submissions and the organisation's participation in formal inquiries, use EXTERNAL RELATIONS.*

*For media releases and interviews, use EXTERNAL RELATIONS.*

*For receiving or conferring awards for excellence in research and development, use EXTERNAL RELATIONS.*

*For financial transactions supporting research and development activities, including the management of research funds, use FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT.*

*For managing the acquisition of goods and services (other than specialised research equipment), including tendering and contracting arrangements, use PROCUREMENT.*

*For managing legal services, including legal advice, litigation, and establishing and managing agency intellectual property, use LEGAL SERVICES.*

*For agency websites supporting research and development, use PUBLICATION.*

*For recording staff development activities on individual personnel files, including recording completion of specialised research and development related training and competencies, use PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT.*

*For disciplinary action resulting from investigations into research misconduct by agency staff, use PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT.*



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*For information communications and technology systems, processes and activities which do not provide specialised support for research and development, use TECHNOLOGY AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT.*

*For developing and executing contracts under seal or deeds, including signed joint venture contracts under seal, use CONTRACTS UNDER SEAL/DEEDS.*

### **Cross references to other records authorities**

*For statutory and non-statutory advisory bodies, use General Records Authority 26 – ADVISORY BODIES.*

*For the issuing and management of grants, fellowships and scholarships, use General Records Authority 28 – GRANT MANAGEMENT.*

<b>Class no</b>	<b>Description of records</b>	<b>Disposal action</b>
63001	<p>Records documenting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>developing and reviewing high-level research and development policies, principles, protocols, rules, plans, frameworks, strategies, methodologies and programs, including those relating to quality assurance and quality control. Includes research management plans. Includes final versions, policy statements, proposals, major drafts, stakeholder consultation and supporting research;</li> <li>developing, maintaining and reviewing high-level research and development related standards, including quality assurance and quality control standards. Includes contributing to developing national and international standards. Includes final versions, major drafts, stakeholder consultation and supporting research;</li> <li>providing and receiving high-level advice, including advice relating to issues that are controversial or of considerable public interest, or innovative, ground-breaking or precedent setting. Includes final versions of advice, position papers, briefs, reports, opinions and submissions;</li> <li>developing national and high-level reports relating to managing the research and development core business, including major statistical reports. Includes final versions, major drafts, stakeholder consultation, and supporting research;</li> <li>high-level internal and external, including inter-governmental or inter-agency, committees, working groups, forums, panels and other bodies where the agency provides the secretariat, is the Australian Government's main representative, or plays a prominent or central role. Includes committees formed to consider significant matters relating to research and development, such as the establishment of a new research discipline, program or facility. Includes establishment documentation, agenda, final versions of minutes, reports and tabled papers;</li> <li>significant summary records created to support managing research and development activities, such as those consolidating information on research programs and project outcomes, or licensing of research outcomes. Includes registers, indexes and datasets and associated information;</li> <li>final versions of significant agreements and contracts and supporting documents, that: relate to substantial funding arrangements or the establishment of major partnerships and cooperative arrangements with</li> </ul>	Retain as national archives

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Class no	Description of records	Disposal action
	<p>other governments, agencies and organisations; are controversial, of public interest or ground-breaking in nature; are of international, national or regional significance (eg substantially impact upon the provision of research and development in Australia); or, have major implications for the conduct of agency business. Includes high-level inter-governmental and international agreements, joint ventures and memoranda of understanding;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• high-level and strategic reviews of research and development, including reviews of capabilities, programs, performance, quality control, efficiencies and cost effectiveness. Includes final review reports, major drafts, recommendations, stakeholder consultations, submissions, and supporting research;</li> <li>• final versions of papers, reports, presentations and proceedings from research and development related internal and external conferences, symposia, forums, seminars and workshops hosted by the agency; and</li> <li>• final versions of speeches presented by the portfolio Minister, the agency head, members of governing or advisory bodies, and senior agency staff (including senior researchers), in relation to research and development. Includes papers presented to conferences and seminars convened by other organisations;</li> <li>• final outcomes of all major research and development projects undertaken or commissioned by the agency. Includes final research and development reports, research and technical papers, research findings, prototypes, modelling and forecasting, and statistical and trend analysis. Includes research datasets (including scientific and technical research datasets) and associated information that support major research and development projects;</li> <li>• major research and development projects undertaken or commissioned by the agency (ie research case records), where the projects: may be considered controversial, are the subject of extensive debate, or arouse widespread scientific or other interest; represent a considerable investment of government resources; involve the use of new or innovative techniques; involve eminent researchers; represent new knowledge or a significant contribution to the existing body of knowledge; or, investigate matters that may potentially have a major economic, political, cultural, or environmental impact or otherwise be of substantial historical interest. Includes joint venture research and development projects. Includes project plans, methodologies, laboratory notebooks, observations, analysis, reports, and project deliverables;</li> </ul> <p><i>[For records documenting all other research and development projects undertaken or commissioned by the agency (ie research case records), use classes 63002 and 63003.</i></p> <p><i>For records documenting routine project management, use class 63003.]</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• commercialisation of research and development outcomes to develop new products and services that: relate to the outcomes of major research and development projects; involve substantial funding or investment; are the result of partnerships, joint ventures or cooperative arrangements with other governments, agencies and organisations; are controversial or of considerable public interest; are considered ground-breaking, innovative or original; involve the use of new or innovative techniques; or, may</li> </ul>	

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Class no	Description of records	Disposal action
	<p>potentially have a considerable economic, political, cultural, or environmental impact or otherwise be of substantial historical interest. Includes identifying, developing, implementing, reviewing and revising new business opportunities, products and services (including licencing) resulting from research outcomes. Includes proposals, feasibility studies, assessments and recommendations, briefs, business case and modelling, scoping studies, notifications, performance reviews, reports, agreements and market research and analysis;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>designing, developing, evaluating, building or procuring, establishing, testing, calibrating, configuring, customising, maintaining and decommissioning of specialised facilities (eg laboratories) and equipment (eg tools, instruments, laboratory equipment) operated by the agency to support the core business, that: are highly specialised, unique, innovative or ground-breaking in design, or represent a major advance or significant improvement in functionality. Includes initial proposal, designs and drawings, plans, specifications, tender documentation, evaluation and test reports, master copies of operating and maintenance manuals, and decommissioning documentation. Excludes unsuccessful tender responses and tenders that did not proceed;</li> </ul> <p><i>[For designing, developing, evaluating, building or procuring, establishing, testing, customising, maintaining and decommissioning premises (ie land, structures and buildings) that are not highly specialised research facilities or purpose built to support the unique requirements of the core business, use PROPERTY MANAGEMENT.</i></p> <p><i>For disposing of hazardous waste from specialised facilities (eg chemicals from laboratories), use PROPERTY MANAGEMENT.</i></p> <p><i>For acquiring equipment (eg tools, instruments, laboratory equipment) and stores acquired and/or operated by the agency that are not highly specialised or purpose built to support the unique requirements of the core business, use PROCUREMENT.</i></p> <p><i>For managing, maintaining and disposing of equipment (eg tools, instruments, laboratory equipment) and stores acquired and/or operated by the agency that are not highly specialised or purpose built to support the unique requirements of the core business, use ASSET MANAGEMENT.]</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>designing, developing, evaluating, establishing, configuring, modifying, maintaining and decommissioning, specialised software-based technology solutions that are commissioned, built or significantly customised by the agency to specifically meet unique requirements relating to the core business, or that are ground-breaking or innovative in nature (such as developing and employing complex machine learning algorithms, or the creation of specialised software to support research projects). Includes project proposals, system specifications, testing and acceptance reports, developing source code and algorithms, data dictionaries, change requests, and system documentation and technical manuals;</li> </ul> <p><i>[For acquiring software-based technology solutions, including purchasing commercial-off-the-shelf software and tendering for custom-built software, use PROCUREMENT.</i></p> <p><i>For designing, developing, evaluating, establishing, configuring, modifying, maintaining and decommissioning other software systems that do not provide specialised support for the core business and/or are not ground-breaking or</i></p>	

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Class no	Description of records	Disposal action
	<p><i>innovative in nature, use TECHNOLOGY AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT.]</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>disclosures of inventions that have major economic implications or where their industrial application and innovation in industry represent first of a kind processes or products. Includes description of research, results, value, use and possible commercial application; and</li> <li>master versions of agency publications, including published research reports, products and datasets resulting from research and development projects and programs. Includes research data products.</li> </ul>	
63002	<p>Records documenting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>final versions of agreements and contracts, including consent forms with individuals, joint venture partnerships and memoranda of understanding, other than those covered in class 63001;</li> <li>major research and development projects undertaken or commissioned by the agency (ie research case records), other than those covered in class 63001;</li> </ul> <p><i>[For final outcomes of all major research and development projects undertaken or commissioned by the agency, including research datasets, use class 63001.</i></p> <p><i>For major research and development projects undertaken by the agency (ie research case records) where the projects may be considered controversial, are the subject of extensive debate, or arouse widespread scientific or other interest; represent a considerable investment of government resources; involve the use of new or innovative techniques; involve eminent researchers; represent new knowledge or a significant contribution to the existing body of knowledge; or, investigate matters that may potentially have a major economic, political, cultural, or environmental impact or otherwise be of substantial historical interest, use class 63001.</i></p> <p><i>For minor research and development projects undertaken or commissioned by the agency, such as small scale projects of minor significance that do not investigate matters of potential community or scientific interest, have no commercial outcomes and do not add to the existing body of knowledge, use class 63003.</i></p> <p><i>For records documenting routine project management, use class 63003]</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>commercialisation of research and development outcomes to develop new products and services, other than those covered in class 63001. Includes proposals, feasibility studies, assessments and recommendations, briefs, business case and modelling, scoping studies, notifications, performance reviews, reports, agreements and market research and analysis; and</li> <li>disclosures of inventions, other than those covered in class 63001. Includes description of research, results, value, use and possible commercial application.</li> </ul>	Destroy 20 years after action completed

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Class no	Description of records	Disposal action
63003	Records documenting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• routine operational administrative tasks supporting the core business; and</li><li>• research and development activities, other than those covered in classes 63001 to 63002.</li></ul>	Destroy 7 years after action completed

SUPERSEDED