NAA

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF AUSTRALIA

CORPORATE PLAN
REPORTING PERIOD **2024–25** TO **2027–28**

24-25

National Archives of Australia acknowledges the traditional owners and custodians of Country throughout Australia and acknowledges their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to the people, their cultures and Elders past, present and emerging.

Cover image created with records and photographs from National Archives' collection.

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INTRODUCTION FROM THE
DIRECTOR-GENERAL

National Archives of Australia (National Archives) ensures that Australian Government information of enduring significance is secured, preserved and made available to government agencies, researchers and the community. We provide leadership to Australian Government agencies in information management best practice and promote accountability and transparency in Commonwealth administration.

Like all archives globally, National Archives is responding to shifts in the information management environment. We are witnessing a shift from traditional paper-based records to vast digital collections. This requires a fundamental reimagining of how we fulfil our remit to preserve and facilitate access to the ever-growing record of the Commonwealth.

Concurrently, we are operating in a complex environment of reduced trust in government, rapid technological advancement and declines in social cohesion. These dynamics necessitate a re-examination of our organisational strategy to ensure we maintain our relevance, public trust and status as leaders in the information management environment.

Our Corporate Plan 2024-25 sets out several key priorities that underscore our central mission.

Last year, National Archives welcomed the Australian Government's National Cultural Policy – *Revive: A place for every story, a story for every place*. We will continue to embed all 5 pillars of *Revive* in our work, with the commitment to modernise the *Archives Act 1983* remaining a significant focus. This commitment ensures we can manage the national archival collection in a way that reflects the digital age.

In line with Pillar 1 of *Revive*, National Archives will continue to adopt a 'First Nations First' approach. We acknowledge the important role that archival documents can play in redress and truth telling for First Nations peoples. We remain committed to 2-way engagement and active consultation with communities.

National Archives acknowledges our leadership responsibilities in promoting integrity and accountability in government through preserving and facilitating access to the Commonwealth record. Appropriate records management is a whole of government responsibility, and we will continue to set standards and support agencies to ensure records are preserved for future generations. We aim to increase our engagement with agencies, with the intention that this will improve the longterm preservation and ongoing accessibility of records for the community.

Preserving and facilitating access to at-risk records also remains a core focus. With our Defend the Past, Protect the Future Program in its final year, additional funding has enabled more at-risk records to be digitised. We will continue to identify, prioritise and preserve our records at greatest risk of deterioration.

A robust archival collection is one that is accessible. The national archival collection is unique, and its value can only be realised if it is effectively preserved and readily accessible. Accessibility is achieved through a range of programs and services offered by National Archives. This includes ensuring that our digitisation on demand service meets our service standards, as well as through pro-active digitisation of records. We also increase access to our collection through dynamic and exciting exhibitions and public programs.

Finally, we recognise that technological advancements offer new efficiencies and possibilities for enhancing access to our collection. We will continue to embrace change while working towards a digital end-to-end archival service.

The Corporate Plan 2024-25 reflects our unwavering dedication to navigating these transformative times with foresight and resilience.

We will also continue to work collaboratively with and seek advice from the National Archives of Australia Advisory Council, to help ensure we deliver on our legislated mandate and our unique and enduring role in supporting government accountability and transparency. I also thank the outgoing Chair of the Advisory Council, Dr Denver Beanland AM, for his dedicated and invaluable service to National Archives over the past decade. I look forward to working with incoming Chair Dr Paul Grimes PSM.

As the accountable authority of National Archives, I am pleased to present the National Archives of Australia Corporate Plan 2024-25, prepared in accordance with paragraph 35(1)(b) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*, covering the periods 2024-25 to 2027-28.

Simon Froude
Director-General
National Archives of Australia
29 August 2024

ABOUT
NATIONAL ARCHIVES
OF AUSTRALIA

National Archives of Australia (National Archives) is an Australian Government entity established under the *Archives Act 1983* (the Archives Act). It is a non-corporate Commonwealth entity (a listed entity) under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act) and an Executive Agency under the *Public Service Act 1999* (Public Service Act).

National Archives' responsibility, as mandated in the Archives Act, is to secure, preserve and make accessible the archival resources of the Commonwealth.

Our purpose

National Archives provides leadership in best practice management of the official record of the Commonwealth and ensures that Australian Government information of enduring significance is secured, preserved and available to government agencies, researchers and the community.

Our work strengthens trust in democracy and improves government transparency and accountability by connecting Australians to government decisions and activities.

National Archives embodies the 5 pillars of the National Cultural Policy, *Revive: A place for every story, a story for every place*.

Key activities[1]

National Archives sets 3 key activities to achieve our purpose:

1. **Enable** best practice information management by Australian Government entities

We are trusted advisers in information management requirements to Australian Government entities and we engage with agencies to support them to create and keep records of government activities and decisions. We:

- provide stewardship for the whole of government on information management policy, through implementation of the *Building trust in the public record* policy

- lead and set government information management standards, ensuring that information management products, advice and standards are fit for purpose

- assist Australian Government agencies in compliance with the Archives Act, and assess information management maturity across the Commonwealth through the annual Check-up survey to all agencies.

2. **Secure** and preserve nationally significant Australian Government information

We preserve the most significant records of the Australian Government and authorise disposal of records with no ongoing value to government or community. We:

- work with Australian Government agencies to identify records, both physical and digital, of enduring national significance for transfer to National Archives

- identify and prioritise the digitisation of records that are at risk of loss or damage, in particular records of importance to First Nations peoples

- provide stewardship of the nation's archival collection.

3. **Connect** Australians to the national archival collection

We make the national archival collection accessible to the public, to enrich and inform Australians of who they are today and into the future. We:

- create innovative and audience-centric programs and services to engage the public and create awareness of the national archival collection

- prioritise and describe more of the national archival collection to ensure it is discoverable, accessible and useable

- connect First Nations peoples with the national archival collection in a safe and culturally appropriate way.

National Archives also undertakes activities as outlined by the Minister for the Arts' Statement of Expectations, which is published on our website, along with our Statement of Intent.

[1] Key activities have been amended from the Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS) 2024-25, with one activity removed while remaining activities have been amended for clarity.

Our Values

Together with the APS Values and APS Code of Conduct, Our Values guide us in all that we do.

I will trust my colleagues and make decisions together

I will communicate and consult regularly and early within and across teams

I will develop my knowledge of and connections with other teams

I will respect my colleagues for who they are

I will contribute to an environment where each person can make a difference and grow

I will listen to the experience and knowledge of my colleagues

I will trust my colleagues and make decisions together

I will communicate and consult regularly and early within and across teams

I will develop my knowledge of and connections with other teams

COMMITMENT TO
NATIONAL CULTURAL POLICY

Revive: A place for every story, a story for every place

The work of National Archives is embodied in the 5 pillars of the National Cultural Policy, *Revive*, and we will continue to align our programs of work to these pillars.

1. First Nations First

We support the telling of First Nations histories and stories, and we recognise that evidence and accounts in archival records play a vital role in redress and truth-telling for First Nations peoples. We acknowledge at-risk First Nations cultural material must be preserved for future generations.

2. Place for Every Story

We provide access to the national archival collection to the Australian public, including family researchers, historians, academics and students, to enable conversations and storytelling about our history. We recognise that archival records hold the evidence of the impact of government decisions and past events, and we share those stories so that we may better understand who we are as a nation.

3. Centrality of the Artist

We recognise that the national archival collection is an important resource, particularly for biographers and historians but also for wider artistic practice. Our commitment to ensuring access to Australia's historic, heritage and contemporary records can inspire and inform the development of future creative work.

4. Strong Cultural Infrastructure

We care for and protect the national archival collection, comprising over 51 million records that weave the narrative of the collective journey of the Australian people. We recognise we are part of the infrastructure that enables Australia's cultural and creative sector to flourish. We work to make our collection accessible, for the benefit of all Australians.

5. Engaging the Audience

We connect with audiences in diverse ways. With offices located in each state and territory, an online and on-demand collection database, and a range of digital and touring exhibition programs, we support Australians to discover more about their connection to the social, cultural and political changes in Australian society.

OPERATING CONTEXT

National Archives, like many government agencies, is navigating external challenges, including rapid advances in technology, increased cyber security threats, a tight fiscal environment and increasing demand for services. An erosion of social cohesion and reduced public trust in government present challenges that National Archives can respond to.

We are in a period of transforming the way we work, as we seek to harness new opportunities and respond to existing and emerging challenges to achieve a leading and robust archival service, that effectively manages government information assets and contributes to Australia's cultural identity.

Environment

A robust national archival collection is a whole-of-government responsibility and builds public trust in government

A number of recent Australian National Audit Office reports, royal commissions and whole-of-government inquiries have identified issues with poor recordkeeping in Australian Government agencies. These inquiries have also identified that poor recordkeeping affects the ability of Australians to understand how government decisions were made.

While Australian Government agencies have obligations under the Archives Act to manage their records appropriately, there is no legal requirement for them to comply with information management standards set by National Archives.

The effectiveness of National Archives to maintain the national archival collection relies on agency cooperation and investment to improve their information management practices. We will continue to support agencies to improve their practices and capability, most notably through the whole-of-government information management policy, *Building trust in the public record*.

National Archives has been seeking amendments to modernise the Archives Act for many years, and is pleased that the Australian Government has identified this as a deliverable under the National Cultural Policy, *Revive*.

The national archival collection is a whole-of-government responsibility. Trust in government is linked to democratic participation, social cohesion and collaboration in tackling societal challenges. By working together and investing in information management, all Australian Government agencies can help to ensure that more Australians can access evidence of government decisions and actions, and improve the transparency and accountability of government.

Community expectations around access

National Archives is a vital part of the infrastructure that makes cultural memory possible. Our national stories are shaped by our histories, places, identities, languages, cultures, families and communities. National Archives shares these stories by providing access to the national archival collection.

We continue to operate in an environment with high levels of community and researcher expectations around access to the national archival collection, as well as the programs and services we offer that share and celebrate Australian stories. Our responsibility to provide access also supports First Nations truth-telling, and we remain committed to providing access to records for the National Redress Scheme and the Territories Stolen Generations Redress Scheme.

Meeting community expectations around access is challenging. An accessible National Archives requires a collection that is effectively described and searchable, and accessible nationally. An 'always on' digital service, combined with physical locations where people can engage with our reference services team, ensures equitable access to the national archival collection.

In an environment where resources are limited, our reference services team continues to deliver onsite access to records in research centres in all states and territories. Researchers and members of the public are also provided with reference advice that enables them to undertake self-directed searches and access digital copies of records online, where possible.

The ongoing expansion of the national archival collection, growing demand for access to records and increasing operating costs in the long term means that expenses appear likely to exceed available appropriations. We continue to look for efficiencies and reduce our costs. While the situation is partly assisted by the increased base funding, ongoing financial sustainability remains a priority.

Technological change and innovation

As the demand to manage and archive greater volumes of digital records in a broader range of digital formats increases, the resources and capabilities we require are changing. While the national archival collection continues to expand, our available resources have not increased to reflect the volume and complexity of the task to preserve and share the national archival collection. However, this challenge presents opportunities for us to embrace innovation in order to improve how we operate and to play a leading role in developing the future digital records management practices required across the Commonwealth.

The cyber security threat landscape also continues to change and evolve as threat actor capabilities grow. National Archives continues to prioritise uplifting our cyber security capabilities and implementing new controls and practices to strengthen our defences, taking into consideration whole-of-government Australian Cyber Security Centre guidance, the Information Security Manual and Protective Security Policy Framework controls.

Importance of First Nations engagement

National Archives recognises that as an institution we hold records that are central to telling First Nations stories and truth-telling, and that at-risk First Nations records must be preserved for current and future generations. We acknowledge the number of current and arising significant issues for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, including past National Inquiry recommendations relating to access to archival records.

Decisions about the management and availability of records related to First Nations peoples must be made in full consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. This is a challenge many archives are facing.

National Archives is committed to broadening and strengthening connections to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with 2-way engagement to develop relationships and assist peoples to access collections, services and resources in culturally appropriate ways through *Our way: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander protocols* and the Tandanya Declaration.

National Archives plan to engage First Nations peoples and communities includes:

- acknowledging First Nations peoples' diverse differences and where possible, providing culturally safe spaces for individuals or groups to visit and view sensitive or culturally secret and sacred records

- protecting the cultural safety of our First Nations staff

- creating and strengthening engagement with individuals, groups, and communities such as Link-Up, land councils and native title organisations, universities, advisory and state and territory family history departmental staff, for ongoing interaction with services and future collaboration

- continuing leadership and involvement with the Healing Foundation Historical Records Taskforce on Indigenous matters with records forums to assist stolen generations peoples to access records and connect with non-government organisations that hold related record collections.

National Archives engagement activities have been supported, in part, through non-ongoing grant funding which has enabled us to establish a dedicated team to meet the growing program and service demand in the short-term. An increase in stable resourcing to confidently staff the program and meet growing program and service demands would enable longer-term operational planning.

Capability

Our people

National Archives is a medium-sized agency with a national footprint employing around 390 people. National Archives' workforce is highly engaged and draws on unique subject matter knowledge, skills and experience to ensure the ongoing preservation and access of both physical and digital records. In a changing operating environment, contemporary and digital-first capability must be built to manage and support archival services for all record types. A targeted approach is being taken to enhance our core skills, knowledge and capability in digital preservation, archival practices and access.

National Archives has identified areas to enhance our workforce capability, including developing our people in the following areas:

- Digital preservation – as we move to a digital-first approach to our work, and the number of digital records we archive grows, a significant uplift in digital preservation is required. National Archives is responding to this by first exploring the capabilities needed in our digital preservation team and more broadly across the agency.

- Access examination – critical to providing access to the national archival collection is ensuring that we have employees that have appropriate security clearances and are trained in access examination.

- Description – a properly described national archival collection leads to increased access, however the size of the collection means that it is not possible for our people alone to adequately describe every record. We are exploring how emerging technologies may support our staff in meeting this challenge.

- First Nations – we are committed to supporting the connection of First Nations peoples to their family, history and heritage through access to our collection, programs and services in culturally appropriate and safe ways. We will continue to enhance cultural competency and understanding of First Nations cultural practice across the agency.

Targets under APS Strategic Commissioning Framework

In 2024-25, National Archives will reduce outsourcing of core work in line with the APS Strategic Commissioning Framework. Our targets for 2024-25 focus on reduced outsourcing of Information and Knowledge Management work, with an expected reduction of $800,000 in 2024-25 in outsourcing expenditure.

Infrastructure required to manage the national archival collection

Protecting and caring for the national archival collection requires specialised physical and digital storage. The nature of an archival collection is that it continually increases in size, meaning that our storage needs are always expanding. Fit-for-purpose physical and digital storage is foundational to preservation, digitisation and access activities across National Archives.

We have offices in each state and territory, which provide important in-person services to Australians. We will ensure that our state and territory offices are delivering their work effectively and consistently by reviewing the model for service and program delivery and developing an agreement framework. This year, our Northern Territory Office will move to a new location in Darwin's central business district, enabling us to expand our activities and improve client engagement.

Our collection is also geographically dispersed, but we will continue to consolidate repositories, maximise physical storage capacity, and scale digital storage in accordance with our business needs.

ICT capability requirements to provide a digital archival service

National Archives is transitioning to a digital-first approach in all aspects of our work. Providing a digital end-to-end service to the public has unique challenges and requires specific capabilities, including:

- Metadata management – the national archival collection is made up of a broad range of physical, digitised and digital-born records including documents, images, and audiovisual media. Managing the collection and making it accessible to the public is contingent on creating and maintaining rich metadata, allowing the collection to be described, categorised, searchable and secure. As our collection grows, we will employ emerging technologies to capture and maintain the metadata required to describe and access it more effectively.

- Enterprise workflow – many of our legacy processes still operate in a largely manual way. We are transitioning them to automated processes where appropriate and feasible. Our current focus is integrating our existing systems and creating digital workflows that increase our workplace effectiveness and efficiency.

- Effective and efficient digitisation – many of our physical records, whether paper, film or magnetic media, face the risk of deterioration as they age. We will continue to improve our effectiveness and efficiency in digitising these records, especially those most at risk, to ensure their ongoing preservation and accessibility.

- Search and discovery – an effective search capability is integral to our ability to provide the public with access to the national archival collection from anywhere and at any time. We will deliver improvements in our public search, external identity management, payment processing and content delivery to ensure that when a member of the public searches for available content they can find, view and download it with ease.

- Planning for obsolescence – as technologies advance, older file and document formats fall out of common usage and reach end of life. We manage our collection using the latest digital preservation methods, practices and systems to ensure ongoing viability of our digital records and to preserve the digital collection for future generations.

Risk management

National Archives recognises there is potential for risk in most aspects of its operations. Effective risk management enables us to work in a complex and challenging environment and ensures the delivery of strategic goals and business priorities.

National Archives Risk Management Framework:

- supports risk control and management

- maintains a line of sight from high-level enterprise and strategic risks

- informs staff of roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for managing risk

- establishes expectations and guidance on how risk should be identified, assessed, documented and managed

- allows innovation through balanced risk management.

National Archives key strategic risks are:

Key risk	Management approach
Australian Government agencies do not meet their information management obligations Australian Government agencies do not meet their obligations in the *Building trust in the public record* policy to manage the official record for the Commonwealth, reducing public trust in our democratic system.	*Building trust in the public record*, aims to improve how agencies create, collect, manage and use information assets. This is a shared risk with all Australian Government agencies. National Archives aims to increase engagement and support to uplift information management maturity and integrity across Australian Government agencies. This challenge presents an opportunity, as effective records management across the Commonwealth improves confidence and trust in democracy and government integrity and builds the archival collection for the future.
Technological change impedes archival practice Rapid technological change has presented many challenges, notably that records are created in numerous digital formats and must be ingested, preserved and stored in a way that makes them accessible and secure.	National Archives is responding to this risk through continued development of a digital-first archive. This ensures we mitigate risk by bringing at-risk records into the digital collection as soon as possible, in formats optimised for archival storage. We will use emerging technologies and automation to increase our efficiency at ingesting those records that are held on at-risk digital media, to ensure they become part of the digital collection. We will also use metadata analysis to identify records stored in at-risk formats and employ automated workflows to update those formats as required.
Archival material is lost or destroyed Archival material is lost through failure to identify, secure and preserve, or due to resource limitations, obsolescence, neglect or hostile action.	National Archives continues to: • invest in contemporary fit-for-purpose archival storage facilities, cyber secure technology, business systems and staff capabilities to secure and safeguard the collection • ensure effective implementation of strategies for preservation, transfer and storage of retain as national archives (RNA) records • issue records authorities to identify RNA records, for transfer to National Archives • set archival standards and policy for National Archives and Australian Government agencies.

Key risk	Management approach
National Archives does not connect with audiences Australians' ability to access and engage with the national archival collection is impeded. In particular National Archives fails to connect with First Nations and other diverse communities.	National Archives continues to improve infrastructure and systems and increase the quantity and breadth of records available for discovery and access through description, access examination, digitisation and preservation. This includes through contemporary fit-for-purpose secure digital engagement platforms. We are committed to the development and delivery of public engagement programs and services across onsite, online and offsite. This also presents an opportunity to improve social cohesion through engagement with diverse and marginalised communities.
Workforce capability does not meet operational requirements National Archives is unable to attract, develop and retain the capability required to meet current and future workforce demands, most significantly a workforce that can deliver a digital-first archive.	National Archives recruits and develops our people to ensure we have the right skills in the right place at the right time. A focus in 2024-25 is on ensuring our people have access to contemporary tools to apply the skills of the future. The continuation of our participation in the pilot graduate certificate qualification with Charles Sturt University will support National Archives and other agencies to access contemporary industry accredited digital archiving talent. In addition, our commitment to workplace policies and practices that promote inclusion and belonging and attract and retain diverse employees, will support us to meet current and future workforce demands. We invest in the development of core and specialist capability consistent with the APS Continuous Learning Model and offer dedicated time and budget through centralised and decentralised learning programs. This risk presents an opportunity to continue to build an archival workforce of the future and lead digital archival practice.

Key risk	Management approach
Financial resources are insufficient to meet operational requirements National Archives does not have sufficient ongoing funding to meet its legislative functions or community expectations around preserving, securing and providing access to the national archival collection in the medium and long term.	National Archives does not have sufficient ongoing and stable resourcing to enable it to carry out its functions in the medium to long term. The 2023-24 Budget provides additional funding for all National Collecting Institutions, including $36.5 million over 4 years for National Archives and a further $8.2 million per annum from 2027-28 (indexed and ongoing). This will assist in supporting the digital uplift and responding to legacy technology issues. However, National Archives continues to operate in a challenging fiscal environment. Pressures to our financial sustainability include: • non-ongoing funding of $67.7 million provided in 2021-22 over 4 years ceases in June 2025 • increasing supplier costs • increasing project and workforce costs • accelerating growth in born-digital records storage and associated technology costs.

Cooperation

Setting information standards across the Australian Government

National Archives is responsible for setting information management standards to secure, preserve and provide access to Commonwealth records.

A major challenge for National Archives in achieving its purpose is that agencies do not secure their archival records or transfer those records into the national archival collection. The Archives Act currently lacks an ability for National Archives to enforce compliance to ensure records are protected. As a result, we rely on the cooperation of Australian Government agencies to ensure that the evidence of Australian Government decisions and activities is preserved for future generations.

The Check-up survey measuring how agencies are managing their information and records is conducted annually and the results published to assist agencies in improving their information management maturity.

National and international archival and records management communities

National Archives works closely with regional, national and international archival communities to address common archival issues and to evolve the role and capability of archives.

In Australia, our work with the archival and information management community includes:

- Association of Moving Image Archivists (AMIA)

- Australian Institute for Conservation of Cultural Materials (AICCM)

- Australian Society of Archivists (ASA)

- Australasian Sound Recordings Association (ASRA)

- Council of Australasian Archives and Records Authorities (CAARA)

- Data Management Association of Australia (DAMA)

- GLAM Peak.

We also run Government Agencies Information Network (GAIN) Australia as a national network supporting agency information and records managers in the Australian Government.

Internationally, we support and participate in skills development, collaborative projects and conferences, including working with:

- Digital Preservation Coalition (DPC)

- International Association of Sound Archives (IASA)

- International Council on Archives (ICA) including the Pacific Regional Branch (PARBICA)

- International Federation of Film Archives (IFFA)

- International Federation of Television Archives (IFTA)

- Records and Information Management Practitioners Alliance (RIMPA Global)

- SouthEast Asia-Pacific AudioVisual Archives Association (SEAPAVAA).

Subsidiaries

National Archives does not have any subsidiaries.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

These performance measures articulate National Archives' expected progress towards its outcome to promote the creation, management and preservation of authentic, reliable and useable Australian Government records, and to facilitate Australians' access to the archival resources of the Commonwealth. When reporting in the Annual Report against performance measures that comprise more than one target, a result of 'partially achieved' will be used if the target results are a mix of achieved and not achieved.

⚙ Enable

Key activity
Enable best practice information management by Australian Government entities

Performance measure E1: Australian Government agencies actively apply best practice in the creation, collection and use of Australian Government information assets

National Archives developed the *Building trust in the public record* policy to help Australian Government agencies improve how they create, collect, manage and use information assets. The policy outlines actions agencies can take to implement best practice information management. Making and keeping evidence of government actions and decisions is vital for transparent and accountable government. National Archives uses the annual Check-up survey results to measure implementation of the *Building trust in the public record* policy across government. The survey results also assist agencies to measure their information management maturity. National Archives will continue to analyse and use the results from the Check-up survey to build information management capability across the Commonwealth.

Target				
No	2024–25	2025–26	2026–27	2027–28
E1.1	Percentage of agencies that have implemented the mandatory actions in the *Building trust in the public record* policy: Action 1: Assess information management capability annually by completing the National Archives annual Check-up survey – at least 97% Action 9: Manage all digital information assets created since 1 January 2016, digitally – at least 95% Action 14: Transfer 'retain as national archives' information assets as soon as practicable, or within 15 years of creation, to the care of National Archives – at least 20%	Action 1 – ≥ 97% of agencies; Action 9 – ≥ 95%; Action 14 – ≥ 25%	Action 1 – ≥ 99% of agencies; Action 9 – ≥ 99%; Action 14 – ≥ 30%	Action 1 – ≥ 99% of agencies; Action 9 – ≥ 99%; Action 14 – ≥ 35%
E1.2	Annual Check-up survey national average index shows an improvement in Australian Government agencies' information management maturity.[2]	Same as 2024–25	Same as 2024–25	Same as 2024–25

Methodology: The data used to report against this performance measure is from National Archives' annual Check-up surveys. The Check-up survey is an online self-assessment tool that all Australian Government agencies must complete. The survey seeks to measure maturity and performance in information management, mapped against the requirements of the Information Management Standard for Australian Government and actions of the *Building trust in the public record* policy.

In relation to target E1.1, Action 9 or Action 14 is implemented if the agency responds in the Check-up survey that the action is performed 'usually/most of the time or almost always/always'.

Target E1.2 is achieved if the annual Check-up survey national index average shows an increase on the 2023 benchmark of 3.65.

Explanation of changes since 2023-24 Corporate Plan: Description of target 1.1 has been updated for clarity. The targets in relation to Action 14 at E1.1 have been revised down, based on 2023 Check-up survey results. Those results indicated that agencies require more time and support to implement this element of the policy. The previous target relating to the percentage of agencies that have implemented 12 recommended actions from the policy has been removed. The target was not a suitable indicator of effectiveness given a low percentage of agencies have reached that maturity level.

The *Building trust in the public record policy* applies until 31 December 2025, and targets may be revised following a review of the policy.

[2] Previously performance measure E1.3 in Corporate Plan 2023-24

🔒 Secure

Key activity
Secure and preserve nationally significant Australian Government information

Performance measure S1: Nationally significant archival records (meaning those identified as 'retain as national archives' (RNA)) are appropriately transferred to National Archives

Australian Government agencies must transfer select information and records to National Archives for preservation and access. These are records that have been identified as 'retain as national archives' (RNA) in a records authority and are no longer used on a regular basis. Agencies that have not transferred records to National Archives in the last 10 years may have records that are at risk of being lost or damaged. National Archives engages with these agencies as a matter of priority to ensure they are aware of their recordkeeping obligations under the Archives Act.

Target				
No	2024–25	2025–26	2026–27	2027–28
S1.1	Engagements with at least 85% of agencies that have not transferred archival records identified as RNA to National Archives in 10 years or more[2]	Engagements with ≥ 90% of agencies that have not transferred archival records identified as RNA to National Archives in 10 years or more	Engagements with ≥ 90% of agencies that have not transferred archival records identified as RNA to National Archives in 10 years or more	Engagements with ≥ 90% of agencies that have not transferred archival records identified as RNA to National Archives in 10 years or more

Methodology: National Archives uses annual Check-up survey results to inform transfer forecasting and targeted transfer of at-risk records. RecordSearch is used to identify agencies which have not transferred records identified as RNA in 10 or more years.

Explanation of changes since 2023-24 Corporate Plan: Clarification that agencies identify records that are RNA through applicable records authorities issued by National Archives and may not be aware if records are at-risk. The target from 2026-27 has been revised down from 95% to 90%, consistent with expected resources. The language of the targets has also been amended to make clear the target is met if the result is greater than or equal to stated target. This measure and target have been included in the PBS 2024-25 because it is a measure of National Archives effectiveness in enabling best practice information management.

[2] Source: PBS 2024-25, p308, noting that language of target amended to make clear the target is met if result is greater than or equal to target

Performance measure S2[3]: Managing an evolving national archival collection

Following a review of National Archives strategic priorities in 2022-23, a key action identified was the development of a Collection Strategy that provides a comprehensive roadmap for end-to-end collection management activities. The development of the strategy commenced in 2023-24.

Target				
No	2024–25	2025–26	2026–27	2027–28
S2.1	Collection strategy finalised[4]	Target to be determined following finalisation of Collection strategy	Target to be determined following finalisation of Collection strategy	Target to be determined following finalisation of Collection strategy

Methodology: Development of a Collection Strategy that aligns National Archives' functions and services to enable effective management of the national archival collection. The target will be achieved if the Collection strategy has been approved by the National Archives Executive Board.

Explanation of changes since 2023-24 Corporate Plan: Clarification that the Collection Strategy will be finalised in 2024-25. Targets for future reporting periods will be determined after the strategy has been finalised.

[3] Previously performance measure S4 in Corporate Plan 2023–24

[4] Previous performance target S4.1 in Corporate Plan 2023–24

Performance measure S3: At-risk collections are preserved

National Archives prioritises preserving and digitising as many at-risk records as possible, for the benefit of future generations. Records that are 'at-risk' are those that are in danger of being lost, damaged or destroyed. Examples of records considered at-risk are those that are chemically unstable, in poor condition or stored in obsolete formats. Preserving the records that evidence government decision-making and actions is important for future generations, including for First Nations peoples. An example of this is a recent scoping study of our Northern Territory repository to prioritise digitisation of at-risk First Nations records, with a formal 4-year program of work in response currently in development.

Target				
No	2024–25	2025–26	2026–27	2027–28
S3.1	Digitisation targets are delivered[5]	As per 2024–25	As per 2024–25	As per 2024–25
S3.2	18% or more of at-risk physical collection items are digitised[6]	≥ 20% of at-risk physical collection items are digitised	≥ 20% of at-risk physical collection items are digitised	≥ 20% of at-risk physical collection items are digitised
S3.3	90% or more of digital collection items confirmed to be in low-risk stable formats[7]	≥ 90% of digital collection items confirmed to be in low-risk stable formats	≥ 95% of digital collection items confirmed to be in low-risk stable formats	≥ 95% of digital collection items confirmed to be in low-risk stable formats

Methodology: Digitisation targets are set based on an analysis of data from National Archives systems and accounting for the end in 2024-25 of non-ongoing funding of $67.7 million received in 2021-22 to increase digitisation of at-risk records.

Explanation of changes since 2023-24 Corporate Plan: Performance Measure S3 and the digitisation target at S3.1 have been amended to acknowledge that it is not possible to digitally preserve all at-risk collections given National Archives is continually receiving material into the collection and does not control material that has not been transferred. Target S3.2 has been revised down from 22% from 2026-27 based on analysis of data from National Archives systems and the end in 2024-25 of a $67.7 million funding allocation received in 2021. The language of both targets has been amended to make clear the target is met if result is greater than or equal to the stated target.

[5] PBS 2024-25, p 308

[6] PBS 2024-25, p 308, noting that language of target has been clarified to refer to physical collection (rather than analogue collection), noting that language of target amended to make clear the target is met if result is *greater than* or equal to target

[7] PBS 2024-25, p 308, noting that language of target amended to make clear the target is met if result is *greater than* or equal to target

Connect

Key activity
Connect Australians to the national archival collection

Performance measure C1: The way audiences engage with and use the collection meets their expectations within a digital-first approach

A key aim for National Archives is for Australians to be able to meaningfully connect with the national archival collection. We create innovative and audience-centric programs and services to enable access to, and engagement, with the collection onsite, offsite and online.

Target

No	2024–25	2025–26	2026–27	2027–28
C1.1	70% or more online visits / sessions are engaged[8]	Same as 2024–25	Same as 2024–25	Same as 2024–25
C1.2	Case studies of programs show that more than 80% of audience expectations were met[9]	Same as 2024–25	Same as 2024–25	Same as 2024–25

Methodology: Case studies for 2024-25 are selected at the beginning of the reporting period to include onsite, offsite and online visitor data that reach a variety of demographics and aim to connect people with the national archival collection.

Explanation of changes since 2023-24 Corporate Plan: The more specific quantitative target for online visits/sessions has been included in this reporting cycle. This better demonstrates meaningful interactions with our audiences and is based on current industry approach to measuring effective online audience engagement. Both targets are included in the PBS 2024-25.

[8] PBS 2024-25, p 308
[9] PBS 2024-25, p 308

Performance measure C2: National archival collection is discoverable and accessible

For records to be of use to the public, they must be discoverable and accessible. For records to be discoverable through our database, RecordSearch, they need to be described accurately using agreed standards. The digitisation of records is also essential to accessibility, as it enables more records to be accessed digitally by more people while preserving the original record.

National Archives must also ensure that access applications made by the public are assessed within legislated timetables. Our reference services team are on hand to help navigate the national archival collection for members of the public.

Target				
No	**2024–25**	**2025–26**	**2026–27**	**2027–28**
C2.1	At least 800,000 new item descriptions added to RecordSearch online, making more of the collection discoverable to audiences	To be determined annually	To be determined annually	To be determined annually
C2.2	At least 85% of reference enquiries are actioned within service standards	As per 2024–25	As per 2024–25	As per 2024–25
C2.3	At least 90% of digitisation on demand requests are actioned within service standards	As per 2024–25	As per 2024–25	As per 2024–25
C2.4	At least 80% of access applications examined within legislated timeframes	As per 2024–25	As per 2024–25	As per 2024–25

Methodology: Assessment of item descriptions loaded and/or discoverable on RecordSearch online, reference inquiries and public digitisation-on-demand requests completed nationally within service standards; and decisions on access applications made nationally within the legislative timeframe under the Archives Act.

Explanation of changes since 2023-24 Corporate Plan: Target C2.1 has been amended to clarify that adding item descriptions to RecordSearch means more of the collection is discoverable to audiences. The language of the targets has also been amended to make clear the target is met if the result is greater than or equal to stated target.

Performance measure C3: Commitments and values of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Strategy are recognised, enabled and realised

National Archives is committed to embedding a First Nations first approach to all our work. This is supported by the *Our way: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander protocols*, which guide our engagement with First Nations communities and peoples, and the Tandanya Declaration, the first international archives declaration on Indigenous people and matters.

Target				
No	**2024–25**	**2025–26**	**2026–27**	**2027–28**
C3.1	Case study demonstrates that a selected action of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Strategy and Implementation Plan has been successfully implemented	As per 2024–25	As per 2024–25	As per 2024–25

Methodology: Assessment of implementation of a selected action of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Strategy and Implementation Plan which responds to the Tandanya Declaration commitments. The case study is selected at the beginning of the reporting period.

Explanation of changes since 2023-24 Corporate Plan: Language of the performance measure and target has been simplified to reflect National Archives Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Strategy and Implementation Plan.