



Adequate Records Management in Perspective - Records Management Policies, Procedures and Practices

Why have records management policies, procedures and practices?

Documenting records management policies, procedures and practices is an essential part of an accountable records management program. Such documentation should be written to suit your agency's or authority's environment.

An agency needs to establish, document, maintain and implement records management policies, procedures and practices to ensure all staff understand their roles and responsibilities regarding records management.

In addition, policies, procedures and practices ensure that the evidentiary, accountability and information needs of the agency or authority are met.¹

Records management policies, procedures and practices should:

- be authorised
- be implemented and known by staff
- be regularly reviewed
- be addressed in other rules and guidance of the agency
- identify recordkeeping requirements
- define authorities, responsibilities and interrelationships¹.

By developing records management policies, procedures and practices, an agency will satisfy the requirements of Outcome 10 of the *Adequate Records Management - Meeting the Standard*.

What to include in the policies, procedures and practices?

Key issues to be addressed in the records management policies, procedures and practices of an agency include the following:

Creation of records

- who is responsible for the creation of official records?
- when will they be created?
- what official records is the agency required to create?

¹ Standards Australia, *AS ISO 15489.1 – 2002, Records Management Part 1, General*, p. 5

² State Records Authority of New South Wales, *Principles in Practice: Guidelines on Establishing and Maintaining a Records Management Program*, 1999.

- how will they be created?

Capture of records

- who is responsible for the capture of official records?
- when will they be captured?
- what official records is the agency required to capture?
- how will they be captured?

Disposal of records

- who is responsible for the disposal of official records?
- when will official records be disposed of?
- what disposal schedules are in place?
- how will the official records be disposed of?

Access to records

- what access will be provided to official records?
- who will ensure that the access regime is adhered to?
- which of the agency's official records are covered by the access rules?

Finding of records

- what tools will be used to find official records?
- will all staff have access to the tools?
- what indexing or descriptive data will be used?
- who will index or describe official records?
- will all of the agency's official records be indexed or described?

Reliability of records

- how will the agency manage version control over official records?
- what record security regime will be in place?
- what techniques will the agency use to validate the reliability of its official records?

Who receives the policies, procedures and practices?

All current and new staff within the agency need to have access to the policies, procedures and practices.

Additionally, provide all staff with training concerning the use of the policies, procedures and practices. Tailor the training to suit the records management needs and responsibilities of the staff concerned (see also *Recordkeeping Advice 015, Records Management Training* regarding training).

Further information

- State Records of South Australia, *Adequate Records Management – Meeting the Standard* (2002).
- State Records of South Australia, Records Management CD ROM.

- State Records Authority of New South Wales, *Standard on Full and Accurate Records* (2004).
- Standards Australia, Australian Standard AS ISO 15489.1 - 2002, *Records Management Part 1, General* (2002).
- Standards Australia, ISO 9000 Quality Management Series.

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