

Statement

The Government of the Northwest Territories recognizes the importance of managing its recorded information in a manner that supports the delivery of programs and services and complies with existing legislation, regulation, and policy.

This policy and procedure establishes government-wide direction for records scheduling. It assigns responsibility for the development, implementation and maintenance of records disposition authorities to the department that creates or receives public records as defined in the Archives Act. It also assigns responsibility for reviewing and approving records schedules to Deputy Heads of departments, the Records Manager of Public Works and Services and the Territorial Archivist.

Principles

The Government of the Northwest Territories will follow these principles when implementing this policy:

- I. Information must not be destroyed except in accordance with the retention and disposition set out in an approved records disposition authority.
- II. Information must not be transferred to the custody of another government or a non-government organization except in accordance with an information transfer agreement or an approved records disposition authority.
- III. A records disposition authority is approved and takes effect when the Deputy Head of the Department or equivalent, the Records Manager, Public Works and Services, and the Territorial Archivist has signed it.
- IV. A records disposition authority must take one of the standard formats approved by the Information Policy Committee (i.e. ARCS, ORCS, or a One-Time Disposition Authority).
- V. Only records covered by an approved records disposition authority can be transferred to a GNWT Records Centre for semi-active storage and final disposition.
- VI. The timely review and approval of records disposition authorities is recognized as important activity by Deputy Heads, the Records Management Section of Public Works and Services and the NWT Archives.

Policy and Procedure

This policy applies to all government departments. Departments may, at their discretion, extend the policy to include agencies, boards and commissions.

General Procedure Description

- I. The department identifies the need for a records disposition authority and designates an individual responsible for development.
- II. As soon as possible after the need for developing a records disposition authority has been identified, the departmental designate consults with the Records Management Section of PWS and NWT Archives.
 - a. The Records Management Section of PWS will provide advice and guidance on the development of the records disposition authority, ensure that it follows one of the approved standardized formats and, review and identify any concerns with the retention periods.
 - b. NWT Archives staff will provide advice and guidance on the development of the records disposition authority and, identify the records that meet their selection criteria for transfer to the Archives.
- III. The departmental designate studies the records and conducts interviews with the creators and users of the information in order to determine the recordkeeping requirements.
- IV. Where the department has concerns regarding legal or financial risks associated with the records identified in the records disposition authority, the department may:
 - a. Request a legal opinion from Legal Division, Department of Justice
 - b. Request advice from the Audit Bureau, Financial Management Board Secretariat.
 - c. Request advice from any other department that will prove beneficial to the development of the records disposition authority
- V. Based on input from the department, Records Management Section of PWS, the NWT Archives and any other parties that have been consulted, the departmental designate completes the records disposition authority.

- VI. The departmental designate prepares an approval package which consists of the records disposition authority and written departmental or divisional approval.
- VII. The departmental designate sends the approval package to the Records Management Section of PWS and the NWT Archives for final review and approval
 - a. The Records Management Section of PWS will review the records disposition authority to ensure it complies with approved standard formats, and has assigned appropriate retention periods.
 - b. NWT Archives will review the records disposition authority to ensure it meets their selection criteria.
- VIII. The records disposition authority is approved when the final version has been endorsed by the Deputy Head of the department or designate, the Territorial Archivist and the Records Manager, PWS.

Procedure – Implementation and Maintenance

- I. Departments shall review their records disposition authorities at least once every five years to ensure that the descriptions of the information and the retention periods are still valid.
- II. Departments may amend or rescind their records disposition authorities. Amended and rescinded records disposition authorities must be endorsed by the Deputy Head of the department or designate, the Territorial Archivist, and the Records Manager, PWS.
- III. Records will not be accepted for storage in GNWT Records Centres unless they have reached the semi-active stage of their life-cycles as identified in an approved records disposition authority.
- IV. Records will not be disposed of unless they have reached the final disposition phase of their life-cycles as identified in an approved records disposition authority.

Supporting Documentation and Information

- a) Archives Act, R.S.N.W.T. 1988, c.A6, as amended by S.N.W.T. 1999, c.21 and S.N.W.T. 2000, c.16.
- b) Recorded Information Management Policy. 6003.00.18
- c) Management of Electronic Information Policy. 6003.00.20
- d) Standard - Operational Records. 6003.05.32
- e) Guideline on ORCS Development. 6003.00.25



Policy and Procedure

6003.00.24

GNWT INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY Records Scheduling

- f) RDA 1995-32, GNWT Administrative Records Classification System (GNWT ARCS).
- g) RDA 1997-02, Transitory Records.

Implementation

Effective March 12th 2007 all new records scheduling initiatives within the GNWT will be carried out pursuant to this policy and procedure.

Chairman of the Informatics
Policy Committee (IPC)

DEFINITIONS

final disposition

The final action taken with regard to a group of records after their inactive phase has ended; may be either destruction or transfer to the NWT Archives.

life-cycle

The evolution of a record through creation and receipt, distribution, use, maintenance, and disposition.

recorded information

means information in any form, including electronic records, and includes information that is written, photographed, recorded or stored in any manner, but does not include a computer program or other mechanism that produces records.

records disposition authorities

Also known as a "Retention Schedule" or a "Disposition Authority". A list of public records which indicates and authorizes the length of time a particular series of records should be maintained in the active area of the department, the length of time they should be maintained in semi-active or inactive storage and identifies the final disposition action for the series (destruction or archival selection).

retention period

The length of time a record must be retained in order to satisfy administrative, fiscal, legal and research requirements of a department. Retention periods are usually specified in number of years or by reference to the termination of a project or event.

semi-active record

A record that is no longer required for constant referral in the course of daily business but which is still of some use to the department. The record may be required for occasional consultation and may be retained because of administrative or legal requirements.