



# Directive – Scheduling and Disposition of Electronic Mail Messages

**Issued By:** The Office of the Chief Information Officer

## 1. Effective Date

This Directive takes effect on February 1, 2018.

## 2. Application

This directive applies to all government bodies as defined in the Archives Act who receive Information Technology (IT) service from the Technology Service Centre (TSC), Electronic Information Management (EIM) service from the Corporate Information Management Division (CIM) of the Department of Infrastructure, and are using the GNWT's electronic mail system (Microsoft Outlook) or the combination of both Outlook and the GNWT's electronic mail management system (Open Text Content Server).

This directive also applies to the storage and disposition of e-mail messages contained within individual employee e-mail archives (legacy offline e-mail personal storage tables, also known as .PST files) historically used by account holders of the GNWT's electronic mail systems, a practice discontinued by the GNWT.

## 3. Context

All information resources, including e-mail messages (and attachments), created or acquired during the course of employment with the GNWT, regardless of format or medium, are owned by the government body that created or acquired them. Clear accountabilities for e-mail storage, scheduling, and disposition ensure that information retains its value throughout the entire period for which it is required for government business and is preserved according to established rules (outlined below).

In order to maintain information as a valuable asset and comply with territorial and federal legislation account holders must regularly manage e-mail messages by deleting those of no business value (transitory records) from their mailboxes and saving those containing business value (official records) to trusted repositories.

This directive is used under the authority of the ***Management of Electronic Information Policy (6003.00.20)***.

This directive is to be read in conjunction with the related policy instruments and e-mail management user guides.

#### **4. Statement**

##### **4.1 Directive Objective(s):**

To ensure account holders are managing e-mail messages (and attachments) regularly by deeming them to be either transitory or official records.

To discontinue the use of .PST file formats within the GNWT on local and network drives.

To manage and store substantive e-mail messages within the GNWT's Digital Integrated Information Management System (DIIMS).

To facilitate the disposal of transitory e-mail messages under the authority of this Directive and the GNWT's Transitory Records Schedule:

- After 60 days of receipt, e-mail messages will be moved into the DIIMS Personal E-mail Volume (PEV) while retaining access in MS Outlook to account holders.
- After transfer to the DIIMS PEV, e-mail messages will be retained for 12 months and then deleted.

E-mail retention period approved at the April 2016 Informatics Policy Council (IPC) meeting.

#### **5. Responsibilities**

This Directive assigns the following responsibilities to GNWT departments and employees:

- The Deputy Head is responsible for overseeing e-mail use within their respective government bodies and ensuring adherence to all related legislation, policy and standards.
- Managers must ensure account holders (employees) follow approved records management procedures for e-mail messages and must initiate action regarding inappropriate use as per the Code of Conduct.
- The Departmental Records Management Personnel are responsible for providing advice on the appropriate classification of e-mail messages and the value of an e-mail message as a master record (official record).
- All GNWT E-mail Account holders must:
  - Distinguish between official (master) e-mail records (and attachments) and transitory e-mail records (those that contain no value).
  - Classify, schedule, save and dispose of e-mail records based on the content in the message (and its attachments) as per the GNWT's approved ARCS and/or the government body's approved ORCS.
  - Transfer e-mail messages (and attachments) deemed an 'official record' to a trusted repository (i.e. DIIMS, SAM) or storage medium (i.e. paper file, microfiche) suitable for retention of ongoing records as soon as possible.
  - Delete/dispose of e-mail messages (and attachments) deemed a 'transitory record' under the authority of the GNWT's Transitory Records Schedule, 1997-02, as soon as possible.

- Migrate/move substantive e-mail messages out of .PST files (individual e-mail archives) into trusted repositories and delete transitory messages.
- The Department of Infrastructure, Corporate Information Management Division is responsible for:
  - Implementing, maintaining, and supporting the Digital Information Management System (DIIMS).
  - Facilitating the disposition of all un-filed e-mail messages from the DIIMS Personal E-mail Volume.
  - Accessing e-mail stored in the DIIMS PEV in limited circumstances, as follows:
    - With the account holder's consent to fix a problem;
    - With the supervisor's consent to access a specific business related e-mail, in a situation when the account holder is away from the office or unavailable and where the e-mail is otherwise inaccessible and is required;
    - In response to a legal investigation;
    - During an investigation of suspected misuse of e-mail or other authorized investigation; or
    - In response to an Access to Information and Protection of Privacy request.
- The Office of the Chief Information Officer is responsible for:
  - The establishment of this directive.
  - For ensuring that the Corporate Information Management division is monitoring and reporting on the effectiveness of the e-mail management solution and the implementation of this directive.

## 6. References

E-mail records are subject to the same provisions as other record formats, as established by the Acts, policies, international standards and best practices outlined in Appendix B.

## 7. Monitoring and Reporting

The Department of Infrastructure will report to IPC on the following:

- Volume of e-mail messages retained in e-mail accounts.
- Volume of .PST files stored on network personal and shared drives.
- Volume of e-mail messages retained in the DIIMS e-mail volume repository.
- Volume of e-mail messages retained in DIIMS workspaces.

## 8. Enquiries

All enquiries regarding this directive should be directed to the Department of Infrastructure, Corporate Information Management Division.

## 9. Approval

Directive is effective from the date approved below.

Corporate Chief Information Officer	Signature	Date
Dave Heffernan		

## Appendix A

### Definitions

**Account holder** is a person who has been given a personal GNWT e-mail account or a person who monitors a GNWT e-mail account on behalf of another person or a program. The account holder is the creator and recipient of e-mail messages.

**Administrative Records Classification System (ARCS)** is the government-wide standard for identifying, describing, organizing, classifying, managing, and disposing of all types of administrative (housekeeping) records. Administrative records support “housekeeping” functions such as the management of facilities, property, material, finances, personnel and information systems. Administrative records also relate to common management processes including committees, agreements, contracts, information services, legal opinions, and other similar functions.

**Attachments** are those documents appended to and sent with an e-mail message such as word processing documents, spreadsheets, sound files, image files, etc. They form a central part of an e-mail message, and both the message and the attachments or both, may constitute a record.

**Digital Integrated Information Management System (DIIMS)** is a corporate GNWT-wide solution that enables the GNWT to gain better access and control of its electronic information throughout the organization. It is a content lifecycle management system that provides organizations with the tools to manage and share corporate information through its lifecycle from a single repository.

**DIIMS PEV (Personal E-mail Volume)** is a repository within DIIMS that is assigned to each account holder and is used to temporarily store e-mail messages that have not been saved into the ARCS and ORCS file structure in DIIMS or deleted.

**Electronic mail (e-mail) messages** (also known as Outlook data files) are communications created, sent, or received on an electronic mail system and include the content of the communication, any attachments transmitted with the message as well as the associated transmission and receipt data. E-mail messages include those sent or received internally or externally. (see Microsoft Outlook Data Files)

**Electronic mail (e-mail) system** is computer applications used to create and receive electronic messages, and to transmit electronic messages and any other electronic documents in the form of attachments between individual users and/or groups of users.

**Exchange server** is a mail server and calendaring server developed by Microsoft and used by the GNWT to send and receive e-mail messages.

**Government body** means (a) a department, branch or office of the Government of the Northwest Territories, (b) an agency, board, commission, corporation, office or other body designated in the regulations, or (c) the office of a member of the Executive Council.

**Legacy e-mail** refers to an existing set of e-mail messages that were sent or received by the account holder and saved in a location other than a trusted repository.

**Lifecycle** means the span or time from the creation or receipt of a record through its useful life to its final disposition.

**Operational Records Classification System (ORCS)** is the government-wide standardized system for the classification, filing, retrieval, retention and disposition of operational records. Each government body will have one or more ORCS. Operational records are those records which relate to the operations and services provided by a government body in carrying out the functions for which it is responsible according to statute, mandate, or policy. Operational records are distinct from administrative records and are unique to each government organization.

**Microsoft Outlook** is an e-mail, calendaring, task manager, contact manager, note taking, journal, and web browsing application that works with Exchange server.

**Microsoft Outlook Data files** refers to a computer file that Outlook uses to save items to an individual computer. There are two types of Outlook Data Files: Offline Folder files (.ost) and Personal Folders file (.PST). The Outlook .ost files are designed for use when an account holder chooses to work offline. The Outlook .PST files are designed for use when an account holder wishes to save e-mail messages to a file outside of the Exchange Server and still have the messages accessible through Outlook.

**PST (Personal Storage Table)** is an open proprietary file format used to store copies of e-mail messages, calendar events, and other items within Microsoft software.

**Public record** means a record that is created by or for or is received by a government body in carrying out its activities, but does not include (a) a record of the Legislative Assembly, the office of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly or the office of the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, (b) a record of a committee of the Legislative Assembly, (c) a record of a member of the Legislative Assembly, other than a member of the Executive Council, (d) a record of a member of the Executive Council that relates to his or her activities as member of the Legislative Assembly, (e) correspondence sent or received by a member of the Legislative Assembly, unless the correspondence relates to his or her responsibilities as a member of the Executive Council, (f) a record of a member of the Legislative Assembly, including a member of the Executive Council, that relates to his or her constituency office or to his or her representation of constituents, or (g) a surplus copy of a record or a copy of a record that is created only for convenience of reference.

**Record** is a record of information, regardless of its form and characteristics, the means by which it was created and the media on which it may be stored and, without limited the generality of the foregoing, include (a) a document, book, ledger, photograph, image, audio-visual recording, x-ray, map and drawing, and (b) a record created or stored in digital or other intangible form by electronic means, but does not include software or a mechanism that produces records.

**Records Disposition Authority (RDA)** a plan respecting the preservation and destruction of public records as described in the *Archives Regulations*, which must (a) include a comprehensive

description of each class of public records; (b) specify the criteria for determining whether a class of public records should be preserved or destroyed; and specify the minimum period during which the government body must retain each class of records that it intends to destroy.

**Transmission and receipt data** include such things as originator, recipients, carbon copy (cc), blind carbon copy (bcc), subject, date and time. These data are an integral part of an e-mail message and form part of the e-mail record.

**Transitory records** are records that are needed only for a limited time for the completion of a routine action or to prepare a subsequent record. Transitory records do not include records required by government organizations to control, support, or document the delivery of programs, to carry out operations, to make decisions, or to account for activities of the government.

**Trusted Repository:** A trusted repository (secure storage location) provides reliable, long-term access to managed resources to its designated community, now and in the future. A trusted repository for digital assets must protect the authenticity and reliability of the digital assets stored and managed within it.

## Appendix B

### References

***Archives Act*** sets the legal framework for disposing, transfer, custody and access to records;

***Electronic Transactions Act*** establishes the legal authority of digital records in regards to transactions;

***Evidence Act*** establishes the power and authority of evidence admissible in court, including digital records;

***Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*** provides public access to records and protects against unauthorized use or disclosure of personal information by public bodies;

**Recorded Information Management Policy** (6003.00.18) guides government bodies in the management of their recorded information (regardless of format) and defines the authority and accountability framework;

**Records Scheduling Policy** (6003.00.24) guides government bodies in the classification, retention, and final disposition of government records;

**Management of Electronic Information Policy** (6003.00.20) guides government bodies in the management of electronic information;

**Electronic Information Security Policy** (6003.00.26) guides government bodies in the security of electronic information;

**E-mail Use Policy** (6003.00.11) guides government bodies in the appropriate use of government e-mail and e-mail systems;

**DIIMS E-mail Management Users Guides** provide guidance on the use of the GNWT's e-mail management system;

**CAN/CGSB-72.34-2017, Electronic Records as Documentary Evidence** is a Canadian national standard for the management of electronic information;

**ISO 15489-1:2016, Information and documentation – Records management – Part 1: Concepts and Principles** is an international standard for records management programs;

**ISO/TR 15801:2009, Document management – Information stored electronically – Recommendations for trustworthiness and reliability** is an international standard for the management of electronic information;

**ISO 23081-1:2006, Information and documentation – Records management processes – Metadata for records – Part 1: Principles** is an international standard for the capture of metadata about records;

**ISO 23081-2:2009, Information and documentation – Records management processes – Metadata for records – Part 2: Conceptual and implementation issues** is an international standard for the capture of metadata about records.