

Records disposal schedule

Northern Territory Emergency Service

Northern Territory Police, Fire and Emergency Services

Disposal Schedule No. 2023/001

June 2023

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Preamble

Introduction

The *Information Act 2002* states that public sector organisations must safeguard their records and must not delete or otherwise dispose of a record unless authorised to do so¹. Disposal of records is permitted through the use of records disposal schedules and enable regular, planned and authorised disposal of records controlled by an agency.

Records retention decisions are based on:

- the current and future business needs of the organisation
- compliance with legal and governance requirements of the organisation
- the current and future needs of internal and external stakeholders, including the wider community.

Records disposal schedules provide continuing authorisation for the legal disposal of records and are authorised by the records service, archives service and chief executive of the public sector organisation responsible for the schedule.

Records disposal schedules apply to records created and maintained in any format, including electronic records, records in business systems, and parts of records.

In the Northern Territory Government (NTG) there are two types of records disposal schedules:

- general records disposal schedules that apply to records common to most or all NT public sector organisations, and
- functional records disposal schedules that apply to records specific to an NT public sector organisation or function.

Functional records disposal schedules should be used in conjunction with general records disposal schedules.

Structure of a Records Disposal Schedule

Records disposal schedules set out minimum requirements for the creation, maintenance, retention or destruction actions to be taken in relation to existing or future records described in each class. Records disposal schedules specify

- whether a class of record has temporary or permanent status;
- the retention period for a temporary class of record;
- authorised disposal actions for a class of record.²

Each class of records created by an agency is described using classifications based on business analysis.

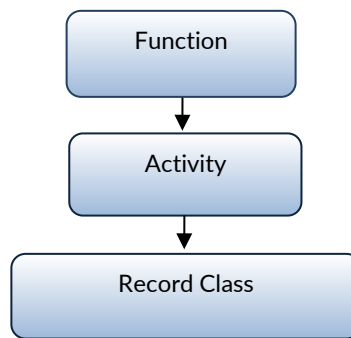
Disposal schedules are developed using the functional structure based on the classification scheme of the *Keyword AAA: A Thesaurus of General Terms* produced by the State Records Authority of NSW and modified for use by NTG public sector organisations.

Within the schedule, functions are documented as the highest level terms and business activities under the functions, followed by record classes, as shown in diagram 1.

¹ S.145 Information Act 2002

² S.136A(3) Information Act 2002

Diagram 1



Function

The function or keyword is the highest level in the classification scheme in this disposal schedule. The function is indicated at the start of each section and a description (scope note) provided.

Activity

Activities are the processes or operations that make up the business function. This is the second level in the classification scheme in this disposal schedule. The description (scope note) provides details of the transactions that take place in relation to the activity, for example, REPORTING or POLICY.

Record class

A record class is a group of records that relate to the same activity, function or subject and require the same disposal action. The descriptions can relate to one record (such as a register) or a group of records documenting a particular set of business transactions.

Status and disposal action

The appraisal status of a record class is assigned as either permanent or temporary.

Permanent records: records appraised with permanent status have been identified as archives and must be transferred to the NT Archives Service for their preservation and eventual public access.

The retention period for permanent records is the maximum period before the records must be transferred to the Archives Service. Permanent records must be transferred no later than 30 years after creation in accordance with the *Information Act 2002*, unless exemption has been granted (see Archives Management Standards Transfer of Archives, and Exemption from Compulsory Transfer of Permanent Records to the NT Archives Service). An Application to Transfer Records form must be submitted to the Archives Service before records will be accepted for transfer.

Temporary records: the retention period for temporary records is the minimum period before the records can legally be destroyed. The retention period is calculated after an event or a disposal trigger such as 'date of action completed', 'date of audit' or 'date of birth'. Destruction should be done following consultation with relevant operational business employees responsible for the records.

Retention periods for temporary records in a records disposal schedule are minimum periods only and agencies may keep records for a longer period if considered necessary for business requirements.

Reasons for longer retention could include;

- administrative need or agency directives

- legal requirements such as current or pending legal action
- relevance to an investigation or inquiry which is in progress
- is subject to an Information Access application,
- subject to a disposal freeze.

Records created prior to 1 July 1978 must not be disposed of without the authorisation of the Archives Service in accordance with Archives Management Standard Records Created Prior to 1978, unless specified in a schedule.

Sentence records with this records disposal schedule using the following five steps:

1. Determine the appropriate function and activity of the records. This can be done by examining an existing record or when creating a new record.
2. Identify the disposal class.
3. From the disposal action in the class, identify the trigger event and a date when the record can be disposed of, alternately, identify that the record is to be retained permanently as archives.
4. If the trigger event has already occurred (such as action is completed), confirm and implement the disposal action.
5. If the trigger event has not occurred (e.g. the record is still in active use), set a review date for the future.

About this Records Disposal Schedule

Purpose

The purpose of this Records Disposal Schedule is to enable regular, planned and authorised disposal of records of Northern Territory Emergency Service of the Northern Territory Police, Fire and Emergency Services.

Scope

Application of this Records Disposal Schedule is mandatory for Northern Territory Emergency Service records of the Northern Territory Police, Fire and Emergency Services.

This Records Disposal Schedule applies to Northern Territory Emergency Service records in all formats.

Responsibility

The Chief Executive Officer of Fire and Emergency Services is responsible for the content and implementation of this Records Disposal Schedule including the provision of advice and training, and for monitoring compliance.

Authority

This Records Disposal Schedule is authorised in accordance with section 136B of the *Information Act 2002*.

Disposal Schedule No. 2023/001 was approved by the Senior Director of Library and Archives NT (the Archives Service), Director Digital Policy and Data Strategy (the Records Service), and the Chief Executive Officer of the Fire and Emergency Services on 27 June 2023 and is effective immediately.

Regulatory framework

The regulatory basis for this Records Disposal Schedule is defined in:

- *Emergency Management Act 2013*
- *Information Act 2002*
- NT Government Records Management Standards
- NT Government Archives Management Standards
- Australian Standards AS ISO 15489:2002-Records Management.

Related documents

This Records Disposal Schedule is to be read in conjunction with:

- NT Government Records Management Standard – Records Disposal
- policies and procedures of the Northern Territory Police, Fire and Emergency Services
- current authorised disposal schedules for Northern Territory Police, Fire and Emergency Services
- current authorised general disposal schedules.

Normal administrative practice

NT public sector organisations are permitted to dispose of some short term or ephemeral documents under the authority of the Disposal Schedule for Short Term Value Records. These include:

- duplicate (e.g. information or reference copy)
- obviously unimportant (e.g. telephone message slips)
- of short term facilitative value (e.g. compliment slips)
- a combination of these.

The guiding principle is that organisations should be sure that destroying these records will not destroy evidence that might be needed.

Records that have been captured into a recordkeeping system should be destroyed using the Disposal Schedule for Short Term Value Records unless the class of records has been identified in a specific disposal schedule.

Acknowledgement

The Archives Service and the Records Service acknowledge that material produced by National Archives of Australia, State Records Authority of New South Wales, State Records of South Australia, Public Records Office of Victoria, Territory Records Office and Standards Australia was used in the development of this schedule.

This work is copyright. Apart from any use as permitted under the Copyright Act 1968, no part may be reproduced by any process without prior written permission of the Archives Service. Requests and enquiries concerning reproduction and rights should be directed to the Director, Archives Service. The terms in the classification scheme are based on the Keyword AAA: A Thesaurus of General Terms (Government of New South Wales, 1998), and are produced under a licence agreement between the NT Archives Service and the State Records Authority of New South Wales.

Compliance checklist

<p>Implement a records disposal program to ensure regular appraisal, sentencing, destruction and transfer of all records.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Stop applying sentences from previous schedules that have been revoked or amended.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Assign responsibility for the management and application of regular records disposal action using authorised records disposal schedules, to an appropriately skilled records manager who consults with the Archives Service and Records Service.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Retain all records in good order and condition to be available for retrieval during the retention period.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Identify and sentence all records described in this schedule in all formats including electronic records and records in business systems, copies of records and parts of records.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Identify and update control records so that you can demonstrate what happened to each record, whether paper or electronic.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Ensure all copies of temporary records are destroyed in any format (including backups), unless otherwise stated in a disposal schedule.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Dispose of all records sentenced according to this schedule in all formats including electronic records and records in business systems, copies of records and parts of records.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Apply this records disposal schedule to records in the organisation's records management systems, including systems for the management of paper records, electronic records, or records in any other format.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Transfer records of permanent value to the Archives Service for retention as archives not later than 30 years after creation.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Apply this records disposal schedule to records in the organisation's business systems, either directly or by linking the business system to a records management system.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Inactive records can be transferred to offsite service providers providing they have been sentenced.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Implement quality assurance mechanisms to periodically check that the disposal class originally assigned at the creation of the records is still applicable at the time of sentencing of the record.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Destroy time expired temporary records in a secure manner that ensures complete deletion/destruction beyond any possible reconstruction.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Implement review or quality control procedures in recordkeeping systems to ensure disposal actions are implemented correctly.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Do not destroy records that are not described in an authorised records disposal schedule.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Identify records that require re-sentencing where a previous disposal schedule has been superseded.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Do not destroy any records created prior to 1 July 1978 without specific authorisation from the Archives Service.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Disposal Schedule

1. Northern Territory Emergency Service

The Northern Territory Emergency Service (NTES) is responsible for facilitating emergency management planning, raising public awareness of potential disasters and providing a response capability for emergency events through dedicated volunteers as required under the *Emergency Management Act 2013*.

1.1 Appointments

The process of appointing persons under relevant Acts, including setting terms and conditions.

Class No.	Description of Records	Status and Disposal Action
1.1.1	Records documenting appointments of Authorised Officers under the Act. Includes business memoranda, recommendations, and written instruments. May include returned identity cards of authorised officers who are not serving members of the police force.	PERMANENT Transfer to the Archives Service 30 years after action completed
	Use activity Volunteer Management for records documenting volunteer members appointed under the Act.	
	Use the Records Disposal Schedule Administrative Functions of the Northern Territory Government - PERSONNEL - EMPLOYMENT HISTORY for records documenting public sector employees that have been appointed as the Director of Northern Territory Emergency Services under the Act.	

Note: All entries apply to records in any format, including electronic media, unless otherwise specified. It is the responsibility of all public sector organisations to ensure that all records are readily accessible for the retention periods specified.

1. Northern Territory Emergency Service

The Northern Territory Emergency Service (NTES) is responsible for facilitating emergency management planning, raising public awareness of potential disasters and providing a response capability for emergency events through dedicated volunteers as required under the *Emergency Management Act 2013*.

1.2 Committees

The activities associated with the management of boards, committees, sub committees, councils, forums working groups, boards and task forces (internal and external, private, community, local, state, national, international, etc.). Includes the committee's establishment, appointment of members, terms of reference, proceedings, minutes, reports, agendas etc.

Class No.	Description of Records	Status and Disposal Action
1.2.1	Records documenting high level committees or national boards where the Director of Northern Territory Emergency Service represents the Northern Territory Emergency Service as a member or attendee, such as the Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Council (AFAC) and the Commissioners and Chief Officers Strategic Committee (CCOSC). Includes agendas, minutes, discussion papers, out of session exchanges and related correspondence.	PERMANENT Transfer to the Archives Service 30 years after action completed
	Use Records Disposal Schedule Northern Territory Emergency Management Arrangements for records documenting the establishment and management of the TEMC, SOG and the SEMC.	

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1. Northern Territory Emergency Service

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1.3 Control

The activities associated with creating, maintaining and evaluating control mechanisms.

Class No.	Description of Records	Status and Disposal Action
1.3.1	Summary records for volunteer members' emergency management training held in business systems, such as ADAPT. Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- volunteer member details- volunteer member results	TEMPORARY Destroy 75 years after last entry

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1. Northern Territory Emergency Service

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1.4 Delegations

The process of delegating or being delegated as a requirement under relevant legislation.

Class No.	Description of Records	Status and Disposal Action
1.4.1	Records documenting ministerial delegations of functions to the Director of the Northern Territory Emergency Service and Authorised Officers under the Act. Includes business unit memoranda and written instruments.	PERMANENT Transfer to the Archives Service 30 years after action completed

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1. Northern Territory Emergency Service

The Northern Territory Emergency Service (NTES) is responsible for facilitating emergency management planning, raising public awareness of potential disasters and providing a response capability for emergency events through dedicated volunteers as required under the *Emergency Management Act 2013*.

1.5 Education Programs

The activities associated with planning and developing educational activities and programs which raise awareness and understanding of the broader role of the organisation.

Class No.	Description of Records	Status and Disposal Action
1.5.1	Records documenting community engagement and awareness programs in relation to emergency services targeted for businesses, government agencies, community groups, households and high schools that focus on how to prepare, respond and recover from emergency situations, such as cyclones, earthquakes, storms and floods, and tsunamis. Includes publications, videos, presentations, handouts, programs, research materials and checklists.	TEMPORARY Destroy 10 years after action completed
	Use activity Training for records documenting course development and delivery in relation to the function Northern Territory Emergency Service.	

Note: All entries apply to records in any format, including electronic media, unless otherwise specified. It is the responsibility of all public sector organisations to ensure that all records are readily accessible for the retention periods specified.

1. Northern Territory Emergency Service

The Northern Territory Emergency Service (NTES) is responsible for facilitating emergency management planning, raising public awareness of potential disasters and providing a response capability for emergency events through dedicated volunteers as required under the *Emergency Management Act 2013*.

1.6 Emergency Response Operations

The activities associated with managing, evaluating and reporting on emergencies attended by operational and volunteer staff.

Class No.	Description of Records	Status and Disposal Action
1.6.1	<p>Records documenting emergency response operations into emergencies such as cyclones, earthquakes, flooding, storm surges, storm and water damages and tsunamis by the NT Emergency Service as the Hazard Management Authority. These are emergency response operations that do not involve a multi-agency response, but emergency events that have caused death, serious injury, caused significant community disruption or suspicious in nature, including responses to an emergency event in a remote area, such as a fatal vehicle crash and where assistance has been provided to the Northern Territory Police.</p> <p>Includes warnings, response plans, update reports, witness statements, media releases, incident reports, photographs, transcripts, video and voice recordings, situation reports, impact assessments, distribution plans of personnel and materials, maps, operational logbooks, debriefings, internal reviews and other related documentation. Also includes records captured on business systems such as WebEOC and TRM.</p> <p>May include investigation reports into incidents and disputes regarding incident response and written applications for compensation to the Minister from owners or occupiers of a property that have suffered a loss due to an emergency event, including court orders, and supporting documentation.</p>	<p>PERMANENT</p> <p>Transfer to the Archives Service 30 years after action completed</p>
1.6.2	<p>Records documenting emergency response operations into emergencies, such as cyclones, earthquakes, flooding, storm surges, storm and water damages and tsunamis by the NT Emergency Service as the Hazard Management Authority, where there has not been a multi-agency response, there was no death or serious injury, was not deemed suspicious, including responses to an emergency event in a remote area, such as a non-fatal vehicle crash where assistance has been provided to the Northern Territory Police.</p> <p>Includes warnings, response plans, update reports, witness statements, media releases, incident reports, photographs, transcripts, video and voice recordings, situation reports, impact assessments, distribution plans</p>	<p>TEMPORARY</p> <p>Destroy 30 years after action completed</p>

Note: All entries apply to records in any format, including electronic media, unless otherwise specified. It is the responsibility of all public sector organisations to ensure that all records are readily accessible for the retention periods specified.

1. Northern Territory Emergency Service

The Northern Territory Emergency Service (NTES) is responsible for facilitating emergency management planning, raising public awareness of potential disasters and providing a response capability for emergency events through dedicated volunteers as required under the *Emergency Management Act 2013*.

1.6 Emergency Response Operations

The activities associated with managing, evaluating and reporting on emergencies attended by operational and volunteer staff.

Class No.	Description of Records	Status and Disposal Action
	of personnel and materials, maps, operational logbooks, debriefings, internal reviews and other related documentation. Also includes records captured on business systems such as WebEOC and TRM.	
1.6.3	Records documenting requests for assistance received from other jurisdictions for emergency events such as floods, cyclones and bushfires. Includes interstate requests for NTES support, memoranda, ministerial, briefing papers, deployment papers, operation orders, situation reports, and related correspondence.	TEMPORARY Destroy 10 years after action completed
	Use Records Disposal Schedule for Administrative Functions of the Northern Territory Government – Common Activity – ADVICE for records documenting the provision and receipt of advice in relation to Northern Territory Emergency Service.	
	Use Records Disposal Schedule for Administrative Functions of the Northern Territory Government – Common Activity – AGREEMENTs for records documenting the establishment, negotiation, maintenance and review of agreements in relation to Northern Territory Emergency Service.	
	Use Records Disposal Schedule for Administrative Functions of the Northern Territory Government – Common Activity – AUDITS for records documenting the planning and conduct of the Northern Territory Emergency Service function.	
	Use Records Disposal Schedule for Administrative Functions of the Northern Territory Government – COMMUNITY RELATIONS – ENQUIRIES for records documenting the handling of enquiries regarding information about the Northern Territory Emergency Services, including requests from insurance companies for information regarding incidents.	
	Use the general Records Disposal Schedule for Northern Territory Emergency Management Arrangements for where there is a multi-agency response to emergency events, such as cyclones, earthquakes, flooding, pandemics, fires etc as stated in the Territory Emergency Plan.	

Note: All entries apply to records in any format, including electronic media, unless otherwise specified. It is the responsibility of all public sector organisations to ensure that all records are readily accessible for the retention periods specified.

1. Northern Territory Emergency Service

The Northern Territory Emergency Service (NTES) is responsible for facilitating emergency management planning, raising public awareness of potential disasters and providing a response capability for emergency events through dedicated volunteers as required under the *Emergency Management Act 2013*.

1.7 Policy

The activities associated with developing and establishing decisions, directions and precedents which act as a reference for future decision making, as the basis from which the organisation's operating procedures are determined.

Class No.	Description of Records	Status and Disposal Action
1.7.1	Final approved versions of policies in relation to the Northern Territory Emergency Service function. Includes policy proposals, research papers, results of consultations, support reports and major draft versions.	PERMANENT Transfer to the Archives Service 30 years after action completed

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1. Northern Territory Emergency Service

The Northern Territory Emergency Service (NTES) is responsible for facilitating emergency management planning, raising public awareness of potential disasters and providing a response capability for emergency events through dedicated volunteers as required under the *Emergency Management Act 2013*.

1.8 Procedures

Procedures developed by the agency for core business or administrative purposes. Includes the development of forms.

Class No.	Description of Records	Status and Disposal Action
1.8.1	Final approved versions of standard operating procedures in relation to the Northern Territory Emergency Service function. Includes background research, draft versions, consultation notes with stakeholders and related correspondence.	PERMANENT Transfer to the Archives Service 30 years after action completed

Note: All entries apply to records in any format, including electronic media, unless otherwise specified. It is the responsibility of all public sector organisations to ensure that all records are readily accessible for the retention periods specified.

1. Northern Territory Emergency Service

The Northern Territory Emergency Service (NTES) is responsible for facilitating emergency management planning, raising public awareness of potential disasters and providing a response capability for emergency events through dedicated volunteers as required under the *Emergency Management Act 2013*.

1.9 Reporting

Initiating or providing a formal response to a situation or request (either internal, external or as a requirement of agency policies), and providing formal statements or findings of the results of the examination or investigation.

Class No.	Description of Records	Status and Disposal Action
1.9.1	Records documenting major reports in relation to the Northern Territory Emergency Service, such as post incident analyses reports and major incident reviews of an emergency event where the NTES is the Hazard Management Authority.	PERMANENT Transfer to the Archives Service 30 years after action completed
1.9.2	Records documenting reports on the operations and performance of the Northern Territory Emergency Service, includes weekly operation reports from the Territory Duty Officer.	TEMPORARY Destroy 10 years after action completed

Note: All entries apply to records in any format, including electronic media, unless otherwise specified. It is the responsibility of all public sector organisations to ensure that all records are readily accessible for the retention periods specified.

1. Northern Territory Emergency Service

The Northern Territory Emergency Service (NTES) is responsible for facilitating emergency management planning, raising public awareness of potential disasters and providing a response capability for emergency events through dedicated volunteers as required under the *Emergency Management Act 2013*.

1.10 Training

All types of training to develop the skills and knowledge of agency employees and volunteers.

Class No.	Description of Records	Status and Disposal Action
1.10.1	<p>Records relating to the development and delivery of training programs in relation to the Northern Territory Emergency Service function, including the Introduction course in the Australasian Inter-service Incident Management System (AIIMS) etc.</p> <p>Includes course material, handouts, presentations, programs, background research, consultation notes, training material and summary list of attendees.</p> <p><i>NOTE: The Northern Territory Police, Fire and Emergency Services are the Registered Training Organisation as required by Australian Skills Quality Authority under the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011. NTPFES approve all courses that are developed and delivered by the Northern Territory Emergency Service and hold registration and accreditation documentation.</i></p>	<p>TEMPORARY Destroy 10 years after action completed</p>

Note: All entries apply to records in any format, including electronic media, unless otherwise specified. It is the responsibility of all public sector organisations to ensure that all records are readily accessible for the retention periods specified.

1. Northern Territory Emergency Service

The Northern Territory Emergency Service (NTES) is responsible for facilitating emergency management planning, raising public awareness of potential disasters and providing a response capability for emergency events through dedicated volunteers as required under the *Emergency Management Act 2013*.

1.11 Volunteer Management

The activities associated with recruiting, supervision and training and development of volunteer personnel.

Class No.	Description of Records	Status and Disposal Action
1.11.1	Records documenting the establishment of volunteer units within the Northern Territory Emergency Service as required under the Act.	PERMANENT Transfer to the Archives Service 30 years after action completed
1.11.2	Records documenting the management of volunteer memberships within the Northern Territory Emergency Service volunteer units. Includes applications, appointments, clearance documents, copies training qualification certificates, referrals and related correspondence.	TEMPORARY Destroy 75 years after date of birth, or where a member has attained the age over 75 years retain for 7 years after their separation, whichever is the later
	Use Records Disposal Schedule for Administrative Functions of the Northern Territory Government – LIAISON for records documenting sharing of informal advice with other professional associations such as the NT SES Volunteers Association.	

Note: All entries apply to records in any format, including electronic media, unless otherwise specified. It is the responsibility of all public sector organisations to ensure that all records are readily accessible for the retention periods specified.