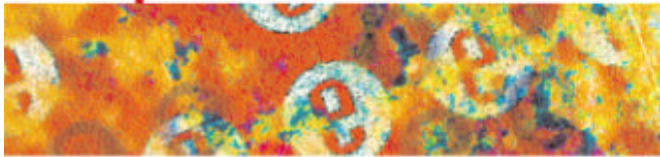




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DIRKS – A Strategic Approach
to Managing Business Information

APPENDIX 6 – PRACTICAL ADVICE FOR USING KEYWORD AAA AND AGIFT TERMS

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APPENDIX 6

PRACTICAL ADVICE FOR USING KEYWORD AAA AND AGIFT TERMS

Organisations undertake Step B – [Analysis of business activity](#) of the DIRKS methodology to analyse their core functions and activities and develop a business classification scheme that conceptually represents their core business activities. The business classification scheme is the basis for developing three additional tools:

- **Merged business classification scheme**
This comprises the organisation's core functions and activities *plus* the administrative functions and activities identified as being common to most government agencies. The merged business classification scheme will provide your organisation with a comprehensive classification regime for its records. The 17 common administrative functions, and their associated activities, are outlined in the Commonwealth version of [Keyword AAA: Thesaurus of General Terms](#) (May 2001) (Keyword AAA);
- **Functions-based records disposal authority**
This controls the disposal of records produced as a result of your organisation's core business functions and activities (see Appendix 8 – [Procedures for developing a records disposal authority](#) in the Commonwealth). This authority, in conjunction with the [Administrative Functions Disposal Authority](#) (AFDA) which provides disposal coverage for records produced as a result of the 17 common functions outlined in the Commonwealth version of Keyword AAA, will provide your organisation with comprehensive disposal coverage for its records. (Please contact the [National Archives Agency Service Centre](#) if you wish to develop your own functions-based records disposal authority.); and
- **Classification tools**
Classification tools (such as a functions thesaurus or records classification scheme) expand the utility of your organisation's business classification scheme to provide a comprehensive indexing, retrieval and classification regime for your organisation's records. The Overview of Classification Tools for Records Management provides further advice on developing classification tools.

The remainder of this document provides guidelines for using Keyword AAA (Commonwealth version) and AGIFT terms when developing your agency's business classification scheme and related classification tools. In particular, adherence to these guidelines will ensure that the classification regime you implement uses unambiguous terms and that it is fully compatible with the Administrative Functions Disposal Authority.

Rules for using Keyword AAA terms in an organisation's core business classification scheme

Following these seven rules will ensure that your organisation's business classification scheme is fully compatible with the Commonwealth version of Keyword AAA.

- Rule 1. Avoid making changes to functions and activities (including scope notes) in Keyword AAA.
- Rule 2. You can attach activities from Keyword AAA to agency core functions.
- Rule 3. Retain the hierarchical level of authorised terms in Keyword AAA.
- Rule 4. Agency-specific activity terms can only be used with agency-specific functions.
- Rule 5. Do not use a *function* term from Keyword AAA, or alter its scope, to describe a core agency business function.
- Rule 6. Do not use an *activity* term from Keyword AAA, or alter its scope, to describe a core agency business function
- Rule 7. Make sure you have a clear understanding of the effect of deleting unused functions, activities and function-activity links from Keyword AAA.

Rule 1: Avoid making changes to functions and activities (including scope notes) in Keyword AAA

It is important to understand that, because there are direct links between the Commonwealth version of Keyword AAA and AFDA, you should not make changes to authorised terms (function and activity) when you are compiling your merged business classification scheme.

Scope notes of authorised terms should also not be altered. Any changes would make it difficult to sentence records in accordance with AFDA, as the new scope notes would not match AFDA disposal classes. (Note: A disposal class consists of the function and activity term and scope plus the description of records and disposal action.)

Rule 2: You can attach activities from Keyword AAA to agency core functions

When you are compiling a business classification scheme to merge with the Commonwealth version of Keyword AAA, you can use activity terms from Keyword AAA under your core functions. You cannot modify the scope note of the Keyword AAA activity term.

Some Keyword AAA activity terms that may be applicable to your core functions are 'Policy', 'Implementation', 'Meetings', 'Research', 'Liaison', 'Acquisition', 'Contracting-out', 'Tendering' and 'Audit'.

If the Keyword AAA scope note is not appropriate to describe your business, you should create an activity term that accurately describes your organisation's unique activity.

Rule 3: Retain the hierarchical level of authorised terms in Keyword AAA

You should always retain the hierarchical level of authorised terms in the Commonwealth version of Keyword AAA. For example, you cannot use

'Occupational Health and Safety', which is itself a function term, as an activity under the function of 'Personnel'. If you change the hierarchical levels of Keyword AAA terms you will not be able to sentence your records. Disposal classes in AFDA are linked to the functions and activities of Keyword AAA.

Also, you cannot group several functions together into a new function. For example, you cannot group several functions like 'Personnel', 'Occupational Health & Safety' and 'Staff development' together to form a new function of 'Human resources'. This would be an inappropriate level for a function.

Rule 4: Agency-specific activity terms can only be used with agency-specific functions

Agency-specific activities belong with agency-specific functions rather than with administrative functions. Please do not add agency-specific activities to Keyword AAA functions. AFDA will not provide disposal coverage for such combinations.

If there are missing relationships in the Commonwealth version of Keyword AAA and AFDA please inform the staff of the National Archives who will consider it in reviews of these products.

Rule 5: Do not use a function term from Keyword AAA, or alter its scope, to describe a core agency business function

For example, AusInfo has a core responsibility for Commonwealth Government publishing. AusInfo cannot use the function 'Publication' from Keyword AAA as it stands, nor should it widen the scope note, to cover its agency-specific activities.

Likewise the National Archives of Australia cannot use 'Information management' for its own core function of managing Commonwealth records. The current scope in the Commonwealth version of Keyword AAA is too limited and widening the scope note would cause problems when sentencing.

If your organisation performs a function from Keyword AAA as part of its core business, you have some options, depending on the circumstances.

- You can keep the original function in Keyword AAA and add another function to cover additional agency needs. This is suitable when you need to distinguish between your core business and your administrative needs.

For example, the National Occupational Health and Safety Commission cannot use the function 'Occupational Health and Safety' to describe its core responsibility of providing OH&S advice and assistance to other agencies. This agency should, instead, create an additional function term (eg 'Workplace Health and Safety') as well as retaining 'Occupational Health and Safety' for the common administrative function of implementing and coordinating OH&S and associated legislation throughout their own organisation.

For organisations with a core functional responsibility that may partly overlap a Keyword AAA function – for example the function of 'Community relations' – using the Keyword AAA term 'Community relations' in conjunction with an

agency-specific function term like 'Promotion' will provide for the agency's administrative and core business needs.

If you cannot find a suitable alternative term for a core function, you can simply add to the Keyword AAA term, for example 'Gallery community relations', to avoid confusion between the terms.

- You can remove the original function (and all of its relationships) from Keyword AAA, choose a different term to cover your new function and widen the scope. This approach is suitable if you do not need to use the original function at all in an administrative sense.

For example, if your organisation performs the function of 'Community relations' as part of its core business, this approach is suitable. When compiling your business classification scheme and records disposal authority you should change the name of the term (for example to 'Customer relations') and tailor the scope note accordingly. This means that 'Community relations' from AFDA cannot be used to sentence records. The classes under 'Customer relations' in your records disposal authority would apply instead.

Rule 6: Do not use an activity term from Keyword AAA, or alter its scope, to describe a core agency business function

It is important not to use an activity term from the Commonwealth version of Keyword AAA to describe a core business function. For example, some agencies undertake inspections as part of their core business. The term 'Inspections' is an activity in Keyword AAA. For an agency with inspections as a core function, the combination of activities that make up that process would need far more description than the scope provided in Keyword AAA.

If you perform an activity from Keyword AAA as a core business function, you have some options, depending on the circumstances.

- You can remove the original activity term and all of its relationships from Keyword AAA and create a new function term. This is suitable when you are entirely replacing the scope of the original activity with a new scope. You should not remove the original activity unless you are confident that you will never undertake this activity as part of any of your administrative functions.

For example, if your organisation dispenses grants to other bodies, but is not itself a grant recipient, you might wish to remove the activity 'Grant funding' from your merged business classification scheme. You could then add a core function of 'Funding' (to avoid confusion do not call it 'Grant funding') and cover it under your records disposal authority.

- You can keep the original activity in place and create a new function. Again, this is suitable when you need to distinguish between your core business and your administrative needs.

For example, the Office of the Auditor-General would not use the activity term 'Audit' when performing financial audits of other organisations. They would need to choose a term like 'Audit management' to represent their core function. However, they can still use 'Staff development – Audit', for

internal staff development audits, or 'Financial management – Audit', for internal audits conducted within the Office of the Auditor-General.

Rule 7: Make sure you have a clear understanding of the effect of deleting unused functions, activities and function-activity links on your use of Keyword AAA

You may delete unused functions, activities and function-activity links in the Commonwealth version of Keyword AAA (and therefore not use the corresponding terms in AFDA) in order to streamline your business classification scheme. However, it is recommended that you do not follow this option unless you will never require these in the future. Be aware that such changes need to be monitored so the changes can be made again in new versions of merged business classification schemes and so that agency staff can sentence records correctly.

'For' references

'For' references may be included after a term in the 'merged business classification scheme' to direct users to the appropriate function or activity.

These examples show the conventions to follow:

- For compensation claims made by employees, use COMPENSATION – Cases.
- For formal submissions made by the agency on government matters, use GOVERNMENT RELATIONS – Submissions.

Ensure that references included in the 'merged business classification scheme' add value. These references can greatly increase the accessibility and useability of your organisation's 'merged business classification scheme'.

Rules for using AGIFT terms

The Australian Governments' Interactive Functions Thesaurus (AGIFT) is a national cross-jurisdictional thesaurus of government functions. It contains 24 high-level (or ambient) function terms and more than 500 lower level function terms covering Commonwealth government functions, as well as functions of other government jurisdictions. A function, or part of a function, described in AGIFT will be undertaken by your organisation.

AGIFT is a potential source of function terms for use in your organisation's business classification scheme and related classification tools. For more information see DIRKS Step B - [Analysis of business activity](#) and [Overview of classification tools for records management](#).

Many of the high-level (or ambient) functions described in AGIFT will extend beyond the scope of your organisation's business functions. However, it is likely your organisation's business functions will correspond to particular lower level function terms in AGIFT. Organisations may adopt these terms for their own purposes rather than developing alternative function terms, subject to the following conditions.

Rule 1: Ensure that the term is appropriate

Before using an AGIFT term, you must ensure that the term you are adopting is an appropriate term for a Commonwealth function. AGIFT is a cross-jurisdictional

thesaurus and terms cover Commonwealth government functions as well as functions of other government jurisdictions.

Rule 2: Ensure that the scope is consistent

Before using an AGIFT term, you must ensure the scope of your organisation's function is consistent with the scope assigned to AGIFT term. It does not need to be identical, but it must not be defined in a way that contradicts the scope of the same term in AGIFT. Although it is conceivable that some organisational functions will be identical in scope to AGIFT terms this is likely to be uncommon, since the selected function would need to be performed only by the Commonwealth and only by a single agency. The scope of the AGIFT term would also need to be at a level of specificity useful for classification purposes.

AGIFT provides a national framework for public sector functional classification. Your agency's classification regime sits within this national framework. It is therefore important to ensure consistency with, and appropriate cross references between, the function terms in your organisation's business classification scheme and related classification tools and relevant lower level function terms in AGIFT.

For more information on AGIFT, see

www.naa.gov.au/recordkeeping/gov_online/agift/summary.html

Documenting changes

The source of all functions and activities (Commonwealth version of Keyword AAA, AGIFT or the organisation's own business classification scheme) should be noted clearly in the merged business classification scheme and related classification tools. It is also essential that any changes made to Keyword AAA terms are carefully documented. This will enable you to transfer the same changes to subsequent editions of merged business classification schemes or classification tools used in your organisation. These steps will also enable you to carefully track what effect your modifications will have on the application of AFDA.