



Australian Government

National Archives of Australia

General Records Authority

Advisory Bodies

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INTRODUCTION

The National Archives of Australia has developed this Records Authority to set out the requirements for keeping or destroying the records of advisory bodies.

Purpose

This Authority identifies minimum retention periods for records relating to the business of advisory bodies and authorises the destruction or retention of these records as required by Section 24 of the *Archives Act 1983*. It is issued for use across the Commonwealth.

Advisory bodies may use the following tools to dispose of their records:

- this General Records Authority, covering all the business performed by advisory bodies;
- the Administrative Functions Disposal Authority (AFDA), covering administrative functions commonly performed by most Commonwealth agencies;
- AFDA Express, a streamlined version of AFDA;
- other General Records Authorities (GRAs), covering business performed by many agencies; and
- normal administrative practice (NAP), which allows for the destruction of records where the records are duplicated, unimportant or for short-term use only.

As changes in circumstances may affect future records management requirements, this Authority will occasionally require amendment by the addition of new classes or variation to existing classes. The National Archives will notify agencies of any changes and the information will also be published on the Archives website.

APPLICATION OF THIS AUTHORITY

1. This Authority should be used in conjunction with:

- AFDA Express, or
- AFDA

2. This Authority should also be used in conjunction with GRAs issued by the National Archives that cover other types of records that may be created by an advisory body, such as encrypted records and source records that have been copied.

3. This Authority is to be used to determine whether Advisory Bodies records should be kept, destroyed or transferred to the National Archives. The disposal action set out in the Authority is the minimum retention period. A record can be kept for longer, but it cannot be destroyed before that date. Records designated as national archives (RNA) should be transferred to the National Archives when the agency's regular business need for the records ceases. Arrangements should be made with the National Archives when records are to be transferred.

4. Where the method of recording information changes (for example from a manual system to an electronic system or when information is migrated from one system to a new system) this Authority can still be used to sentence records created, providing the records document the same business. The information must be accessible for the period of time prescribed in this Authority. Agencies will need to ensure that any software, hardware or documentation required to enable continuing access to the information is available for the periods prescribed.

5. In general, retention requirements indicate the minimum period for retention. Agencies may extend minimum retention periods if there is an administrative need to do so without further reference to the National Archives. Where the advisory body believes that its accountability will be substantially compromised because a retention period or periods are not adequate, it should contact the National Archives for review of the retention period.

6. The Normal Administrative Practice (NAP) provision of the Archives Act gives agencies permission to destroy certain records without formal authorisation. This usually occurs where records are duplicated, facilitative or for short-term use only. NAP does not replace arrangements agreed to in this Authority but can be used as a tool to assist in identifying records for destruction together with an agency's Record Authority or Authorities, and with AFDA and AFDA Express. The National Archives recommends that agencies develop and implement a Normal Administrative Practice policy to assist in planning and implementing activities to determine whether records should be kept or destroyed. Advice and guidance on destroying records as a normal administrative practice and on how to develop an agency NAP policy is available from the National Archives' website at www.naa.gov.au

7. **Prior to records destruction, it is important to note any relevant disposal freezes.** The National Archives places a disposal freeze on some groups of records to prevent their destruction. These generally relate to groups of records relating to a particular topic or event which has gained prominence or provokes controversy. While the freeze is in place, no records relating to the topic or event may be destroyed. Further information about current disposal freezes and whether they affect the application of this Authority is available from the National Archives website at www.naa.gov.au/records-management/keep-destroy-transfer/freezes

8. Records in the care of agencies should be appropriately stored and preserved. Agencies need to meet this obligation to ensure that the records remain authentic and accessible over time. Under Section 31 of the *Archives Act 1983*, access arrangements are required for records that are in the open access period (currently after 30 years).

9. Arrangements should be made with the National Archives when records are to be transferred into

custody. The National Archives accepts for transfer only those records designated as national archives (RNA).

10. Advice on how to use this Authority is available from your agency's Records Manager. If there are problems with the application of the Authority that cannot be resolved, please contact the National Archives.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For assistance with this authority or for advice on other information and records management matters, please contact National Archives' Agency Service Centre.

Queen Victoria Terrace
Parkes ACT 2600
PO Box 7425
Canberra Mail Centre ACT 2610

Tel: (02) 6212 3610
Fax: (02) 6212 3989
Email: recordkeeping@naa.gov.au
Website: www.naa.gov.au

AUTHORISATION

RECORDS AUTHORITY

Person to whom notice of authorisation is given:

Heads of Commonwealth Institutions under the *Archives Act 1983* responsible for the records of advisory bodies

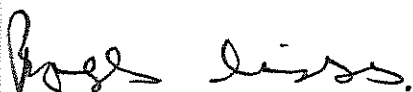
Purpose:

AUTHORISES ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE DISPOSAL OF RECORDS IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 24(2)(b) OF THE ARCHIVES ACT 1983

Application:

Records of ADVISORY BODIES.

This authorisation gives permission for the destruction, retention or transfer to the National Archives of Australia of the records described. The Authority will apply only if these actions take place with the consent of the agency responsible for the business documented in the records.

Authorising officer**Date of issue:**

1 March 2010.

Ross Gibbs
Director-General
National Archives of Australia

ADVISORY BODIES

The core business of managing the deliberations and administrative activities of statutory and non-statutory bodies established to provide independent advice to the Minister, government and the supporting agency. These bodies represent stakeholder communities and provide informed advice and guidance responding to issues as requested or as required in their charters. Covers advisory body meetings, advising and reporting on results of deliberations including consulting and liaising with interested parties through forums, conferences, workshops, visits and formal submissions. Includes managing the nomination, appointment and separation of advisory board members. Also includes the provision of secretariat support to advisory body members such as arranging meetings, organizing travel, arranging allowances and remuneration for duties performed and carrying out research. Excludes governing bodies that are a part of the management structure of an organization established to direct and support good governance practices.

Core business note: Advisory bodies support the policy development, decision making and service delivery activities of government by providing informed and independent advice. Unlike Governing Bodies they have no executive or decision making powers and play no role in an agency's governance activities.

This core business includes such advisory body related activities as:

- providing advice to the Minister, the government and the supporting agency;
- supporting the development of addresses (presentations);
- arranging conferences and supporting members' attendance at conferences;
- undertaking consultations with interested parties;
- administering members' disclosures of interest;
- managing meetings of advisory bodies and their committees;
- managing membership of advisory bodies (ie appointments and separations); and
- administering members' remunerations arrangements.

The performance of the core business is supported by routine administrative tasks such as:

- making arrangements to support journeys and visits;
- managing media relationships;
- planning, researching, reporting and reviewing; and
- developing policies and procedures.



For managing the administration of governing bodies such as boards, trusts, councils, commissions etc, use GOVERNING BODIES.

For managing the acquisition of goods and services and tendering and contracting arrangements to support the advisory bodies' core business, use PROCUREMENT.

For accidents involving advisory body members on agency premises, use OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY and for accidents involving members of the public, use COMPENSATION.

For managing financial transactions supporting advisory bodies activities, use FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT.

ADVISORY BODIES

Class No	Description of records	Disposal action
21135 	<p>The following significant records documenting the advisory bodies core business:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>advice</u> received or provided to the Minister, the Government and the agency by advisory bodies in accordance with their charter and terms of reference; • <u>addresses</u> made by the advisory body Chairpersons and Deputy Chairpersons; • <u>consultation issues papers</u> and reports documenting <u>outcomes of consultations</u>; • master set of advisory body <u>media releases</u>; • <u>minutes and supporting records of meetings</u> of advisory bodies; • <u>membership records</u> (appointments and separations of members); • <u>policies</u> supporting the <u>administration and operations of advisory bodies</u> (eg charters and terms of reference); and • <u>formal reports of advisory bodies</u> and their <u>committees</u>. <p><i>[For advisory body records that do not fall into the significant category of 21135, use ADVISORY BODIES – 21136.]</i></p> <p><i>For advice provided to the Minister, the Government or the agency, provided in the form of a report, or undertaken as a review, use ADVISORY BODIES – 21135.</i></p> <p><i>For submissions received as part of a consultation process, use ADVISORY BODIES – 21136.]</i></p>	Retain as national archives
21136 	<p>Records documenting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • routine operational administrative tasks supporting the core business; and • advisory body activities other than those covered in class 21135. 	Destroy 10 years after action completed