



**NATIONAL  
ARCHIVES  
OF AUSTRALIA**

**Records Authority**

2012/00569345

**Department of Agriculture**

*Biosecurity*

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2014

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## INTRODUCTION

The Department of Agriculture and the National Archives of Australia have developed this Records Authority to set out the requirements for keeping or destroying records for the core business area of Biosecurity. It represents a significant commitment on behalf of the Department to understand, create and manage the records of its activities.

This Authority is based on the identification and analysis of the business of the Department of Agriculture. It takes into account the agency's legal and organisational records management requirements, and the interests of stakeholders, the agency and the National Archives of Australia.

The Authority sets out those records that need to be retained as national archives and specifies the minimum length of time that temporary records need to be kept. This Authority gives the Department of Agriculture permission under the *Archives Act 1983*, for the destruction of the temporary records described after the minimum retention period has expired. Retention periods for these temporary records are based on: an assessment of business needs; broader organisational accountability requirements; and community expectations, and are approved by the National Archives of Australia on the basis of information provided by the agency.

As changes in circumstances may affect future records management requirements, the periodic review of this Authority is recommended. All amendments must be approved by the National Archives.

## APPLICATION OF THIS AUTHORITY

1. This Authority supersedes Record Authorities 984(1993) and 972 (1993) issued to the Department of Primary Industries and Energy. RA 984 covers all records other than forms used in regional offices of the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS). RA 972 covers all forms used in AQIS except those placed on case files.

The superseded authorities cannot be used by the Department of Agriculture after the date of issue of this Authority.

This Authority partially supersedes Records Authority 829 (1992) issued to the Department of Primary Industries and Energy.

2. This Authority is to be used to determine how long records must be kept. Records are matched to the relevant core business and records class in the Authority.
  - Where the minimum retention period has expired and the records are not needed for agency business they should be destroyed as authorised in this Authority.
  - Records that have not reached the minimum retention period must be kept until they do.
  - Records that are identified as Retain as National Archives (RNA) are to be transferred to the National Archives of Australia for preservation.
3. This Authority should be used in conjunction with general records authorities such as:
  - the Administrative Functions Disposal Authority (AFDA) and/or AFDA Express issued by the National Archives to cover business processes and records common to Australian Government agencies;
  - General Records Authority (31) For source (including original) records that have been copied, converted or migrated.
4. The Normal Administrative Practice (NAP) provision of the *Archives Act 1983* 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 Records Authority or Authorities, and with AFDA and AFDA Express. The National Archives recommends that agencies develop and implement a Normal Administrative Practice policy. 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](http://www.naa.gov.au)
5. Records that are reasonably likely to be needed as evidence in a current or future judicial proceeding or are subject to a request for access under the *Archives Act 1983*, the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* or any other relevant Act must not be destroyed until the action has been completed.
6. Records subject to a disposal freeze must not be destroyed until the freeze has been lifted. Further information about disposal freezes and whether they affect the application of this Authority is available from the National Archives website at [www.naa.gov.au](http://www.naa.gov.au)

7. 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 applied, providing the records document the same core business. The information must be accessible for the period of time prescribed in this Authority. The Department of Agriculture will need to maintain continuing access to the information, including digital information, for the periods prescribed in this records authority or until the information is transferred into the custody of the National Archives.
8. In general, retention requirements indicate a minimum period for retention. The Department of Agriculture may extend minimum retention periods if it considers that there is an administrative need to do so, without further reference to the National Archives. Where the Department of Agriculture 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.
9. Records coming within retain as national archives' classes in this Authority have been determined to be part of the archival resources of the Commonwealth under Section 3C of the *Archives Act 1983*. The determination of Commonwealth records as archival resources of the Commonwealth obliges agencies to transfer the records to the Archives when they cease to be current and, in any event, within 15 years of the records coming into existence, under Section 27 of the *Archives Act 1983*.
10. Records in the care of agencies should be appropriately stored, managed 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 become available for public access including those records that remain in agency custody.
11. Appropriate 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.
12. Advice on how to use this Authority is available from the Department of Agriculture 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 records management matters, please contact the 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](mailto:recordkeeping@naa.gov.au)  
Website: [www.naa.gov.au](http://www.naa.gov.au)

# AUTHORISATION

## RECORDS AUTHORITY 2012/00569345

**Person to whom notice of authorisation is given:**

Dr Paul Grimes  
The Secretary  
Department of Agriculture  
18 Marcus Clarke St  
Canberra ACT 2601

**Purpose:**

Authorises arrangements for the disposal of records in accordance with Section 24(2)(b) of the *Archives Act 1983*  
Determines records classed as 'Retain as national archives' in this Records Authority to be part of the archival resources of the Commonwealth under section 3C of the *Archives Act 1983*.

**Application:**

All core business records relating to biosecurity.

This authority gives permission for the destruction, retention or transfer to the National Archives of Australia of the records described. This authority will apply only with the consent of the agency currently responsible for the business documented in the records described.

**Authorised by:**

Anne Lyons  
Acting Director-General  
National Archives of Australia

**Date of issue:**

10 October 2014

## BIOSECURITY

The core business of managing, protecting and reducing risks to Australia's animal, plant and human health, and maintaining market access, through quarantine and responding to biosecurity emergencies.

**Core activities** include:

- liaising with government, industry and community groups to manage terrestrial, aquatic and marine animal health and welfare, plant health and protection, and agricultural and veterinary (agvet) chemicals;
- preventing and preparing for biosecurity emergencies;
- responding to, and taking recovery action in relation to, biosecurity emergencies;
- planning, conducting and reviewing emergency exercises;
- detecting, investigating and prosecuting under relevant laws;
- conducting control operations for the management of pests and diseases, including the storage and use of chemicals;
- surveillance and forecasting of pest populations and diseases to determine patterns of outbreaks and anticipate future outbreaks;
- quarantine clearance including pre-border and border security, surveillance, treatment, clearance of passengers and/or seizure of mail and cargo;
- assessment and compliance activities relating to imported food products against Australian food standards;
- issuing certificates, permits and pratiques;
- auditing, inspection and verification, and authorisation of individuals, facilities, processes or programs;
- participating in collaborative exercises with national and international stakeholders;
- undertaking import risk analysis and risk assessments;
- post entry management of live animals, plants and goods in quarantine;
- managing detector dogs;
- negotiating, establishing, and reviewing agreements;
- providing and receiving advice;
- managing public relations and raising awareness about quarantine and biosecurity;
- developing, implementing and reviewing policies, strategies and plans;
- developing, setting, implementing and reviewing standards;
- providing discretionary compensation; and
- awarding prizes and honours.

The performance of the core business is supported by **general activities** such as:

- administering approved arrangements and agreements;
- delegating powers and authorising actions;
- managing committees and meetings;
- preparing and delivering speeches and presentations;
- managing and participating in conferences;
- determining fees and charges;
- planning, risk management and reviewing;
- developing operational policies and procedures;
- research and reporting; and
- developing and maintaining datasets and registers.

*Cross references to other Department of Agriculture records authorities*

*For the improvement of market access through trade and international liaison, use INDUSTRY & TRADE RELATIONS.*

## BIOSECURITY

For free trade agreements, use *INDUSTRY & TRADE RELATIONS*.

Cross references to AFDA Express Records Authority

For events other than conferring awards, use *COMMUNITY RELATIONS*.

For compensation matters relating to personnel or to visitors, use *COMPENSATION*.

For managing financial transactions supporting biosecurity activities, use *FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT*.

For legal claims & cases that proceed to litigation, use *LEGAL SERVICES*

For agency submissions and advice to the portfolio Minister, use *GOVERNMENT RELATIONS*

For records detailing potential exposure to hazardous substances, including asbestos, use *OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY*.

For managing acquisition, tendering and contracting-out arrangements, use *PROCUREMENT*.

For construction, management and surveillance of Biosecurity premises, use *PROPERTY MANAGEMENT*

For national and unit level plans supporting administrative and operational objectives, use *STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT*.

For system logs, control mechanisms, system backups and data, other than master control records, use - *TECHNOLOGY & TELECOMMUNICATIONS*.

For the development and delivery of non-accredited training, or attendance at training delivered by external organisations, use *STAFF DEVELOPMENT*.

Cross references to other records authorities

For records of the Biosecurity Council, use *GRA 26 ADVISORY BODIES*.

For managing grants, use *GRA 28 GRANT MANAGEMENT*.

For biosecurity accredited training conducted by, or on behalf of the agency, use *GRA 33 ACCREDITED TRAINING*.

Class no	Description of records	Disposal action
61238	<p>Records documenting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>significant biosecurity specific agreements such as international, Commonwealth/State or interagency agreements, eg the <i>Memorandum of Understanding on Animal and Plant Quarantine Measures</i>. Includes negotiations, establishment, maintenance and review;</li> <li>strategic high level liaison activities undertaken with other government organisations, industry and the community;</li> <li>advice provided to, or received from major stakeholders, relating to significant matters that have far-reaching implications, or which are controversial, subject to government scrutiny, innovative and/or high profile with either a significant social, economic, environmental or international impact;</li> <li>final reports relating to biosecurity emergencies, including emergency exercises, for example <i>Exercise Eleusis</i>. Includes major drafts and summaries of consultations;</li> <li>final version of formal reports relating to biosecurity. Includes major drafts and summaries of consultations;</li> <li>final reports of biosecurity involvement in military exercises such as <i>Exercise Talisman Sabre</i>;</li> <li>investigation and compliance activities related to breaches of relevant laws, such as serious threats to Australia's biodiversity or damage to Australia's international reputation. Includes enforcement records and referrals. Excludes cases where there is a court order or clause in settlement agreement requiring destruction or return of records;</li> </ul>	Retain as national archives

## BIOSECURITY

Class no	Description of records	Disposal action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• management, supervision and conduct of operations where biological control agents are used. Includes consultation and informed consent documents from landholders;</li> <li>• risk analysis on imported products which generate litigation or media attention;</li> <li>• import permits relating to biological control agents such as parasites, predators, or pathogens (disease-causing organisms). Includes supporting records, such as risk analyses;</li> <li>• investigations into outbreaks of diseases or infestations by insects, pests or weeds;</li> <li>• quarantine decisions resulting in a change of policy, or which have an impact on international relations or which generate litigation or media attention;</li> <li>• final policies, strategies and high level reviews relating to biosecurity, eg <i>Australian Animal Welfare Strategy</i>. Includes policies governing the import of animals, plants and other goods, the entry and departure of individuals and groups, the identification of pests and diseases and the assessment of potential biological threats. Includes major drafts and summaries of consultations;</li> <li>• final version of standards and benchmarks;</li> <li>• final version of promotional material used to support national and international public awareness of biosecurity issues;</li> <li>• final version of national biosecurity plans, eg the <i>AusVetPlan</i>;</li> <li>• final version of interagency plans, for example the <i>National Business Continuity Plan for Import Cargo Systems</i>;</li> <li>• final version of biosecurity related speeches and presentations made by the Minister or senior agency staff, including conference presentations;</li> <li>• high level committees and working groups relating to biosecurity where the agency provides the secretariat or plays a significant role;</li> <li>• formal acknowledgment of the contributions of organisations and individuals to Australian quarantine and biosecurity, eg the <i>National Quarantine Award</i>; and</li> <li>• major datasets and associated information about the data fields, for example data dictionaries, indexes, tables, registers and repositories.</li> </ul>	
61239	Records documenting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• collection, receipt, use and analysis of intelligence data relating to criminal investigation and compliance activities; and</li> <li>• compensation claims for personal injury or death arising from biosecurity activities.</li> </ul>	Destroy 80 years after date of birth or 7 years after action completed, whichever is later.
61240	Records documenting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• management, supervision and conduct of operations where chemicals are used. Includes consultation and informed consent documents from landholders.</li> </ul>	Destroy 75 years after action completed.
61241	Records documenting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• investigation and compliance activities relating to breaches of relevant laws that result in prosecution, other than those described in class 61238</li> <li>• registration of approved importers or premises where post-entry quarantine requirements are carried out (Quarantine Approved Premises);</li> </ul>	Destroy 25 years after action completed.



## BIOSECURITY

Class no	Description of records	Disposal action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• management of biosecurity facilities;</li> <li>• management of secure items;</li> <li>• prevention of and preparedness for biosecurity emergencies. Excludes final reports covered in class 61238;</li> </ul> <p>management, processing and care of animals and plants under quarantine. Includes live animals, viable human or animal material, live or dead plants, or any part of a plant;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• development of industry standards and benchmarks to support biosecurity. Excludes final versions covered in class 61238;</li> <li>• monitoring of pest and disease populations through surveys, testing and trapping; and</li> <li>• collection, receipt and use of surveillance and intelligence data to monitor pests and diseases.</li> </ul>	
61242	<p>Records documenting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• development, implementation and evaluation of international or national public awareness campaigns relating to biosecurity, eg <i>Quarantine Matters!</i> Excludes final version of promotional material covered in class 61238;</li> <li>• advice provided or received by the agency relating to biosecurity which does not lead to policy or legislative change. Includes biosecurity advice notices;</li> <li>• negotiations, establishment, maintenance and review of routine operational agreements relating to biosecurity;</li> <li>• audit programs including announced and unannounced audits;</li> <li>• verification of individuals, processes or programs against standards and procedures to improve performance and reduce risk;</li> <li>• accreditation of persons, premises and laboratories against agreed standards;</li> <li>• appointment of Biosecurity Officers, Quarantine Officers, Imported Food Control Officers and Approved Premises Officers (APOs);</li> <li>• delegations of power specific to biosecurity;</li> <li>• routine internal and external committees and meetings formed to consider matters relating to biosecurity;</li> <li>• operational reports developed collaboratively with other agencies;</li> <li>• planning, conducting and reviewing of emergency exercises. Excludes final reports covered in class 61238;</li> <li>• management of agency detector dogs, including selection, care, training and separation;</li> <li>• tracking, inspection, clearance or quarantine of imported goods;</li> <li>• issuing certificates;</li> <li>• standard import permits (excluding biological control agents) for agricultural products, biological materials, live animals, plant materials, and reproductive materials. Includes supporting records, such as risk analysis;</li> <li>• compliance warnings or sanctions to individuals and entities that may inadvertently create risks related to biosecurity;</li> <li>• granting or refusal of pratique for aircraft and vessels arriving in Australia;</li> </ul>	Destroy 12 years after action completed.

## BIOSECURITY

Class no	Description of records	Disposal action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• seizure of imported goods and subsequent treatment;</li> <li>• treatment of vessels, and goods or items withheld for quarantine reasons;</li> <li>• forecasting of pest populations used to determine patterns of outbreaks and anticipate future outbreaks;</li> <li>• assessment of imported food products against Australian food standards. Includes compliance activities relating to food products found to be non-compliant with Australian food standards; and</li> <li>• investigation and compliance activities relating to breaches of relevant laws that do not result in a prosecution or the investigation is halted.</li> </ul>	
61243	<p>Records documenting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• implementation of <i>Human Biosecurity Control Orders</i>;</li> <li>• operational aspects of award and recognition of organisations and individuals contributions to Australian quarantine and biosecurity, eg selection processes;</li> <li>• arrangements for biosecurity conferences including the development of presentations;</li> <li>• management, supervision and conduct of control operations where no chemicals are used. Includes consultation and informed consent documents from landholders;</li> <li>• determination of fees and charges for biosecurity services;</li> <li>• requests for assistance or referral of biosecurity matters to or from other agencies;</li> <li>• assessment and analysis of information, products, procedures, standards and systems to ensure compliance integrity;</li> <li>• final versions of section or business unit plans supporting the business. Includes state, regional and overseas offices;</li> <li>• procedures supporting the business of biosecurity;</li> <li>• the provision of customer services and management of routine enquiries;</li> <li>• sponsorship of events to help raise the agency's profile;</li> <li>• supporting documentation for the maintenance of datasets;</li> <li>• final versions of periodic reports required on a regular basis by external government bodies or internally. Includes supporting records;</li> <li>• research carried out to support the business of biosecurity. Includes supporting records. Excludes final research reports covered in class 61238;</li> <li>• review of agency programs and operations supporting biosecurity;</li> <li>• risk management relating to biosecurity areas;</li> <li>• compensation claims arising from loss of business or goods due to quarantine or other biosecurity activities;</li> <li>• analysis, testing and examination of collected data and specimens; and</li> <li>• core business advice to or from other areas of the agency relating to issues which do not lead to policy or legislative change.</li> </ul>	Destroy 7 years after action completed.
61244	<p>Records documenting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• investigation and compliance activities related to prosecution of criminal</li> </ul>	Dispose of in accordance with

## BIOSECURITY

Class no	Description of records	Disposal action
	offences where there is a court order or clause in the settlement agreement requiring destruction or return of records. Includes referrals.	court order or settlement agreement.
61245	Records documenting: <ul data-bbox="343 450 1268 521" style="list-style-type: none"><li>• routine operational administrative tasks supporting the core business; and</li><li>• biosecurity activities other than those covered in classes 61238 to 61244.</li></ul>	Destroy 3 years after action completed.