



Australian Government

National Archives of Australia

Records Authority

2018/00145234

Department of Health

Health Protection and Health Emergencies

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INTRODUCTION

The Department of Health (the agency) 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 Health Protection and Health Emergencies. It represents a significant commitment on behalf of the Department of Health 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 Health. It takes into account the agency's legal and organisational information management requirements, and the interests of stakeholders, the agency and the National Archives.

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 Health 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 on the basis of information provided by the agency.

As changes in circumstances may affect future information 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 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 Departmental 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' are to be transferred to the National Archives for preservation.
2. 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; and
 - General Records Authority (31) - Destruction of source or original records after digitisation, conversion or migration (2015).
3. 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 NAP policy. Advice and guidance on destroying records as a normal administrative practice and on how to develop a NAP policy is available from the National Archives' website at www.naa.gov.au.
4. 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.
5. 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.
6. Where the method of recording information changes (for example from an analogue system

to a digital 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 Health 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.

7. In general, retention requirements indicate a minimum period for retention. The Department of Health 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 Health 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.
8. 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 National 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*.
9. 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.
10. 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. Records created digitally after 1 January 2016 can be transferred in digital formats only.
11. Advice on how to use this authority is available from the Department of Health information 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 management matters, please contact National Archives' [Agency Service Centre](#).

AUTHORISATION

RECORDS AUTHORITY 2018/00145234

Person to whom notice of authorisation is given:

Ms Glenys Beauchamp PSM
Secretary
Department of Health
GPO Box 9848
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 Health Protection and Health Emergencies.

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.

Authorising Officer

Linda Macfarlane
A/g Assistant Director- General
National Archives of Australia

Date of issue:

23 May 2018

HEALTH PROTECTION AND HEALTH EMERGENCIES

The core business of protecting the health of the Australian community through effective national leadership and coordination, and building appropriate capacity to detect, prevent, respond to and manage threats to public health and safety, as well as health emergencies in Australia and overseas (likely to affect Australians).

Core activities include:

- receiving and providing advice and other forms of information to internal and external stakeholders, including through formal submissions and briefing sessions, relating to health protection matters or health emergencies;
- negotiating, establishing, reviewing and managing national and international agreements, including joint ventures with private sector organisations and other government agencies, to support health protection and health emergencies;
- managing the national medical stockpile (ie a strategic reserve of drugs, vaccines, antidotes and protective equipment for use in the national response to a public health emergency), including acquiring, procuring, maintaining, deploying, and disposing of items;
- responding to and managing health emergencies in Australia or overseas (likely to affect Australians), and activating the National Incident Room to ensure a nationally consistent and coordinated response to these health emergencies;
- conducting surveillance and monitoring of health events and health emergencies (eg outbreaks or occurrences of communicable diseases, clinical syndromes, biosecurity issues, or major disasters) in Australia or overseas (likely to affect Australians). Includes data collection;
- authorising 'human biosecurity officers' through legislative instruments of appointment;
- developing, implementing and reviewing policies, strategies, standards, plans, procedures, guidelines and programs to protect the health of Australians and to respond to health emergencies, threats, and crises;
- evaluating health protection events of national or international significance (eg national exercises and pre-prepared events) and the outcomes of health emergencies; and
- internal and external reporting, including reports on clinical syndromes, communicable diseases, biosecurity matters and health emergencies.

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

- preparing and presenting addresses and speeches;
- planning, conducting or facilitating internal and external audits;
- establishing, managing and participating in internal and external committees, meetings, working groups, leadership groups, forums, panels or other bodies;
- arranging and attending conferences, forums, seminars and workshops;
- managing and responding to complaints, enquiries and reactions on health protection and health emergency matters;
- delegating powers and authorising actions;
- liaising, collaborating and consulting with stakeholders;
- undertaking research and analysis relating to health protection matters or the management of health emergencies; and
- identifying, assessing and managing risks.

Cross references to other Department of Health Records Authorities

For routine medical evacuations from overseas requiring management of applications and an assessment of eligibility, use MEDICAL AND HEALTH CARE ACCESS.

For policies, strategies, programs and services designed to reduce the incidence of or prevent chronic diseases such as arthritis, asthma, cancer, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease, use CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION.

For policies, strategies, programs and campaigns designed to promote healthy environments and lifestyle behaviours (including healthy ageing), prevent disease through vaccinations, inform the

community about lifestyle risk factors, including alcohol, tobacco and substance abuse, and ensure the safety of food, use HEALTH PROMOTION & SAFETY.

For medical and health care access services and programs that relate to hearing services, use HEARING SERVICES.

For the assessment of risks associated with the proposed importation or manufacture of industrial chemicals and providing notification of such risks, use INDUSTRIAL CHEMICALS NOTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT.

For policies, strategies, programs and services designed to address broader social health issues in the community including mental illness, use MENTAL HEALTH.

For medical and health care access services and programs that relate to pharmaceutical benefits, use PHARMACEUTICAL BENEFITS AND ACCESS.

Cross references to AFDA Express

For media releases, use COMMUNITY RELATIONS and/or GOVERNMENT RELATIONS.

For the preparation of budget estimates, budget proposals, cost modelling, and financial transactions, use FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT.

For advice, briefs and submissions to the portfolio Minister, cabinet submissions and the organisation's participation in formal inquiries, use GOVERNMENT RELATIONS.

For development of new legislation and amendments to existing legislation, use GOVERNMENT RELATIONS and/or STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT.

For the procurement of goods and services, other than for the national medical stockpile, use PROCUREMENT.

Cross references to other General records authorities

For developing and executing contracts under seal or deeds, use CONTRACTS UNDER SEAL/DEEDS (GRA 36).

For the management of grants, use GRANT MANAGEMENT (GRA 28).

HEALTH PROTECTION AND HEALTH EMERGENCIES

Class no	Description of records	Disposal action
62469	<p>Records documenting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • development, implementation and review of national or high level policies, strategies, standards, plans, procedures, guidelines and programs to protect the health of the Australian population or prepare for and respond to health emergencies, such as major disasters. Includes final version, major drafts, model plans for the utilisation of medical resources, stakeholder consultation, supporting research papers, briefs and correspondence; • evaluation of health protection events of national or international significance (eg national exercises and pre-prepared events); • response to, and management of, health emergencies (eg outbreaks or occurrences of communicable diseases, clinical syndromes, biosecurity issues, or major disasters) in Australia or overseas (likely to affect Australians). Includes notifications of a crisis or emergency situation, the operation of the National Incident Room and the management of the associated register of crisis enquiries, establishing emergency coordination and response centres, deploying manpower, quarantining individuals, making arrangements for evacuation or repatriation of Australians and approved nationals of other countries in the wake of a health emergency overseas, initiating arrangements for medical and rehabilitation services required in support of the evacuation and post-evacuation, and implementing all other arrangements outlined in the response plans. Also includes client communication and service charters relating to health emergencies, reports of evacuation and quarantine developed in response to health emergencies, register of evacuated individuals, final version of situation reports and evaluation of the outcomes of health emergencies; <p><i>For details of evacuated individuals from affected areas, including details of injuries sustained, and initiation of contact with relevant stakeholders such as next of kin or foreign governments, use class 62474.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • surveillance and monitoring of health emergencies (eg outbreaks or occurrences of communicable diseases, clinical syndromes, biosecurity issues, or major disasters) in Australia or overseas (likely to affect Australians). Includes arrangements made for surveillance monitoring, data collection through surveys (eg. surveys of essential items required in an emergency) and other collection methods, early warning indicators and responses to such indicators; <p><i>For all other surveillance and monitoring activities, use class 62472.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • authorisation, under legislation, of ‘human biosecurity officers’ to enable them to use a range of powers for the management of persons exposed to a human disease declared as a biosecurity risk, at Australia’s international borders; • high-level advice and information received from or given to internal or external stakeholders relating to health protection matters or the management of health emergencies of national or international (likely to affect Australians) significance. Includes public health advice and notices, briefing notes and outcomes of briefing sessions, transcripts, supporting research and correspondence; • signed version of agreements (national and international), treaties, 	Retain as national archives

HEALTH PROTECTION AND HEALTH EMERGENCIES

Class no	Description of records	Disposal action
	<p>memoranda of understanding (MoUs), joint ventures or contracts with other national governments, State or Territory governments, government agencies, or non-government organisations or companies relating to the management of health emergencies (eg. National Health Security Agreement). Includes records of negotiations, correspondence, associated regulations and protocols;</p> <p><i>For the implementation and administration of all other agreements, MoUs, joint ventures or contracts relating to health protection and the management of health events, use class 62471.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • high-level, internal or external, committees, working groups, task forces and other bodies relating to the core function, where the agency provides the secretariat, is the Australian Government's main representative or plays a prominent or central role. Includes documents establishing the committees, working groups etc, agenda, final version of minutes, associated reports, and supporting documentation such as briefing notes and discussion papers; • national or high-level reviews, including major internal reviews, relating to health protection and health emergencies. Includes final review reports and supporting documentation such as recommendations, submissions, stakeholder consultations and associated research; • final version of other national or high-level reports relating to health protection and health emergencies. Includes major drafts and supporting documentation; • findings or outcomes of major research and analysis undertaken or commissioned by the agency in relation to health protection matters or the management of health emergencies of national significance or similar international health emergencies (likely to affect Australians). Includes final research reports and supporting documentation; <p><i>For general or routine research supporting the core business, use class 62474.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • final version of speeches and addresses presented by the portfolio Minister or senior agency staff in support of the core business; • conference papers delivered by the portfolio Minister or senior agency staff in support of the core business; and • master version of agency publications produced to support health protection and health emergencies. Includes handbooks, newsletters, information bulletins and fact sheets. 	
62470	Individual case files resulting from health emergencies requiring quarantine.	Destroy 80 years after last action
62471	Records documenting implementation and administration of agreements, memorandums of understanding (MoUs), joint ventures or contracts relating to health protection and the management of health events. Includes final version, records of negotiations, correspondence, protocols and working papers.	Destroy 25 years after last action
62472	Records documenting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • acquisition, procurement, maintenance, deployment and disposal of goods and services for the national medical stockpile. Includes 	Destroy 15 years after last action

HEALTH PROTECTION AND HEALTH EMERGENCIES

Class no	Description of records	Disposal action
	<p>industry briefs and reports developed in relation to medical, commercial and audit matters. Also includes records of stocktakes, condition reports, disposal certificates, and correspondence with storage providers;</p> <p><i>For policies, strategies, research, reviews and high-level advice associated with the national medical stockpile, use class 62469.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • surveillance and monitoring activities relating to the core business, other than those covered by class 62469 (eg surveillance of mortality and morbidity trends, of food safety related matters, and general monitoring of international health). 	
62473	<p>Records documenting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outcomes of briefing sessions on health events that are not of national or international significance. Includes records documenting preparations for the briefing sessions, and the transcripts of the sessions; • internal and external reports relating to the core business, other than those covered by classes 62469 and 62472; • reviews of systems, processes and procedures, including after each health emergency, health event, incident or exercise, other than those covered by class 62469. Includes planning documents, draft and final reports of the outcomes of the review, and other supporting materials; and • planning and conduct of internal and external audits relating to the core business. Includes records of liaison and consultation with stakeholders and auditing bodies, meeting notes, comments and reports, research materials, and working papers. 	Destroy 10 years after last action
62474	<p>Records documenting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • external and internal committees relating to the core business where the agency does not provide the Secretariat, is not the Commonwealth's main representative, or plays only a minor role. Includes documents establishing the committee, agenda, final version of minutes, reports and supporting documentation such as briefing and discussion papers; • attendance at conferences arranged by other organisations relating to the core business. Includes conference papers, speakers' notes, minutes, briefs, correspondence, promotional material and administration papers; • details of evacuated individuals from affected areas, including details of injuries sustained, and initiation of contact with relevant stakeholders such as next of kin or foreign governments; <p><i>For evacuated individuals requiring quarantine, use class 62470.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evaluations of the outcomes of health events that are not of national or international significance; • final version of minutes and supporting material documenting internal agency meetings; • client satisfaction surveys, discussion papers, statistical data, and planning documents relating to public enquiries; and • findings or outcomes of general or routine research supporting the 	Destroy 5 years after last action

HEALTH PROTECTION AND HEALTH EMERGENCIES

Class no	Description of records	Disposal action
	core business.	
62475	Original passenger forms (currently called 'Traveller with Illness Checklists' or TIC) that do not result in further action (eg do not result in quarantine or medical attention).	Destroy after collection
62476	Original passenger forms (currently called 'Traveller with Illness Checklists' or TIC) that result in further action (eg result in quarantine or medical attention).	Destroy after form has been scanned to a digital version
62477	Records documenting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • routine operational administrative tasks supporting the core business (eg. routine public health advice and notices, agency's administrative responses to health emergencies); and • health protection and health emergency activities, other than those covered in classes 62469 to 62476 (eg. risk management planning, and routine liaison and collaboration with couriers, warehouses and suppliers). 	Destroy 7 years after action completed