



Australian Government

National Archives of Australia

Records Authority

2020/00181681

Classification Services

*Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional
Development and Communications
(including Classification Board and Classification Review
Board)*

2020



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Introduction

The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications (the Department) 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 Classification Services. 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 and the Classification Board and the Classification Review Boards (the Boards). 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, including on behalf of the Classification Board and Classification Review Board, 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 supersedes Records Disposal Authority (RDA) 621 for the Office of Film and Literature Classification, issued in 1989. This superseded RDA cannot be used to sentence records after the date of issue of this authority.
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 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.
3. This authority should be used in conjunction with general records authorities such as:
 - the Administrative Functions Disposal Authority (AFDA) Express Version 2 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).
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 Express Version 2. 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.

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 legislation 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.
7. 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 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 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 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' class 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*.
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. Records created digitally after 1 January 2016 can be transferred in digital formats only.
12. Advice on how to use this authority is available from the Department's 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 2020/00181681

Notice of authorisation

Person to whom notice of authorisation is given:

Simon Atkinson
Secretary
Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications
111 Alinga Street
Canberra ACT 2601
GPO Box 594, 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 CLASSIFICATION SERVICES.

Authority

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	Date of issue
	5 November 2020
Jason McGuire Assistant Director-General National Archives of Australia	

CLASSIFICATION SERVICES

The core business of classifying films, computer games and certain publications in Australia, by the relevant classification bodies such as the Classification Board and Classification Review Board (the Boards), in accordance with the National Classification Scheme, legislation, regulations, instruments, schemes, agreements, standards, codes, policies and guidelines. Includes the development and administration of classification tools, providing secretariat services to the Boards, and offering operational and policy advice on classification issues to the Boards, the Minister and departmental executives.

The **core activities** include:

- processing applications for classification, making and supporting classification decisions and classification review decisions and assessments of likely classifications, notifications and publication of decisions;
- setting and reviewing fees for classification services;
- granting requests for permissions, and revoking permissions, to import or export objectionable goods;
- providing, managing and revoking permissions, approvals, requests, assessments and notices;
- receiving, storing, managing and disposing of media products submitted for classification;
- giving, receiving, developing and reviewing classification advice, reports and submissions;
- making referrals and providing evidentiary statements to law enforcement bodies in relation to classification items;
- developing and reviewing policies, plans, procedures and assessment criteria on classification of material;
- developing, monitoring and administering classification tools (including validations and revocations);
- developing and delivering classification training (ie. assessor training); and
- providing secretariat services to the Boards, including managing appointments, leave and remuneration arrangements, separations, temporary Board members registers and disclosure of interest.

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

- preparing and delivering addresses (speeches and presentations);
- establishing and managing agreements and joint ventures;
- arranging for classification training, information sessions and site visits;
- managing administrative appeals;
- managing audits;
- promoting and monitoring compliance with classification laws;
- authorising delegations of power and actions;
- managing committees and meetings;
- handling public complaints and enquiries;
- liaising with stakeholders;
- developing, implementing and reviewing internal operational policies, procedures and guidelines;
- reporting and reviewing of operational matters such as fees;
- undertaking research and analysis; and
- identifying, assessing and managing risks.

Cross references to other records authorities

For the management and administration of grant funding for classification research, use GRA28 GRANTS MANAGEMENT.

Cross references to AFDA Express Version 2

For media releases and hosting and attending conferences and trade shows use EXTERNAL RELATIONS.

For charging arrangements for classification services and the processing of fees, fee waivers and refunds associated with classification applications and associated activities, use FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT.

For managing the agency's financial resources in the performance of its functions, use FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT.

For the acquisition of cinematographic items and equipment for the purposes of viewing content, use PROCUREMENT.

For the contracting-out of services to external consultants and contractors, including associated tendering processes, use PROCUREMENT.

For the production and dissemination of published documents such as research reports, brochures, bulletins, advertising legends, approved notices, factsheets, decision reports etc., use PUBLICATION.

For the development, review and amendment of classification legislation, including the National Classification Code and classification guidelines, use STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT.

Class no	Description of records	Disposal action
62753	<p>Records documenting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • high-level departmental policies, plans, procedures, and assessment criteria on classification of material. Includes final versions, major drafts, results of stakeholder consultations, and supporting research; • registers of Board members, appointments, terminations, or disclosure of interest; • high-level advice, including legal advice and analysis of legal issues, on classification matters; • ministerial briefings relating to classification services; • participation in the development and approval of classification tools. Includes meetings, major versions, and evaluation and monitoring reports of approved classification tools; • high-level reports relating to classification activities, including petitions and submissions made to commissions (e.g. Australian Law Reform Commission) and parliamentary committees and inquiries. Includes final versions, major drafts and associated documentation which relate to these reports; • case files of classification applications, or relating to reviews of applications for classification, or the exercise of other legislative powers, which display notable or controversial decisions or attract considerable official or public interest, represent trends or are precedent setting, or lead to policy or legislative review. Case file records include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ application-based records, such as application processing forms, submissions, correspondence with applicants, checklists and summary sheets, waivers of fees etc; 	Retain as national archives

Class no	Description of records	Disposal action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ assessment process documentation, notices of decision, appeals and records of reviews of classification decisions; ○ correspondence, submissions and assessments relating to legislative powers such as call-ins (i.e. issuing of notices to publishers to submit material for classification), granting or revoking of import or export permissions; ○ correspondence with interested stakeholders; ○ classification reports (includes Board or assessor reports, classifier running sheets (blues notes), application contentious material statements, decision reports containing reasons for decisions and final classification decisions); and ○ classification certificates, and import or export permissions. <p><i>[For all other case files, use class 62754]</i></p> <p><i>[For material (i.e. any part of a film, computer game, publication) submitted as part of an application for classification which is retained by the agency to support classification activities, use classes 62756 and 62757]</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● the public register of classification decisions (such as the National Classification Database (NCD)), including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ information about the film, computer game or publication such as title, alternative title, production details, format, country of origin, creator of the product (director, owner, distributor or author, depending on the type of product) and the name of the applicant; ○ the classification of the item, the date of the decisions and details of the elements that led to that classification, and the consumer advice related to the product. ● final version of minutes, papers and supporting documentation tabled at Classification Board and Classification Review Board meetings; ● signed versions of significant agreements, memoranda of understanding (MoUs), joint ventures or contracts with other government agencies, or non-government organisations or companies relating to classification activities. Includes records of negotiations, correspondence, and associated protocols; ● high-profile liaison, negotiation and consultation with major national (e.g. ministerial councils, State and Territory governments etc.) and international classification stakeholders on classification and related issues; ● major research, analysis and review undertaken or commissioned by the agency relating to the classification activities. Includes final research outcomes and reports, major drafts and supporting datasets; ● addresses made by the Boards' chairpersons and deputy chairpersons; ● final versions of speeches and presentations made by the Minister, Board members or senior agency staff relating to classification activities; and ● final versions of training material developed to train members of the Boards, industry, and government bodies on classifying films, computer games and certain publications. 	

Class no	Description of records	Disposal action
62754	<p>Records documenting case files of classification applications or relating to reviews of applications for classification, other than those covered under class 62753.</p> <p>Case file records include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • application-based records, such as application processing forms, submissions, correspondence with applicants, checklists and summary sheets, waivers of fees etc; • assessment process documentation, notices of decision, appeals and records of reviews of classification decisions; • correspondence, submissions and assessments relating to legislative powers such as call-ins (i.e. issuing of notices to publishers to submit material for classification), granting or revoking of import or export permissions; • correspondence with interested stakeholders; • classification reports (includes Board or assessor reports, classifier running sheets (blues notes), application contentious material statements, decision reports containing reasons for decisions and final classification decisions); and • classification certificates, and import or export permissions. 	Destroy 50 years after last action
62755	<p>Records documenting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • handling of enquires and complaints from the public relating to classification activities. Includes analysis of the complaints data. 	Destroy 25 years after last action
62756	<p>Records documenting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • referrals to law enforcement agencies and regulatory authorities of suspected classification compliance breaches. Includes records of liaison and designation of liaison officers; • the arrangement and delivery of assessor training (for the members of the Boards, industry assessors, and other external stakeholders). Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ training calendars and attendance lists; ○ training requests and notices; ○ registration forms; ○ end of session trainer reports and statistical report on training (ie. delivery hours, course attendance); ○ letters of attendance/completion; and ○ copies of authorisation letters. • material (i.e. any part of a film, computer game, publication) submitted as part of an application for classification which is retained by the agency and used to support the development of training material. <p><i>[For material submitted as part of an application for classification which is retained by the agency and not used to support the development of training material, use class 62757]</i></p>	Destroy 3 years after action completed
62757	<p>Material (i.e. any part of a film, computer game, publication) submitted as part of an application for classification which is retained by the agency and not used to support the development of training material;</p>	Destroy 1 year after action completed

Class no	Description of records	Disposal action
	<p><i>[For material submitted as part of an application for classification which is retained by the agency and used to support the development of training material, use class 62756]</i></p> <p>Records documenting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • routine enquiries for advice, access to, and provision of classification activities, including enquiry logs; • routine arrangements for training (unrelated to assessor training), conferences, information sessions and site visits; and • the viewing and reviewing of material for classification, such as timetables, processing of schedules, daily programs, venue and catering bookings, distribution lists, notifications etc. 	
62758	<p>Records documenting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • routine operational administrative tasks supporting the core business; and • classification services activities, other than those covered in classes 62753 to 62757. 	Destroy 7 years after action completed