



Australian Government

National Archives of Australia

Records Authority
2021/00042784

Regional Investment Corporation

Rural and Regional Community Loan Programs

2021



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Introduction

The Regional Investment Corporation (the Corporation) 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 Rural and Regional Community Loan Programs. It represents a significant commitment on behalf of the Corporation to understand, create and manage the records of its activities.

This authority is based on the identification and analysis of the business of the Corporation. 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 Corporation 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 includes coverage for records related to the National Water Infrastructure Loan Facility. Although a deal of preliminary work was completed by the Corporation, a change in Government focus led to a decision in the 2020/2021 Federal Budget to discontinue this facility. While no applications for loans were ever received and processed before the facility was discontinued, work related to the development of the facility were created and are included in 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 Corporation 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:
 - 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 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.
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.
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 Corporation 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 Corporation 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 Corporation 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 the '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 Corporation 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 2021/00042784

Notice of authorisation

Person to whom notice of authorisation is given:

Bruce King
Chief Executive Officer
Regional Investment Corporation
PO Box 653
Orange, NSW 2800

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 Rural and Regional Community Loan Programs

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 |
| Tatiana Antsoupova Assistant Director-General (a/g) National Archives of Australia | 18 February 2021 |

Rural and Regional Community Loan Programs

The core business of developing programs to deliver support to rural and regional Australia through specialised concessional finance loans for farm businesses and farm related small businesses. This is done under relevant legislation (currently the *Regional Investment Corporation Act 2018*) and the Regional Investment Corporation Operating Mandate Direction 2018.

Loan types include:

- AgriStarter Loans to help manage the transfer of family farm businesses from one generation to the next and encouraging new entrants to agriculture;
- Drought Loans to help prepare farm businesses for drought and to manage or recover from the effects of drought;
- Farm Investment Loans to make farming businesses stronger, more resilient and more profitable;
- AgBiz Drought Loans to support regional Australians to take control of their business through drought;
- Restocking and Replanting loans to help farm businesses recover from natural disasters such as floods and drought; and
- Investment from the National Water Infrastructure Loan Facility (NWILF) to help state and territory governments fund the construction of major water infrastructure.

The core activities include:

- developing and implementing loan programs, including eligibility and assessment criteria;
- providing business loan for farmers and farm-related small businesses. Includes:
 - receiving and assessing loan applications based on eligibility and assessment criteria;
 - determining terms and conditions for the provision of loans;
 - managing approved loans;
 - consulting with stakeholders (e.g. commercial lenders and other industry bodies); and
 - reviewing loan performance and associated terms and conditions.
- stakeholder engagement, including an Indigenous engagement strategy, as guided by the Regional Investment Operating Mandate;
- monitoring sector threats, opportunities, changes and trends;
- identifying and assessing financing opportunities;
- liaising with states, territories and other parties on possible water infrastructure projects;
- providing advice to the responsible Minister and other stakeholders; and
- implementing Ministerial directions.

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

- providing and receiving general advice;
- undertaking audits;
- delegating powers and authorising actions;
- establishing, managing, and participating in committees, working groups, and other bodies;
- development and maintaining internal operational policies and procedures;
- developing guidelines and templates;
- providing internal and external reports such as financial, pipeline and other reports;
- evaluation and reviewing;

- identifying, assessing and managing risks;
- preparing and presenting speeches;
- strategic planning;
- general research; and
- handling enquiries.

Cross references to AFDA Express Version 2

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

For agreements with other government jurisdictions, use EXTERNAL RELATIONS.

For developing high-level reports (e.g. annual report, other formal reports) submitted to the responsible Minister or Government, use EXTERNAL RELATIONS.

For master set of media releases, customer case studies, events, roadshows and webinars, and addresses and presentations made by Chief Executive Officer and other senior agency officers, use EXTERNAL RELATIONS.

For agency wide strategic plans, audits and policies, use STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT.

For the provision of legal advice and review, use LEGAL SERVICES.

For engaging the services of contractors and/or external consultants, and purchasing specialist services, use PROCUREMENT.

For design, production and distribution of publications, newsletters, etc., use PUBLICATIONS.

For managing FOI enquiries, use TECHNOLOGY AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT.

Cross reference to other records authorities

For Board and governance matters, use General Records Authority 27 – GOVERNING BODIES.

Classes

| Class no | Description of records | Disposal action |
|----------|---|-----------------------------|
| 62857 | <p>Records documenting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the development of loan programs; • the determination of eligibility and assessment criteria; • administration of loans that are controversial or of major public interest, have a significant effect on communities and/or the environment, or result in major changes to agency policies, programs, and processes. Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ receipt, assessment and outcomes of loan applications based on eligibility and assessment criteria; ○ correspondence and consultation with interested stakeholders; and ○ management of approved loans. | Retain as national archives |

| Class no | Description of records | Disposal action |
|----------|---|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • significant summary information such as loan registers, indexes and datasets and associated information; • responses to external audits, official inquiries or reviews; • high-level reports describing program outcomes and specific projects; • high-level internal or external committees, working groups and other bodies, relating to the core business, where the agency provides the secretariat, is the Australian Government's main representative or plays a prominent role. Includes establishment, agendas, final versions of minutes, and supporting documentation such as reports, briefing notes and discussion papers; • high-level advice, reports, communications, liaison and briefings prepared for, or received from, major stakeholders (e.g. responsible Minister, the Australian Government, and state and territory governments); and • outcomes of high-level or major research and analysis conducted or commissioned by the Corporation in relation to the core business, such as monitoring sector threats and opportunities. Includes final research reports, statistical modelling and trend analysis, and supporting research datasets and associated information. | |
| 62858 | Records documenting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications and loan management of loan facilities other than those described in class 62857. | Destroy 10 years after last action or loan is repaid in full |
| 62859 | Records documenting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routine operational administrative tasks supporting the core business; and • Rural and regional loan program activities other than those covered in classes 62857 and 62858. Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identifying and assessing potential financing opportunities; ○ Rejected and withdrawn loan applications, including feedback; and ○ Developing internal policies and procedures. | Destroy 7 years after last action |