

Information Management Advice 2 - All about Appraisal

Introduction

This Advice is to be read in conjunction with the *Appraisal Statement for State records required as State Archives*.

What is Appraisal?

Appraisal is the evaluation of the business activities of an agency to determine how long state records should be kept to meet

- Business needs,
- The agency's accountability requirements and
- Community expectations.

It informs the development of requirements for systems to create, capture and manage records, and the development of Retention and Disposal Schedules (R&DS).

Records generated in the undertaking of all agency activities need to be appraised.

One of TAHO's functions is to identify and preserve State records of enduring value as State archives. These are records which document the authority and functions of the Tasmanian Government, its decision making process and the implementation and outcomes of those decisions, including their effect on communities and the lives of individuals. Only a very small proportion of all records created by government are required to be kept permanently (approximately 5%).

To be appraised as having permanent retention value, State records would, in the majority of circumstances, fall within one or more of the appraisal principles outlined in the Appraisal statement.

How do I do Appraisal?

Appraisal is usually carried out on a series of records, rather than an individual record, however occasionally particular circumstances may require a different approach to appraisal. For example;

- A discreet set of legacy records are identified by an agency that are not covered by a R&DS
- Non-current records are identified that relate to an inherited function or activity from a previously responsible agency which is not covered by the agency's current R&DS.
- Non-current records are identified that relate to a former function or activity from a previously responsible agency which is not covered by the agency's current R&DS.
- There is a change in legislative or organisational requirements or a disestablishment of an agency

A legacy appraisal, (or one off or ad-hoc appraisal) is the best way to manage these circumstances.

The appraisal decision making process should be planned, systematic, consistent, transparent and accountable.

Note: When developing a R&DS your appraisal notes will be entered into ORDA (Online Retention and Disposal Authority.)

Tip: It is a good idea to develop a worksheet to follow so that for each series of records you approach appraisal in the same manner. (See Appendix A for an example of a worksheet).

Step 1 - Identify

Identify the series of records to be appraised.

Step 2 - Analyse

Analyse the records. (This is where a worksheet would come in handy).

Analysis should identify;

- If the records have legislative or regulatory obligations
- The business needs for the records
- Stakeholder interests
- Other requirements for accountability (for example, records of individuals)
- The potential future use and value of the information for cultural heritage purposes (use the Appraisal Principles to determine this)

Step 3 - Format

Document the format of the record. Does it exist in more than one format? (eg electronic and hardcopy?)

Is it in a business system? If it is in a business system, is it a current system or a legacy system?

Are there any problems in accessing the record due to its format? (eg on a floppy disc)

Step 4 - Inherent Value

Occasionally State records possess an inherent value beyond the information they contain, due to their physical quality or rarity.

For example, records may have an;

Value	Example
Aesthetic or artistic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manuscripts • Photographs • Pencil, ink or watercolour sketches • Maps • Architectural drawings • Engraved forms
Artefact	<p>State records in their original form, as evidence of technological development, such as;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early press copies • Glass plate negatives • Wax cylinder sound recordings <p>Also, state records may have physical features that are unique, curious or historically</p>

	<p>significant such as;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wax seals • Watermarks • Unusual bindings
Complementary/relationship to existing holdings	Where the public records complement and add research value to an existing series of permanent records, for example, an Index when we already hold the Correspondence
Rarity/Uniqueness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Records may be legacy records of an agency that no longer exists and provides the only evidence of its existence • Records may document functions and activities that differ from the current responsibilities of the agency • May be the only records that exist for a geographic area or for a particular activity

Step 5 - Significance

Appraisal is subjective. Some records are obviously Permanent (such as those explicitly stated in legislation), however there are many record series whose permanent status is based on their 'significance'. Defining significance is based on evaluative judgements determined on the level of impact on the government or community.

Some series of records may need to be kept for a long time for a business need, but are still Temporary records. For example, some client files. Many agencies have one to one dealings with clients and create 'client files' where all the information about that one client is kept. Client files are of importance to that client, and to the agency about that client, often for a very long time, sometimes for the life of the client. However once that client is deceased, the records may only need to be retained for ongoing business needs or statutory requirements, for a short period of time. Sometimes however, some case files may be identified as permanent due to the notoriety or fame of the individual, innovative treatment received, taking part in ground-breaking research, or high public interest in the individual or topic, etc.

Remember that if you make recommendations to retain some case files permanently, it is important that you implement procedures in the workplace that allow these records to be identified so that they won't be destroyed with case files deemed to be temporary.

One series of records may have several different retention periods depending on the 'significance' of individual files. For example, the Department of Police and Emergency Management have police investigation files. These files are retained according to the 'significance' of the crime.

See the following table.

<p>Investigation files for the following crimes;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Murder • Manslaughter • Attempted murder • dangerous or negligent driving causing death • Fraud in excess of \$500,000 • Abduction/kidnapping • Conspiracy • Bribery involving government officials • Blackmail and extortion directed at corporations or public safety • Judicial corruption • Disclosure of Official Secrets • Bargaining for Public Office 	<p>Are appraised as PERMANENT</p>
<p>Investigation files for the following crimes;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rape • Blackmail and extortion (not directed against corporations or public safety) • Dealing or trafficking in illicit drugs for commercial activity • Significant breaches involving commercial quantities against the <i>Living Marine Resources Act 1995</i> 	<p>Are appraised at TEMPORARY 99 years after date of last action</p>
<p>Investigation files for the following crimes;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crimes of violence not included in the previous classes • Incest, unlawful sexual intercourse • Property damage caused by fire or explosion, including arson • Armed robbery 	<p>Are appraised at TEMPORARY 30 years after date of last action</p>
<p>Investigation files for the following crimes;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public disorder • Stealing • Minor assaults • Minor breaches against the <i>Living Marine Resources Act 1995</i> 	<p>Are appraised at TEMPORARY 7 years after date of last action</p>

Step 6 - Risk

Appraisal involves a degree of risk analysis. It involves a balance between the cost of continued retention, maintenance, migration and preservation and the risks that may be incurred if the records were no longer accessible or destroyed.

For more information on risk please refer to [Guideline 25 - Managing Information Risk](#) and the associated [Advice 6 - Risk Management](#).

Step 7 - Sources

When a staff member or other stakeholder provides background information about the series of records you are appraising, document their name and position, and the information they provided. It validates the information and if further information is required at a later date, you will know who to refer to.

Step 8 - Decision

Document your decisions, which are informed by all the information you have gathered about your series of records.

Retention of records requires more than demonstrating that records have value; that value needs to clearly outweigh the costs of ongoing management and the risks involved in not having the records. This is where the issue of 'significance' comes into the appraisal process.

Remember - Permanent means forever.

Recommended Reading

- [Managing Information Risk \(2014: Guideline 25\)](#)
- [Risk Management - Part 1: Introduction \(2014: Advice 60\)](#)
- [Risk Management - Part 2: Applying Risk Management processes \(2014: Advice 60\)](#)
- [Risk Management - Part 3: Information risk Register template \(2014: Advice 60\)](#)

Further Advice

For more detailed advice, please contact:

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Acknowledgements

- A General Guide to appraising Functions, Activities and records. Archives New Zealand. March 2014
- Public Records Brief - Identification of permanent public records using the Queensland State Archives' Appraisal Statement. Queensland State Archives. February 2013
- Policy on records appraisal and the identification of State archives. State Records New South Wales 2001
- Standard no 9 - Standard on the appraisal and disposal of State records. State Records New South Wales. April 2007
- Procedures for disposal authorisation – State Records New South Wales. February 2015

Information Security Classification

This document has been security classified using the Tasmanian Government Information Security classification standard as PUBLIC and will be managed according to the requirements of the Tasmanian Government Information Security Policy.

Document Development History

Build Status

Version	Date	Author	Reason	Sections
1.0	February 2015	Deborah Drinkell	Initial Release	All

Amendments in this Release

Section Title	Section Number	Amendment Summary
		This is the first release of this document

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State Archivist

Appendix A

Step 1 - Series: <i>Building applications</i>	
Step 2 - Analysis:	
Legislative obligations	<i>Building Act 2000 – no recordkeeping requirements</i>
Regulatory obligations	<i>Building Regulations 2004 – no recordkeeping requirements</i>
Business needs	<i>May need to access plans at any time during the life of the building. Access could be in-house or at the request of the owner/occupier or builders/architects working on their behalf or from another agency such as TasWater or TasNetworks.</i>
Stakeholder interests	<i>Owner /occupier, builders/architects, possible local history interest, possible genealogical interest, other agencies.</i>
Accountability requirements	<i>Requirement for Council to produce approved plans and associated documentation if requested</i>
Apply Appraisal Principles	<i>Principle 4 – Rights and Entitlements of Individuals (for owner/occupier) Principle 3 – Accountability of Government (for Council approval of building) Principle 5 – Tasmanian Society and Culture – if the building was of significance Principle 6 – Environmental management and change – showing occupation of the land</i>
Step 3 – Format	
Format 1 <i>Electronic - Hard copy records have been scanned and are in TRIM</i>	Problems/comments <i>Cost of continued retention, maintenance, migration and preservation</i>

<p>Format 2 <i>Hard copy records, a mixture of plans of various sizes and foolscap and A4 sheets.</i></p>	<p>Problems/comments <i>We currently hold 75 linear metres of these records with a secondary storage provider at a cost of \$7,000 pa.</i></p>
<p>Detail any inherent value: <i>The older plans, from 1929 – 1952 are very artistic. They are hand drawn and coloured, and the writing is done in Calligraphy.</i></p>	
<p>Significance: <i>Mainly domestic dwelling, houses, garages, sheds etc. There are some larger homes and a couple of homes that have won design awards. There are also some public buildings, and buildings on recreational land, such as the cricket ground.</i></p>	
<p>Risk : <i>During the life of the building it is essential that the owner/occupier and their agents have access to the plans and associated information in the building application. Once the building was demolished there is no business need for Council to retain the records.</i></p>	
<p>Sources: <i>Ian Evans – Manager – Building and Development Enquiry counter staff – Steve Jones, Mahira Japiara, and Kelly Lee.</i></p>	
<p>Decision: <i>Approx 1,200 Building Applications are created annually by our Council. The majority are for houses, and other domestic buildings. The majority of the houses are standard three or four bedroom houses or units/villas. There are a few houses of interest in that they have won design awards. There are some public buildings. There are some applications containing plans with artistic value. I recommend that we retain as Permanent records (and transfer to TAHO as State archives) the following building applications;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A recipient of a prestigious State, national or international architectural design award</i> • <i>An important local landmark, or holding a special association with the community for social or spiritual reasons</i> • <i>Highly aesthetic characteristics valued by the community</i> • <i>Heritage listed</i> • <i>Of innovative architectural value</i> • <i>Developments of state significance</i> • <i>Controversial developments (ie the structure generated large protests or attracted extensive media attention)</i> • <i>Significant public buildings</i> <p><i>The applications for all other buildings may be destroyed 5 years after the building is removed or demolished EXCEPT those plans that have artistic value.</i></p>	