

Information Management Advice 63 Part I - Management of Records during Administrative Change Handbook

Introduction

This Advice is intended to be used as a handbook to guide agencies through the key tasks associated with the various forms of Government administrative change. The handbook supports the mandatory requirements outlined in Guideline 3 Managing Recordkeeping Risks during Government Administrative Change, and provides direction for agency staff to manage the transition effectively and with minimal disruption to Government business.

- *This handbook explores each of the following scenarios in further detail:*
- *When a function is transferred between Tasmanian Government agencies (page 2)*
- *When a function is transferred to another tier of government (page 13)*
- *When a new function is created (page 14)*
- *When an existing function is abolished (page 15)*
- *Amalgamation of agencies into larger agencies/entities (page 16)*
- *Privatising a function (page 25)*
- *Shared Service arrangements (page 29)*
- *Private Office and Parliamentary Issues (page 31) and*
- *General considerations (page 34)*

Further Advices that form part of the TAHO Government Administrative Change toolkit include:

- *Guideline 3 Managing Recordkeeping Risks During Government Administrative Change*
- *Information Management Advice 63, Part 2 Government Administrative Change Advice for Senior Management*
- *Information Management Advice 64 Transfer of Electronic Records*
- *Information Management Advice 65 What to do if your Agency is Closed or Privatised*
- *Information Management Advice 62 Help we are moving!*

TAHO Guidelines and Advices are available from the GISU website.

I. When a Function is Transferred between Tasmanian Agencies

Overview

The transfer of a function between Tasmanian agencies

- **will** involve the transfer of responsibility for records, and
- **may** also involve the relocation of staff and records to different premises.

A key principle is that records relating to a function should be transferred with the function. This will help the receiving agency to manage the function effectively and with as little disruption as possible.

Having become aware that a function, or in some circumstances a number of functions, are to be transferred to another agency, it is vital that you identify which records will be affected. This should be done in consultation with the staff of the receiving agency, preferably before the administrative changes come into effect.

Records that will be affected can cover a range of activities and formats (hardcopy and/or digital), and can relate to core operational matters or general administration (e.g. specific project files or the personnel files).

Transferring Agency: this is the agency which transfers a function to another agency.

Receiving Agency: this is the agency which receives an existing function, transferred from another agency.

Process

The table below summarises the process for managing the records associated with a function, when that function is transferred within or between agencies.

Stage	Description
1. Identify records of the function	The transferring agency identifies the records associated with the function which is being transferred.
2. Determine management arrangements	The transferring agency contacts the person assigned responsibility for records management in the receiving agency. Together, the transferring agency and the receiving agency determine management arrangements for the records including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a formal agreement • which records are to be transferred to the control of the receiving agency • a cut-off date (the point at which any earlier dated records will not be required for transfer) • whether TAHO's Transfer of Custody authorisation is required.
3. Review those records not required by either agency	The transferring agency reviews records not required for transfer, to determine whether the records should be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • transferred to secondary storage • destroyed (either under the authorisation of a current R&DS or subject to a Destruction Authority issued by the State Archivist) • transferred to TAHO as State archives.

Stage	Description
4. Manage access	The transferring and receiving agency agree access arrangements. Note: This includes both access within the agency, and access for the public.
5. Manage transfer of records	The transferring agency transfers the records to the control of the receiving agency.
6. Notify TAHO	The transferring agency notifies TAHO of the transfer of control of the records.
7. Amend records management tools	Both the transferring agency and the receiving agency review and amend their records management tools.

Stage I. Identify Records of the Function

1.1 Identify records to be transferred to the receiving agency

The transferring agency needs to identify all records associated with the function. Records of the function will be specific to the function, but may also include general administrative records such as personnel files of staff transferring with the function. Talking to action officers will help with records identification.

Key tasks
Meet with key staff of the agency receiving the records as soon as possible after the proposed change is known, and establish a joint working group.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that the group includes records management staff from both agencies.
Create a file within your recordkeeping system to document the transfer of records to the receiving agency, and the consultation process undertaken of the joint working group's activities.
List the function or functions, (including activities, projects etc), that are being transferred. Also list any legislation or government policy or instruction, relating to the function being transferred.
Obtain a Transfer of Custody authority from the State Archivist (if required)
List any related staff being transferred.
Identify the broad categories of official records that will be transferred. This can include, but is not limited to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> correspondence files project files case files personnel files financial records

Key tasks

- Identify any information systems, and related data (including metadata), that will need to be transferred. This can include, but is not limited to:
- customer information systems
- client case management databases
- project management files and systems
- maps, plans and technical drawings
- Websites (Internet, Extranet and Intranet)
- Electronic Document and Records Management System (EDRMS)

1.2 Identify any control records that apply to the records

It is possible that some of the categories of records that are identified in the previous step may be controlled or managed through other records. This second set of records is known as control records.

It is essential that your agency identify any of these control records. Without these control records the receiving agency will be unable to effectively use, maintain, access and dispose of the various records that they receive.

Key tasks

Having identified the relevant broad categories of records in Step 1, the joint working group should also identify any relevant control records. These can include:

- registers of files
- indices of files
- guides to the use and structure of the filing system
- thesauri for records systems
- spreadsheet listings of records developed by work teams
- EDRMS metadata.

Identify any approvals to use or disclose particular Records (eg, Copyright etc)

If staff will be moving to the new agency ask them if they have any control records developed at a local level.

Stage 2. Determine management arrangements

In a transfer, the responsibilities of each agency should be agreed upon and documented in a formal agreement. Discussions between those assigned responsibility for records management, in both the transferring and receiving agencies, should begin early so that the right management decisions are made. The agreement should include:

- records to be transferred
- records to be retained by the transferring agency
- roles and responsibilities
- details of any records in secondary storage, including management issues such as contractual arrangements, costs, outstanding charges.

2.1 Identify the scope of the records to be transferred

Check whether the records that relate to the function are maintained as a separate series or group. If they are, the series should be transferred in its entirety to the receiving agency. If not, it may be necessary to transfer only part of a series, or to copy files or data to ensure that both agencies still have access to the records they need.

Having identified the relevant records related to the transferred function, it is important for your agency to determine if all of the related records identified will be transferred. It is unlikely that the new agency, or agencies, will want to receive all of the records that your agency has generated for a transferring function (eg inactive temporary records).

Accordingly, a records transfer strategy will need to be developed which details the following:

- the records to be transferred
- the records management system the records are currently managed in
- the records management system the records will be managed in going forward, if different
- how the transfer process will take place (e.g. automated, manual, etc.)
- who is responsible to govern this process in each agency
- those who will actually undertake the transfer process (e.g. migration of records may be outsourced to an EDRMS provider)
- a plan which details the actions and milestones, and responsibilities for each applicable action
- which agencies are funding particular actions (e.g. boxing of hardcopy records, couriers, developing migration utilities, etc.).
- any new approvals that may be required under PIP, Copyright or IP.

Key tasks
<p>Determine when a particular range of the official records will be transferred. This should include consideration of transferring the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • records that are active on the day the function is transferred • records from a limited period prior to the transfer of the function, eg one month prior, six months prior, etc • case files or project files that relate to the particular clients or projects whose management is being transferred.
<p>Determine the range of relevant control records to be transferred. These will relate directly to the range of official records to be transferred.</p>
<p>Determine if a Transfer of Custody authority is required from the State Archivist by contacting TAHO.</p>
<p>You may wish to agree a cut-off date for older records which will not be transferred to the receiving agency. This will be based on an analysis of the needs of both agencies.</p>
<p>Determine which agency will keep the original control records and which will receive copies</p>
<p>Both agencies should document the decisions, and the rationale for the decisions reached, for future reference.</p>

Key tasks

Records required for current RTI requests or internal reviews should be retained by the agency with current custody of the records until processing is complete as it may be more practical (subject to the receiving agency agreeing). However, once processed, the new RTI Officer appointed by the receiving agency's Principal Officer should make the final determination with all records transferred at that time. Any internal reviews must be carried out by the receiving agency in the event that they become subject to external review.

2.2 List the records to be transferred

Once both agencies have a common understanding of the records that will be transferred a detailed inventory should be made of the records. This inventory can be prepared manually or through using the report writing facilities of applicable systems. This inventory should include relevant web pages and records held within web sites, which are not going to be archived by the transferring agency. Migration utilities may need to be written by EDRMS providers to enable efficient and effective uploading of record profiles, metadata and audit trails.

The transferring agency should list the records to be transferred. The list should include details of any records in current or semi-current storage, in any format. This list can be generated through the report-writing function of electronic records management systems or through other software if used. The transferring agency should provide a copy of the list to the receiving agency, and also retain a copy for their own accountability needs.

Key tasks

List each individual file that is being transferred (report from EDRMS)

List records that are not being transferred (eg files that are missing; being sent to secondary storage; or permanently archived).

List the control records (original or copies) that are being transferred

Prepare a formal acknowledgement that the records have transferred, for signing by an authorised representative of the receiving agency.

Ensure that both agencies have an inventory of the records, and control records, being transferred.

Document the software format in which any electronic records were transferred, and any particular hardware systems needed to access the records.

Agree to the timeframe in which the transfer is to occur by.

2.3 Provide the receiving agency with details of records in storage

Records of the function already maintained in secondary storage should also be included in the review of management arrangements. If the records are required by the receiving agency, control should be transferred to the receiving agency. Where the secondary storage is managed by a commercial storage provider, there should be an existing formal contract between the transferring agency and the provider. Even when the records remain with the provider, responsibility for managing the contract must be transferred to the receiving agency.

Key tasks
Inform TAHO of the transfer of responsibility for permanent records from the transferring agency
Provide details of the Approved Secondary Storage Provider (ASSP) who holds records in secondary storage on behalf of your agency
List the records series held by the ASSP
Provide details of your customer number provided by the ASSP – subject to agreement by the provider
Provide details of any relevant contact details for your account manager with the ASSP – subject to agreement by the provider
Inform the ASSP of the transfer of responsibility for relevant records of your agency in their custody
Resolve who will fund transfer and storage costs for records held by the ASSP
Ensure that both the transferring agency and the receiving agency have copies of the detailed lists of series and consignments of State records in storage that are being transferred
Provide copies of any relevant back-ups of electronic records being transferred.

2.4 Determine whether TAHO Authorisation is required

The transferring agency may require authorisation from TAHO to transfer records to the receiving agency. Under the *Archives Act 1983*, agencies are not allowed to transfer the possession or ownership of a State record without the authorisation of TAHO. This applies to the transfer of records between separate agencies, such as local councils and universities, and to the transfer of functions between governments, such as between State and Federal governments. It also applies to the transfer of records between agencies that are part of the Tasmanian State Government.

If you are uncertain whether you need authorisation, contact TAHO at gisu@education.tas.gov.au

Note: For the transfer of functions between governments, see Section 2 When a function is transferred to another government (page 12 of this document).

Stage 3. Review those Records not Required by Either Agency

The transferring agency should review any records in its control which are not required by either agency. The agency should sentence records against current Retention and Disposal Schedules. This will involve:

- transferring records to secondary storage for ongoing retention, until they are due for disposal
- maintaining records within electronic document and records management systems, or business systems, until they are due for disposal
- making appropriate arrangements for records due for destruction, or
- transferring permanent records to TAHO

Key tasks
Transfer temporary records off site to an ASSP in accordance with <i>State Records Guideline 13 Certification for secondary storage providers</i>
Contact TAHO to discuss arrangements for early transfer of permanent records if no longer required for business use
Prepare AOT48 consignment documentation in accordance with TAHO requirements
Determine access restrictions required for transfer of permanent records to TAHO custody

Stage 4. Manage Access

Two types of access arrangements need to be put in place:

- Agency access to records no longer in their control
- Public access under provisions in the *Archives Act 1983*.

4.1 Agency Access

Both the transferring agency and the receiving agency may have need in the future to access records of the transferred function that are under the control of the other. Agencies will need to agree and document arrangements for access. This should include:

- access by the transferring agency to records it created and transferred
- access by the receiving agency to records retained by the transferring agency.

Arrangements for access to records in secondary storage or in the custody of TAHO should also be documented.

Note: Access by another agency to records in the custody of TAHO would normally require the written permission of the agency with control of the records. TAHO would also normally require agencies other than the one with control, i.e. 'third party agencies', to view records in TAHO control in TAHO's History Room.

4.2 Public Access

TAHO requires agencies to determine access restrictions for records when being transferred to TAHO. The receiving agency should make sure all records being transferred, regardless of age, have had any access restrictions predetermined. This will ensure that most records will continue to be publicly available after transfer and that sensitive records will be appropriately protected.

If the receiving agency is not advised of access restrictions that appropriately cover the records, new restrictions will need to be determined. The transferring agency should advise the receiving agency on the content of the records to help determine appropriate access restrictions. The receiving agency may also wish to review access restrictions recommended by the transferring agency.

Stage 5. Manage the Transfer of Records

If the records are to be moved, paper files should be packed securely in labelled boxes, and arrangements made with the receiving agency for their relocation. Arrangements must also be made for the transfer of digital records. This will involve the transfer of control data and the associated metadata, It may also involve the transfer of software and/or hardware. The transferring agency's staff should liaise with their own IT department and that of the receiving agency to agree on media and format, and any other requirements for transfer.

The receiving agency should check records received against the transfer list provided prior to signing the formal acknowledgement document. A copy of the acknowledgement document should be retained by both agencies for their records.

Stage 6. Exemption from Transfer authority

If the receiving agency for business purposes is wanting custody of permanent records that are over 25 years old they must obtain an Exemption from Transfer authority from the State Archivist.

Formal notification of the completion of the transfer should be made to TAHO, stating:

- The functions transferred
- The quantity and formats of records transferred
- The date the transfer process concluded

Stage 7. Amend records management tools

A vital element of transferring responsibility for records is amending records management tools. Having transferred records it is vital to update your control records. This will ensure that records do not become lost or unaccounted for during the administrative change process.

7.1 Updating control records

Control records are used as tools to manage records. They are records in themselves, and are used in both paper and electronic records management systems. Examples of control records include thesauri, file registers, indexes.

The transferring agency should amend control records to indicate that responsibility for the management of the records has been transferred to the receiving agency. Include the

- details of records transferred
- date of transfer, and
- details of the agency to which they were transferred.

Provide a copy of the control records to the receiving agency, either through the export of appropriate metadata from records management software, or the physical copying of paper records.

It is important that the history of the records can be reconstructed. Identify transferred records in the receiving agency's records management system and tools as transferred, and note the details of the transferring agency. They should not generally be re-titled, re-numbered or re-ordered. Link the transferred records to those created subsequently by the receiving agency through the records management system and tools.

Approved electronic records management software is able to support this

Key tasks
<p>Transferring agency to update control records to indicate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The records transferred to the receiving agency • The date of the transfer • The name and contact details of the agency to which the records were transferred
<p>Update the lists of records held offsite to indicate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Records transferred to the receiving agency • Date of the transfer • The name and contact details of the agency to which the records were transferred
<p>Transferring agency to update Business Classification Scheme to indicate functions, activities and associated transactions that have transferred, to whom, and date of transfer.</p>
<p>Transferring agency may provide the receiving agency with copies of any development documentation of their Business Classification Scheme. This may be useful for the integration of the function into the receiving agency's own business classification scheme, and in the development of thesaurus terms, and Retention and Disposal Schedules, where required.</p>
<p>The transferring agency may need to revise its thesaurus following the transfer of a function, as certain terms may no longer be valid. Redundant terms should not be deleted from the thesaurus. Instead change the terms to 'non-preferred' and indicate the end date.</p>
<p>The receiving agency may need to integrate thesaurus terms for transferred functions into its own thesaurus</p>
<p>The transferring agency should provide the receiving agency with copies of any functional Retention and Disposal Schedules which relate to the records being transferred.</p>
<p>Where no functional Retention and Disposal Schedule exists, the receiving agency must develop a schedule with the assistance of TAHO and submit this for approval to TAHO prior to any disposal of records taking place.</p>

7.2 Retention and Disposal Schedules

A Retention and Disposal Schedule is a formal instrument that identifies records, defines how long they should be kept, and when they should be destroyed or retained as State archives. In Tasmania, the destruction of State records is authorised through both Common (eg. DA2157) and Functional Retention and Disposal Schedules. *DA2157 Common Administrative Functions* is used for the disposal of administrative records common to all agencies, with the exception of Local Government Councils which use DA2200. Functional Retention and Disposal Schedules are developed by agencies and cover records of their core business functions.

The transferring agency should provide the receiving agency with copies of any functional Retention and Disposal Schedules which relate to the records being transferred. When functions move between branches or units within a specified agency, the associated Retention and Disposal Schedule does not have to be resubmitted to TAHO. However, when functions move from one agency to another, TAHO should be notified, as the receiving agency may need the approval of TAHO to use the Schedule.

Where no functional Retention and Disposal Schedule exists, the receiving agency must develop a schedule with the assistance of TAHO and submit this for approval to TAHO prior to any disposal of records taking place. The *DA2157 Common Administrative Functions* schedule may continue to be used for the disposal of administrative records in the interim.

Multiple EDRMS

EDRMS Systems provide complex mechanisms and structures for organising and providing access to information. Different systems and versions will handle, display and organise the information they hold very differently.

Moving information from one form of data structure and technology application to another raises the risk that you will lose some or all of the information content or context, or your ability to access it, so that:

- you can't find the information you need
- you can't open the information you need
- you can't work with your information in the way you need
- you can't understand what your information is, or what it is about
- you can't trust your information is what you say it is

EDRMS migration therefore requires careful planning and management to ensure that you:

- understand how you need to use your information
- ensure that you maintain the completeness, availability, and therefore usability of your information throughout the migration process
- manage the risks involved in migrating your information between systems.

You should also use it as an opportunity to ensure that the EDRMS you are migrating information into has the properties you need to ensure digital continuity – such as capability to import and export information effectively, facilitating further changes in the future.

There are many decisions about digital recordkeeping to be made when agencies merge, particularly where the agencies have multiple EDRMS. Some possible situations:

Several agencies have been combined into a single new agency:

- Each agency was using the same EDRMS, but had implemented different versions. These versions don't 'talk' to each other.
- Each agency also had their own retention and disposal authority and BCS.
- Each agency had their own business rules establishing the points at which records were captured into the EDRMS. Some of these worked well and had significant user acceptance.

The new agency is now in the process of making some decisions about its digital recordkeeping environment, including:

- Should all areas of the organisation be migrated to the most up-to-date version of the EDRMS?
- How can different BCS be incorporated into a single system?
- Should the 'best' business rules be rolled out organisation-wide, or should new business rules be developed for the new agency (bearing in mind that the business needs of each area of the organisation may differ widely and a 'one size fits all' approach may not work)?

Information held in your EDRMS is likely to be critical to your organisation's business operations, and potentially contributing to the government record. This means that any activity that puts the use of this information at risk needs to be managed appropriately.

Transfer of content between systems can be a highly demanding process, involving a number of distinct stages, each with an associated risk and cost. An EDRMS migration must be planned and managed as a significant data migration, business change and technology project. You will need access to a range of skills, resources and processes, in addition to the technical capability to carry out the physical transfer of content.

2. When a function is transferred to another tier of government

Overview

The transfer of functions can occur between different governments, for example between the Commonwealth Government and the Tasmanian Government. Appropriate arrangements for the management of records following the transfer of functions will need to be made. Such arrangements will be affected, in general, by the fact that the ownership of State records must not be transferred from the Tasmanian government to another government without the authorisation of TAHO.

Process

Tasmanian agencies which are responsible for a function that is to be transferred to another tier of government should contact TAHO to discuss the management of the affected records. Before the records can be transferred a Transfer of Custody or Transfer of Ownership authority may be required from the State Archivist.

There are a number of principles that apply to records of transferred functions. These are:

- the transferring agency should close records of completed transactions
- the transferring agency should close records of current transactions at or before the date the function is transferred
- the receiving agency will need records of current transactions to ensure the efficient administration of the function.

To meet the need for records of current transactions, the transferring agency may:

- loan the records to the receiving agency for a specific period
- copy the records or data about the records (metadata) and supply copies to the receiving agency.

3. When a New Function is Created

Overview

When a new function is created, the agency will need to update its records management tools to reflect this.

Process

Updating records management tools includes:

- updating control records
- updating the Business Classification Scheme
- reviewing your thesaurus, and
- developing with the assistance of TAHO a functional Retention and Disposal Schedule to incorporate the new function.

See Stage 7 “Amend Records Management Tools” in Section I “When a function is transferred between Tasmanian Agencies” (page 9 of this document) for further detail.

4. When an Existing Function is Abolished

Overview

When a function is abolished, the agency will need to retain the records, but amend its records management tools to make it clear that no new records are to be created for this function.

Process

When an agency or local authority ceases to carry out a function, the agency must still retain and continue to manage the records until such time as they are due for disposal.

Agencies should:

- sentence the records of the abolished function against their current authorised Retention and Disposal Schedule and the general Disposal Schedule
- if the records are unscheduled, undertake a one-off appraisal to determine the appropriate periods of retention prior to destruction;
- if the records are for permanent retention, transfer to TAHO.

Agencies should update their records to make it clear that no new records are to be created for the function, and to indicate the functions and terms that are no longer in use. This involves:

- revising your agency's Business Classification Scheme
- updating with the assistance of TAHO your agency's approved Retention and Disposal Schedule
- updating records management control systems. Control systems are the specific recordkeeping tools and finding aids that are used to manage the records. These can include:
 - registers and lists of records
 - business classification structures and the guides to their use
 - indexes
 - thesauri
 - Retention and Disposal Schedules – the State Archivist must approve any amendments
 - metadata schema

See Stage 7 Amend Records Management Tools in Section I When a function is transferred between Tasmanian Agencies (page 9 of this document) for further detail.

5. Amalgamation of Agencies into larger Entities

Overview

When two or more agencies are amalgamated into larger entities, there may be a number of ramifications for records management and recordkeeping. Amalgamations may be complex, or relatively straightforward depending on the timing and degree of:

- integration of functions and staff
- co-location or moving of staff and resources (such as services and records)
- integration of ICT infrastructure
- integration of information resources.

In some cases, changes may be minimal e.g. where several agencies are merged into a 'super-agency' but retain their own operational systems, software and personnel or adopt 'shared service' arrangements. In this case, many of the steps below will not be relevant. See the section 'Shared service arrangements' for more information.

The changes to records management and recordkeeping can be significant when there are different systems, software and personnel that need to be integrated. A change of site may also have implications for managing records e.g. the availability of secondary storage, or accessibility of recordkeeping expertise.

Process

The table below summarises the four main stages in managing records when agencies amalgamate their recordkeeping and records management systems. Further detail on each stage is provided after the table.

Stage	Description
1. Preparation	Form a steering group across the agencies to be merged. Identify relevant systems, staff, contracts, agreements, tools, transferred records, policies, procedures and rules. Close files and implement disposal where appropriate.
2. Planning for integration	Carefully and systematically plan for all steps involved in the integration, and decisions that need to be made.
3. Management of the changeover	Implement decisions and projects. Implement chosen options for achieving a unified records management system and business systems.
4. Future planning	Plan for the ongoing management of the new agency's records management program.

Stage I: Preparation

Preparation involves forming a steering group, consisting of key information and records management positions from across the merging agencies, to plan for and carry out the necessary actions. This steering group should

report to relevant high level committees established to oversee all aspects of the amalgamation, so they remain informed of recordkeeping issues and progress.

The steering group for records management will need to identify the following in the preparatory stages:

- all business communications and recordkeeping systems in the agencies who are merging, including financial management systems, human resource management systems, electronic document and records management systems, line-of-business business systems and unofficial recordkeeping systems
- the different hardware and software platforms in each agency
- key staff with records management responsibilities, or with knowledge of different systems
- all contracts and service level agreements for the supply of records management services
- all licensing agreements or arrangements for software applications, or records management products and tools
- all recordkeeping tools covering the records of merging entities such as thesauri, and functional retention and disposal schedules
- the location of all records storage areas including in-house and commercial facilities
- records transferred as archives to TAHO and any access restrictions allocated
- current corporate recordkeeping policies, procedures and rules, including security and access requirements, which apply to each of the merging agencies.

Preparation should also involve allocating relevant staff to:

- ensure that any current files that are no longer in use are closed
- dispose of records that can be destroyed or transferred to TAHO as State archives, under current common or functional Retention and Disposal Schedules.

These actions will help to reduce the volume of records that need to be managed during the changeover. See relevant steps within 'How to transfer control of records' for more information. If such activities constitute a major project, they may be best addressed in longer term plans.

Stage 2: Planning for integration

If time permits, careful and systematic planning can streamline the process of change to records management and recordkeeping. If there is little warning before amalgamations occur, it may be advantageous to identify a lead partner to conduct most of the planning, or deciding whose systems can become the basis for new recordkeeping systems. Issues to consider in planning include:

- which records management control system, e.g. EDRMS, to use
- what records management model should be adopted
- what file numbering should be used
- what file titling practices will be adopted
- how records management and business systems will be integrated
- which business systems across the merging agencies keep records
- what work needs to be done, and who needs to do it
- change management initiatives required to help with staff transition
- whether storage contracts will be transferred to the new entity, and any relocation of records required
- who will require access to what information resources when the agencies merge, and how access will be provided

- how work processes will change, and the effects on recordkeeping requirements
- how recordkeeping and information management processes can be streamlined.

Further information about these issues is provided in the section below. Many decisions will require agreement and sign off by the high level committees of the merging agencies.

2.1 Decide which records management control system to use

Requirements for a system

The entity formed by the amalgamation is likely to require records management software to handle the volume of records created. The decision about what system to use should be based on an analysis of the requirements for the system.

Requirements for a Records Management control System

- Some of the issues to consider include:
- What record formats will the system be required to manage?
- What is the likely volume of records in the different formats?
- Will there be file and individual record registration? Will this vary between low risk and high risk functions?
- Will this be devolved to users or managed centrally?
- Will there be access to some functionality on every staff member's desktop?
- Will access to be required across a number of sites?
- Are there large volumes of control data to be imported into the system?
- What reporting will be required from the system?
- Note: This is not a checklist. Requirements and issues will vary.

An existing system

One or more of the merging agencies may already have records management software. Evaluate whether the existing system/s in use can meet the requirements you have identified, at least in the short term. If one or more of the agencies are using TRIM which is emerging as a whole of government standard, it is sensible to use this for the new system. This way there will be continuity as at least some of the staff will be familiar with its operation and will be able to assist the others. If both agencies have different products, work out which one will best suit the needs of the amalgamated agency.

If an existing system is used, then the system functionality should clearly distinguish the records and files created by the new merged agency. It should be documented clearly that ownership of the new system has been transferred to the newly formed agency.

A new system

If records management software is not being used or does not meet the new agency's needs, consider choosing a product, but consider that TRIM is emerging as a whole of government standard.

Tip The agency may decide to use different control systems at different sites, e.g. records management software at the main site, and simple systems such as spread sheets or word processed documents at small branch offices. If this is the case, you need to think about:

- requirements for information sharing between offices
- the degree of centralisation of file creation
- records management support for staff at branch offices
- preventing the proliferation of 'unofficial' recordkeeping systems.

2.2 Decide on a new records management model

When an amalgamation occurs, previous records management models may no longer effectively support the newly merged agency, or its program objectives. Agencies should give consideration to what records management model would be the most suitable to adopt.

2.3 Decide on Titling Practices

It is important to establish good file titling practices for the newly merged agency. The Australian Standard AS *ISO15489* recommends that keyword classification be used. A thesaurus or controlled language tool based on keyword classification may assist. For example, if two councils are merging and both are using Keyword for Councils the licence can usually be extended to the amalgamated council. Please contact State Records NSW regarding licencing arrangements.

Likewise some or all of the agencies merging to form a larger agency may have licences for Keyword AAA, and you may wish to extend this to apply to the merged agency. Please contact State Records NSW regarding licensing arrangements. A separate project may be required to develop thesauri to cover the functions of the newly merged agency.

If file creation is decentralised to users, the new agency will need to provide some training and support to users not familiar with titling tools.

Golden Rules

- Do not renumber or retitle files.
- Do not re-cover existing files in new corporate covers.
- Do not combine files or split from merging agencies.
- Do not add records to closed files.

Note: files can be paper or 'virtual' groupings of digital records.

2.4 Decide on File Numbering Practices

It is important that file numbers are not duplicated, even between what may be different sites of the same agency. TAHO recommends the use of annual/running numbers for files e.g. 04/001, 04/002, 04/003. If you want to use annual/running numbers but plan to use different systems at different sites you may need to add an alpha prefix to the file numbers e.g. A04/8620. B04/5260 or implement some other means to ensure that each file number is unique.

Tip Where smaller groups of records are managed separately from a main correspondence file system e.g. contracts, case files etc., use different numbers to distinguish them from each other. This should be kept simple and should not duplicate any other file numbers. TAHO recommends that annual/running numbers are prefixed with alpha characters where necessary.

2.5 Decide on How Systems will be Integrated

Careful consideration needs to be given to how systems will be integrated. See Stage 3: 'Managing the transition' for more information about how records management systems and business systems might be unified.

2.6 Decide on Work Required, Priorities and Allocating Responsibilities

Detailed work plans need to be developed for the actual work required to bring about a smooth transition. Separate plans may be required for particular projects such as closing old files, relocating records from one site to another, or training staff in new systems. Staff will need to be allocated to particular projects and tasks.

2.7 Decide on Change Management Initiatives

New recordkeeping practices and systems may only be some of the changes staff are required to deal with during amalgamations. Staff will need to be kept well informed of their new responsibilities and these will need to be documented in new policies, position descriptions etc. Consider and plan for what change management initiatives such as training and support are required for staff, and what documented guidance they require.

2.8 Decide on Changes to Storage

The steering group will need to decide whether storage contracts and services being used by the amalgamating agencies need to be transferred to the new entity. They will also need to consider whether any records require relocation. For more information on good practice when moving records, see:

- *Guideline 11 Physical storage of state records*
- *Guideline 13 Certification for secondary storage providers*
- *Guideline 23 Certification for Places of Deposit of State archives*
- *Advice 46 Treating records with mould*

2.9 Decide on Access Requirements

You will need to carefully consider who will require access to what information resources when the agencies merge, and how that access will be provided.

Consideration should not only be given to active records. Staff of the newly merged agency will often need to access closed files to support their business activities. Plan to import control information for the files that are closed, into the new records control system to enable cross searching. The system functionality can be used to show that the files are closed and belonged to a particular predecessor agency.

2.10 Decide on Changes to Work Processes

An amalgamation necessarily involves some changes to work processes, or the introduction of new processes, to meet business objectives. It is important that when work processes are being designed or redesigned that

recordkeeping requirements are considered, so that full and accurate records of the process can be captured and kept.

The potential for streamlining information and recordkeeping processes can also be considered.

For more information, consult *Strategies for documenting government business: The DIRKS Manual*, particularly Step B: Analysis of business activity and Step C: Identification of recordkeeping requirements, State Records NSW.

Stage 3: Management of the Changeover

Managing the changeover involves implementing the plans and projects described in Stage 2. Processes for achieving a unified records management system and managing records in business systems are described below.

3.1 Achieving a Unified Records Management System

The two basic options for achieving a unified records management system are:

- close all files and open new ones – the ‘Big Bang’ approach
- run parallel systems for a time.

Whatever approach is taken to managing the actual changeover, be aware that users will require continuing assistance and support.

The ‘Big bang’ Approach

When the newly merged agency begins operation, TAHO recommends that, where feasible, the defunct agencies close their files and the new agency opens new files for its ongoing business activities. Use the records control system to make any links between closed files and new files.

Operating Parallel Systems

The ‘big bang’ approach can be resource intensive. If it is not possible to close all files and create new ones, an alternative approach is as follows:

Step	Action
1	Close what systems and files you can and update control systems to show they are closed. Create what new files you can and 'park' these in advance of proclamation.
2	On the date of transition, document that all new records added to a file are created by the new agency. To make this easier this could be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • documented in the system/s and/or • added to control records for each file.
3	Close files as they naturally expire.
4	Create all new files in the new records management system and use the system to link these to closed files in the old system/s.
5	Agree on a cut-off date for the parallel systems and, at this time, close all remaining files from the old system/s. This could be staggered for different sites to make it more manageable.

Note: Be aware that this process may create confusion for users as there will be parallel systems in place for a time.

3.2 Working with Business Managers

Some important records are managed outside of general records management systems. Personnel and financial records are two common examples. Many of the decisions about managing the transition of these business systems will be taken outside of the records management unit, and it is important that recordkeeping issues are addressed during the transition.

If business systems are to be closed or integrated, make sure that:

- changes to the business systems are clearly documented, and records of these changes are captured in an official recordkeeping system
- data from closed systems is copied to the new systems as required
- records in closed systems are sentenced using current retention and disposal authorities, and the accessibility of data in these systems is maintained as long as is required. For more information see TAHO Guidelines and Advices on managing digital records.
- the recordkeeping requirements of new systems are assessed and the necessary functionality to capture and maintain records is either built in, or there is either manual or electronic integration with the official records management system e.g. monthly/quarterly financial reports are printed and filed.

3.3 Managing Personnel Records

By managing personnel records, effectively the rights and entitlements of staff are protected over time. This enables the newly merged agency to have a clear idea of its ongoing employee-related liabilities. You need to:

- make sure personnel records are transferred to the new agency. This includes personnel files, payroll and superannuation deductions
- close personnel files and start new ones for the new agency (ensuring that new and old files are linked in the control system)

- make sure that no personal staff identification numbers are duplicated. If new personnel or payroll numbers are assigned to staff, make sure these are clearly documented. Unique personnel or payroll numbers are good tools to link all related records together, and can be used as retrieval tools
- add summary information about the service of the staff member to the new file to protect their rights and entitlements. Do not remove records from the closed file. If summary records already exist, copy these and add them to the new file
- use the new agency's control system to link the new file to the old file
- close existing payroll systems. Data from the systems should be copied to the new system as needed.

Tip Work with HR to ensure this process goes smoothly. Large amalgamations may require a progressive approach to integrating or standardising Personnel/Human Resource systems.

Refer TAHO *Managing inter-agency transfer of personnel records (2009: Guideline 16)*

This is particularly useful in establishing personnel records systems aligned to records retention requirements.

3.4 Managing Financial Records

It makes it easier if the amalgamation of agencies coincides with a new financial year, but this is not always the case. Agencies may decide to continue running parallel financial systems until the new financial year. Use the records management system to document on what date the new agency becomes a legal entity. As with personnel systems:

- copy data from one system to the new system
- close files of input and output records, e.g. invoices, purchase orders, financial reports, and create new ones for the new agency.

Stage 4: Future Planning

Once the initial transition has been completed, planning is required for the ongoing management of the new entity's records management program. This includes:

- developing a new records management policy, and business rules for the agency
- creating or updating if required the agency's functional Retention and Disposal Schedule
- identifying and making provision for the protection of vital records
- developing a disaster plan covering all records and recordkeeping systems
- developing or reviewing access and security schemes
- developing records management skills
- training staff in good recordkeeping practice according to their roles and responsibilities
- establishing new monitoring and review systems
- notifying TAHO of mergers or changes.
- 6. Privatising a Function

If adequate arrangements for records are not made, both the agency and the community's rights may be placed at risk through loss of records. Agencies must identify records issues early in the planning stage of privatisation. They must be aware of their responsibilities for managing State records, and also notifying the private successor of their obligations regarding State records that may be temporarily in their custody.

Contact TAHO as soon as possible once privatisation is known. The scope and mechanisms of the privatisation process will be different in each case.

Below is an overview of common recordkeeping issues and strategies for managing them. For further guidance see *State Records Guideline 14 Privatisation of government business: recordkeeping issues*.

Common Recordkeeping Issues

The table below describes the key recordkeeping issues that must be considered and incorporated into the planning stages of a privatisation process.

Issue	Description
Transfer of ownership of State records	Records that were created by an agency are State records and subject to the <i>Archives Act 1983</i> . The transfer of ownership of those State records deemed to be temporary requires the permission of TAHO. Permission is given by a formal authority.
Transfer of custody of state records	Those State records deemed to be permanent can be transferred to the succeeding private entity if they are required for their business purposes. This requires a transfer of custody authority from TAHO. Once the business use of the records ceases, these records must be returned to TAHO as State archives.
Protecting State records	Both the agency being privatised and any agency/s that takes on responsibility for the State records after privatisation, have obligations to protect State records in their control.
Access to State records	There are a number of issues relating to access: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the private successor may require access to records retained by the agency or in the custody of TAHO • the agency may require access to records transferred to the private successor • if permanent State records over 25 years old are temporarily in the custody of the private successor, they may be required to provide public access to the records.
Disposal of State records	Agencies must dispose of State records only with the permission of TAHO. This includes the transfer of ownership or transfer of custody to a private successor and destruction of records. Permission is given through a Retention and Disposal Schedule, or specific Transfer Authority approved by TAHO.

Managing the Recordkeeping Issues

Agency Assigned Responsibility for Legacy Records

When a whole agency is privatised, another agency is usually assigned responsibility for legacy issues relating to the privatised functions (the 'legacy agency'). This should include responsibility for maintaining temporary State records that are not transferred to the private successor, or to TAHO. Permanent State records not transferred to the private successor must be transferred to TAHO. Responsibilities will include:

- monitoring the loan of any records to private successors
- advising private successors on record issues (e.g. disposal and access)
- storing and managing State records not transferred to the private successor, including managing public access.

Decisions Regarding Custody of State Records

Decisions regarding the control of State records, particularly disposal and custody, should be documented in a Transfer Authority. This should be developed with TAHO. When an agency is privatised, there are four main options relating to the ownership and control of State records. These are set out in the table below.

If..	Then..
State records that are identified as permanent records	Only transfer permanent records to the private successor if they have a business need for them. In which case, a Transfer of Custody authority is required from TAHO. Once the business use of these records has ceased they must be returned to TAHO as State archives. OR Copies can be given to the private successor and the originals transferred to TAHO.
State records that are identified as temporary records	Only transfer temporary records to the private successor if they have a business need for them. In which case, a Transfer of Ownership authority is required from TAHO. Otherwise, these records must be transferred to the agency assigned responsibility for legacy issues. The agency assigned responsibility for legacy issues remains responsible for the safekeeping of any temporary State records transferred to it from the defunct agency
State records loaned to a private successor	The agency assigned responsibility for legacy issues may loan records of the defunct agency to the private successor if they have a business need for them. However they must make arrangements with the private successor that ensure all obligations are met according to the Archives Act 1983.
The records are personnel records	Do not transfer to the private successor. The Tasmanian Government retains liabilities for its former employees. Provide copies of the records to the private successor for only those staff who are to be employed by the private entity as they will need these records to carry out their business.

Providing Access to State Records

State records may be in the custody of TAHO, the agency assigned responsibility for legacy issues or the private successor. A number of parties may have the need and the right to access the records. The table below sets out how this should be managed.

If..	Then..
The private successor requires access to State records in the control of the agency assigned responsibility for legacy issues.	Either of the following arrangements must be made: copies of the State records are provided to the private successor the State records are loaned to the private successor. The loan agreement must set out requirements for safekeeping, return of the records, and the provision of public access.
The private successor requires access to State archives	A Transfer of Custody authority must be obtained from TAHO. This authority requires that once the private successor no longer has a business purpose for these records they must be returned to TAHO as State archives.
The agency assigned responsibility for legacy issues requires access to records transferred to the private successor	An agreement on access arrangements should be made with the private successor at the time of privatisation. Document the terms of the agreement for future reference.
Public access is requested to a State record temporarily in the custody of a private successor	If the record is <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • over 25 years old, AND • is open to public access, AND • a State archive as is deemed by the Transfer of Custody authority then the private successor must provide access under the provisions of the Archives Act 1983. If the record was transferred to the private successor under a Transfer of Ownership authority, the private successor is not required to provide access.

When privatisation looms...planning for records

If you become aware that your agency is to be privatised, the table below sets out steps to follow to ensure that planning is carried out for records.

Step	Action
1	Identify the records that will be affected.
2	Identify the recordkeeping issues. These may need to be included in any legal agreements. This advice identifies general issues, there are likely to be further issues specific to your circumstances.
3	Notify TAHO as soon as possible.
4	Check whether all affected records are covered by a Retention and Disposal Schedule. This may be either a common or a functional Retention and Disposal Schedule.

5	Identify those records that are not covered by a Retention and Disposal Schedule.
6	After first consulting with the private successor, sentence records covered by Retention and Disposal Schedules, to reduce the volume and complexity of relocation.
7	<p>Make arrangements regarding transfer, access, and custody with TAHO, the agency assigned responsibility for legacy issues and the private successor. This will require:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a Transfer of Ownership authority from TAHO for those temporary records required by the private successor • a Transfer of Custody authority from TAHO for those permanent records required by the private successor • a Transfer of Custody authority from TAHO for those temporary records not required by the private successor but not yet due for destruction. These must be transferred to the agency assigned responsibility for legacy issues • a Transfer Agreement with TAHO for those permanent records not required by the private successor for transfer to TAHO as State archives.

For more information about Privatising of a government function see *State Records Guideline 14 Privatisation of government business: recordkeeping issues*.

7. Shared Service Arrangements

Some agencies may be moving to 'shared service' arrangements for the efficient and effective delivery of a number of services. Shared service arrangements generally involve a degree of standardisation to allow groups of agencies to use common technical platforms, systems and processes.

In records management, common models for shared services are sharing records management services amongst a group of agencies, such as geographically co-located or functionally similar agencies, or with a 'parent' agency.

Government administrative changes may result in transfers of functional units of any size from one agency to another, along with its information resources and IT systems. These moves raise significant cost issues for the receiving agency. The cost of a typical move would include:

- Physical move costs (files, library books etc.).
- Cost of staff time involved in managing and implementing moves.
- Costs of sorting and separating files, books and electronic records.
- Cataloguing costs – for books and files.
- Cost of transferring electronic data. In some cases, this work has been carried out by the IT services contractor at significant cost.
- Cost of renegotiating licences for electronic resources.
- Cost of reconfiguring existing corporate IT systems to reflect the change.
- Cost of provision of interim access to information – for example, provision of laptops – during the changeover period.

An alternative model is to explore the shared services options available in all significant moves of major units. These include:

- Large units of staff remain in existing accommodation, thus eliminating the need for removal costs and consequent disruption.
- Information, including paper files, electronic records and library resources is retained and provided as a service to the new agency.
- Generic IT desktop and infrastructure services remain unchanged – provided as a service from one agency to another. HR and Finance systems would still need to be re-configured.

Modern technologies are robust and resilient, and they may enable a new approach, the development of a shared infrastructure across agency. The development of a shared infrastructure approach would have the following benefits:

- A faster transition to the new agency with less change to implement.
- More resources available to be used to deliver the agency's objectives.
- Cash savings by avoiding early contract termination charges.

There are a number of drawbacks to this approach. First, some investment will be required. There may be difficulties with existing contracts for service delivery, which may restrict the scope for sharing services. New ICT interfaces will have to be developed, to link the infrastructures across agencies. There may be some legal restrictions on data sharing. Full co-operation between agencies is essential if this is to be achieved. Agreement on common services standards is also essential if savings are to be maximised.

Before it is decided that information and records services should be transferred between agencies, the possibility of a shared service should be explored. There should be an economic analysis of the costs of

transferring records, information and access to services (both hard-copy and electronic), as compared with one agency providing a service to another. This should cover:

- Physical storage of paper records
- Electronic records
- Library services and collections, both hard-copy and electronic

The study should include:

- Statutory issues (does more than one piece of legislation apply to this record?)
- Legal issues (data sharing)
- Contractual issues (is a shared contract legally possible?)
- Technical issues (is a shared infrastructure or shared access to files possible?)
- Physical costs of moving files and books (including catalogue changes)
- Costs of continuing to use existing storage accommodation
- Costs of migrating electronic information
- Cost of providing a shared service
- Opportunity costs caused by delays and disruptions to services

A third option is a half-way house between an immediate transfer, and a full shared service. This option allows the change to be implemented over time. In practice, many areas which are transferred are quite self-sufficient and can be allowed to run on existing knowledge infrastructures for a time. In the first instance, resources should be devoted to handling the information and knowledge issues of key staff. In this scenario, full access to the new corporate infrastructure and full transfer of records and electronic information would be provided to the following areas while the rest would run on existing infrastructures until an appropriate time:

- Minister's Office
- Corporate Services
- Senior Executive
- Policy areas
- RTI, Communication Branches

8. Private Office and Parliamentary Issues

Private Offices

Documents produced by Ministers in the course of their official ministerial responsibilities are State records. It is important therefore that any such documents should not be retained by a Minister who is moving to the receiving agency. Private Office staff will need to arrange for the immediate handover of records and information relating to the functions being transferred, to another Minister or agency. A handover session should be arranged to brief the new Minister's staff. Care should be taken to extract any personal material relating to the Minister (such as private diary engagements or financial records, for example of mobile phone calls), before official material is transferred or destroyed.

For further guidance please refer to *State Records Guideline 19 Managing Ministerial records*.

The following steps should be taken:

Ministers' diaries and notebooks

- Official engagements relating to a transferred function should be extracted from Ministers' diaries so that details can be passed to the Minister taking over responsibility for that function.

Cabinet papers

- Cabinet documents relating to past meetings relating to the functions being transferred should be returned to the Cabinet Office.

For more detailed advice, please refer to *Advice 15 Transfer and provision of access to Cabinet records*.

Official submissions and records

- Copies of submissions relating to transferred functions can be destroyed.
- Copies of records of Ministers' meetings and telephone conversations in which policy officials have been involved can also be destroyed.
- Records of meetings and telephone calls that did not involve policy officials should be managed as a record, and passed to the Records Manager in the transferring agency.

Personal Material

- If the Minister is moving to the new agency, any purely personal material should be packed securely and sent to him/her, or if clearly ephemeral in nature, destroyed.
- Information held electronically should be deleted unless the Minister requires a copy.

Parliamentary Questions

Live PQs become the responsibility of the new Minister straight after the announcement of the GAC change, unless a later date is specified. On the assumption that staff will move with functions, answers to these PQs will be prepared by the same officers as before, but sent to the Ministers office of the receiving agency for sign-off by Ministers and forwarding to Parliament.

The following steps should be taken:

- The Ministers office of the transferring agency should pass details of all live PQs to the Ministers office of the receiving agency – for each PQ the text, MP, name and contact details of the official dealing with it
- The receiving Ministers Office should enter details of live PQs in its records system
- The transferring Ministers office should tell policy officers who is responsible for PQs in the receiving agency, and where to send their answers
- Replies should be filed by the receiving Ministers Office in accordance with its current practice
- The transferring Ministers Office should brief the receiving Branch on past and expected future PQs, and provide staff directory details so that the receiving agency can allocate new PQs
- The transferring Ministers Office should give details of the transfer of functions to the Table Office in Parliament, copying the receiving agency into the notification

Other Parliamentary Business

The receiving Ministers Office will need briefing about future Parliamentary business relating to newly acquired functions. Handover notes should include details of the following:

- Legislation going through Parliament
- Select committee and other committee inquiries
- All notified business in the House of Representatives
- Relevant timetabled debates and debates scheduled but not on Order Papers
- Forthcoming Parliamentary business already announced
- Scheduled written Ministerial statements
- Other developments pending but not yet announced.

9. General Considerations during Government Administrative Change

9.1 Poor recordkeeping practice

TAHO recognises that there may have been instances in the past where records may have been re-titled, re-numbered and physically combined with records of your agency. In such instances it is vital that your agency establishes a clear record of the link between the original record title and reference number, and the new record title and reference number. Failure to do so will make it impossible to retrieve records using their original title or number.

A record of these links can be made in a physical control record, such as a consignment list or file register. They can also be accommodated by the inclusion of this data as an extra field in any spreadsheets or file listings that may be in existence. In addition most EDRMS will have the ability to establish and maintain these sorts of links.

The practice of retitling, renumbering or combining of records must not occur.

9.2 Information Security

One of the priorities in any move of records and other information following a transfer of functions is information security. Security provision should be proportionate to the source, nature and contents of the information and, when classified material is involved, should conform to the Tasmanian Government Information Security Policy. Any transferring agency that holds classified material should satisfy itself that the receiving agency has the necessary procedures and policies in place, i.e. the capacity to hold the material, and the recordkeeping and information security awareness to treat it appropriately.

The first step is to identify what classified material should be transferred to the successor body. The second step is to undertake a risk assessment to determine whether the receiving agency meets the necessary security requirements, or if existing ICT infrastructure, policies and procedures will need to be revised or upgraded.

Only when the necessary review, risk assessment and any required changes have been implemented, should the material be moved (the third step). The method of transit, and the security measures employed to protect the information during the move, should conform to the Information Security Policy.

9.3 Records Transfer

The Transition Project Team needs to ensure that the transfer of all forms of records is effectively managed, to provide a smooth transition from one agency to another. This should include disseminating information about the changes widely within both agencies, as well as informing groups of staff with a particular need to be kept closely in touch with developments. These groups, which should be identified at the outset, will include:

- The staff at all levels whose work is closely affected by the transfer of functions
- Private Offices, Parliamentary and Ministerial Correspondence Units
- Enquiry services, call centres, help lines and libraries
- Major suppliers e.g. Suppliers of EDRMS systems, library management systems, paper records storage suppliers.

There must be a communications plan to ensure that the information needs of customers, end-users and external contacts are fully met – otherwise a serious reduction in service quality can result.

Each of the agencies involved in a transfer will have its own role to play, but a co-ordinated approach by the whole Project team will be key to a successful transfer of functions. If knowledge champions or officers have been appointed within the agencies, they should also be fully involved in ensuring business continuity across the transition. Both agencies should ensure that risk registers covering records and information are updated following a Government administrative change. Also, vital records transferred should be added to the receiving agency's business continuity and disaster plans, and removed from the transferring agency's plans.

9.3.1 The Transferring Agency

A major change of function will have a significant impact on the transferring agency, and even a minor transfer will mean some upheaval for the staff immediately involved. Once the Government administrative transfer has been announced, they will probably be required to move to a new location and learn how to use new systems and methods in a short time. They will become part of another agency with a different mission and different goals. Some jobs may be substantially changed or abolished. There will also be a wider effect. The agency will experience knowledge “walking out of the door” in relation to customers, processes or records. Knowledge networks may need to be rebuilt to enable remaining staff to function effectively.

The transferring agency has a responsibility to ensure that all the information required for a smooth transition is identified and prepared for transfer. This includes capturing knowledge which is not written down, or held in a formal way either electronically or on paper. Staff rely on each other as information resources. They share knowledge of relevant developments or key contacts, which is constantly updated and related to other information without necessarily being recorded in any way. In carrying out the process of records review, staff will also have acquired knowledge of the history of the function and of which records are likely to be appraised as having permanent value by TAHO. It is important to consider how to prevent the loss of all this vital information and knowledge following a Government administrative change, especially if some staff are not moving with the function.

9.3.2 Useful Tools

Concise electronic or paper documents, outlining the existing function and working methods, will be essential to ensure business continuity.

A function statement should be drawn up by the existing staff which explains who they are and what they do. It should cover:

- Purpose
- Goals
- Recent achievements
- Introduction of collective knowledge/expertise
- Risk register for current and planned activities with management strategies and contingency plans.

Handover notes will also be important in transferring previously unwritten or informal knowledge about the way business is conducted, key contacts etc., especially if some staff are not moving with the work.

Exit interviews and/or questionnaires should be given to transferring staff where necessary, with the purpose of gaining knowledge/information of records, processes and contacts of transferring staff.

Suggested questions include:

Knowledge transfer questionnaire

- What key skills do you have that enable you to do your job?
- What are the key resources you need to do your job?
- Is there anything that would help you function more effectively?
- If your job didn't exist, what would happen?
- Who are your key contacts internally/externally?
- Who are your customers internally/externally?
- What service do you provide to them?

Develop a Risk register for current and planned activities with management strategies and contingency plans.

Maximum use should be made of existing knowledge management tools such as corporate directories and Intranets to ensure that all those affected are fully informed of the changes. Information is increasingly portable, and not sharing the same physical space need no longer be a barrier to knowledge sharing. The availability of resources should be investigated for setting up social media tools (such as Wikis, blogs, instant messaging, podcasts, social bookmarking, knowledge bases), and maintaining existing knowledge networks.

Corporate directories should continue to include transferred staff for an appropriate time, with a link to their new details.

The Intranet is not just a portal for static information. It can also act as an effective communications and knowledge management tool, resulting in reduction of emails and continual maintenance and development of content. It may be necessary to give transferring staff access to both the transferring and receiving agency's Intranets

9.3.3 The Receiving Agency

The receiving agency will need to provide accommodation, equipment and training for incoming staff, and inform existing staff of the new arrangements. When staff are moving with the function, it is important that they receive full training in the new agency's records management systems and procedures.

A communications plan should be devised to keep staff informed of changes. This could include:

- a launch session
- briefing on the Government administrative change
- publication of the function statement
- welcome packs for new colleagues.
- a welcome email introducing key figures in the agency, explaining aims and objectives and advertising corporate services.
- induction for all new staff (including senior staff).

Corporate directories should be updated from, or before, the date of transfer. Wiki technology can be used to enable staff to update their own information.

9.3.4 Enquiry Services and Help lines

It is important to ensure that any users or customers of a function being transferred are given full information early on, and receive an uninterrupted service as far as possible. Priority must be given before the transfer to preparing a full brief for staff operating an enquiry service or a helpline, to enable them to give authoritative and accurate information. Other resources should include lists of new contacts and telephone numbers, subject lists and a glossary of terms. Differences in working practices between the transferring and the receiving services need to be identified in advance.

9.3.5 Libraries

The library service may be responsible for wider knowledge management activities including intranets, websites, knowledge networks, and enquiry or directory services for the public and internal customers. The majority of libraries provide enquiry services for significant electronic information resources as well as hard copy collections.

If library collections need to be divided following Government administrative changes, enquiry responsibilities and subject areas to be transferred will need to be agreed at the beginning of the process, together with a transitional Service Level Agreement for enquiry services. These agreements should be used to inform subsequent collection transfer decisions.

The library services transfer plan should include the following action points:

- Plan how customers will be kept informed of changes.
- Identify collections, both electronic and hard copy, to be transferred.
- Plan for catalogue record transfer, and reclassification if necessary.
- Plan for merging of common subject collections, including consideration of disposal or cancellation of duplicate holdings.
- Follow agreed withdrawal procedures for weeding and disposal of items.
- Review collection and retention policies for continuing relevance, including long-term preservation of significant unique collections and items.

For electronic resources:

- Consider the current subscription periods and renegotiation of licence agreements based on requirements of new body e.g. number of staff, subject coverage, access to 'paid for' historical content, Intranet/internet security settings.

For hard copy resources:

- Negotiate and plan for physical transfer of stock, including space in receiving agency.
- Identify books, pamphlets, journals and reports to be transferred.

Consider journal subscriptions and standing orders in the light of new agency's requirements e.g. current subscription periods, number of staff, subject coverage.

10. Definitions

The terms *agency*, *transferring agency* and *receiving agency* are used interchangeably throughout this guide when describing roles and responsibilities. Where a matter relates specifically to an agency or a local authority, those terms are used in preference.

The key terms are –

Private entity - An individual or agency not employed, owned, or operated by the public sector.

Local authorities - These include:

- local government councils
- council-controlled agencies and trading agencies

A full definition of local authority agencies is provided in the Local Government Act 1993.

Agency - This is a blanket term that includes government departments and local authorities.

Receiving Agency - The agency or local authority which receives an existing function that has been transferred from another agency.

Transferring Agency - The agency or local authority which transfers a function to another agency.

Further Advice

For more detailed advice, please contact:

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Acknowledgements

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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.

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Amendments in this Release

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State Archivist