

Digitisation Policy

IR02-CP

Hard copies of documents are uncontrolled and may not be current – please refer to the electronic version.



1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance on the digitisation and disposal of paper-based records and to outline the responsibilities and obligations for all MacDonnell Regional Council (MRC) employees and councillors when digitising hard copy (physical) records thus turning them into digital records, and to ensure compliance with relevant legislation and standards.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all MRC employees and to records of all business activities performed by or on behalf of the council regardless of the media in which they are created or captured. All practices, systems and procedures pertaining to recordkeeping are to be consistent with this policy. It covers;

- 2.1 All MRC staff and councillors, regardless of employee status
- 2.2 All aspects of MRC business operations
- 2.3 All types of records created to support business activities
- 2.4 Organisations and businesses, including their employees, to which MRC has outsourced its functions or activities, and therefore associated recordkeeping responsibilities
- 2.5 It does not relate to records created by any other agencies, except where they form part of MRC's official business activities and procedures

3. Objectives

The policy objectives are to ensure the ongoing availability of, and access to, MRC's records regardless of the carrier or digital file format. MRC provides a framework for achieving best practice outcomes when undertaking digital preservation and digitisation activities. These outcomes ensure that:

- 3.1 MRC has an efficient and effective digitisation system in place
- 3.2 Strong records management practice exist that support communication and decision-making
- 3.3 All staff are aware of and practicing their responsibilities regarding digitisation and record keeping
- 3.4 Staff have access to records that provide information of MRC's decisions
- 3.5 Legislative and policy requirements are met
- 3.6 MRC's records protect the interests of Council, the rights of customers, clients and residents, and at the same time ensure that privacy and information access needs are protected

4. Definitions

The following words and corresponding definitions apply specifically to this policy and supporting documents and are provided to support its interpretation and implementation.

Archive Advice	To provide advice and direction to public sector organisations on the storage and transfer of permanent hard copy records that have been digitised
Batching	The process of storing records together based on the date the record was received into the agency's custody or the date that the record was scanned into the agency's records management system

Digitisation Policy

IR02-CP

Hard copies of documents are uncontrolled and may not be current – please refer to the electronic version.



Born Digital	Born digital refers to material that originated in a digital form rather than having been converted from print or analogue equivalents
Digitisation	The process of creating digital files by scanning or otherwise converting analogue materials
Disposal	A range of processes associated with implementing, authorised decisions about records retention, destruction, rearrangement, migration or transfer of custody or ownership
Disposal Schedule	A formal policy, authorisation jointly by the Chief Executive of an NT Government public sector organisation, the NT Records Service, and the NT Archives Service, that defines the temporary or permanent status, retention period and consequent disposal actions authorised for classes of records
Hard or Paper Copy (Physical)	Hard copy is a printed version of data held on a computer
Permanent Records	Records of permanent value, which are in the custody of a public sector organisation.
Public Sector Organisation Record	An agency as defined in s.5 of the Information Act (redefine as in IR05-CP)
Temporary Value	Records that have temporary value for which an approved disposal schedule exists can be destroyed in accordance with that schedule

5. Statement

As per the Records Management Policy, MRC is committed to adequately capturing and storing records to protect their authenticity and integrity and also making sure that records can be readily located, retrieved and preserved. This is most easily done with records in digital format entered into the Electronic Document and Records Management System (EDRMS).

5.1 Scanning Records

Scanning of documents supports the transition to electronic document and records management systems (EDRMS) by reducing or eliminating the need for hard-copy files. It offers a solution to record keeping environments, which have files 'split' between hard-copy originals and born digital documents.

5.1.1 When deciding to scan hard copy records, the following criteria must be met:

- a) Records should be in a suitable format for the process
- b) The scanning process will be performed in accordance with the MRC Scanning Procedure and be subject to adequate quality control procedures
- c) Scanned images will be captured into a EDRMS and managed accordingly
- d) Records are covered by an authorised and current records disposal schedule

5.1.2 Once a record has been scanned, the scanned record should become the record relied upon for business, with the original hard copy being either archived or destroyed. Simultaneous use of both hardcopy originals and digital copies is not good practice and is likely to lead to error.

Digitisation Policy

IR02-CP

Hard copies of documents are uncontrolled and may not be current – please refer to the electronic version.



5.2 Compliance

Fundamental to compliance is the use of the EDRMS where all MRC records should be registered, with a set of classification and metadata essential to the integrity, management and retrieval of the records. This will satisfy requirements in regards to:

- a) Capturing records
- b) Allocating a unique identifier
- c) Application of business classification system
- d) Security of the records
- e) Managing and recording access to the records
- f) Managing the records' sentencing and disposal process

5.3 Destruction of Hard / Paper Records

NOTE: Destruction of records must be approved by MRC's Executive Leadership Team. Destruction of records is performed by IT Manager and/or Records Officer.

5.3.1 To destroy paper records after digitisation, three key principles must be met:

- a) Records being digitised must be of temporary value, sentenced under a current and approved disposal schedule and not subject to a disposal freeze or have a pending legal action
- b) Records must not hold a value as a physical artefact, such as original work of arts or documents under seal
- c) You must keep the digitised record in a well-managed system with recordkeeping functionality for as long as required. Processes must be in place that will support the admissibility of digitised records in legal proceedings

5.3.2 Originals should be kept for a minimum of three months after the digitisation, before destruction, to allow for any errors to be detected and allow re-scanning. Once this period is over and quality assurance is met, the original hard copies can be destroyed without any formal notification to the NT Archives Services or to the Department of Corporate and Information Services.

6. Policy Details

Replaces Policy	N/A
Responsible Directorate/Department	Corporate Services – Information Management
Approval Date	30 October 2020
Minutes Reference	OCM Item # 15.1 – OC2020-111
Review Cycle	October 2024. Review every four (4) years or after changes to relevant legislation or Council policy

Digitisation Policy

IR02-CP

Hard copies of documents are uncontrolled and may not be current – please refer to the electronic version.



7. Legislation and References

Related Legislation	Information Act 2017 Records Disposal Schedule for Local Authorities in the Northern Territory 2018/13 – June 2018 Disposal Schedule for Temporary Records that have been Digitised 2009/13 – November 2009, Disposal Schedule 2018/03 – June 2018 Archive Advice 5: Scanning of records (Northern Territory Government) Archive Advice 7: Batching of Permanent Records (Northern Territory Government) – November 2014 Records Disposal Schedule Digital Source Records that have been Migrated 2013/6 – August 2013
Related Policies	IR05-CP Record Management
Related Procedures	IR02-P1 Scanning Procedure IR05-G2 Records Naming Conventions
Associated Documents	Records Management Framework

8. Version control

Version No	Approval Date	Policy No.	Minutes reference and Resolution number (previous version)
1	30 October 2020	IR02-CP	