

Digitisation & Disposal Policy

IR02-CP (Superseding IR02-CP Digitisation Policy v2)



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.

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
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

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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, i.e., common seal documents, contracts
Public Sector Organisation Record	An agency as defined in s.5 of the Information Act (redefine as in IR05-CP)
Temporary Records	Records of temporary value, which are in the custody of a public sector organisation i.e., employee information, meeting minutes
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:

- Records should be in a suitable format for the process
- The scanning process will be performed in accordance with the MRC Scanning Procedure and be subject to adequate quality control procedures
- Scanned images will be captured into a EDRMS and managed accordingly
- 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.

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:

- Capturing records
- Allocating a unique identifier
- Application of business classification system

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- 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

- 5.3.1 Destruction of records must be reviewed by the relevant Director and approved by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Destruction of records is performed by IT Staff.
- 5.3.2 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 authorised 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
- 5.3.3 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 Northern Territory Archives Services (NTAS) or to the Department of Corporate and Information Services.

5.4 Digital Disposal

The status of a record under an authorised records disposal schedule are assigned as either *permanent* or *temporary*. Permanent records must be transferred to NTAS for their preservation and eventual public access, temporary records are retained for the minimum period before they are destroyed. Retention periods for temporary records in an authorised disposal schedule are minimum periods only. MRC may keep records for a longer period if considered necessary for business requirements. All records prior to 1978 must not be disposed of without authorisation from the NTAS.

Refer to Records Disposal Schedule Digital Source Records that have been Migrated – Disposal Schedule No. 2013/6 – August 2013.

5.5 Disposal of EDRMS Records

Magiq document and folder disposal is currently performed by IT Staff after authorisation from MRC's CEO. Electronic document and records disposal allows MRC to dispose of records that are no longer needed. All documents tagged for disposal must sit under an authorised retention and disposal schedule and have a temporary value assigned to them. All disposed records must be entered into the IR01-R2 Records Destroyed Register.

All EDRMS records tagged for disposal will be emailed to the relevant Director for their input and assessment prior to record/s being presented to and approved by the CEO for disposal.

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6. Policy Details

Replaces Policy	IR02-CP Digitisation Policy v2
Responsible Directorate/Department	Corporate Services – Information Management
Approval Date	28 October 2022
Minutes Reference and Resolution No:	OCM Item # 15.9 – Resolution OCM2022-161
Review Cycle	October 2026 - Review every four (4) years or after changes to relevant legislation or Council policy.

7. Legislation and References

Related Legislation	<i>Information Act 2017</i>
	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
	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
	IR02-P2 Appraisal, Sentencing and Disposal of Records Procedure
	IR05-G2 Records Naming Conventions
Associated Documents	IR02-F1 Notification of Destruction of Records Form
	IR01-R2 Records Destroyed Register

8. Version control

Version No.	Approval Date	Policy No.	Minutes reference and Resolution number
1.	30 October 2020	IR02-CP	OCM Item # 15.1 – OCM2020-111
2.	24 June 2022	IR02-CP	OCM Item # 15.7 – OCM2022-093
3.	28 October 2022	IR02-CP	OCM Item # 15.9 – OCM2022-161