



Recordkeeping for Good Governance Toolkit

GUIDELINE 10: Starting an Appraisal Programme





The original version of this guideline was prepared by the Pacific Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (PARBICA) for use by countries around the Pacific. This means that the guideline may refer to things that you are not familiar with or do not use in your country. For example, not all governments have an auditor-general who reviews the financial and other records of government departments. You may find that you need to change some of the advice in this guideline to suit your own government's arrangements. To obtain an editable copy of this guideline, contact the national archives, public record office or other records authority in your country, or contact PARBICA at <http://www.parbica.org>.



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INTRODUCTION

The Pacific Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (PARBICA) has developed this guideline to Starting an Appraisal Programme as part of the Recordkeeping for Good Governance Toolkit. It was drafted in consultation with a working group which was made up of representatives from the following countries:

- Australia;
- Cook Islands;
- Fiji;
- Nauru;
- New Zealand;
- Palau;
- Papua New Guinea;
- Samoa; and
- Vanuatu

The PARBICA Recordkeeping for Good Governance Toolkit includes a model Disposal Schedule for Common Administrative Functions (Guideline 7) that identifies which common administrative records should be kept as archives and which can be destroyed after a period of time.

<http://www.parbica.org/Toolkit%20pages/ToolkitIntropage.htm>

Guideline 7 **cannot be used for the core business records of government agencies**. The core business of a government body is the work it is responsible for which no other part of the government does. For example, only the Ministry of Health manages hospitals, and only the Ministry of Education runs schools.

This guide is intended to assist archival institutions and government Ministries to appraise the closed records of core functions. This guide is called Starting an Appraisal Programme because once all old records of core functions have been appraised in a “one-off appraisal”, then those decisions can be used to determine the retention requirements of records of core functions as they are being created. A regular programme of appraisal and disposal of records of core functions will ensure that a backlog of old records do not build up within a government Ministry.

Each Ministry will need to produce an appraisal report and list that gives instructions on how to dispose of records about specific types of core business. This guide is designed to assist in deciding which closed core business records should be kept as archives and which may be destroyed.

WHAT IS APPRAISAL?

Appraisal for recordkeeping purposes is a process for deciding what records to create and capture, and how long records need to be kept, prior to being sent to the archives or destroyed. Appraisal decisions are based on reviewing the value of the records and of the functions and activities that resulted in the creation of records. Appraisal decisions also take into account the needs of the organisation that created them, any legal requirements for keeping the records, and the value they may have to the community as a whole.

There are different methods of appraisal. This guide discusses the kind of appraisal known as 'one-off' appraisal. 'One-off' appraisal is used for a specific set of records, that are closed and no longer used by an organisation and where a disposal schedule does not exist that applies to them.

Another kind of appraisal is the appraisal of the functions and activities that create the records. This kind of appraisal usually results in the development of a disposal schedule that can be applied to existing records and to records that will be created in the future. This is the type of appraisal that was carried out to develop Guideline 7: Disposal Schedule for Common Administrative Functions that is part of the PARBICA Recordkeeping for Good Governance Toolkit.

<http://www.parbica.org/Toolkit%20pages/ToolkitIntropage.htm>

Many recordkeeping programmes incorporate both methods of appraisal so as to manage the disposal of records over time in an effective way. However, this guide does not discuss the appraisal of functions and activities that lead to the development of a disposal schedules for core business records.

Appraisal decisions are made with the help of *disposal criteria*, which assist in deciding the value of the records. The disposal criteria used in this guide were developed by the PARBICA Recordkeeping for Good Governance Toolkit working group. See page 15 for the disposal criteria.

The appraisal decisions that are made are called *disposal actions*. Disposal of records does not necessarily mean destruction - it means what happens to a record at the end of its active life, which could be either destruction or retention as an archive (a record of permanent value). The usual disposal actions for records are *Archive* or *Destroy*.

WHAT ARE THE RESULTS OF A 'ONE-OFF' APPRAISAL?

An appraisal results in:

- An *appraisal list*, that lists each record or each type of records and the disposal action to be applied to the record (archive or destroy)
- An *appraisal report* that sets out the reasons for the appraisal, describes the records, and documents and provides justification for the disposal actions that have been recommended
- A *final approval* of the appraisal by the National Archivist that signifies that the disposal actions have been agreed.

The ultimate result of an appraisal is the transfer to National Archives or to archival storage of records of permanent value and the destruction of records of low or short-term value.

WHY DO APPRAISAL?

As part of a well managed recordkeeping programme, appraisal supports good governance and contributes to societal memory by allowing:

- the identification of the records that need to be created and managed in an organisation
- the identification of records that need to be retained as an archive
- efficient use of resources by not storing records for longer than necessary
- improved ability to retrieve records of continuing value to the organisation
- compliance with legal requirements for the retention and destruction of records (by the Archives Act and any other legislation)

Appraisal is also a systematic way of deciding value, and the decisions used to appraise one set of records can be used in the future to appraise similar records, or to develop a disposal schedule.

WHEN TO DO A 'ONE-OFF' APPRAISAL

A "one-off" appraisal should only be carried out on records that are *inactive*. This means that they are *no longer in current use*. Although they may be used for reference, no further information is being added to them.

'One-off' appraisal should be carried out if storage areas are full of inactive records. Once the storage areas have been cleared, it is useful then to develop a disposal schedule so that in the future there are regular transfers of archival records to the National Archives and regular destruction of records of low or short-term value.

STEPS TO CARRYING OUT A 'ONE-OFF' APPRAISAL

Records are always appraised at 'accumulation' level, not at document level. For most records, accumulation level will be the file; for others it might be a set of volumes, or a box of loose papers.

The steps to doing an appraisal are listed below. The rest of this guideline discusses each step in detail.

1. Determine roles and responsibilities
 - Who will perform the appraisal and write the report?
 - Who has internal authority to agree to the appraisal report and list once it is completed?
 - What is the legislated process for the National Archives or similar body to give final approval to an appraisal?
2. Research the organisation and its records
 - Develop an understanding of the organisation so that you know the context in which records were created and used, including researching the records created and maintained by the organisation
 - Review relevant legislation to identify any statutory retention periods
3. Survey the inactive records of the organisation so that you know what kinds of records are being stored, where they are and how many there are
4. Determine which records will be appraised
5. List the records that will be appraised if they are not already listed
6. Using the list, the background knowledge you have collected and the disposal criteria provided in this guide, assess the value of the records
7. Mark up the list with the recommended disposal action and the disposal criteria used to make the decision
8. Consult with the creators and users of the records about your appraisal decisions and make any necessary amendments
9. Write a report describing the reason for the appraisal, describing the records and providing justification for the disposal actions recommended
10. Gaining approval for the appraisal report and lists
11. Implementing the disposal actions approved in the appraisal report.

1. DECIDING ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

WHO PERFORMS THE APPRAISAL?

Agreement should be reached between the National Archives and the Ministry as to who will do the appraisal. Appraisal could be done by either a designated staff member from the National Archives, the person responsible for managing the records in the Ministry, a person from another Ministry who has experience in doing appraisals, or any combination of these people. This should be agreed upon by all parties prior to the appraisal starting.

WHO AGREES TO THE APPRIASAL REPORT AND LIST

The completed appraisal recommendations (in the report and list) must be agreed to at an appropriate, senior level before final approval by the National Archivist. This agreement means that the appraisal recommendations have been appropriately authorised for use in the organisation. A decision on who will agree to the appraisal recommendations is a key issue and should be the first issue you decide on before you undertaking an appraisal.

It is suggested that the most senior manager in the Ministry approves the appraisal.

FINAL APPROVAL OF THE APPRAISAL

If your country, state or territory has a National Archives, or similar, and archives legislation, then there will be provision for the National Archivist to give final approval to appraisal recommendations.

This approval is in addition to that given by the Ministry, so the National Archives should be contacted before starting any appraisal to find out there process and requirements.

2. RESEARCHING THE ORGANISATION AND ITS FUNCTIONS

In order to evaluate the records created by the organisation, it is important to have an understanding of what the organisation does (its functions). You also need to know about the history of the organisation and how it fits into your country's history.

This helps provide the *context* for the records, which is part of what is considered when deciding the value of records.

Sources for research about the organisation include:

- Annual reports and other publications that talk about what the organisation does
- Any legislation that is relevant to the organisation
- Histories of your country or of the organisation
- The older records of the organisation
 - Note: These may already be at the National Archives and could provide good precedent.
- Reports by parliamentary committees, the auditor-general, the ombudsman or other review bodies;
- Reviews and reports by bodies outside government, such as the World Bank;
- Talking to the people who create and use the records.
 - It is always useful to consult with the people who use the records or have been in the organisation for a long time.

3. SURVEYING THE RECORDS

The better listed and controlled the records are, the easier it will be to undertake an appraisal. The Recordkeeping for Good Governance Toolkit has a guide to developing and implementing record plans for core business functions that will make appraising these records easier in the future.

<http://www.parbica.org/Toolkit%20pages/ToolkitIntropage.htm>

Carrying out a survey of records before you begin the appraisal process helps you to understand what records are held by the organisation, and where they are held, and therefore which records require appraisal and which do not.

A survey is not an inventory or a list of each record that exists, but rather a high-level overview of 'what' is 'where'. When you survey you are simply trying to identify 'groups' of information. If you already have good lists of all the records, then the survey will simply be a matter of reviewing the lists, so you can identify which records are inactive and could be appraised.

Otherwise undertaking a survey will involve physically examining information located in the many and varied storage areas that are common to most organisations. It can include official and unofficial records systems in storage areas and in offices.

The result of the survey should be that you know:

- How many rooms, cupboards, shelves and boxes hold records
- What records are held in which storage area
- Broadly how many records there are in each group, and
- Which records have to be listed in more detail.

The survey will also help you identify the records that do not have to be appraised, because they are common administrative records that are covered by the Disposal Schedule for Common Administrative Functions.

<http://www.parbica.org/Toolkit%20pages/ToolkitIntropage.htm>

You should use a standard form for the survey so that the information you collect about each group of records is in a standard format. There are examples of filled out survey forms on pages 10 - 11. Appendix 1 has a blank survey form and instructions, but it can be modified to suit your requirements. For each 'group' of information you must fill out a survey form. This will involve some detailed examination of the group, recording date ranges and details of quantity. It can often be messy and quite physical work.

Deciding what makes up an information group/series can depend just as much on the physical proximity and appearance of the records as on the possible intellectual similarity. For example: all of the inactive files from series 2 of the formal file classification system, or the one box holding papers from a staff member who has left the organisation.

It is usually impossible to determine in advance what the most logical groupings of information are going to be until you are out there examining. Be wary of trying to make the groups too big or else the results of your survey will be difficult to use.

Once you have filled out the survey form, you need to talk to the users of the records to find out about the use of the records. The users might also be able to answer some of the questions on the survey form.

EXAMPLE OF FILLED OUT SURVEY FORMS

NAME OF ORGANISATION: <i>Department of Customs and Immigration</i>	
FORM CREATED BY: <i>Mrs Mere Wale, Records Management Officer</i>	ON (DATE): 29/3/09
1. NAME OF STORAGE AREA: <i>Import licensing office cupboard</i>	
2. LOCATION WITHIN STORAGE AREA: <i>Top shelf</i>	
3. INFORMATION GROUP TITLE/ DESCRIPTION: <i>Loose papers about import licensing controls (from former head of section's office)</i>	
4. CONTAINER TYPE	5. FORMAT OF RECORDS
<input type="checkbox"/> Box - file <input type="checkbox"/> Box - archive <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Box - non-standard (<i>describe below and measure</i>) <input type="checkbox"/> Card index drawer <input type="checkbox"/> Other (<i>describe below</i>) <i>Photocopy paper box</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Diary <input type="checkbox"/> Envelope - legal <input type="checkbox"/> Envelope - f/cap <input type="checkbox"/> File <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Loose papers <input type="checkbox"/> Manila folder <input type="checkbox"/> Ringbinder <input type="checkbox"/> Other (<i>describe</i>) <input type="checkbox"/> Microfiche/film <input type="checkbox"/> Photograph <input type="checkbox"/> Map/Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Spiral bound <input type="checkbox"/> Split pin file <input type="checkbox"/> Suspension folder <input type="checkbox"/> Volume
6. DIMENSIONS NON-STANDARD BOX H <u>20.5 cm</u> W <u>20.1 cm</u> D <u>30.1 cm</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Multiple	
7a. CONTAINER QUANTITY 2	7b. ITEM QUANTITY:
8. DATE RANGE	FROM: 1975 TO: 1989
9a. LISTED/INDEXED? <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N	9b. IF YES, WHERE LISTED/INDEXED
10a. SUMMARISED ELSEWHERE? <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N	10b. IF YES, WHERE SUMMARISED
11a. DUPLICATED ELSEWHERE? <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <i>? possibly</i>	11b. IF YES, WHERE DUPLICATED <i>Possibly these are copies of papers on 29/6 files</i>
12a. PRIMARY USERS <i>Import licensing section</i>	12b. OTHER USERS <i>None</i>
13. PRIMARY CONTACT NAME: <i>Head of Import Licensing Section (Mr Joseph Jones)</i>	
14. HOW OFTEN USED BY PRIMARY USERS? <input type="checkbox"/> Daily <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly <input type="checkbox"/> Quarterly <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Six-monthly <input type="checkbox"/> Annually <input type="checkbox"/> Never (as far as we know)	
COMMENTS (OTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE INFORMATION GROUP) <i>Need to check 29/6 files to see if these papers are duplicates.</i> <i>Continue over page if required</i>	

NAME OF ORGANISATION: <i>Department of Customs and Immigration</i>	
FORM CREATED BY: <i>Mrs Mere Wale, Records Management Officer</i>	ON (DATE): <i>29/3/09</i>
1. NAME OF STORAGE AREA: <i>Inactive storage room 1</i>	
2. LOCATION WITHIN STORAGE AREA: <i>Bay 1, shelf 3</i>	
3. INFORMATION GROUP TITLE/ DESCRIPTION: <i>13/ series files</i>	
4. CONTAINER TYPE	5. FORMAT OF RECORDS
<input type="checkbox"/> Box - file <input type="checkbox"/> Box - archive <input type="checkbox"/> Box - non-standard (<i>describe below and measure</i>) <input type="checkbox"/> Card index drawer <input type="checkbox"/> Other (<i>describe below</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/> Diary <input type="checkbox"/> Envelope - legal <input type="checkbox"/> Envelope - f/cap <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> File <input type="checkbox"/> Loose papers <input type="checkbox"/> Manila folder <input type="checkbox"/> Ringbinder <input type="checkbox"/> Other (<i>describe</i>)
<input type="checkbox"/> Microfiche/film <input type="checkbox"/> Photograph <input type="checkbox"/> Map/Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Spiral bound <input type="checkbox"/> Split pin file <input type="checkbox"/> Suspension folder <input type="checkbox"/> Volume	
6. DIMENSIONS NON-STANDARD BOX H _____ W _____ D _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Multiple	
7a. CONTAINER QUANTITY <i>N/A</i>	7b. ITEM QUANTITY: <i>5</i>
8. DATE RANGE	FROM: <i>1993</i> TO: <i>1999</i>
9a. LISTED/INDEXED? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	9b. IF YES, WHERE LISTED/INDEXED <i>Main file index</i>
10a. SUMMARISED ELSEWHERE? <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N	10b. IF YES, WHERE SUMMARISED
11a. DUPLICATED ELSEWHERE? <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N	11b. IF YES, WHERE DUPLICATED
12a. PRIMARY USERS <i>Customs border controls team</i>	12b. OTHER USERS <i>Customs policy group</i>
13. PRIMARY CONTACT NAME: <i>Manager, Customs Border Control Group, Mrs Ani Lang</i>	
14. HOW OFTEN USED BY PRIMARY USERS? <input type="checkbox"/> Daily <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly <input type="checkbox"/> Quarterly <input type="checkbox"/> Six-monthly <input type="checkbox"/> Annually <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Never (as far as we know)	
COMMENTS (OTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE INFORMATION GROUP) <i>Procedures have been superseded so records are no longer consulted</i> <i>Continue over page if required</i>	

4. DECIDING WHICH RECORDS TO APPRAISE

You should only appraise *inactive* records, so if your survey has included active (or current) records you should exclude them from the appraisal.

If there are a lot of inactive records you might decide to appraise only some of them now and to leave the others until later. This will depend upon how much time and how many resources you have available for the listing and appraisal.

Alternatively you might decide that all of the inactive records should be appraised in one big project. Again this will depend upon how much time and how many resources you have available for the listing and appraisal.

5. LISTING THE RECORDS

If you already have good lists of the records you do not have to list them again.

The information you gathered during the survey will help you to know if the records should be listed in any more detail. That is why the example survey form asks if the records are listed or indexed anywhere. However, a records index that identifies which files have been created might not be sufficient for an appraisal list, depending on the information that is contained in the index.

The minimum requirements for an appraisal list are:

- File reference or number, or other numbering system (for example box number if the records are loose papers in boxes)
- Title or name of the record or group of records
- Part/volume number of a file part/volume
- Date opened (date of the first paper in the record)
- Date closed (date of the last paper in the record)
- Location of the record

If the files are stored in boxes, then it is useful to also have the box number included on the list. If none of the records are in boxes and are just on shelves, and there is a large quantity, then you may find it useful to number the shelves so as to ensure that the records can be located easily.

Appendix 2 has a listing template and some standard listing instructions that you can use as a guide to develop your own list format and listing instructions.

You will appraise the records at the level of detail to which you have listed them. This is why you do not list document by document, and also why you must be sure you know what level the records should be listed to before you start the listing work.

Different records require listing at different levels of detail. For example:

- Files must be listed file by file ('item level' listing)
- Register volumes or other bound volumes must be listed volume by volume
- Batches of application forms could be listed by batch or even by box, provided that all the boxes held the same kind of application forms and that a first date and a last date can be applied.
- Loose papers should be listed according to how they are stored (by box or pile), and titled according to the activity that they provide evidence of. For example, 'papers about import licensing controls' or 'loose papers from Secretary's office'.

EXAMPLE RECORDS APPRAISAL LIST

Box no.	Reference no.	Part/ Vol. no.	Title	Date opened	Date closed	Location	Disposal action	Disposal criteria reference
25	29/7/1	1	Import licensing management - policy	Mar 1978	Nov 1978	Inactive records store room 1		
25	29/7/1	2	Import licensing management - policy	Nov 1978	Jun 1979	Inactive records store room 1		
25	29/7/1	3	Import licensing management - policy	Jun 1979	Feb 1980	Inactive records store room 1		
25	29/7/1	4	Import licensing management - policy	Feb 1980	Apr 1981	Inactive records store room 1		
25	13/1/3	1	Border controls - Customs border procedures - development	Feb 1993	Jul 1993	Inactive records store room 1		
25	13/1/3	2	Border controls - Customs border procedures - development	Jul 1993	Nov 1993	Inactive records store room 1		
25	13/1/3	3	Border controls - Customs border procedures - development	Nov 1993	Jan 1994	Inactive records store room 1		
25	13/1/9	1	Border controls - Customs border procedures - 1995 review interviews and investigation	May 1999	Sep 1999	Inactive records store room 1		
25	13/1/10	1	Border controls - Customs border procedures - 1995 review report	Aug 1999	Nov 1999	Inactive records store room 1		
1a	2756 - 3197		Import licensing applications	Jan 1987	Jan 1988	Import licensing office cupboard		
1b	3198 - 4559		Import licensing applications	Jan 1988	Mar 1989	Import licensing office cupboard		
	4/1		Import licensing register	Jan 1987	Sep 1988	Import licensing office cupboard		
	4/2		Import licensing register	Sep 1988	Aug 1989	Import licensing office cupboard		
HOS/1			Loose papers from former head of section's office about import licensing controls	Sep 1975	Jan 1989	Import licensing office cupboard		

6. ASSESSING THE VALUE OF THE RECORDS USING THE DISPOSAL CRITERIA

The PARBICA Recordkeeping for Good Governance Toolkit working group has developed the disposal criteria on the next page. These criteria should be used to assess the value of the records that are being appraised.

There are criteria for records that will be permanently retained as archives and criteria for the destruction of records of short-term value.

FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE CRITERIA

GRANDPARENT DATE

A 'grandparent' date is a date before which most, if not all, records should be kept, because records before this date are scarce. For example, if the department had a fire in 1985 which destroyed most of its records, you might consider keeping all records of core functions that pre-date 1985, because they are the only remaining evidence of how the department performed its core functions.

SUMMARY RECORDS

Records that are summarised elsewhere are often recommended for destruction because the non-summarised records are high in quantity and low in evidential or informational value. The summary records may contain all the information that is necessary to be retained permanently. For example, a register of applications may be recommended for retention while the applications themselves are not, because the applications comprise many boxes, and the information that is most of value in them is summarised in the register.

INDEXES AND REGISTERS

Indexes and registers to records that are being retained as archives should be kept to provide continuing access to the records once they become archives. Even if the records themselves no longer exist, or belong to a set of records recommended for destruction, the indexes and registers should still be retained. They provide a summary list of the types of records that have been created and used. All formats of indexes and registers should be retained – index and register volumes, cards, or files.

CRITERIA FOR THE PERMANENT RETENTION OF RECORDS AS ARCHIVES (ARCHIVE)

Disposal Criteria Reference	Description
A1	Records that provide evidence of key events that are of significant national interest (supporting national identity) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• history of country• history of community• records relating to historical national security issues
A2	Records that provide evidence of key events that are significant to a particular government department <ul style="list-style-type: none">• history of department• administrative history of department (e.g. recordkeeping systems)
A3	Records that provide evidence of major decisions of government departments
A4	Records that are of cultural/historical significance to the country and/or department
A5	Records that provide evidence of precedent setting cases
A6	Records that are required for long term accountability or legal reasons
A7	Records that provide evidence of, and assist in understanding, the country's relationship with the environment and its natural resources
A8	Records of the proceedings of a government Inquiry
A9	Evidence of high level inter-governmental relations
A10	Records that are indexes and registers to other records
A11	Any records that relate to the governing of other countries in the Pacific
A12	All records created before Grandparent date (date before which few records have survived)
A13	All records created before independence/self-government was gained

CRITERIA FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF RECORDS (DESTROY)

D1	Duplicates <ul style="list-style-type: none">• within a government department or across government departments
D2	Records that do not have historic significance because they are summarised in a better record elsewhere <ul style="list-style-type: none">• within a government department or across government departments
D3	Records that are no longer of evidential value because the accountability or legal requirement for retention has been met
D4	Drafts that do not contain significant changes to the content of the record
D5	Records that are no longer required for current business and that do not fit any of the ARCHIVE criteria
D6	Records received for information only (such as newsletters, circulars from other organisations, copies of journal articles, downloads from web-sites).

APPLYING THE CRITERIA TO THE RECORDS

The research you have done on the context of the records (the history of the country and the organisation, the legislation about functions and activities of the organisation) will help you to apply these criteria to the record lists.

You must review the record lists with the criteria in mind. You are using the criteria to decide the value of each record. Sometimes more than one criterion will apply to a record. For example a record about the establishment of a government department will provide evidence of a key event in the department's history (criterion A2) and it might also provide evidence of key decisions of the department (criterion A3).

In order to apply the criteria well, the records must have been listed so that the title tells you something about the contents of the records. Even then, you will sometimes have to look at the record itself so as to understand what its contents are. You should not have to look at every record, especially if there are files with many parts/volumes. Looking at one instance of a record should help you to decide on the value of all instances. For example, one import licensing application is much like another, so you do not have to look at all of them to decide the disposal action.

If you have decided that there are some records that you must look at, it is useful to note down what you think about the contents of the record. A form created for this purpose is sometimes called a 'file content analysis sheet', although it can be used for non-file records as well. There is a template for a file content analysis sheet in Appendix 3. There is an example of a filled out file content analysis sheet on page 17.

RECORDS TO WHICH MORE THAN ONE DISPOSAL ACTION APPLIES

It sometimes happens that records may contain a mixture of some information that is of low or short-term value and other information that is of long-term value. An example of this is records of working groups or advisory committees which contain both the documents of long-term value (minutes, agendas, etc) and the low-value administrative information (e.g. arranging venues and catering).

In this case, the 'highest' disposal action applies – that is, the disposal action should be 'archive'.

You **should not** 'cull' or 'weed' records to remove the low value information. This is very time-consuming work and it also affects the integrity of the record. It is better to retain the whole record even though some of the information it is of lower value.

In other words, a disposal action of **Archive** always supersedes one of Destroy.

Example filled out record content analysis sheet

FILE/RECORD CONTENT ANALYSIS SHEET			
NAME OF ORGANISATION: <i>Department of Customs and Immigration</i>			
FILE/RECORD NUMBER:		PART/VOLUME NO:	
FILE/RECORD NAME: <i>Loose papers from former head of section's office about import licensing controls</i>			
LOCATION: <i>Import licensing office cupboard, top shelf</i>			
DATE	FROM: <i>1975</i>	TO: <i>1989</i>	BOX/SHELF NO.: <i>Box HOS/1</i>
<p>CONTENTS</p> <p><i>Correspondence from various importers about import licensing issues and replies</i></p> <p><i>Complaints from various importers about import licensing restrictions and replies</i></p> <p><i>Incomplete drafts of Import Licensing Section's contribution to the Department's annual reports 1977, 1981</i></p> <p><i>Draft of report on visit to New Zealand Customs Department (has file reference 29/6/3 - possibly a copy of papers on this file?)</i></p> <p><i>New Zealand Customs Department information brochures</i></p> <p><i>Blank import licensing application forms</i></p> <p><i>Copy of part of Import Licensing Section's procedures manual</i></p> <p><i>Internal memos re import licensing procedures</i></p>			
FORM CREATED BY: <i>Mrs Mere Wale, Records Management Officer</i>			DATE: <i>29/03/09</i>

7. MARKING UP THE LIST WITH APPRAISAL DECISIONS

When you have made the decisions about disposal actions (archive or destroy) you should 'mark up' the list with the disposal action and note the disposal criteria you used to make the decision. This means that you need to add two columns to the existing list. The listing template in Appendix 2 includes these two columns.

Example marked up appraisal list

Box no.	Reference no.	Part/vol. no	Title	Date opened	Date closed	Location	Disposal action	Disposal criteria reference
25	29/7/1	1	Import licensing management - policy	Mar 1978	Nov 1978	Inactive records store room 1	A	A3
25	29/7/1	2	Import licensing management - policy	Nov 1978	Jun 1979	Inactive records store room 1	A	A3
25	29/7/1	3	Import licensing management - policy	Jun 1979	Feb 1980	Inactive records store room 1	A	A3
25	13/1/3	1	Border controls - Customs border procedures - development	Feb 1993	Jul 1993	Inactive records store room 1	D	D2
25	13/1/3	2	Border controls - Customs border procedures - development	Jul 1993	Nov 1993	Inactive records store room 1	D	D2
25	13/1/9	1	Border controls - Customs border procedures - 1995 review interviews and investigation	May 1999	Sep 1999	Inactive records store room 1	D	D2
25	13/1/10	1	Border controls - Customs border procedures - 1995 review report	Aug 1999	Nov 1999	Inactive records store room 1	A	A2
1a	2756 - 3197		Import licensing applications	Jan 1987	Jan 1988	Import licensing office cupboard	D	D2
1b	3198 - 4559		Import licensing applications	Jan 1988	Mar 1989	Import licensing office cupboard	D	D2
	4/1		Import licensing register	Jan 1987	Sep 1988	Import licensing office cupboard	A	A6
HOS/1			Loose papers from former head of section's office about import licensing controls	Sep 1975	Jan 1989	Import licensing office cupboard	D	D1
HOS/2			Loose papers from former head of section's office about import licensing controls	Mar 1977	Jan 1989	Import licensing office cupboard	D	D1

8. CONSULTING WITH THE CREATORS AND USERS

Once you have assessed the value of the records against the criteria, you need to test your recommendations by consulting with the users of the records. You will have already talked to them when you were doing the background research; now you are presenting them with the appraisal results. You are asking them if they have any concerns about the decisions you have made to either archive or destroy particular records and, if so, why they think the disposal action should be different.

During this consultation you may have to weigh up what people are telling you about the 'appropriate' disposal action with what you know about the records, their context and the criteria you have used originally to decide the disposal action. Sometimes people who work with particular records can become convinced that their records have more long-term value than they really do. You have to consider the records both within the context of the organisation as a whole and across the whole of government, not just the activities of one work area.

If you decide on any changes as the result of the consultation, you must revise the marked up lists.

9. WRITING THE APPRAISAL REPORT

An appraisal list should always be accompanied by a written appraisal report. The report provides the context and explanation for the appraisal recommendations you have made. The report should:

- describe the reason for the appraisal
- describe the records, including the date range, physical format, quantity, and information about why the records were created and how they were used
- discuss any precedent for appraisal recommendations (previous appraisal decisions about the same kind of records)
- discuss the evaluation of the records and provide justification for the disposal actions you have recommended, making reference to the disposal criteria
- mention who has been consulted about the appraisal recommendations.

Appendix 4 has an appraisal template, and there is an example appraisal report on pages 20 and 21.

Example Appraisal Report

Name of organisation:	Department of Customs and Immigration
Scope of appraisal:	Records from Customs Group, including files from main filing system, application forms, and loose papers
File reference:	04/02/01
Appraisal carried out by:	Records Management Officer, Mrs Mere Wale
Date of appraisal:	30 March 2009

Appraisal circumstances:

The Customs group of the Department of Customs and Immigration is moving buildings. As part of the preparation for the move, a survey was carried out to identify all inactive records in two records storage rooms and in staff offices. Following the survey a meeting was held with the National Archives, and it was agreed that the Records Management Officer would undertake an appraisal with the assistance of the National Archives.

Description of records:

1. Files

Files from the Department's main filing system for the customs and import licensing functions. Files are from the 29/- and the 13/- series.

Records are files in standard file covers.

Date range: 1978 – 1999

Quantity – 4 boxes in the office and about 200 files from the attic.

Records concern: import licensing policy and procedures; customs border controls policy and procedures, review of border control procedures, review of border control operations, development of forms for import licensing

2. Import licensing application forms and registers.

Forms are single sheet documents, organised by form number. Registers are bound volumes

Date range: 1987 – 1989

Quantity – 2 boxes of application forms and 2 bound volumes

Under section 61 (a) of the Customs Act 1970, anyone wishing to import certain products into the country must fill out an application form applying for an import licence. The application must be registered (section 61(b)) and the register must include whether a licence was issued, the date the licence was issued, and the reasons why a licence was refused.

3. Loose papers from the office of the former Head of Import Licensing Section

The former Head of Section left the Department in 1990.

Quantity: loose papers in 2 photocopy paper boxes (0.45 linear metres)

Date range: 1975- 1989

Records include:

- Correspondence from various importers about import licensing issues and replies

- Complaints from various importers about import licensing restrictions and replies
- Incomplete drafts of Import Licensing Section's contribution to the Department's annual reports 1977, 1981
- Draft of report on visit to New Zealand Customs Department
- New Zealand Customs Department information brochures
- Blank import licensing application forms
- Copy of part of Import Licensing Section's procedures manual
- Internal memos re import licensing procedures

Precedent:

There has been no previous appraisal of records from the Department of Customs and Immigration, but there are some records already held at the National Archives, for example, import licensing registers.

Recommendations

1. Files

It is recommended that the 29/7 import licensing policy files be retained as archives, as they provide evidence of the decisions of the Customs and Immigration Department concerning import licensing (criterion A3).

It is recommended that the 13/1/10 files on reviews of Customs border procedures and operations are retained as archives, because they provide information and evidence about the operations of the Customs group that contributes to the history of the Department (criterion A2)

It is recommended that the 13/1/3 files about the development of Customs border procedures are destroyed, because the procedures have been superseded, these files contain working papers, and the National Archives already has a set of Customs border procedures manuals (criterion D2).

It is recommended that the 13/1/9 file on information gathering for the review of border procedures is destroyed, because the information is summarised in the 13/1/10 file (criterion D2).

2. Import licensing application forms and registers.

It is recommended that the import licensing registers are retained as archives, following the precedent mentioned above. These registers are similar in format and content to the registers previously transferred to the National Archives.

It is recommended that the import licensing application forms are destroyed, as their contents are summarised in the registers (criterion D2).

3. Loose papers from the office of the former Head of Import Licensing Section

It is recommended that these loose papers are destroyed. Several of the items are copies of documents on 29/ files, are drafts of information published elsewhere (for instance, the Department's annual reports) or are published material from other agencies (criteria D1, D2, D6).

See the accompanying list of 7 pages for item by item disposal recommendations.

10 GAINING APPROVAL FOR THE APPRAISAL REPORT AND LISTS

The completed appraisal recommendations (in the report and list) must be agreed to at an appropriate senior level before final approval by the National Archivist.

The appraisal report should include an approval form (see Appendix 4) so that there is a formal sign-off of the appraisal report and marked up list.

Once you have internal agreement for the appraisal recommendations, you should submit the appraisal report, lists and approval form to the National Archives, using their standard procedures.

11. IMPLEMENTING THE DISPOSAL ACTIONS APPROVED IN THE APPRAISAL REPORT

Once the National Archives approves the appraisal, you can implement the disposal actions.

PREPARING RECORDS FOR DISPOSAL

The appraisal list should be separated into a Destruction list and an Archive list. The records can then be separated into records for destruction and records for transfer to Archives.

TRANSFERRING TO ARCHIVES

Some countries will have rules about how long organisations must keep records before they can be transferred to archives institutions. This should be agreed with the National Archives.

The National Archives or similar body will have specific instructions about the listing, boxing and transfer of the records to their custody, which you should follow.

You should keep a list of the records you have transferred and you should also keep any paperwork associated with the transfer, such as a transfer or deposit agreement.

DESTRUCTION

It is important to keep lists of destroyed records and any destruction certificate that might be provided by the agency that destroyed the records on your behalf. You should add the destruction date to the destruction lists. These lists are evidence that the records were destroyed at a certain date and time, and provide certainty that they were really destroyed and are not lost somewhere.

The most typical forms of destruction of physical records are burning or shredding. **It is not appropriate to destroy records by including them in office rubbish removal or simply placing them in paper recycling bins.** Secure destruction processes should always ensure that there is no unauthorised access to the records at any point before the actual destruction.


APPENDIX 1: SURVEY FORM TEMPLATE AND INSTRUCTIONS

NAME OF ORGANISATION:	
FORM CREATED BY:	ON (DATE):
1. NAME OF STORAGE AREA	
2. LOCATION WITHIN STORAGE AREA	
3. INFORMATION GROUP TITLE/ DESCRIPTION	
4. CONTAINER TYPE	5. FORMAT OF RECORDS
<input type="checkbox"/> Box – file <input type="checkbox"/> Box - archive <input type="checkbox"/> Box – non-standard (<i>measure</i>) <input type="checkbox"/> Card index drawer <input type="checkbox"/> Other (<i>describe below</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/> Diary <input type="checkbox"/> Envelope - legal <input type="checkbox"/> Envelope – f/cap <input type="checkbox"/> File <input type="checkbox"/> Loose papers <input type="checkbox"/> Manila folder <input type="checkbox"/> Ringbinder <input type="checkbox"/> Other (<i>describe</i>)
<input type="checkbox"/> Microfiche/film <input type="checkbox"/> Photograph <input type="checkbox"/> Map/Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Spiral bound <input type="checkbox"/> Split pin file <input type="checkbox"/> Suspension folder <input type="checkbox"/> Volume	
6. DIMENSIONS NON-STANDARD BOX H_____W_____D_____ <input type="checkbox"/> Multiple	
7a. CONTAINER QUANTITY:	7b. ITEM QUANTITY:
8. DATE RANGE	FROM: _____ TO: _____
9a. LISTED/INDEXED? <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	9b. IF YES, WHERE LISTED/INDEXED
10a. SUMMARISED ELSEWHERE? <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	10b. IF YES, WHERE SUMMARISED
11a. DUPLICATED ELSEWHERE? <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	11b. IF YES, WHERE DUPLICATED
12a. PRIMARY USERS	12b. OTHER USERS
13. PRIMARY CONTACT NAME:	
14. HOW OFTEN USED BY PRIMARY USERS? <input type="checkbox"/> Daily <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly <input type="checkbox"/> Quarterly <input type="checkbox"/> Six-monthly <input type="checkbox"/> Annually <input type="checkbox"/> Never (<i>as far as we know</i>)	
COMMENTS (OTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE INFORMATION GROUP)	
<i>Continue over page if required</i>	

SURVEY FORM INSTRUCTIONS

Complete a form for each group of similar records that you identify.

- Name of organisation:** Fill in the name of the organisation
- Form created by:** Enter name and position of the surveyor (e.g. Mrs Mere Wale, Records Management Officer)
- On (date):** Fill out the date the survey was carried out
- Name of storage area:** Name of storage area that is being surveyed (e.g. 'inactive storage room 1', 'Corporate Service Manager's office)
- Location within storage area:** If the storage area is large then identify the different parts of the room. If there is shelving, then number the bays and shelves so that it is clear exactly where the group of records is stored
- Container type:** Tick the box that best describes the container the records are in. If the records are in a non-standard box, then describe the box (e.g. photocopy paper box) and provide measurements in section 6.
If the records are not in a container, leave blank.
(Note: the survey form can be adapted to suit the container types used in the organisation)
- Format of records:** Tick the box that best describes the format of the records.
(Note: the survey form can be adapted to suit the format types used in the organisation)
- Dimensions:** Enter HxWxD measurements for non-standard boxes and volumes. If there are multiple sized volumes or boxes, tick multiple.
- Container quantity:** Count the number of containers and enter here. If there are no containers, leave blank.
- Number:**
- Quantity of items:** If items are not in containers, count the number of items (e.g. volumes or files). If there are many shelves of them, then you can simply enter the linear metres measurement in the next field.
- Number:**
- Quantity of items:** If items are not in containers, measure how many linear metres the items occupy.
- Linear metres:**
- Listed/indexed:** Tick Y or N. You may not be able to ascertain this at the time of the physical survey. Add it in when/if you find it out.
- Where listed or indexed:** Describe where the group of records is listed or indexed (e.g. 'main file index', 'basement storage list held by records officer')
- Duplicated elsewhere:** Tick Y or N. You may not be able to ascertain this at the time of the physical survey. Add it in when/if you find it out.
- Date range:** Enter the year only. Remember that this is the date



range of the whole series so that you are only looking for the first date of the earliest item and the last date of the latest item. If it is not possible to identify the earliest or last date, then enter approximate date range.

- Primary users:** Who are the creators/main users of these records? Use group/section or position names rather than people's names
- Other users:** Any other groups or positions that also use the records. The primary users may be able to tell you who else uses the records
- Primary contact name:** This is to assist in identifying the right people to talk to about the records. Enter position and person's name.
- How often used by primary users:** This information will help to understand the organisation's business need for the records. It is one of the questions you need to ask the users either at the time of the survey or when consulting user after the records have been further listed.
- Comments:** Other information about the records that you think is important to note, either from your own or others' knowledge

APPENDIX 2: LISTING TEMPLATE AND INSTRUCTIONS

Box no.	Reference no.	Part/vol no.	Title	Date opened	Date closed	Disposal action	Disposal criteria reference	Location

LISTING INSTRUCTIONS

The listing template can be created in a word processing document or in a spreadsheet.

General instructions

- You should not have to list records document by document.
- You should list files individually (file by file).
- You should list volumes, manila or plastic folders and ringbinders individually.
- If you have a shelf that is filled with one type of form, then you can list it in one entry, so long as you identify the type of form and the date range, and any reference numbers, if there are any. For example, 'Invoice batches 111971 – 201011, September 1995 – January 1997'.
- Only use abbreviations that are on the file titles – do not abbreviate titles yourself, because no-one else may know what the abbreviation means.
- You can decide whether to list dates as day/month/year or simply as month/year.

Filling out the listing template

- Box no:** The boxes holding records may be numbered. If so, enter the number of the box here.
If there are boxes holding records belonging to the same series or group of information that are not numbered, it is useful to number the boxes so it is easier to identify which record is in which box.
Be aware that there if the storage are has been used by different groups there may be boxes with the same numbers holding different types of records. In this case it may be useful to also make a brief note of the contents on the outside of the box.
- Reference number:** Records that belong to a filing system will normally have file reference or file numbers, such as 29/7/1, 29/7/2 written on the file cover and/or the file tag.
Enter the file number of the file here.
Documents such as application forms may have a running number for each form. If the forms are grouped together in a batch, then find the first and last numbers of the batch and enter it here.
If there is no reference number, leave this field blank.
Be careful that you are not listing dates instead of numbers.
- Part/volume number:** Records that belong to a filing system may be given part or volume numbers, as each part becomes full and another is opened. The part number is often written on the file cover and/or the file tag.
Enter the number here.
If there is no part number, leave this field blank.

Title:	<p>If the records are part of a filing system, they will have a file title that includes the main heading and the sub-headings, for example, <i>'Border controls- Customs border procedures – development'</i>. It is important that the whole file title is entered into the title field in the list.</p> <p>If the records are not part of a filing system, but are all the same type of document, such as import licensing application forms, then you should enter a title that describes the type of document. For example, <i>'import licensing application forms'</i>, <i>'fishing permit application forms'</i>.</p> <p>Anything that is known as a register should have this term in its title. When titling loose papers it is always useful to identify that they are loose papers and to try to give some indication of the activity, transaction or subject they discuss. For example <i>'loose papers about import licensing controls'</i>. It is even better if you can identify their origin in the title as well; for example <i>'loose papers from the former head of section's office about import controls'</i>, or <i>'documents from the Chief Secretary's safe about historical personal grievance cases'</i>.</p> <p>See also page 12 of this guide for more discussion about how to title loose papers.</p>
Date opened:	<p>The earliest date on the papers in a file, folder, ring binder, or volume. Normally this will be the paper on the bottom or at the back of the file or folder when you open it, but it may not be. Check through the papers to see if they are in chronological order. DO NOT REORDER THEM. Find the earliest date and enter that into this field. Do not use the date opened, date closed entries on a file cover as an entirely accurate reflection of the dates inside.</p> <p>Index books, some registers, and card indexes often do not have dates. If this is the case, then you can enter n.d. (no date)</p>
Date closed:	<p>The latest date on the papers in a file, folder, ring binder, or volume. Normally this will be the paper on the top or at the front of the file or folder when you open it, but it may not be. Check through the papers to see if they are in chronological order. DO NOT REORDER THEM. Find the earliest date and enter that into this field. Do not use the date opened, date closed entries on a file cover as an entirely accurate reflection of the dates inside.</p> <p>Index books, some registers, and card indexes often do not have dates. If this is the case, then you can enter n.d. (no date)</p>
Location:	<p>The physical location of the records. Be as specific as you need to be in order to find the records again.</p>
Disposal action:	<p>Leave this field until the appraisal has been done.</p>
Disposal criteria reference:	<p>Leave this field until the appraisal has been done.</p>

APPENDIX 3: FILE/RECORD CONTENT ANALYSIS SHEET

FILE/RECORD CONTENT ANALYSIS SHEET			
NAME OF ORGANISATION:			
FILE/RECORD NUMBER:		PART/VOLUME NO:	
FILE/RECORD NAME:			
LOCATION:			
DATE	FROM:	TO:	BOX/SHELF NO.:
CONTENTS			
FORM CREATED BY:			DATE:

APPENDIX 4: APPRAISAL REPORT AND AGREEMENT TEMPLATES

- Name of organisation:** *Enter the name of the organisation*
- Scope of appraisal:** *Brief description of the records the appraisal covers*
- File reference:** *The file for the recording of the appraisal project*
- Appraisal carried out by:** *Position and name of the person undertaking the appraisal*
- Date of appraisal:** *Date appraisal report and lists completed*

Appraisal circumstances

Briefly describe why this appraisal is being undertaken.

Include brief details of any communication or meetings that have occurred between the Archives and the department, in which the records were viewed or assessed and/or the decision to conduct the appraisal was made

Description of records

Provide a meaningful description of the records being appraised, concentrating on:

- *Physical description/format*
- *Quantity*
- *Date ranges*
- *Any relevant information about reason for creation and what purpose they fulfilled*

Describe each separate group or series of records separately

Precedent

Describe if any precedent exists for appraisal recommendations for these records

Recommendations

Provide a discussion of the assessment of value in relation to which records are to be retained as archives and which records are to be destroyed. For example:

'It is recommended that the following records are to be retained as public archives because...' and refer to the relevant disposal criteria

And/or

'It is recommended that the following records are to be destroyed because...' and refer to the relevant disposal criteria.

Appraisal agreement	
Name of organisation:	<i>Enter the name of the organisation</i>
Scope of appraisal:	<i>Brief description of the records the appraisal covers</i>
File reference:	<i>The file for the recording of the appraisal project</i>
Appraisal carried out by:	<i>Position and name of the person undertaking the appraisal</i>
Date of appraisal:	<i>Date appraisal report and lists completed</i>
Appraisal agreed by:	<i>Position of internal approver</i>
Signature:	<i>Signature of the person agreeing to the appraisal</i>
Name:	<i>Name of the person agreeing to the appraisal</i>
Date of agreement:	<i>Date of agreement</i>
Appraisal approved by:	<i>Name and position of the person approving the appraisal (normally the National Archivist)</i>
Date of approval:	<i>Date of approval</i>



This Guideline of the *Recordkeeping for Good Governance Toolkit* was produced by the Pacific Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives with assistance from Archives New Zealand and NZAID.