

S-G12 Information Management Policy

Purpose	To provide guidance and direction on the creation and management of information and records and to clarify staff and elected members' responsibilities.	
Department	Governance	
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1. Definitions

Disposal

Involves either the destruction of records; their transfer to the Tasmanian Archive & Heritage Office for retention as part of the State archives; their transfer to another custodian; or some other process approved by the State Archivist which removes them from the custody of the agency.

Record

Information created, received and maintained as evidence and information by an organisation or person, in the pursuance of legal obligations or in the transaction of business. (Source: *International Standard ISO 15489 – 2002, Records Management, Part 1: General, Clause 3.15*)

State Archive

State record or any other record which is deposited and preserved permanently in the Tasmanian Archive & Heritage Office.

2. Objective

The objectives of this Policy are to, as far as is practical:

- provide effective council records management, covering the creation and maintenance of authentic, reliable and useable records;
- ensure that Council's records support the accountability and transparency of its business functions and activities for as long as those records are required;
- provide evidence of the Council's commitment to best practice records management;
- set out the responsibilities of staff and elected members, clarifying their accountability for records and information management (refer to 'Responsibilities' section in this document); and
- provide records and information management that is done in accordance with legislative requirements.

The benefits of compliance with this policy will be trusted information and records that are well described, stored in known locations and accessible to staff and clients when needed.

3. Scope

This policy applies to the management and maintenance of records through their life cycle - from creation, receipt or capture to preservation and disposal under the provision of the *Archives Act 1983*. It includes records in any format held in the Council's information systems. This policy also covers the work practices of staff, elected members and consultants who:

- create information;
- access information;
- have responsibility for information including storage, retrieval, dissemination and disposal;
- have management responsibilities for officers engaged in any of these activities; and
- manage or have design input into information technology infrastructure.

The key distinction between council records and other types of information is that records provide evidence of business activities (refer to 'Definitions' section in this document for definition of a record). Records exist in a variety of formats including, but not limited to paper documents, electronic messages, word processed letters, web-pages, information in databases, photographs, film, charts etc. Regardless of format, records must be created, captured, maintained, secured and disposed of in accordance with the requirements of this Policy and the accompanying Information Management Procedure.

4. Policy

Flinders Council's information and records are a corporate asset, vital both for ongoing operations and in providing valuable evidence of business decisions, activities and transactions.

- 4.1. Flinders Council is committed to establishing and maintaining information and records management practices that meet its business needs, accountability requirements and stakeholder expectations.
- 4.2. All council records must be managed and maintained regardless of their format in an information management system.
- 4.3. All council staff are required to create and maintain authentic, reliable and useable information, documents and records, and protect their integrity for as long as they are required through:
 - 4.3.1. Ensuring that full and accurate records are created and maintained for each business process followed in the Council;
 - 4.3.2. Preserving records, whether hard copy or electronic, safely and securely;
 - 4.3.3. Ensuring that electronic records are saved and stored in the Council's recordkeeping system, with appropriate naming conventions used to enable their efficient retrieval and use;
 - 4.3.4. Ensuring records are accessible over time to support the conduct of business, and that they are only retained for as long as required by the agency and relevant legislation; and
 - 4.3.5. Assigning responsibilities for recordkeeping within the Council.
- 4.4. The Council aspires to proactively implement systems and processes which will enable records and information to be stored in an electronic format wherever possible. All

practices and procedures concerning records management within Flinders Council must be in accordance with this Policy.

5. Procedure

The Information Management Procedure provides the guidelines by which staff and elected members will implement the Information Management Policy.

Where there is an inconsistency between this Policy and the Information Management Procedure, the provisions of this Policy shall take precedence over the provisions of the Information Management Procedure.

6. Legislation and Council Related Policies

Archives Act 1983

AS:ISO-15489.1 – Information and Documentation – Records Management

Corporations Act 2001

Crimes Act 1924

Electronic Transactions Act 2000

Evidence Act 2001

Financial Transaction Reports Act 1988

Income Tax Assessment Act 1997

Limitations Act 1974

Local Government Act 1993

Personal Information Protection Act 2004

Right to Information Act 2009

7. Responsibility

The responsibility for this Policy rests with the General Manager.