

## Information Management Advice 54 Records Management Toolkit for Local Government

### FACT SHEET 5 - Basic Records Management - Disaster Management & Risk

#### Introduction

*This Fact Sheet is part of a sub-set of Advice 54, and focuses on the operational procedures of a records management program. Some templates are provided to assist agencies to establish and implement recordkeeping controls and procedures. Agencies with very small records operations, those who do not have dedicated RM resources, and those who have not yet implemented specialised EDRMS software, may find these Fact Sheets particularly beneficial.*

#### Records Program operations

Daily operations are the basis for the development of a procedure manual for the records team. This promotes consistency of process, and information sharing, in the event of new staff, volunteers or contractors. Procedure manuals should be regularly reviewed and updated as required to allow for organisational and procedural change. Whether paper or electronic recordkeeping systems are in place, key functions include:

- Record identification
- Record capture
- Registration
- Indexing
- Classification
- File creation and closure
- Distribution & tracking
- Search & retrieval
- Access
- Security
- Storage
- Scheduling, retention & disposal
- Records transfer
- e-Discovery & Disposal Freezes
- Vital Records
- Disaster Management
- QA & Auditing
- Monitoring (program, processes and people) & reporting on activities, performance and compliance

- Resourcing

## Tools you will need

- Vital records locator checklist
- Compliance checklist for disaster recovery

## e-Discovery & Disposal Freezes

With increasing compliance issues in the government sector it is vital that agencies ensure they meet all relevant requirements. Records Managers can mitigate the liability of agencies, if agency records are regularly and routinely appraised, sentenced and, where appropriate, disposed of according to approved Records Disposal Schedules.

A system that ensures information is managed to records management compliance standards and also facilitates e-Discovery (the provision of electronic information and records) is essential.

Irrespective of any disposal authorization provided by an approved disposal schedule, agencies must not destroy records that are, or may reasonably be, required in legal proceedings. In a situation where a court or tribunal has issued a subpoena, or any other court process for the production of documents, those documents must not be destroyed.

In addition, an agency must not dispose of any records where it is aware of **possible** legal action for which the records may be required as evidence. This does not mean an agency must hold all records indefinitely 'in case' there may be future legal action, it simply means where there is already a dispute in progress that may escalate, or where an issue is precedent setting or so sensitive that a dispute or litigation is deemed probable or likely, that these records should be preserved until such time as the legal action (if any) or dispute is finalized.

Where a record has been lawfully disposed of before its need for legal proceedings became apparent, details of the destruction of the record from the agency *Register of Records Destroyed*, and a copy of the Records Disposal Schedule that authorised the destruction, should be provided in response to a court order or subpoena.

e-Discovery, sometimes called e-Disclosure (electronic disclosure) specifically refers to the process of collecting and processing **electronic** material for the use in civil or criminal litigation. Collection can be as simple as seeking a CD that contains data, or more complex processing of forensically acquiring data from an agency's entire network, and all information systems including email. Failure to comply with e-Discovery orders, because potential evidence has been destroyed, compromised or cannot be produced, can be extremely costly.

Due to the devolved nature of many agencies information holdings, and poor recordkeeping practices, e-Discovery poses a very real risk to Government agencies, and Local Government in particular. Whilst there are specialist organizations that can provide tools to assist in the event of major litigation, there are a few simple strategies that can help to reduce exposure, and potential costs. Reviewing and producing information for inspection in response to disclosure obligations can be time-consuming and expensive. Therefore, reduce any potential future e-Discovery impact by:

- 1) Reducing the volume of data. Simply put – maintain a regular appraisal and disposal program. This applies to both electronic and hard copy records, across the spectrum of agency systems and databases.
- 2) Establish legally defensible processes and procedures for information and data management, and governance frameworks.

- 3) Consolidate information, where at all possible, into core corporate business systems with recordkeeping capability, or with documented information management regimes. This means migrating information off network drives, ad-hoc databases, etc.
- 4) Establish an agency Information asset register - know where your information assets are and manage them appropriately. This way you will be in a good position for the employment of data mining tools should the need arise. See *TAHO Advice 39 Developing an Information Asset Register*.
- 5) During the requirements gathering phase for the introduction of new EDRMS systems, include the ability to 'flag' documents and folders in the event of a Disposal Freeze being issued by the State Archivist in the event of an Inquiry, or for the duration of active or expected litigation. Being able to quarantine these files for set periods will effectively safeguard these documents from regular disposal routines.

In the context of e-discovery, proposed changes to legal practice in Australia could see lawyers being held responsible for implementing a 'legal hold' when litigation is anticipated, as occurs in the US.<sup>1</sup>

## Vital Records

Vital records are records that are deemed essential for the ongoing business of the agency. If these records were to be irretrievably lost or destroyed, the agency would have difficulty in continuing to function effectively or re-establish business operations.

The identification of vital records should be a collaborative process involving records staff and business units, in order to:

- determine the kinds of records required to meet the needs noted above; and
- identify the specific groups of records, their quantity and location(s).

Once vital records are identified, an agency is able to develop processes and procedures to protect these records, including requirements as part of the Business Continuity Plan to ensure continued accessibility in the event of a disaster.

Vital records may be considered vital only in the short term, or may retain this status indefinitely. They may be in any format (e.g. hardcopy, microfilm, electronic, maps or plans, etc.) and can have any records security classification associated.

Examples of vital records include:

- original signed agreements, MOUs, contracts, leases or licenses;
- signed (ratified) Master sets of Council & Committee Minutes & Agendas/officer reports
- agency wide financial records, assets & liabilities;
- debtors and creditors lists
- personnel records including employment agreements, authorizations/delegations & salary information
- current policies and procedures;
- insurance records (policies and claims)
- plans to vital infrastructure;

---

<sup>1</sup><http://www.alrc.gov.au/publications/4.%20Ensuring%20Professional%20Integrity%3A%20Ethical%20Obligations%20and%20Discovery/legal-ethical-o-0>

- records management control records;
- current litigation files.

When an agency has identified its vital records holdings, the information should be included in the records management program and should incorporate:

- how the vital records are identified, listed, protected, handled, and if necessary, recovered and restored;
- procedures (forms part of the disaster management plan for records and recordkeeping systems);
- the preventive measures for protecting vital records that have been implemented;
- a timetable for review and maintenance of the vital records list, and associated policy and procedures. Include this review in the Records Management program activities.

For more information on Vital Records, see *TAHO Advice 52 Identifying and managing Vital Records*.

## Disaster Management

Disaster management is about identifying and assessing:

- the risks of disasters affecting records;
- developing strategies to prevent them,
- being prepared for and able to manage various scenarios, and
- recovering from them.

Disaster management for records and recordkeeping systems should take place within the framework of the agency's Business Continuity Plan in conjunction with staff responsible for risk management. Development of a robust Disaster Management Plan requires the following:

- Identification and assessment of risks affecting records and recordkeeping systems, and the subsequent activities to reduce the probability of a disaster, and reducing the probability of loss should a disaster occur
- Planning activities to establish a counter disaster plan to assist staff to respond to an emergency event
- Activities to identify and protect vital records
- Response and recovery – the activities involved in implementing the plan and initiating resources to protect or secure the organisation from loss; and restoring records and operations to 'business as usual' status.

Records managers are therefore encouraged to perform risk assessments, not only of daily operational records tasks and work areas (OHS type risk assessment), but also of business risk – identifying potential risks to the agencies records and information assets, and putting in place strategies to mitigate those risks. If records related risks have been neglected in the broader Business Continuity and Risk Management plans of the organisation, Disaster Management plans and/or Disaster Recovery manuals and 'disaster kits' developed by Records staff can help. Disaster plans, procedures and manuals should be routinely reviewed for currency as part of an effective Records Management program.

For more information on Disaster Management, see *TAHO Advice 26 Disaster Preparedness and Recovery*.

Risks to records and recordkeeping systems can come from:

- Natural events or threats including earthquakes, cyclones, bushfires, floods, vermin, lightning strikes

- Structural or building failure such as malfunctioning sprinklers, heating or airconditioning systems; leaks in roofs; damaged or poor wiring; sewer/stormwater drainage failure
- Industrial accidents such as chemical spills, fire, gas leaks
- Technological disasters such as viruses and computer equipment failure
- Criminal behaviour such as theft, arson, vandalism, fraud, terrorism
- Accidental loss through human error, or misuse

However, damage and loss can also occur due to:

- Unstable records, or unsuitable storage conditions,
- Degradation of records caused by natural deterioration,
- improper shelving,
- inadequate precautions in transit or handling
- poor work procedures

In the event of damage to records, do not rush to destroy, or assume records are unsalvageable. All records, including damaged ones, must only be destroyed with the authorisation of the State Archivist, and will require a Destruction Authority in the event they are unscheduled, or not due for destruction under an existing Disposal Schedule (DA2200). Damaged records may also look worse than they are. Contact the Government Information Strategy Unit for urgent advice on [gisu@education.tas.gov.au](mailto:gisu@education.tas.gov.au). We have access to Conservation staff and can also point you in the direction of commercial recovery and restoration services.

## **Recommended Reading**

*State Records Guideline 20 Records required for legal proceedings – implications for Tasmanian government agencies*

*TAHO Advice 7 Information Rights Management*

*TAHO Advice 16 Legal acceptance of Records*

*TAHO Advice 25 Management of Backups*

*TAHO Advice 26 Disaster Preparedness and Recovery*

*TAHO Advice 36 Legislative mapping for Information Managers*

*TAHO Advice 38 Information Custodians and Digital Continuity – also see accompanying checklist*

*TAHO Advice 39 Developing an Information Asset Register*

*TAHO Advice 46 Treating records with mould*

## **Appendices**

Vital records locator checklist (Appendix 1)

Sample disaster kit inventory list (Appendix 2)

Sample Risk Assessment form (Appendix 3)

Sample Disaster Management Activation plan (Appendix 4)

Sample Disaster Preparation & Recovery manual (Appendix 5)

## Further Advice

For more detailed advice, please contact:

Government Information Strategy Unit  
Tasmanian Archive and Heritage Office  
91 Murray Street  
HOBART TASMANIA 7000  
Telephone: 03 6165 5581  
Email: [gisu@education.tas.gov.au](mailto:gisu@education.tas.gov.au)

## Acknowledgements

National Archives of Australia *Check Up 2.0*<sup>2</sup> and *Disaster Preparedness Manual for Commonwealth Agencies*<sup>3</sup>

Australian Standard *AS ISO 15489.1 & Guidelines 15489.2*<sup>4</sup>

State Records NSW *Recordkeeping Advice Disaster Management*<sup>5</sup>

State Records of South Australia *Records Management Disaster Planning*<sup>6</sup>

AIIM

Caboolture Shire Council – *Records Management Disaster Preparedness & Recovery Manual*

## 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.

## Document Development History

### Build Status

Version	Date	Author	Reason	Sections
2.0	May 2015	Christine Woods	Template	All
1.0	March 2014	Sam Foster-Davies	Initial Release	All

---

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.naa.gov.au/records-management/check-up/index.aspx>

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.naa.gov.au/Images/Disaster%20manual\\_tcm16-47280.pdf](http://www.naa.gov.au/Images/Disaster%20manual_tcm16-47280.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.saiglobal.com/Information/Standards/>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.records.nsw.gov.au/recordkeeping/advice/disaster-management/disaster-management>

<sup>6</sup> [http://government.archives.sa.gov.au/sites/default/files/20120125%20Records%20Management%20Disaster%20Planning%20%20Final%20V1.2\\_Copy.pdf](http://government.archives.sa.gov.au/sites/default/files/20120125%20Records%20Management%20Disaster%20Planning%20%20Final%20V1.2_Copy.pdf)

**Amendments in this Release**

<b>Section Title</b>	<b>Section Number</b>	<b>Amendment Summary</b>
All	All	Document imported into new template

**Issued: June 2014**

**Ross Latham**  
State Archivist



## Appendix I – Vital Records locator

Audit date: \_\_\_\_\_

Examples of Vital Records	Location
Insurance policies & schedules (original signed documents)	
Master sets of Minutes (Council meetings, Special Committees and council Committees)	
Internal/operational policy documents (current)	
Drawings, maps & plans	
Pay Rates	
Annual reports	
Bank Balances	
Research records (major projects, ventures)	
Share certificates	
Tax Returns	
Technical Reports	
Leases & Licences (include software licences)	
Customer & Debtor lists	
Inventory control records	
Grant Deeds	
Loan agreements and balances	
Mortgages	
Payroll registers	
Personnel Records	
Workers Rehab & Compensation records	
Certificates of incorporation, patents, trademarks, business names	
Copyrights	
Corporate seals	
Deeds & Certificates of Title	
Contracts & Agreements/MOUs/Partnership Agreements (original signed documents)	
Computer software licences/databases	
General Ledgers	
Joint Venture agreements & MOUs (original signed document)	
Acquisition/disposal contracts	
Due Diligence reports	
Legal Opinions/Advice	
Liability releases & indemnification agreements	
Guarantees	
Litigation files	
Master set of By-Laws	

**Appendix 2 - Sample disaster kit inventory list**

<b>ITEM/ MATERIAL</b>	<b>ITEM USE</b>
<b>Batteries</b>	Torches / lights
<b>Bodkins</b>	Replacing file pins for fanning
<b>Broom</b>	Cleaning
<b>Buckets (household)</b>	Cleaning / clearing
<b>Buckets (with lids)</b>	Microfilm salvage
<b>Cleaning Wipes</b>	General Purpose Cleaning
<b>Clipboards</b>	Documentation (incl. lists, procedures etc.)
<b>Clips (Foldback)</b>	General Purpose
<b>Document Cleaning Pads</b>	Removing mould from small areas
<b>Dust Bunny</b>	Dusting Documents
<b>Dust Masks</b>	Breathing Protection
<b>Dustpan and Brush</b>	Cleaning
<b>Extension Cord 10 metre</b>	Electrical items such as dehumidifier
<b>Extension Cord 20 metre</b>	Electrical items such as fans
<b>First Aid Kit</b>	
<b>Freezer Bags 30 x 45cm</b>	Freezing books
<b>Garbage Bins*</b>	Collecting rubbish
<b>Gloves, rubber or disposable</b>	Where needed
<b>Gum Boots **</b>	Protective footwear
<b>Hard Hats</b>	Protective head wear
<b>Hazard Tape</b>	Safety
<b>Hinged Rings</b>	Replacing file pins for fanning
<b>Hole Punches</b>	Use with Tyvek labels
<b>Labels</b>	Labelling wrapped items
<b>Mop and Bucket</b>	Cleaning
<b>Note Pads A4</b>	Recording and labelling
<b>Packaging Tape</b>	Lining benches etc.

<b>ITEM/ MATERIAL</b>	<b>ITEM USE</b>
<b>Paper Towels</b>	Absorbing / blotting moisture
<b>Pegs</b>	Drying
<b>Pencils</b>	Recording and labelling
<b>Pens (black markers)</b>	Labelling boxes / crates
<b>Plastic Bags</b>	Freezing files and registers
<b>Plastic Paper Clips</b>	Replacing wet pins etc.
<b>Plastic Sheeting</b>	Protection
<b>Plastic Trays</b>	Photographic salvage
<b>Post-It Notes</b>	
<b>Power Boards</b>	
<b>PVC Raincoats</b>	Protective Clothing
<b>Scissors</b>	Where needed
<b>Sign - “Caution Wet Floor”</b>	Safety
<b>Signs - “Hazard Warning - Authorised Personnel Only”</b>	Safety
<b>Signs - “Stop - Restricted Area”</b>	Safety
<b>Signs - “Danger - Disaster Recovery Area”</b>	Safety
<b>Soft Brushes</b>	Cleaning Soot off books / documents
<b>Sponges (household)</b>	Cleaning off med caked books / general
<b>Stanley Knives</b>	Where needed
<b>String (plastic coated)</b>	Drying lines / miscellaneous
<b>Tables*</b>	Work Areas
<b>Torches</b>	Lighting during blackout
<b>Tyvek Tags</b>	Wrapping items for freezing
<b>Unbleached Cotton Tape</b>	Replacing file pins for fanning / drying line
<b>Vests (Safety)</b>	Safety
<b>Wash Bag</b>	Storing Pegs

Workplace Health & Safety Act & Regulations - Reg 17 Hazard Identification, Reg 18 Risk Assessment, Reg 19 Risk Control

Site Description: .....

Job Description: ..... Assessment Date: .....

ACTIVITY	HAZARD IDENTIFICATION –  <b>SPOT</b>	CONSQ.	LIKELIHOOD	RISK LEVEL	ACTION TO CONTROL HAZARD – Hierarchy of Control - eliminate, substitute, isolation, engineering, administrative or PPE  <b>FIX</b>	Evaluate Risk Level after control <b>E,H,M,L</b>	CONSEQUENCE: <b>1 – Insignificant</b> No injuries, no financial loss  <b>2 – Minor</b> First aid treatment, on-site release immediately contained, medium financial loss  <b>3 – Moderate</b> Medical treatment required, on site release contained without assistance, high financial loss  <b>4 – Major</b> Extensive injuries, loss of production capability, off site release with no detrimental effects, major financial loss  <b>5 – Catastrophic</b> Death, toxic release off site with detrimental effect, huge financial loss  <b>LIKELIHOOD:</b> <b>A – Almost Certain</b> Is expected to occur in most circumstances  <b>B – Likely</b> Will probably occur in most circumstances  <b>C – Possible</b> Might occur at some time  <b>D – Unlikely</b> Could occur at some time  <b>E – Rare</b> May occur only in exceptional circumstances
		<b>Assess</b>	<b>Assess</b>	<b>E, H, M, L</b>			

Name: .....	Signature: .....	<b>Consequence:</b>	<b>LEGEND:</b>																														
Date of assessment: .....	<b>Likelihood:</b>	<table style="width:100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 15%; text-align: center;">Insignificant 1</td> <td style="width: 15%; text-align: center;">Minor 2</td> <td style="width: 15%; text-align: center;">Moderate 3</td> <td style="width: 15%; text-align: center;">Major 4</td> <td style="width: 15%; text-align: center;">Catastrophic 5</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">A (almost Certain)</td> <td style="text-align: center;">H</td> <td style="text-align: center;">H</td> <td style="text-align: center;">E</td> <td style="text-align: center;">E</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">B (likely)</td> <td style="text-align: center;">M</td> <td style="text-align: center;">H</td> <td style="text-align: center;">E</td> <td style="text-align: center;">E</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">C (moderate)</td> <td style="text-align: center;">L</td> <td style="text-align: center;">M</td> <td style="text-align: center;">E</td> <td style="text-align: center;">E</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">D (unlikely)</td> <td style="text-align: center;">L</td> <td style="text-align: center;">L</td> <td style="text-align: center;">M</td> <td style="text-align: center;">E</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">E (rare)</td> <td style="text-align: center;">L</td> <td style="text-align: center;">L</td> <td style="text-align: center;">M</td> <td style="text-align: center;">H</td> </tr> </table>	Insignificant 1	Minor 2	Moderate 3	Major 4	Catastrophic 5	A (almost Certain)	H	H	E	E	B (likely)	M	H	E	E	C (moderate)	L	M	E	E	D (unlikely)	L	L	M	E	E (rare)	L	L	M	H	<b>E;</b> extreme risk; immediate action required  <b>H;</b> high risk; senior management attention needed  <b>M;</b> moderate risk; management responsibility must be specified  <b>L;</b> low risk; manage by routine procedures
Insignificant 1	Minor 2	Moderate 3	Major 4	Catastrophic 5																													
A (almost Certain)	H	H	E	E																													
B (likely)	M	H	E	E																													
C (moderate)	L	M	E	E																													
D (unlikely)	L	L	M	E																													
E (rare)	L	L	M	H																													

# Timbuctoo City Council Counter Disaster Plan

Version #

Review date: / /2XXX

*Blue text is for instructional purposes only, and should be deleted.*

*[Note: This is a sample disaster plan for a fictitious Council. Agencies should develop individual Counter Disaster Plans that address their risks, preventative measures and response processes. Advice on developing plans can be obtained from the Information Policy and Strategy Unit unit at TAHO]*

## PRIMARY CONTACT IN THE EVENT OF A DISASTER:

[Name] , [Position]

Contact Numbers [business hours/after hours/mobile]

(Also see additional contacts - Section 4.1, p.7)

### Authorisation

This plan has the endorsement of the General Manager of [Timbuctoo City Council]. All relevant staff are requested to familiarise themselves with its contents and, in the event of a disaster affecting the records of [Agency], follow the procedures contained within it.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (General Manager)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Distribution

Staff that are required to read and become familiar with the contents of this plan:

- ICT Manager
- Corporate Services Manager
- Records Manager
- Records Officer
- General Manager

### Confirmation form

I have read and understood this version of the [Timbuctoo City Council] Counter Disaster Plan for Records.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** A copy of this page will be retained by the Corporate Services Manager as part of the record of staff who have read and understood the plan.

---

## Contents

1	About this plan	3
	1.1 Purpose	3
	1.2 Confidentiality	3
	1.3 Plan review	3
	1.4 Training and testing	3
	1.5 Acknowledgement	3
2	Protection of the Council's records	4
	2.1 Responsibilities for protection measures	4
	2.2 Risk assessment and prevent measures	4
3	Priorities for recovery: Vital records	5
	3.1 Vital records and protection measures	5
	3.2 Summary of records copied or backed up	6
	3.3 Offsite back up storage location	6
4	Activating the plan: Response and recovery	6
	4.1 Who to contact and responsibilities for recovery	6
	4.2 Response and recovery steps for Disaster Team	7
	4.3 Equipment and supplies	7
	4.4 Technical and specialist advice	8
	4.5 Disaster headquarters	8
	4.6 Insurers	8
5	Records recovery information	8
	5.1 Paper-based records	8
	5.2 Non-paper materials	12
6	Services and advice	13
	6.1 List of contacts	13
	6.3 Training and publications	14
7	For more information	14
8	List of vital records and protection measures	15

## **I About this plan**

### **I.1 Purpose**

The purpose of this plan is to:

- Document the main risks to Council's records
- Outline measures and responsibilities required to mitigate risks or minimise the impact of potential disasters
- Allow Council staff to respond quickly and appropriately to recover records after a disaster
- Ensure the Council's most valuable records are prioritised for recovery in the event of a disaster
- Ensure that the best use is made of Council and external resources in disaster preparedness and recovery activities.

### **I.2 Confidentiality**

This plan is only available to the Disaster Team (positions listed on the cover sheet) and should not be accessed by other employees or persons external to the Council. Other staff members have a condensed and modified version (Records Recovery Plan), without sections 2 and 3 as it is not relevant to their roles in recovery.

The Council's Counter Disaster or Records Recovery Plans should only be accessed by authorised personnel or with the permission of the General Manager.

### **I.3 Plan review**

It is Council policy to review the Counter Disaster and/or Records Recovery Plans every two years. The [position title] is responsible for carrying out the review.

### **I.4 Training and testing**

The [position title] is responsible for ensuring that all personnel with responsibilities in this plan are made fully aware of those responsibilities and are capable of carrying them out. Regular tests of the plan will be run every six months. The Disaster Team meets once every six months to review their roles and responsibilities.

### **I.5 Acknowledgement**

This plan has been developed according to the information in the Australian Standard AS4390-1996 *Records Management*, Part 6, *Storage*, Appendix B 'Contents of a model disaster response plan.'



## 2 Protection of the Council's records

### 2.1 Responsibilities for protection measures

Responsible officer	Role
General Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Authorises Counter Disaster and Records Recovery Plans</li> </ul>
Corporate Services Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinates production of Counter Disaster and Records Recovery Plans</li> <li>Disseminates to relevant staff</li> <li>Manages the overall implementation of risk assessment and reduction measures for records, including vital records</li> <li>Organises training for staff according to their responsibilities</li> <li>Organises testing of the plans</li> </ul>
Records Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Drafts Counter Disaster and Records Recovery Plans (in liaison with IT Manager and other relevant staff)</li> <li>Undertakes risk assessment and reduction for records, including vital records</li> </ul>
IT Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contributes to drafting of Counter Disaster and Records Recovery Plans (in liaison with Records Manager)</li> <li>Undertakes risk assessment and reduction for electronic records, including vital records, under supervision of records manager</li> </ul>
Records Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carries out risk assessment and reduction for records, including vital records, under supervision of records manager</li> </ul>

### 2.2 Risk assessment and prevention measures

Council's Counter Disaster and Records Recovery Plans are based on an understanding of risks to Council property, people assets and records. The following table shows the main risks to all Council records. Risks particular to vital records have been identified in Section 3.

1=Prevention / treatment of these risks attracts the greatest investment of resources

4=Prevention / treatment of these risks attracts the least amount of resources

	Risk	Risk Assessment	Prevention / treatment measures
1	Natural disaster: earthquake, flood, bushfire	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure all staff understand evacuation procedures</li> <li>Copies of vital records (paper and electronic) stored offsite or in a fireproof safe</li> </ul>

2	Building fault: leaking pipe, faulty sprinkler system	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular maintenance checks of plumbing and sprinkler system</li> </ul>
3	Faulty airconditioning: fluctuations in temperature	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular airconditioning maintenance checks</li> </ul>
4	Computer crime: viruses, hackers	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Firewall in place to protect network</li> <li>Routine testing of computer security measures by IT manager</li> <li>Regular back up of vital records and storage offline</li> </ul>
5	Other crime: theft, vandalism, arson	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular patrol of Council premises by [Terminator Security Pty Ltd]</li> <li>Auditable issue of keys and after hours passes to building</li> </ul>
6	Human error: accidental deletion, destruction or damage	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training for records staff in use of software</li> <li>Back up allowing reconstitution of deleted electronic records by IT Manager</li> </ul>

*[Note: these risks should be added to and customised for each Council]*

### 3 Priorities for recovery: vital records

Vital records are records, in any format, which contain information essential to the survival of an organisation. If a vital record is lost, damaged, destroyed or otherwise unavailable, the loss is a disaster, affecting critical operations. Vital records should be the main priorities for recovery and salvage efforts when a disaster occurs.

#### 3.1 Vital records and protection measures

A list of [Timbuctoo City Council's] vital records is provided at section 8, including specific risks and protection measures.

### 3.2 Summary of records copied or backed up

General ledger

Records registry

Title deeds

Rates records

Conservation records for heritage buildings

*[Note: This is a sample list of vital records only. Each agency needs to identify its own set of vital records based on its specific business needs]*

### 3.3 Off site back up storage location

Timbuctoo City Council's off site storage location is **[location/address]**.

## 4 Activating the plan: Response and recovery

### 4.1 Who to contact and responsibilities for recovery

The contacts below are for the Disaster Team. These are available to staff in the Records Recovery Plan. In the event of a disaster the person locating the problem should call the first person on this list. If there is no answer, the next person should be contacted, and down the list until **one** person on the Disaster Team is informed. The Disaster Team representative contacted should follow the procedure in 4.2.

Position	Role	Contact details
Corporate Services Manager	In charge of disaster recovery processes In charge of media liaison Arranges use of cold site if required Compiles post disaster report	<b>[work no]</b> <b>[home no]</b> <b>[mobile no]</b>
Records Manager	Primary contact regarding records in the event of a disaster; back up leader of team in absence of Corporate Services Manager	<b>[work no]</b> <b>[home no]</b> <b>[mobile no]</b>
ICT Manager	Carries out disaster recovery for electronic records, under supervision of Records Manager	<b>[work no]</b> <b>[home no]</b> <b>[mobile no]</b>

Records Officer	Carries out disaster recovery activities for records, under supervision of Records Manager Documents the disaster	[work no] [home no] [mobile no]
General Manager	Contacted in the event of a disaster	[work no] [home no] [mobile no]

## 4.2 Response and recovery steps for Disaster Team

The initial steps of the disaster response and recovery process for the Disaster Team are:

1.	The Corporate Services Manager (or Records Manager if the CSM is unavailable) should decide whether it is necessary to notify the fire brigade, police, hazardous material team and others. Evacuation of staff and visitors may be the first priority. Refer to Evacuation Procedures.
2.	The Corporate Services Manager then notifies all members of the disaster response team (or delegates this duty to someone reliable).
3.	The Corporate Services Manager briefs the response team on the disaster and the necessary response to be undertaken and equipment and supplies are gathered (see sections 4.3 and 4.4).
4.	The Corporate Services Manager contacts the Council's insurers if required (see section 4.6).
5.	When it is safe to re-enter the affected areas, team members commence recovery activities (see section 5) using whatever staff and resources that are necessary and available. The list of vital records (see section 8) will indicate priorities for recovery.

## 4.3 Equipment and supplies

Equipment and materials for use in disaster salvage are in the disaster recovery bin situated in the records compactus area on Level 1. The disaster recovery bin contains:

Plastic aprons	100 A4 Manilla folders
200 sheets of blotting paper	Squeeze Mop
2 buckets	Note pad/folder
200 butchers paper	Paper towel
Chux cloths	Plastic cloths pegs
12 cotton gloves	Pencil
Disposable camera	Plastic bin liners
Dust masks	Plastic sheeting 2x10m
Extension cord	Post it notes
Freezer bags	Power board
Hand towel	Rubber gloves
Utility knife	Scissors
Masking tape	Sponge
Heavy duty aprons	Tags/ties
Copy of the disaster plan	Torch and batteries

#### 4.4 Technical and specialist advice

Technical advice on salvaging and drying materials is provided in Section 5 of this plan. Where necessary, they should seek expert opinion from conservators and other specialists. A list of contacts for specialised services and advice is included in section 6 of this plan.

#### 4.5 Disaster headquarters

The disaster recovery operation will be managed from the [Corporate Services Manager's office]. If this office is affected or the building is evacuated, the recovery will initially be managed from the evacuation gathering point.

The Council has an arrangement for a cold site with [name, address & contact number of service provider/external or satellite site]. In the event that the disaster that prevents re-entry to the building for several days, council operations will be conducted from this site. The Corporate Services Manager will determine the need for use of this site and make the necessary arrangements.

#### 4.6 Insurers

The Council is insured by [Insurance Company Name], [contact no], [Policy no]. It is the responsibility of the Corporate Services Manager to contact the insurers when required.

### 5 Records recovery information

Records should be recovered in accordance with vital records schedules and priorities set for each functional area. Vital records are listed in section 3 of this plan.

#### 5.1 Paper-based records

There are a number of stabilising and drying methods that can be used in the recovery phase of disaster management. Below are general tips on stabilising and drying water damaged paper-based materials. Whichever method is chosen, dried materials should be monitored for potential mould growth.

##### Recovery methods:

##### Freezing

For stabilising and restoring large quantities of records, or records that are already starting to grow mould, freezing is the most effective method. If there are only small quantities of records then other methods, such as airdrying, should be employed.

Freezing is a useful alternative for some records as:

- it stops the growth of mould and mildew (while the object is still frozen)
- it may stop bindings from warping, depending on the method of drying
- it stabilises water soluble materials such as inks and dyes, and
- it gives your organisation time to plan for recovery and restore buildings and equipment ready for the material.

Conservators do not advise the freezing of vellum, photographs, glass plate negatives, electronic media such as diskettes, videos, cassettes or vinyl records.

As soon as the record quantities requiring freezing are decided, companies with appropriate freeze facilities (listed in the counter disaster plan) should be contacted and arrangements made for transport.

Options for freezing are:

- **Blast freeze:** commercial blast freezers are ideal as they drop the temperature quickly and have a large capacity
- **Freeze in refrigerated chamber:** this could be slow but there are benefits to reducing temperature even before freezing point is reached, or
- **Use a home freezer unit to freeze small quantities quickly:** ensure that it reaches a temperature of  $-10^{\circ}\text{C}$  and do not open until ready to remove the material (otherwise it will cause a freeze-thaw cycle).

Once the material is frozen and you have the time and resources to defrost and treat it, you need to look at drying options.

### **Freeze drying**

The frozen items are placed in a vacuum chamber, which allows the water to evaporate without melting. This is of a huge advantage for water sensitive inks as it minimises the risk of them running further. Likewise it is also good for glossy papers as it prevents them from sticking together. But if these situations have begun, freeze drying will not reverse it.

Vacuum freeze drying is not recommended for photographic materials unless there is no alternative, as their surfaces may be damaged. Leather and vellum may not survive. Volumes that are vacuum freeze dried should be acclimatised for at least one month before opening to avoid cracking the bindings, and monitored for mould.

Specialist services for freeze-drying are listed in section 7.2 of this plan.

### **Dry air purging or dehumidifying**

Dry air purging can be used if records are not soaking. A building or site is sealed in plastic sheeting and dry air, at least  $26^{\circ}\text{C}$  and 15% relative humidity, is pumped in using desiccant or refrigeration equipment. The water vapour is then absorbed in the dry air. This method is rapid and has the advantage of being in situ, but is only useful when the whole site can be sealed off.

### **Airdrying**

Airdrying can be attempted if it is within two days of the disaster and if material is not soaked. Otherwise, mould will start to grow, and items that are suitable should be frozen. Airdrying may result in some distortion of items and should not be used for items with soluble inks.

Airdrying requires a large space with good air circulation and temperatures below  $21^{\circ}\text{C}$ . Circulation may be encouraged by positioning fans and opening windows. If available, dehumidifiers can be used in the drying process to reduce relative humidity (ideally to 25-35%). Screening material such as window screens can provide an excellent compact drying surface which allows for air circulation (although metal mesh will rust in contact with moisture).

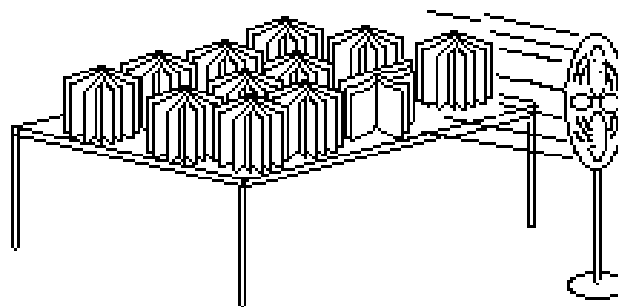
## Recovery of specific media types

### Files

- Files should be removed from boxes carefully and laid flat. Bundles can be interleaved and pressed under a light weight or pages turned regularly, ensuring that the original order is maintained for each bundle. Cool air can be directed to the pages, but ensure that it is directed upward rather than directly on the pages. Replace the interleaved sheets when they become wet. Glossy papers should be fully separated and interleaved or frozen.
- For saturated files, metal binders should be replaced with plastic tubing or plastic coated wire and pages fanned with some interleaving.

### Volumes

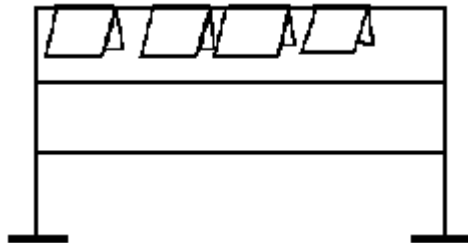
- Closed volumes can be cleaned before drying, by washing off dirt or mud on covers and edges using clean running water and a sponge.
- Books and volumes which can stand upright can be placed on paper towelling with their covers slightly open and their pages lightly fanned. A gentle breeze from a fan can assist the drying process. Do not use heat as it will encourage mould.
- Priority volumes can be dried by placing plastic sheeting on the floor, standing volumes upright with pages fanned (if their spines will support them), and then forming wind tunnels around them from cardboard or plastic sheeting. Cool air from fans can then be directed down the tunnels.
- Interleaving can be used for wet volumes that cannot support their own weight. Loose sheets of paper towel or blotting paper can be placed at 1 centimetre intervals through the volumes. Do not allow interleaving materials to exceed a third of the thickness of the volume or the spine will be damaged (the exception is with coated papers where each page must be interleaved). Replace interleaving materials when wet.
- If adhesives are sticking to the interleaving sheets, a release material such as nylon gauze should be used as a barrier between them.



Drying bound volumes by standing upright  
reproduced with permission of National Archives of Australia

### **Pamphlets**

- Pamphlets and loose pages can be hung on lines or improvised drying racks providing you have enough space and assistance.



Hanging small items  
reproduced with permission of National Archives of Australia

### **Maps and plans**

- Maps and plans can be interleaved with blotting paper stacked up to 10 high and pressed dry under glass, Perspex or thick board and weighted evenly.

### **Card indexes**

- Card indexes should be removed from drawers, stack on sides loosely and supported at each end.

### **Photographic prints**

If treated rapidly, photographic prints may be air dried. Photographs can be frozen if necessary but do not freeze dry as it may result in disfiguring marks on the surface of the photograph.

To air dry:

1. Remove photographs from mounts or separate from each other to prevent the emulsion sticking
2. Rinse with cool water if necessary. Do not touch or blot surfaces, and
3. Place emulsion side up on blotters or lint free cloths or hang by placing clips on non-image areas, ensuring there is no overlap.

If wet, immerse in clean cold water in polyethylene bags. Send to a processing laboratory within 2-3 days for reprocessing and drying (except historic ones).

### **Photographic negatives**

To air dry:

1. Remove negatives from envelopes



2. Wash in clean running water, and
3. Hang to dry or lay flat with emulsion side up.

Eastman colour film should only be handled by a processing lab. If there are large quantities of negatives they should be frozen and air dried.

If wet, negatives should be sealed in polyethylene bags and placed in plastic garbage cans under cold, clean running water while the negatives are still wet. They should be transferred to a laboratory within three days.

### **Glass plate negatives**

Glass plate negatives should NOT be immersed in water. They should never be frozen or freeze dried. Air dry them immediately by laying flat onto blotter with the emulsion side up (duller side) or upright in a dish rack.

## **5.2 Non-paper materials**

If dealing with non-paper media, teams may need to obtain assistance from professionals. Some general principles are explained below.

### **Recovery of specific media types:**

#### **Magnetic media**

If magnetic media (disks, audio, video) is damaged, teams should never try to make copies of it immediately because it might damage the hardware. If exposed to heat, an expert can advise of the chances of preserving the information.

#### **Floppy disks and diskettes**

If floppy disks are wet, they should be placed upright in cold distilled water until recovery is possible. Do not dry or attempt to freeze them. If full backup copies exist, then damaged media can be destroyed and replaced.

To salvage disks and diskettes:

1. Remove from water immediately
2. Remove from jacket
3. Rinse off dirt with clean distilled water. Do not soak
4. Drip dry vertically in a disk drain or rack.
5. Clean with a soft lintless cloth. Move perpendicular to grooves, not in a circular motion. Do not use hairdryers.
6. Place cleaned compact disk in clean jackets.
7. Replace if mould or condensation is present or if there are deep scratches. Check playability and readability.

### **Magnetic tapes**

- DO NOT freeze because the moisture in the tapes will cause permanent damage when frozen. Do not use magnetised tools/scissors
- DO NOT use hot or warm air to dry as it will cause the tape to adhere.

Treatment of magnetic tapes will depend on the extent of water penetration. The casing usually keeps tapes clean and dry. If full backup copies exist, then damaged media can be destroyed and replaced.

### **Wet tape**

- Disassemble the case and remove the tape.
- Rinse dirty tapes, still wound on reels in lukewarm water.
- Support vertically on blotting paper to air dry.
- Reassemble and copy.

### **Optical media (compact disks etc)**

If full backup copies exist, then damaged media can be destroyed and replaced.

1. Remove from water immediately
2. Remove from jacket
3. Rinse off dirt with clean distilled water. Do not soak
4. Drip dry vertically in a disk drain or rack.
5. Clean with a soft lintless cloth. Move perpendicular to grooves, not in a circular motion. Do not use hairdryers.
6. Place cleaned compact disk in clean jackets.
7. Replace if mould or condensation is present or if there are deep scratches. Check playability and readability.

### **Microforms**

If backup copies exist, damaged media can be destroyed and replaced.

Silver halide microfilm should be kept underwater and not allowed to dry out. It should be sent to a processing laboratory within 72 hours. Vesicular and diazo film should be separated and air dried:

1. Extract water affected records and dry separately.
2. Peg aperture cards up for drying.
3. Unroll microfilms and air dry with the emulsion side up or send to film laboratory.
4. Rewind film and store in dry containers.

If microforms cannot be dried immediately, they should be immersed in clean, cold water for no more than 2 to 3 days and taken to a laboratory. Duplication is recommended where possible.

## Portable Hard Drives, Memory Cards and USB Drives

Specialist assistance is likely to be required for electronic repair and recovery for flash memory devices. Memory cards (as found in mobile phones and cameras) are similar in design to USB drives and they share certain similarities that are both strengths (fairly shock-proof and may often survive a trip through the washing machine) and weaknesses (sensitivity to electronic damage, often have a relatively weak casing, and most use FAT16/32 as a file system).

In the case of USB sticks, exposure to water may be remedied allowing to dry thoroughly for a few days before attempting to access the information. Back ups of information to alternative sources is recommended, however, as USB sticks can fail without warning at a later time due to internal oxidization or corrosion. In the event information is unable to be accessed, prompt referral to a specialist service provider is recommended.

## 6 Services and advice

*[Note: Agencies should compile their own list of recovery specialists according to their particular needs and location and update it regularly. Check your local telephone book for more risk management and disaster recovery vendors. Some insurers also have preferred recovery providers.]*

### 6.1 List of contacts

Contact	Specialty/Location
[Name, address, contact details of providers]	[It may be of value to list the types of recovery they will undertake and locations they will go to]

### 6.2 Training and publications

TAHO Advice 46 – *Treating records with mould*

TAHO Advice 26 – *Disaster Preparedness and Recovery*

NAA – *Disaster Preparedness Manual for Commonwealth Agencies*

## 7 For more information

To discuss any aspect of this plan contact the Corporate Services Manager on [extension no].

## 8 List of vital records and protection measures

A list of [Timbuctoo City Council's] vital records is provided below, including specific risks and protection measures.

	Vital Records	Area responsible and location	Controlling System	Why vital?	Risks	Protection measures	Recover if backups are suitable*	RDS ref & action
1	General ledger	Finance Department - Level 2 West	Financial system	Records expenditure and revenue. Loss would cause difficulty in meeting audit responsibilities.	Data corruption Fire Fraud Hackers Viruses	Completed back-ups daily  Store Back ups off-site	No	
2	Records registry	Records Department – Level 2 East	TRIM / ECM / RecFind / Objective / Other	Control system which allows access to organisation's records and contains information showing integrity, authenticity and reliability of records. Required as State archives.	Data Corruption Fire Fraud Viruses Hackers	Completed daily back-ups  Store Back ups off-site  File Creation Forms  Virus checkers	Yes	

3	Title deeds	Legal Services Department	Paper; registered in records system	Shows ownership of Council owned properties. Loss would make ownership difficult to prove.	Loss of deeds	Photocopy and store offsite  Store in fire proof safe	Yes	
4	Rates books	Customer Service Department – 1990-present  Records Department – 1870-1990	Books; registered in records system  Electronic database	Supports rights of rate payers and Council regarding rates collected. Loss would cause difficulty in proving who has paid and may cause financial hardship. Required as State archives.	Fire  Fraud  Virus  Hackers	Microfilm books and store offsite  Back up database nightly and store offsite	Yes	
5	Records regarding maintenance and conservation work on buildings of heritage value	Planning Department	Paper: registered in records system  Electronic database of plans	Important for: ensuring building is maintained according to heritage standards; history of locality. Required as State archives	Fire  Fraud  Virus  Hackers	Photocopy files and store offsite  Store in fire proof safe  Back up database nightly and store offsite	Yes	

\*Note: If records are still required under a legal disposal authority and they are damaged to a very severe extent, the Council should contact TAHO to discuss if they should be recovered, or disposed of and duplicates used in their place. They should NOT be destroyed without permission.

*[Note: This is a sample list of vital records only. Each agency needs to identify its own set of vital records based on its specific business needs]*

**[Agency Name]**  
**Records**  
**Management**

**Disaster**  
**Preparedness &**  
**Recovery Manual**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	INTRODUCTION.....	3
2.0	DEFINITIONS.....	3
3.0	PREVENTION.....	4
4.0	RESPONSIBILITIES .....	4
4.1	Local Disaster Management Group .....	4
4.2	Risk Assessment.....	5
5.0	PREPARATION .....	6
5.1	Salvage Priorities .....	6
5.2	Disaster Recovery Team .....	7
5.3	Disaster Preparedness Kit.....	7
6.0	RESPONSE.....	11
6.1	Checklist for Expected Disasters.....	11
6.2	List of Emergency Contacts.....	11
6.3	Building Plans .....	11
6.4	Key Disaster Response & Recovery Steps .....	11
6.5	List of Trained Council Staff.....	13
7.0	DISASTER RECOVERY.....	14
7.1	Planning.....	14
7.2	Entry to Site .....	14
7.3	Preliminary Tasks .....	14
7.4	Initial Assessment of Building and Records .....	14
7.5	Salvage Process .....	15
	7.5.1 Water Damaged Materials.....	16
	7.5.2 Air Drying .....	17
	7.5.3 Freeze Packing .....	19
	7.5.4 Photographic Salvage .....	20
7.6	Fire Damaged Material .....	22
8.0	AFTERMATH.....	22
8.1	Cleaning Up a Disaster Site .....	22
8.2	Re-shelving Treated Records.....	22
9.0	EVALUATION .....	23
9.1	Disaster Response .....	23
9.2	Reporting .....	23
9.3	Supplies and Services .....	23
9.4	Counselling .....	23
10.0	BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	24
11.0	REVISIONS AND CHECKLISTS.....	25

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Disasters, both large and small, which damage or destroy records, occur on a regular basis.

This manual contains a set of procedures designed to minimise or eliminate the effects of a disaster involving Council records.

It also outlines the preparations required for the timely response to and recovery from a disaster involving paper-based, electronic and other types of documents.

Further advice and assistance may be obtained from:

**Government Information Strategy Unit  
Tasmanian Archives & Heritage Office (TAHO)**

91 Murray Street

Hobart Tasmania 7000

**Phone:** (03) 6165 5581

## **2.0 DEFINITIONS**

### **Major Disaster**

- More than 20 shelves of material affected
- Risk of the disaster spreading to other areas within building
- Risk of disaster spreading to areas outside the building
- In-house power and facilities may not be operational
- Varying degrees of structural damage
- Outside assistance required

### **Minor Disaster**

- Confined to a small area
- Up to 20 shelves of material affected
- In-house facilities still operational
- Little need for outside assistance

## **3.0 PREVENTION**

Council has established special procedures, equipment and facilities covering all aspects of prevention of emergency situations in the workplace.

These include:

- Sprinkler systems
- Electricity generator
- Emergency Lighting
- Public Address System
- Emergency Procedures for Fire/Evacuation Drills
- Designated Fire Safety Officers



- Fire alarms
- Fire extinguishers
- Security systems
- Workplace Health and Safety Procedures (First Aid)
- Inspection and Maintenance Procedures
- Pest and Vermin Control

## 4. RESPONSIBILITIES

### 4.1 Emergency/Disaster Management Group

In the event of an emergency situation, the [Emergency Management Coordinator] will oversee Council's involved resources and response activities. Currently the role of [Emergency Management Coordinator] is vested with [position title].

The [Records Management Coordinator], under the direction of the Manager [business unit], is responsible for attending to the stabilisation and salvage of Council records affected by a disaster and ensuring the rehabilitation of the storage area.

### 4.2 Risk Assessment

#### 4.2.1 Disaster Incidents Affecting Council Records

##### High Risk

- fire and smoke
- water and sewage leaks
- flood
- equipment malfunction

##### Medium Risk

- poor storage and handling
- high dust levels

##### Low Risk

- mould outbreak
- vandalism
- insect and vermin attack
- bomb damage

System failures, usually associated with water pipes, is the **most likely risk** to occur in a workplace. As large proportions of disasters within a workplace occur during periods of building renovation or maintenance, staff are advised to be particularly aware of the risks during these periods.

#### 4.2.2 Definitions of Actions

The aim of all immediate, short and long term actions is to:

- stabilise emergencies affecting records.
- salvage and restore records.
- rehabilitate affected areas
- return records to storage areas.
- restore Council services as soon as possible.

#### **4.2.1.1 Immediate Actions**

These are actions taken to immediately stabilise a situation and protect staff and records. Immediate action generally involves persons discovering an emergency, assessing the situation and reporting it to those who need to know.

#### **4.2.1.2 Short Term Actions**

These are response actions taken to stabilise affected areas and protect records from further damage.

Short term actions generally involve the use of emergency supplies to cover records and contain the source of the emergency. Depending on the type of disaster, short term actions also include assessment, consultation, documentation, planning, prioritisation and exchange of information to develop appropriate long term actions.

#### **4.2.1.2 Long Term Actions**

Long term actions are recovery actions taken to salvage and restore records and affected areas. They include long term planning, salvage and treatment of records, restoration work on affected areas, re-assessment of planning, post disaster assessment and reporting.

It should be noted that disaster incidents can take many different forms necessitating the adjustment of response and recovery procedures to suit the situation.

Disasters occur with uncertain combinations of wet, mouldy, burnt, smoke damaged and physically distorted records on an unpredictable scale.

Every disaster has its own dilemmas requiring the right balance of assessment, decision and timely action. The type of disaster, type of material, location type of damage, available resources, opportunities for taking action and human safety, are all issues likely to influence the decisions that need to be made and the allocation of priorities.

## **5.0 PREPARATION**

### **5.1 Salvage Priorities**

The Records Management Team has identified the types of records held in the workplace, their priority, location and retention/ disposal status. This will avoid the unnecessary salvage of records which are due for destruction and ensure that Council's vital records receive the highest salvage priority.

#### **5.1.1 Vital Records**

Vital records are those which are essential to reconstruct and continue the operational functions of the agency. Vital records are usually associated with the legal and fiscal matters such as original policy documents.

#### **5.1.2 General Records**

There are a wide range of general records within a workplace. (All records have been allocated a retention/disposal status).

Permanent and Long-Term Temporary status records have a high salvage priority.

There may be many records affected by a disaster that have a Short-Term Temporary status, which would have a lower salvage priority, or may be due for destruction. These are listed in the computerised Records Management database, as well as in hardcopy format.

### 5.1.3 Special Records

Records such as computer tapes, microfilm, historical files, Council Minutes, photographic prints and negatives, have a high risk of loss in a disaster and require special salvage and processing procedures.

These types of records are currently stored in the [location/address]. This facility is temperature and humidity controlled and has a two hour fire rating.

Council Minutes are regularly transferred to the TAHO facility at Berriedale, for permanent retention.

Computer tapes have an off-site backup copy.

## 5.2 Disaster Recovery Team

The Records Management Team, under the direction of the [Manager Customer Services], will comprise the *Records Management Recovery Team*. Members of the team are contactable after hours and are able to respond to an emergency situation.

Training in recovery techniques is to be conducted every two years, with staff attending Disaster Preparedness Workshops.

## 5.3 Disaster Preparedness Kit

To assist in the salvage of records, a stock of salvage equipment and supplies will be kept within the workplace and checked on a six monthly basis.

### 5.3.1 Inventory

The following list of supplies are either available from sources within the Council Administration Building [address], or are held in one of Council's three (3) **Records Management Disaster Preparedness Kits**.

The Disaster Preparedness Kits are stored at the following locations:  
[enter location information]

All three "kits" are padlocked and the keys held by [Records Management Coordinator]. Keys to the **Records Repository** [address] are also held by the [Records Management Coordinator] and ID Card Access has been granted to the following staff: [authorised officers].

Each kit has been assembled in a 240 litre wheelie bins and are identical in their contents. An **inventory listing** is also kept with each container and is updated on an annual basis. Perishable goods have been kept to a minimum, however, regular checking of the kits should allow for timely and economical replacement of such items.

#### List of Supplies:

ITEM/ MATERIAL	ITEM USE
Batteries	Torches / lights
Bodkins	Replacing file pins for fanning
Broom	Cleaning

<b>ITEM/ MATERIAL</b>	<b>ITEM USE</b>
<b>Buckets (household)</b>	Cleaning / clearing
<b>Buckets (with lids)</b>	Microfilm salvage
<b>Cleaning Wipes</b>	General Purpose Cleaning
<b>Clipboards</b>	Documentation (incl. lists, procedures etc.)
<b>Clips (Foldback)</b>	General Purpose
<b>Document Cleaning Pads</b>	Removing mould from small areas
<b>Dust Bunny</b>	Dusting Documents
<b>Dust Masks</b>	Breathing Protection
<b>Dustpan and Brush</b>	Cleaning
<b>Extension Cord 10 metre</b>	Electrical items such as dehumidifier
<b>Extension Cord 20 metre</b>	Electrical items such as fans
<b>First Aid Kit</b>	
<b>Freezer Bags 30 x 45cm</b>	Freezing books
<b>Garbage Bins</b>	Collecting rubbish
<b>Gloves, rubber or disposable</b>	Where needed
<b>Gum Boots</b>	Protective footwear
<b>Hard Hats</b>	Protective head wear
<b>Hazard Tape</b>	Safety
<b>Hinged Rings</b>	Replacing file pins for fanning
<b>Hole Punches</b>	Use with Tyvek labels
<b>Labels</b>	Labelling wrapped items
<b>Mop and Bucket</b>	Cleaning
<b>Note Pads A4</b>	Recording and labelling
<b>Packaging Tape</b>	Lining benches etc.
<b>Paper Towels</b>	Absorbing / blotting moisture
<b>Pegs</b>	Drying
<b>Pencils</b>	Recording and labelling
<b>Pens (black markers)</b>	Labelling boxes / crates
<b>Plastic Bags</b>	Freezing files and registers
<b>Plastic Paper Clips</b>	Replacing wet pins etc.
<b>Plastic Sheeting</b>	Protection
<b>Plastic Trays</b>	Photographic salvage
<b>Post-It Notes</b>	
<b>Power Boards</b>	
<b>PVC Raincoats</b>	Protective Clothing

ITEM/ MATERIAL	ITEM USE
Scissors	Where needed
Sign - “Caution Wet Floor”	Safety
Signs - “Hazard Warning - Authorised Personnel Only”	Safety
Signs - “Stop - Restricted Area”	Safety
Signs - “Danger - Disaster Recovery Area”	Safety
Soft Brushes	Cleaning Soot off books / documents
Sponges (household)	Cleaning off med caked books / general
Stanley Knives	Where needed
String (plastic coated)	Drying lines / miscellaneous
Tables*	Work Areas
Torches	Lighting during blackout
Tyvek Tags	Wrapping items for freezing
Unbleached Cotton Tape	Replacing file pins for fanning / drying line
Vests (Safety)	Safety
Wash Bag	Storing Pegs

### 5.3.2 External Sources

Note some disaster recovery materials and equipment are considered too costly and too fragile to purchase and maintain permanently on-site.

In addition, much specialist equipment has limited availability and after consultation it was considered a better option to *source* such items externally, if and when a disaster recovery situation occurred.

Some of the equipment required can also be hired rather than purchased.

Below is a list of **other items** recommended for use in the disaster recovery of records and the **external source** and **contact details** of where the items can be obtained.

## List of External Sources:

<b>ITEM/ MATERIAL/ USE</b>	<b>RECOMMENDED SUPPLIER</b>
<b>Archive Storage Boxes</b> [Replace wet / damp boxes where contents are not affected]	
<b>Blotting Paper</b>	
<b>Crates</b> [Carrying waterlogged material]	
<b>Chux Masslin Rolls</b> [Lint free cloth for cleaning microfilm]	
<b>Dehumidifiers</b> [Reduce Humidity]	
<b>Fans</b> [Air Drying waterlogged books / files]	
<b>Freezing Unit</b> [Freezing waterlogged books / files]	
<b>Hair Drier</b> [Where needed]	
<b>Respirators, Half Face</b> <b>Respirators, Full Face</b> <b>Respirators, Cartridges</b> [Air filtering, refills]	
<b>Silica</b> [Dehumidifying small areas]	
<b>Sponges (Smoke-off)</b> [Removal of soot and smoke residue]	
<b>Vacuum, wet and dry</b> [Cleaning]	

## **6.0 RESPONSE**

### **6.1 Checklist for Expected Disasters**

When a cyclone is approaching or flooding is expected the Records Management Team should check the workplace to ensure that all precautions are in place.

- Monitor weather forecasts regularly.
- Liaise with Local Disaster Management Group for weather predictions, etc.
- Transfer records to a safe site if required.
- Ensure all remaining records are securely stored.
- Remove all records off the floor and from bottom shelving if necessary.
- Cover exposed records with plastic sheeting.
- Secure doors and board or tape windows.
- Check that backup tapes have been stored off-site.

## 6.2 Lists of Emergency Contacts

A list of emergency contacts can be located in Council's *Disaster Management Plan*. Contact details for the Tasmanian Archives and Heritage Office (refer 1.0) and external sources of equipment (refer 4.5), are also held in the Disaster Preparedness Kits.

## 6.3 Building Plans

Plans of the workplace are included in Council's *Disaster Management Plan*, and will be helpful in the planning stage of a disaster recovery. These plans show the location of fire extinguishers, main electricity switches, water main shut-off valves, emergency exits, etc.

## 6.4 Key Disaster Response & Recovery Steps<sup>1</sup>

### 1) Raise the Alarm

Notify and brief emergency services, members of the disaster recovery team, the Counter Disaster Committee and other Council personnel as required.

### 2) Set up Area of Control

If required, set up a designated area that can be used by the disaster recovery team to discuss and make decisions relating to the disaster.

### 3) Secure the Site

Ensure the area is safe to enter prior to the commencement of recovery operations. Where minor damage has occurred, this assessment may be made by the [Manager Information Services] and the Disaster Management Committee. In instances where major damage has occurred (i.e. potential structural instability), Emergency Services will be required to assess the site prior to re-entry.

### 4) Assess & Document Damage to Site & Records

#### Site:

Assess and document damage caused by the disaster. You will need to consider the cause of the damage, type of damage, current conditions, what has been damaged, extent of the damage, injury to people, and whether an alternative site will be required to continue operations. This information will be required for senior management and for insurance purposes.

#### Records :

You will need to determine the following:

- Are records damaged, lost, inaccessible?
- Quantities of records damaged?
- Type of damage to records?
- Have vital records been damaged or lost?
- What types of media have been affected?
- What equipment and supplies are required to recover records?
- Call TAHO to report damage and to obtain guidance and advice from professional conservation staff.

### 5) Stabilise & Protect Records from Further Damage

- Reduce humidity (ensure humidity is below 60%).
- Ventilate the area (open windows, doors, turn on fans and air conditioning etc.).
- Remove debris.
- Isolate damaged / affected records.
- Begin insect eradication procedures immediately to isolate infestations.
- Remove and relocate damaged/affected records.

#### **6) Assemble Resources for Recovery Operations**

- Gather equipment and supplies required to commence recovery operations and assign relevant responsibilities to the disaster recovery team members.
- If external assistance (i.e. records recovery and conservation specialists) is required, contact immediately.

#### **7) Salvage Records According to their Priority**

- Prioritise and salvage records.
- Inspect and evaluate damage to records and divide into categories for specific treatment. (i.e. air-drying, freezing, replacement, destruction and no action).
- Recover records as required.

#### **8) Clean Up Disaster Site**

- Organise for the site to be cleaned and environmentally habitable. Disaster recovery specialists may be required to assist in clean up operations, i.e. cleaning of furniture, furnishings, computer equipment etc.
- Return treated records to clean dry and secure storage facilities.

#### **9) Resume Operations**

- Restart equipment, processes and systems.
- Organise for the re-indexing and re-shelving of salvage records.
- Notify personnel that operations have resumed.

#### **10) Evaluate Disaster Response & Recovery Operations**

- Carry out debriefing sessions for the Disaster Recovery Team and other personnel.
- Compare the disaster plan procedures with what actually happened.
- Evaluate the performance of external suppliers and recovery services.
- Update the Disaster Recovery Plan if and where required.





## 7.0 DISASTER RECOVERY

### 7.1 Planning

Planning is essential to the successful outcome of the recovery procedure. The time spent between the response to the disaster and entry to the disaster site must be used to plan for an effective recovery.

The [Records Management Coordinator] will establish and allocate the responsibilities and duties of a Recovery Team and set up salvage priorities. Planning will include the preparation of work areas for drying and freezer packing and accessing all necessary equipment and materials from the *Disaster Preparedness Kit*.

### 7.2 Entry to Site

Records Management Team may only enter a disaster site once the situation has been stabilised, and access has been authorised by the [Local Disaster Management Group Coordinator] or Emergency Services authorities. Once the affected area has been declared safe, the [Records Management Coordinator] will assess the situation and formulate a plan of action for the records salvage operation.

Protective clothing and footwear should be worn at all times.

### 7.3 Preliminary Tasks

In the event of a major disaster, Records Management Team must first attend to the following before the actual salvage of records can commence:

- initial assessment of building and records
- stabilising of environmental conditions
- protection of undamaged records at risk
- preparation of work areas
- confirm readiness of alternate site (*refer to Operations Manager*)

**NOTE:** If records remain wet for more than 48 hours, mould will begin to develop.

### 7.4 Initial Assessment of Building and Records

This process will include:

- visual damage inspection and documentation.
- photographing of damaged records before removal
- estimation of extent of salvage operation.
- estimation of back-up facilities required.
- ensuring insurance policy obligations are met before clean up commences
- ensuring police incident scene not compromised by recovery work

#### 7.4.1 Building Survey

- note the extent of structural/ shelving damage.
- systems: power/water supply etc.
- atmospheric conditions: presence of water, dirt, soot/smoke damage.

#### 7.4.2 Records Survey

- note quantities and location of records in the worst affected areas.
- identify salvage priority items.

### 7.4.3 Environmental Control

- If there has been excessive water damage, every effort must be made to lower both the temperature and relative humidity as quickly as possible.
- If only the generator is operating, there will be no air-conditioning function and industrial strength dehumidifiers and fans will need to be hired immediately.
- Any excess water must also be removed by whatever means possible:
  - blotters/towels/mops
  - wet/dry vacuum
  - pumps

### 7.4.4 Protection Of Records At Risk

This may involve such actions as:

- draping polyethylene sheeting over shelving units.
- removal of threatened records to a safer area.
- replacing slightly damp boxes and wrappings with dry ones.

### 7.4.5 Preparation Of Work Areas

As soon as possible, members of the *Recovery Team* should begin to prepare key work areas for the salvage operation. The size of the disaster will, however, determine both the number of teams required and their locations.

### 7.4.6 On-Site Team

The main purpose of having an On-Site team is to remove all wet/burnt/damaged material from the shelves repositories and relocate it to the most appropriate salvage area, such as **Freeze Packing** and **Air Drying**.

Good documentation is essential.

## 7.5 Salvage Process

Salvage priority should be given to the following categories of records:

- Vital records.
- Records with permanent or long term temporary retention status
- Records showing signs of mould growth.
- Leather or vellum bound books.

The two essential components for a successful Salvage Program are:

- To remove wet / burnt material from the affected area promptly.
- If there is a large quantity of wet material, freeze as soon as possible.
- 

Records should be frozen within 72 hours or less if mould growth is to be avoided.

Although freezing will not kill mould, it will cause it to remain dormant until resources and facilities are available for correctly drying the records. As soon as possible, arrangements should be made for a refrigerated truck to be made available for transportation of wet records to a blast freezing facility. (refer 5.3)

### 7.5.1 Water Damaged Materials

In the event of a major disaster involving both burnt and wet records, the *Recovery Team* members will, at the direction of the Manager Customer Services, form several work teams specialising in different aspects of the salvage. The following points outline the key duties of each team.

### **7.5.1.1 Setting Up Procedures**

- 1) Assemble equipment and material and proceed to the salvage area.
- 2) Arrange to have several mobile tables/ trolleys close by for sorting, documentation, re-boxing etc.
- 3) Arrange to have a quantity of boxes and wrapping paper on location for re-boxing records which are dry but have wet boxes.
- 4) Arrange to have a quantity of plastic crates or bins onsite for transporting material to the other salvage teams (or for on-site freeze packing).

### **7.5.1.2 Recovery Procedures**

- 1) Remove records and debris from the floor first. Then proceed to empty the filing compactus/ unit from the top working downwards  
(This will reduce the risk of shelving toppling over).
- 2) If a wet register is found lying open, do not attempt to close it.
- 3) Leave files, cards bundles etc in their original boxes/wrapping. Retain with them any loose scraps, labels etc.
- 4) Sort records into categories of wetness (sodden; damp; mostly dry).
- 5) Send sodden records for Freeze Packing.
- 6) Send damp /mostly dry records for Air Drying.
- 7) Record as accurately as possible, details of which records have been removed, and their destinations. (A supply of Record Keeping Sheets are provided in the Disaster Preparedness Kits). A sheet is to be completed for each packing crate and accompany the crates to go to Air Drying or Freeze Packing.
- 8) Remove all wet debris, including floor coverings and furniture and rubbish from the flooded area as soon as possible, and dry out area using fans, dehumidifiers, dry/wet vacuums etc. If discarding wet boxes, make sure that all location details and numbering are first recorded and kept with the relevant items.

## **7.5.2 Air Drying**

The decision to air dry records immediately will depend on the scale of the disaster. If the water damage is confined to a reasonably small area (up to 20 shelves), then air drying can commence immediately. If, however, there is a major disaster resulting in widespread water damage, it would be quicker and easier to simply freeze all damp or wet records.

Once frozen, items can be retrieved, thawed and air dried at a later or more convenient time.

### **7.5.2.1 Setting Up Procedures**

- 1) Assemble tables or borrow stackable bread crates for mass air drying.
- 2) Cover all bench-tops with polyethylene sheeting, and then with blotters or absorbent paper.
- 3) Set up fans and dehumidifiers around the room. Temperature should be maintained between 18°C-22°C and relative humidity (R.H.) should be pulled down as low as possible (around 35%). Temperature and the R.H. should be monitored constantly.
- 4) Line table tops and shelves with blotter /absorbent paper (do the same with the bread crates when they arrive).
- 5) Allocate a special temporary storage area for items which have been dried and are awaiting re-shelving.

### 7.5.2.2 Recovery Procedures

#### 1) Preliminary Washing

Before commencing air drying, wash any registers and files that are soiled with mud or sludge. This should be done holding the item firmly closed, under a gentle stream of cold, clean water and gently dabbing with a sponge.

**Do not** rub, brush or attempt to open pages at this stage.

**Do not** use hot water, detergents or bleaches.

**Do not** attempt this on maps/plans.

#### 2. Files

Gently remove files from boxes or wrappings and lay flat on tables, drying racks and bread crates. Interleave with absorbent paper towels taking care not to put too much strain on the fastener. If space permits fan the files out for greater exposure. The crates can then be stacked on top of one another with a fan placed at one end.

- Remember to document carefully the location of all records removed from boxes and wrappings.
- As the interleaving sheets become wet, discard them and replace with dry sheets. This also applies to wet blotters and paper on the bench tops and drying racks.
- Wet files may benefit from having the metal fastener removed and replaced with a long piece of plastic string or twist tie forming a loop. This will allow a greater degree of fanning and will speed up the drying process. It will also prevent the pin from rusting.

#### 3. Bundles

- Where files are not secured together, and where order is not clearly marked sequentially, deal with one bundle at a time. Be sure to note the order of files, then separate and dry as individual documents.

**Please Note:** *This must be done away from other drying to prevent files becoming mixed up. Alternatively, if a large number of plastic "in tray" baskets (with ventilation holes) can be obtained place each file in a basket, stacking each basket on top of another to make one column per bundle.*

- Make sure that a record is kept of the order. Supermarket carry baskets may also prove useful for keeping the order of files. Use whatever resources are available.

#### 4. Maps/Plans

Interleave with blotter using lint free tissue between the map and the blotter if you suspect that some adhesive may be present. Press dry under glass/perspex/thick boards.

#### 5. Card Indices

Remove from drawers, stack on sides loosely and support at ends with bricks etc.

#### 6. Bound material

- If strong enough, average sized registers should be dried upright, with the covers open slightly.
- If pages are waterlogged, rather than just damp at the edges, interleave with blotting paper or paper towels. The amount of interleaving paper used for one volume should not exceed 1/3 of its thickness, due to the risk of damage to the spine of the book. As with files, this interleaving should be changed often and disposed of.
- When almost completely dry, books should be laid horizontally and lightly weighted (eg. with a covered brick).
- **Never** attempt to stack or press wet, swollen books.

## **7. Dried Records**

Recently dried records should not be returned to the stack immediately. They should remain in the holding area for around 6 months before being returned to the repositories. The holding area should have good air circulation, low temperature 20°C and low R.H. 45%-50%. These records should be inspected regularly for signs of mould and checked to see if repairs, rebinding etc. are needed. Only when convinced that they are completely dry and their original shape has been retained, can they be re-shelved.

### **7.5.3 Freeze Packing**

#### **7.5.3.1 Setting Up Procedures**

- 1) Arrange to hire as many plastic crates as required. Supermarket carry baskets may also prove useful for freezing bundles of files.
- 2) Obtain plastic bags, marking pens etc from the disaster kits. Decide on the most appropriate location for packing. Depending on the scale of the disaster, it may be possible to pack for freezing at or near the original location of the wet records.
- 3) The freeze packing team could work along side the on-site retrieval team. This would also make documentation easier. In the event of a large-scale disaster, however, it might be easier to do all the packing at a loading bay where it can await the refrigerated truck. This decision would need to be made on the day.

#### **7.5.3.2 Recovery Procedures**

- 1) Each item should either be placed into a plastic bag, or have plastic wrapped around the outside to prevent it from sticking to the material beside it.
- 2) Place all items vertically into plastic crates. Registers should be placed with the spine down.
- 3) Wet records in boxes, file or plan cabinets should be left in their containers or drawers and frozen.
- 4) Ensure that each crate is numbered and a list of its contents is attached (waterproof pens or freezer pens should be used).
- 5) **DO NOT freeze the following:**
  - glass plate negatives
  - magnetic tapes (audio, video, computer etc)
  - floppy discs
  - microfilm
  - photograph albums

**Proceed with photographic salvage.**

### **7.5.4 Photographic Salvage**

If possible, all affected materials should be air dried immediately, as this causes less distortion than other drying methods. If this is not possible, film/prints can be frozen (as a last resort), to retard deterioration, then thawed at a later stage and air-dried. Some materials will require the services of a professional photographic laboratory.

#### 7.5.4.1 Salvage Process

Photographic materials should be dried in the following order:

- Colour prints
- Black and white prints
- Negatives
- Transparencies

Those materials requiring the services of a professional lab should be transported in cold water. Obtain buckets with lids for this purpose. Cleaning and drying should be arranged as soon as possible.

#### 7.5.4.2 Drying Procedures (alphabetical order)

- 1) CD-ROM: Remove from protective case and gently dab/blot excess water from the disk with a very soft lint free cloth. Then apply lens cleaning solution sparingly to the disk and wipe it off with a lens tissue. The cleaning motion should never be circular (along the tracks). Always wipe from the centre of the disk outwards.
- 2) Floppy Disks - 3½ Inch: Current research shows that the information on these is unlikely to be saved if contaminated by smoke or water.
- 3) Floppy Disks - 5¼ Inch: Remove disk from the packet by cutting along the edge with non-magnetic scissors. Wash in distilled water. Dry with a lint free towel. Place disk in a new jacket and copy onto a new floppy disk (the new jacket can be reused several times for copying). If the quality of the new recording is satisfactory, the original can be discarded.
- 4) Magnetic Media: (magnetic tape; audio tape; video tape). The salvage of magnetic media is very problematic and there seems to be conflicting advice as to the correct procedures.

The main threat to magnetic media is water. Therefore, if back-up copies of water damaged items exist, then the damaged material should be discarded. If no back-up copies exist, contact the *National Film and Sound Archive* on 1800 067274 for advice on how best to salvage the material (cassettes and cartridges which cannot be opened will probably be a total loss).

If only exposed to heat, magnetic tape may be able to be salvaged. Allow the tape to relax for up to two months, and then re-copy. Once copied, discard the original.

- 5) Microfilm - Silver Halide: Keep all wet film under water and arrange transport to a professional processing laboratory (nappy buckets with tight fitting lids are a good idea).
- 6) Microfilm - Vesicular and Diazo: Air dry or wipe the film with a soft, lint free cloth.
- 7) Negatives - Film Based: Rinse black and white negatives in clean water and wetting agent, and hang up to air dry. Colour negatives should be kept wet and sent to a laboratory for reprocessing.
- 8) Negatives - Glass Plate: (these must be sent to a photographic laboratory.) **Do not** freeze; immerse in water; or allow to dry if touching. Instead, it is advised that you:

- Line a milk crate with polyethylene sheets.
- Stand glass plates vertically, and separate with lint free tissue.
- Pack out all spaces with bubble wrap and transport to a laboratory.

9) Photographic Prints - Black & White and Colour:

- If dirty, place in a tray of cold water, and agitate the tray.
- Colour material should not be left under water longer than 48 hours.
- Black and white should not remain wet longer than 72 hours.
- Air dry by laying prints out face up on blotters in a cool dry environment with good air circulation.

10) Photographic Prints - Framed:

- Remove frame carefully to prevent the photograph from sticking to the glass.
- Air dry as above.

11) Photographs - Cased (Daguerreotypes, Ambrotypes, Tintypes):

- Air dry, being careful to keep face-up at all times (many images will not be recoverable).

12) Transparencies:

- Kodachrome transparencies should be rinsed for 1 minute in clean water and wetting agent.
- Ektachrome (professional quality) transparencies should be sent to a professional laboratory.

13) X-Ray Film: treat as for Kodachrome transparencies.

## 7.6 Fire Damaged Material (not wet)

- Handle all items as gently as possible.
- Place dry, charred items between cardboard sheets and secure with wrappings or ties to await treatment. (Contact TAHO).
- If only damaged by smoke and ash, treat gently with a soft brush.
- If damaged by water, proceed to the salvage program for water damaged records.

## 8.0 AFTERMATH

### 8.1 Cleaning up a Disaster Site

The aim is to return the site to its normal condition as soon as possible. Material should not be returned to the area until the risk of a repeat disaster is removed, the area has been thoroughly cleaned and dried, all repair work is completed and all shelving checked for stability and usefulness.

#### 8.1.1 Clean-up Measures

These include the following:

- washing down dirty shelving, walls and floors
- using fans and dehumidifiers to dry the area and circulate air to avoid mould growth



- carrying out regular temperature and relative humidity checks, and not returning material to the area until the temperature and relative humidity have stabilised at acceptable levels for at least a week.

### **8.1.2 Electronic Records**

Containers and protective encasements like file covers, cartridges and diskettes may need to be replaced or cleaned. Computer equipment will either need to be cleaned or replaced and electronic imaging media may need to be duplicated or reformatted. (refer 7.5.4.2)

## **8.2 Re-shelving Treated Records**

The aftermath of a disaster is a good time to consider improving any shelving arrangements for files. The material may well take up more space than previously, as there will have been some swelling of the material as a result of being wet. Extra space may need to be found.

Temperature and relative humidity should be checked regularly for at least 12 months, in case the records or the room was not sufficiently dry when the room was reoccupied. Files may give off more moisture, which could result in mould growth.

Archived material should either be given new boxes, or be boxed for the first time. Current files could be given new file covers if the legibility of information has been affected.

Orders should be made for replacement books, microforms etc.

## 9.0 EVALUATION

### 9.1 Disaster Response

Once Council has recovered from a disaster, the [Records Management Coordinator] should conduct a debriefing session with the officers and volunteers involved, to compare the *Records Management Disaster Preparedness Procedure* to what actually happened.

This is vital in ensuring that confusing guidelines or mistakes are eliminated and that the *Records Management Disaster Preparedness Procedure* will operate better in the future. The discussion results should also be documented in a report.

### 9.2 Reporting

Reporting is a significant component of the response to a disaster. Officers should keep an adequate record of the emergency so that improvements can be made to prevent similar emergencies occurring in the future, or to make the response to any subsequent ones more efficient.

The Records Management Team will maintain a register of significant emergencies, consisting of the following information, as applicable:

- date/time/duration
- location
- nature
- cause
- a description of the effect on:
  - people (ie. staff and visitors)
  - records
  - business function
  - buildings
  - other property
  - a description of how the occurrence was dealt with and recommendations for future incidents and changes to the *Records Management Disaster Preparedness Procedure*.

### 9.3 Supplies and Services

Staff should also conduct some residual tasks. For example:

- stocktaking and replacement of recovery supplies.
- evaluate performance of suppliers and recovery services and replace vendors that performed poorly.
- monitor affected areas and records for signs of continuing problems.

### 9.4 Counselling

The Manager [unit name] should ensure that staff are thanked for their efforts in disaster management. In some cases where trauma has been suffered, they may require ongoing counselling and support.

## 10.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY

### 10.1 Disaster Management Plan

*[Agency - date]*

### 10.2 Disaster Planning for Libraries and Archives: Understanding Essential Issues

*(National Library of Australia - paper written and presented by Dr Jan Lyall, Director, National Preservation Officer for the Pan-African Conference on the Preservation and Conservation of Library and Archival Materials, Nairobi, Kenya: 21-25 June 1993)*

[www.nla.gov.au/nla/staffpaper/lyall1.html](http://www.nla.gov.au/nla/staffpaper/lyall1.html)

### 10.3 Disaster Preparedness and Recovery Manual (Under Review)

*(Queensland State Archives)*

[www.archives.qld.gov.au/government/guidelines.asp](http://www.archives.qld.gov.au/government/guidelines.asp)

### 10.4 Disaster Preparedness Manual for Commonwealth Agencies

*(National Archives of Australia)*

[www.naa.gov.au/recordkeeping/preservation/disaster/chapt1.html](http://www.naa.gov.au/recordkeeping/preservation/disaster/chapt1.html)

### 10.5 Guidelines for the Storage of Government Documents

*(Queensland State Archives)*

[www.archives.qld.gov.au/government/guidelines.asp](http://www.archives.qld.gov.au/government/guidelines.asp)

### 10.6 Guideline 5 - Counter disaster strategies for records and recordkeeping systems

*(State Records New South Wales)*

[http://www.records.nsw.gov.au/recordkeeping/guideline\\_5\\_counter\\_disaster\\_strategies\\_5021.asp](http://www.records.nsw.gov.au/recordkeeping/guideline_5_counter_disaster_strategies_5021.asp)

### 10.7 Information Standard 40 - Recordkeeping

*(Queensland Government Chief Information Office)*

[www.governmentict.qld.gov.au/02\\_infostand/standards.htm](http://www.governmentict.qld.gov.au/02_infostand/standards.htm)

### 10.8 Learning from Disasters: A Decade of Experience at the NLA

*(paper presented by the National Library of Australia, at the ALIA 5th Biennial Conference and Exhibition 'Pathways to Knowledge', 25-28 October 1998)*

[www.nla.gov.au/nla/staffpaper/lpreiss1.html](http://www.nla.gov.au/nla/staffpaper/lpreiss1.html)

### 10.9 NLA Collection Disaster Plan

*(National Library of Australia)*

[www.nla.gov.au/policy/disaster/](http://www.nla.gov.au/policy/disaster/)

### 10.10 Risk Management

*(Australian Standard: AS ISO 15489.1-2002, 4.3.7 – Storage)*

