

Office of the
State Archivist



PHYSICAL STORAGE TECHNICAL STANDARD

Our principles:

Value: We maximise the value of our state's information assets

Manage: We apply a risk-based approach to managing information assets

Share: We enable safe and secure sharing of information

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CONTACT US

Office of the State Archivist

www.osa.tas.gov.au

osa@libraries.tas.gov.au

03 6165 5581

This is a living document and we will make minor changes as needed. If you notice anything that needs updating, please let us know.

The *Physical Storage Technical Standard* is part of the *Tasmanian Government Information Management Framework*.

Every five years we will review, update and reissue all of our Standards to ensure they reflect current best practice. The scheduled review date is November 2025.



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Document Development History

Version	Date	Comments
1.1	15/07/2024	Minor edits, Appendix 1: austenitic stainless steel, references, template change
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Purpose

This Standard describes minimum storage requirements for State records. It applies to records held in the custody of organisations, and those outsourced to commercial providers.

Poor management of stored records can result in:

- high costs and inefficiencies due to storing and preserving unnecessary information
- reputational damage to organisations and government, and loss of public trust when important information cannot be found when needed
- loss of government information and Tasmania's cultural memory.

Adoption of this Standard ensures that:

- records are stored cost-effectively
- records are protected, secure and readily accessible for as long as they are required to meet business needs, legal and regulatory requirements and community expectations
- permanent records are stored in the best possible conditions.

This Standard covers all types of *physical* storage media including paper, audiovisual material, microforms, photographs, maps, objects, and machine-readable formats, such as tapes and disks.

Scope

This Standard applies to:

1. Government organisations defined in the *Archives Act 1983* (Tas) that store State records
2. Commercial providers seeking certification as Approved Secondary Storage Providers.

If you are a government organisation that has a contract with a non-approved provider, take reasonable steps to move your records to an Approved Secondary Storage Provider once the contract ends.

We recommend that permanent and long term temporary records are kept in your custody, and not outsourced.

If you need to keep permanent records in your custody beyond the time specified in the *Archives Act 1983* (Tas), seek permission from the State Archivist.

Approved Secondary Storage Providers (ASSP) are certified by the State Archivist. Current providers are listed on our website.

Certification is valid for three years, and is site specific. Certification renewal is also for three years. New, additional or altered premises need to be inspected and certified, even if the provider has been previously certified. Please contact the Office of the State Archivist to discuss any changes that may impact on your compliance with the Standard.

Authority

This Standard is issued under Section 10A of the *Archives Act 1983* (Tas).

Implementation

When implementing this Standard, consider **value** and **risk**. In practice, this means that resource and effort should be directed to high-value, high-risk records.

The State Archivist sets the risk tolerance for Permanent records.

Permanent records are to be transferred as State archives for addition to the Tasmanian Archives when no longer required for official purposes. Less than 5% of all records created by government are of permanent retention value. These **high-value records** are kept as the documentary heritage of the State of Tasmania.

The State Archivist's tolerance of risk to these records is low. This means prioritising management of these records above others and consulting the Office of the State Archivist for guidance on appropriate methods for their storage, preservation and accessibility.

Your organisation sets the risk tolerance for Temporary records.

Your organisation's **high-value records** are records that your business could not function without.

Your organisation's **high-risk records** may include, but are not limited to:

- those likely to be required in legal proceedings
- highly confidential or highly classified material
- those of potential value for sharing across government in response to high priority business
- commercially sensitive information
- personal or sensitive information.

Identifying your high-value, high-risk records means that you can prioritise effort and resource to these records, over, for example, low-value, low-risk records.

We have adopted a risk-based approach based on feedback and current best practice. We recognise that this new approach is different from our previous focus on compliance, and we will support all organisations implementing this Standard. Further information and advice is provided in our Implementation tools.

We recommend that you apply a risk-based approach to records management. You should follow your organisational risk management processes.

Contact us to discuss any issues so we can address them together.

Note

Some Policies and Standards in our *Information Management Framework* are in development. Check our website for details.

Minimum Requirements

1. AUTHORISATION

If outsourcing your records storage, confirm that the provider has been certified as an Approved Secondary Storage Provider by checking our website.

2. RISK IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT

It is good practice that records only be stored in storage areas and facilities that are dedicated to the storage of records or library materials. Complete a risk assessment before selecting organisational storage areas or facilities, or outsourcing storage. Identify and mitigate potential risks. Include and mitigate potential risks and record these in your risk register, business continuity plan and disaster preparedness, management and recovery plan.

Prioritise risk assessment for specific record types, including:

- those likely to be required in legal proceedings
- highly confidential or highly classified material
- commercially sensitive material
- personal or sensitive information
- permanent and long term temporary records
- those of potential value for sharing across government in response to high priority business.

Ensure that permanent records are kept in your custody, and not outsourced.

3. CONTRACTS AS A RISK MANAGEMENT TOOL

It is good practice to have a contract when outsourcing storage. A good contract will include clauses that clearly specify:

- the contracting agent/Tasmanian Government retains legal ownership
- the contracting agent/Tasmanian Government owns the intellectual property of the outsourced records
- the storage provider's systems, storage, security, transport, access arrangements and disposal activities comply with:
 - legislative and regulatory requirements, including the *Personal Information Protection Act 2004* (Tas), *Right to Information Act 2009* (Tas) and *Archives Act 1983* (Tas)
 - relevant policies and standards in the *Tasmanian Government Information Management Framework*
 - your organisational security policies
- access provisions, including retrieval, handling and return of records
- performance measures, monitoring and inspection arrangements
- third party arrangements
- notification to changes of terms
- indemnification of the Tasmanian Government against claims for loss or damage in respect of a breach of the recordkeeping requirements

- insurance, including records in transit
- processes and penalties should requirements not be met
- arrangements in the event of machinery of government changes, outsourcing or privatisation
- notification arrangements including receivership, unauthorised access, data breaches or damage to or loss of records
- options should the contracting agent/Tasmanian Government fail to pay for storage (without resorting to the destruction of records)
- the timely return of records and metadata, in a useable format, to the contracting agent/Tasmanian Government at contract end or completion.

If required, seek advice from Crown Law or your organisational legal section before drafting or signing contracts. (Note that State Service agencies are not permitted to modify Crown Law contracts without getting formal Crown Law advice.) It is your responsibility to assess contracts, as this is not assessed as part of our Approved Secondary Storage Provider certification.

Monitor outsourced arrangements annually to confirm contractual requirements are met.

4. LOCATION AND CONSTRUCTION

Ensure storage areas and facilities are located away from known hazards such as:

- bushfire-prone areas
- coastal areas due to risk of flooding from high tides, rising sea levels or tsunamis
- earthquake prone areas or land liable to subsidence
- electromagnetic fields and mobile phone towers and base stations
- floodplains, creeks, rivers or stormwater drains due to risk of flooding or seepage from contaminants
- hazardous or heavy industries, such as oil or gas plants, chemical waste dumps or plants, paint or rubber factories due to atmospheric pollutants, and the risk of fire and/or explosion
- major airports or directly under flight paths due to risk of accidents and exhaust pollutants
- strategic installations, such as fuel depots or munitions factories.

Ensure storage areas within the building are physically separated from areas of known risk, such as:

- kitchens
- bathrooms
- electrical plants
- machinery or air conditioning units
- overhead pipes
- exposed plumbing.

Ensure storage areas and facilities comply with the *National Construction Code of Australia (Building Code of Australia)* and associated codes.

Ensure storage areas and facilities and nearby areas are free of anything that could damage records (such as chemicals or flammable liquids).

Ensure floor loading capacity safely supports records, their containers and any furnishings or equipment.

Minimise the impact of sunlight and UV light on records.

Protect records from fire, dust and water.

Ensure an integrated pest management system is in place.

Protect magnetic storage media from:

- magnetic fields, including, but not limited to, high intensity electromagnetic fields (for example high voltage power lines), lightning conductor systems, electric generators and motors and electrical wiring, and
- dust and other particles, such as acidic and oxidising gases.

5. INSPECTION AND MAINTENANCE

Establish and maintain a schedule of essential building services maintenance that complies with the *Building Act 2016* (Part 14) (Tas) and *Building Regulations 2016* (Part 7) (Tas).

Implement an ongoing maintenance program to identify, assess and mitigate risks to the security and preservation of State records.

Inspect and assess storage areas and facilities every three years for compliance against this Standard. Approved Secondary Storage Providers will be inspected by a representative from our Office.

Complete random checks within a sample of records at least every six months to identify signs of pest infestation, mould, computer viruses, and data corruption or information loss.

Keep storage areas and facilities (including containers, shelving and handling equipment) clean and in good working order.

6. PRESERVATION

Store records in conditions as close as possible to those described in Appendix 1.

Ensure records and their metadata remain accessible for as long as required. This may involve:

- regular monitoring and review
- copying, converting or migrating records into different formats
- disaster preparedness plans.

Use acid free or archival quality containers to store permanent records.

Use robust, clean containers to store temporary records.

Ensure containers are clean, in good condition, and appropriate to record weight, size and format.

Ensure shelving meets the requirements in Appendix 1. Avoid wooden shelving as it can release harmful vapours, contribute to the spread of fire, and may harbour insects.

Ensure shelving is raised off the floor by 85-150 mm to enable cleaning and air circulation, and as a disaster precaution (including floods, mould, pests).

Stack boxes no more than four high and in a staggered formation, like brickwork, to avoid boxes caving in on the bottom row.

Provide staff training in handling fragile records. Ensure procedures reflect measures to prevent damage and deterioration.

7. SAFETY

Ensure containers, shelving, furnishings and equipment meet work health and safety requirements and are appropriate to the format of the records.

Ensure individual shelves can support the records and their containers.

Ensure containers can be moved safely. Use the *Hazardous Manual Tasks Code of Practice* to assess and minimise the risks of lifting heavy loads.

Provide staff training in safe handling practices. Ensure guidelines reflect work health and safety legislation, standards, and codes of practice.

8. ACCESS AND SECURITY

Ensure staff working with records of children and vulnerable people have Working with Vulnerable People Registration.

Protect storage areas and facilities from unauthorised access and report any security breaches.

Protect records in storage and in transit from unauthorised access and/or damage.

Store, access and manage records containing sensitive information or with security classifications according to Tasmanian Government requirements and if applicable, the Australian Government *Protective Security Policy Framework*.

Implement systems (for example barcoding, RFID etc) to track locations of records in storage and in transit.

Develop and maintain procedures for retrieval, handling, and returning of records in storage and in transit.

9. DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND RECOVERY

Notify the Office of the State Archivist in the event of a disaster.

Develop and implement a disaster preparedness, management and recovery program; test and review each year.

Ensure insurance covers recovery and restoration should disaster affect records in storage and in transit. If needed, seek advice about insurance coverage (for example, from the Tasmanian Risk Management Fund).

Install and maintain fire protection systems and equipment in relevant areas that meets Australian standards. Use a qualified contractor.

Ensure disaster recovery equipment, supplies and procedures are located in designated areas.

Provide training to staff responsible for the recovery of records following a disaster.

10. ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR COMMERCIAL STORAGE PROVIDERS

If you wish to become an Approved Secondary Storage Provider, seek certification from the Office of the State Archivist.

Ensure employment agreements include staff confidentiality requirements.

Ensure staff complete National Police Record Checks regularly.

Ensure you maintain a full and up-to-date list of government records to enable records to be identified and located when required.

Appendix 1. Guidelines for storage of temporary records

The table summarises the basic storage requirements for temporary value records. It will help you provide the best storage for a range of record types.

The table has been adapted from the National Archives of Australia's *Standard for the Physical Storage of Commonwealth Records* (2002), *National Archives of Australia Standard for the Storage of Archival Records (excluding digital records)* (2014) and *Standard for the Storage of Non-digital Archival Records* (2018).

Format	Shelving	Containers and packaging
Paper records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> files cards computer print-outs and other papers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coated metal shelving. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Robust, clean containers (eg new cardboard boxes). Clean file covers, folders or envelopes.
Paper records (large format) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> maps plans charts posters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coated metal shelving, plan cabinets or shelving. Flat storage preferred, otherwise rolled or vertical storage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Robust, clean containers (eg new cardboard boxes). Individual enclosures not required.
Bound volumes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coated metal shelving. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can be stored unprotected if in good condition. Small volumes can be stored vertically. Store large volumes horizontally, not more than 2 m high.
Photographic media (black and white or colour) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> sheet film cine film x-rays microforms prints 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coated metal shelving. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Robust, clean containers (eg new cardboard boxes). Clean file covers, folders or envelopes.
Magnetic media <ul style="list-style-type: none"> computer tapes and disks video tapes audio tapes magneto-optical disks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-magnetisable shelving such as austenitic stainless steel, grades 304 or 316. (Martensitic and ferritic stainless steel is not suitable.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-magnetisable sealed containers, cassettes cases or sleeves.
Optical media <ul style="list-style-type: none"> compact and mini discs laser discs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coated metal shelving. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Robust, clean containers (eg new cardboard boxes). Clean envelopes or enclosures.
Miscellaneous <ul style="list-style-type: none"> gramophone disks models objects mixed media items 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coated metal shelving. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Robust, clean containers (eg new cardboard boxes). Clean enclosures or wrapping.

Acknowledgements

This Standard is based on the following, now withdrawn, Tasmanian Archive and Heritage Office publications:

- *Guideline No 1: Records Management Principles: Overview*
- *Guideline No 11: Physical Storage of State Records*
- *Guideline No 13: Certification for secondary storage providers*
- *Guideline No 23: Certification of Places of Deposit of State Archives.*

We thank the archives and records authorities that have influenced this Standard:

- Archives New Zealand
- National Archives of Australia
- State Archives & Records New South Wales
- State Records of South Australia
- State Records Office of Western Australia
- Territory Records Office, Australian Capital Territory.

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Australian Standard [AS] 2012, *Routine service of fire protection systems and equipment*, AS 1851-2012, Standards Australia, Sydney.