

Public Record Office Victoria

Recordkeeping Policy Managing Records in Business Systems

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1. Application

The Keeper of Public Records (the Keeper) has approved this recordkeeping policy for managing records in business systems. Public offices should apply its terms in line with the *PROV Value and Risk Policy*¹ and *Approval Processes Policy*² to relevant recordkeeping decisions and practices.

2. Policy

It is Public Record Office Victoria's (PROV) position that:

1. Information contained in, managed by, or accessed through business systems are public records, in accordance with the *Public Records Act 1973*. They must therefore be managed in accordance with the Standards and Specifications issued by the Keeper of Public Records.
2. It is acceptable to hold and manage public records within business systems if the business system meets the requirements in the Standards and Specifications.
3. The procurement, design, development, configuration, and decommissioning of business systems must include recordkeeping requirements:
 - a) Any licences, contracts or agreements required for business systems must not place records at risk
 - b) Any third-party service provider managing records on behalf of the organisation must be contractually obliged to adhere to the organisation's record keeping policy and requirements
 - c) Business systems must be managed by effective governance structures
 - d) Records of business conducted or managed in business systems must be created and captured³ throughout the lifecycle of the record
 - e) Contextual relationships between records in business systems must be accurately described and maintained
 - f) Records within business systems must be able to be migrated and exported to external systems as needed
 - g) Records within business systems must be able to be destroyed when authorised.

¹ PROV *Recordkeeping Policy: A value and risk-based approach to records management*, available via PROV's website <https://prov.vic.gov.au/recordkeeping-government/document-library/value-risk-policy>

² PROV *Recordkeeping Policy: Approval Processes*, available via PROV's website: <https://prov.vic.gov.au/recordkeeping-government/document-library/approvalprocessespolicy-approval-processes-policy>

³ Refer to the PROV Recordkeeping Standards, including *PROS 19/05 Create, Capture and Control Standard* and associated specifications: <https://prov.vic.gov.au/recordkeeping-government/standards-framework>

4. Business systems must be regularly monitored for risk to records with areas of identified or emerging risk actively addressed:
 - a) Records in business systems must be retained for their mandatory retention period as specified by the Keeper
 - b) Access to records in business systems must be proactively managed from creation and capture to disposal
 - c) Record of business conducted or managed in business systems must be secure and protected from theft, loss, unauthorised access, and misuse
 - d) Records must remain accessible, including when business systems undergo transition (e.g., upgrades, replacement, abeyance, decommissioning, and service or hosting changes)
 - e) Records must not be retained beyond their mandatory retention period without appropriate authorisation and justification.
5. Disposal of records in business systems must be lawful and timely:
 - a) Permanent records within business systems must be transferred to PROV in accordance with PROV requirements⁴ and within agreed timeframes
 - b) Automated disposal routines must be defined, assessed for risk with risks addressed, and be able to be put on hold when required
 - c) The parameters of routine destruction must be defined with reports covering what is destroyed, the authorisation for the destruction, and when it was destroyed.

3. Background

Business systems are any automated or manual tool that creates, uses, manages, or provides access to information and which are designed to perform a set of functions to meet certain business needs. Agencies commonly use multiple business systems with varying recordkeeping functionality to create and manage their records⁵. While some electronic systems may be integrated and allow for centralised management of records, most are not.

PROV supports recordkeeping in place, which includes managing records within systems that administer and maintain evidence of government business. This means that business systems must be capable of:

- capturing and maintaining evidence of government business for as long as it is required, or
- converting the records to a long-term sustainable format, or
- exporting them to another system that has the capability to maintain evidence of government business for as long as it is required.

Business systems must be configured appropriately, with relevant technical and management controls put into place, to ensure that records are captured and managed effectively. The PROV standards and specifications provide details regarding the recordkeeping requirements that business systems will need to meet.

⁴ PROV requirements are described in *PROS 22/04 Disposal Standard*: <https://prov.vic.gov.au/recordkeeping-government/document-library/pros-2204-disposal-standard>

⁵ Records are anything created or received by a public officer in the course of their duties, as per the *Public Records Act 1973*, and include information and data.

4. Appendix

Microsoft 365 Topic Page, PROV 2022 (<https://prov.vic.gov.au/recordkeeping-government/a-z-topics/microsoft-365>)

Managing Records in M365 Guideline, PROV 2022 (<https://prov.vic.gov.au/recordkeeping-government/document-library/m365-guideline-managing-records-microsoft-365>)

Functional Requirements for Managing Records in Microsoft 365, CAARA October 2021 (<https://www.caara.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Functional-Requirements-for-M365-Version-1.0.pdf>)

Standards Framework Topic Page, PROV 2022 (<https://prov.vic.gov.au/recordkeeping-government/standards-framework>)

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