

Quick Tips for the Retention and Disposal of Records in a Minister's Office

This document, prepared by State Records NSW, provides some quick tips to help with sentencing common types of records created in a Minister's office. This guidance is based on the decisions in the **General Disposal Authority - Records in a Minister's Office** (GDA13). Please refer to State Records web site for the full authority.

Records that need to be kept as State archives:

Portfolio legislation - Records maintained in the Minister's office relating to the development of new legislation, or the review of current legislation. Also includes records maintained by the Minister that relate to implementation of legislation. (GDA 13, class 1.2)

Portfolio policy - Records maintained in the Minister's office relating to the development of policy, implementation of policy and review of current policy. (GDA 13, class 1.2)

Portfolio responsibilities - Records maintained in the Minister's office that relate to the management of portfolio responsibilities, including:

- records relating to the creation of new agencies or changes to the functions of an agency within the Minister's portfolio. (GDA 13, class 1.1)
- records relating to appointments made by the Minister as part of their statutory responsibilities (e.g. appointments to Boards, Ministerial advisory committee). (GDA 13, class 1.3)
- records relating to changes to the Minister's portfolio responsibilities. (GDA 13, class 1.1)
- Correspondence from the Premier, other Ministers and members of Parliament to the Minister concerning the Minister's portfolio responsibilities. (GDA 13, class 1.2)
- Correspondence from members of the public or organisations concerning matters relevant to the portfolio responsibilities of the Minister and which receive further action. (GDA 13, class 1.4)

Premier's briefing notes – briefing notes and papers prepared for the Premier. (GDA 13, class 1.7)

Briefing notes of Ministers – briefing notes and papers concerning portfolio specific or whole of government issues of significance, such as attracting media attention, public controversy or debate or resulting in public enquiries. This may include briefings prepared for parliamentary questions time or for meetings with stakeholder groups or their representatives. (GDA 13, 1.8)

Inquiries - records that relate to Committees, Royal Commissions or Commissions of Inquiry etc. where the Minister has been a member, was required to give evidence or had any association. *Note* this does not include departmental, Parliamentary or Cabinet Committees where the main record is retained by the agency, Cabinet or Parliament. (GDA 13, class 1.6)

Media releases - final versions of media releases, statements issued by the Minister, newsletters or circulars. (GDA 13, class 1.14, class 1.16)

Addresses - final transcripts or versions of speeches, addresses and presentations delivered by the Minister in their capacity as Minister or representative of the Government. (*GDA 13, class 1.10*)

Premier's diaries - diaries and appointment books. (*GDA 13, class 1.18*)

Minister's diaries - diaries and appointment books of Minister's which have been used to record detailed information concerning significant matters that are not documented elsewhere. (*GDA 13, class 1.19*)

Records that can be deleted/destroyed when no longer required for administrative purposes:

Routine correspondence - Correspondence concerning matters of a routine nature or referred to another Minister for action and receiving no further action. (*GDA13, class 1.5*)

General brief notes - Briefing notes or papers prepared for the Minister not relating to significant matters or whole of government issues. (*GDA13, class 1.9*)

Routine enquires and information requests - Records maintained in a Minister's office relating to routine enquiries or information requests concerning portfolio responsibilities. (*GDA13, class 1.21*)

Reference material - Material supplied to or obtained by the Minister for reference purposes. (*GDA13, class 1.22*)

General publicity - General media or publicity material, including records relating to the organisation of interviews or general media access to the Minister (*GDA13, class 1.11, 1.15*)

Media monitoring - Records relating to media monitoring, transcription services, transcripts of media programs and broadcasts (*GDA13, 1.17*)

Information flow between portfolio agency and Minister's office

A lot of recorded information flows between an agency and the Minister's office. Much of it represents a work flow as information, briefing documents, letters, approvals and so on move between the two, but little of this will need to be retained by the Minister **when** the agency is capturing the whole process on to its files and into its recordkeeping systems. The portfolio agency **should** retain any documents or records that it refers up to the Minister and subsequent approvals, emails, letters and documentation that are referred back to it (for action and/or filing).

<p>Tip: This flow of information may mean that there may be copies of agency records held in the Minister's office that do not need to be retained after they have been used for reference or information purposes.</p>
