Functional Retention and Disposal Authority: DA166
Approved: 18 February 2004

Workers Compensation Commission

This authority covers records documenting the function of workers compensation dispute resolution carried out by the former Compensation Court of NSW
# Functional Retention and Disposal Authority

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DA no</th>
<th>DA166</th>
<th>SR file no</th>
<th>03/0517</th>
</tr>
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</table>

**Public office**
Workers Compensation Commission

**Scope**
This functional retention and disposal authority covers records documenting the function of workers compensation dispute resolution carried out by the former Compensation Court of NSW.

**Authority**
This functional retention and disposal authority is issued under section 21(2)(c) of the *State Records Act 1998*. It has been approved by the Board of the State Records Authority in accordance with section 21(3) of the State Records Act.

**Authorised**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>18/2/2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>David Roberts</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Director</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Records Authority of New South Wales</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
How to use the Functional Retention and Disposal Authority

The disposal process

Disposing of State records involves assessing the value of records for future use, identifying those State records that have continuing value as State archives and identifying how soon the remainder can be destroyed or otherwise disposed of. Disposal can also involve transfer of ownership or custody of records and the alteration of records.

This functional retention and disposal authority is issued under section 21 (2)(c) of the State Records Act 1998 (NSW). Part 3 (Protection of State Records) of the Act provides that records are not to be disposed of without the consent of State Records with certain defined exceptions. These exceptions include an action of disposal which is positively required by law, or which takes place in accordance with a normal administrative practice (NAP) of which State Records does not disapprove. Advice on the State Records Act can be obtained from State Records.

This authority has been prepared as part of the records disposal program of the agency. Two primary objectives of this program are to ensure that records are kept for as long as they are of value and to enable the destruction or other disposal of records once they are no longer of value. State Records’ decisions take into account both the administrative requirements of the public office in discharging its functional responsibilities and the potential research use of the records by the NSW Government and the public. It is the duty of a public office, in submitting a draft functional retention and disposal authority for approval, to disclose to State Records any information which affects the retention of the records covered by the authority.

Purpose of the authority

This functional retention and disposal authority authorises the destruction or other disposal of State records as required by the State Records Act.

Using the authority

This functional retention and disposal authority covers records controlled by the public office and applies only to the records or classes of records described in the authority. The authority is to be used to sentence records. Sentencing is the examination of records in order to identify the disposal class to which they belong. This process enables the sentencing officer to determine the appropriate disposal action for the records. Advice on sentencing can be obtained from State Records.

Where the format of records has changed (for example, from paper-based to electronic) this does not prevent the disposal classes from being used to sentence records which perform the same function. The information must be accessible for the periods prescribed in the classes. Where a record is copied, either onto microform or digitally imaged, the original should not be disposed of without authorisation (see also the General Disposal Authority – Records of short term value that have been imaged). Public offices will need to ensure that any software, hardware or documentation required to gain continuing access to technologically dependent records is available for the periods prescribed.

Disposal action

Records that are identified as being required as State archives should be stored in controlled environmental conditions. Control of these records should be transferred to State Records when they cease to be in use for official purposes.
Records that have been identified as being authorised for destruction may only be destroyed once a public office has ensured that all requirements for retaining the records are met. Retention periods set down in this authority are minimum periods only and a public office may keep records for a longer period if necessary. Reasons for longer retention can include legal requirements, administrative need, and government directives. A public office must not dispose of any records where the public office is aware of possible legal action (including legal discovery, court cases, FOI requests) where the records may be required as evidence. Once all requirements for retention have been met, destruction of records should be carried out in a secure and environmentally sound way. Relevant details of the destruction should be recorded.

In some cases State Records may withhold authorisation for the disposal of a particular disposal class or possibly a whole function or activity. This would be used where records have been identified as having some immediate short term requirements for retention such as pending legal action. These records will need to be re-appraised at the end of a designated period. This re-appraisal process is necessary as the circumstances which instigate the need for the records to be retained for a longer period may also affect the ‘value’ of the records.

Regardless of whether a record has been authorised for destruction or is required as a State archive, a public office or an officer of a public office must not permanently transfer possession or ownership of a State record to any person or organisation without the explicit authorisation of State Records.

**Custody**

The custody column in the functional retention and disposal authority is designed to assist public offices in identifying storage requirements for records prior to destruction or transfer. The directions in this column are recommendations only and are not mandatory. The type of information includes directions on how long records should be retained in the office and how long they should be kept in off-site/secondary storage. A recommendation to retain records in the agency for more than 25 years does not imply that a *still in use determination* has been approved by State Records (see Part 4, Section 28 of the State Records Act 1998).

**Administrative change**

This functional retention and disposal authority has been designed to link records to the functions they document rather than to organisational structure. This provides for a stable functional retention and disposal authority that is less affected by administrative change. The movement of specified functions between branches or units within the public office does not require the authority to be resubmitted to State Records for approval. However, when functions move from one public office to another State Records should be notified. The public office that inherits the new function will need the approval of State Records to use any existing functional retention and disposal authority to sentence the records that document the function/s.

**Amendment and review of this authority**

State Records must approve any amendment to this authority. Public offices that use the authority should advise State Records of any proposed changes or amendments to the authority.

State Records recommends a review of this authority after five years to establish whether its provisions are still appropriate. Either the public office or State Records may propose a review of the authority at any other time, particularly in the case of change of administrative arrangements or procedures which are likely to affect the value of the records covered by this authority.
In all cases the process of review will involve consultation between State Records and the public office. If the process of review reveals that this authority requires amendment, the necessary amendments will be made and authorised.

Contact Information

State Records  
PO Box 516 Kingswood NSW 2747  
Telephone: (02) 8247 8627  
Facsimile: (02) 8247 8626  
E-mail: govrec@records.nsw.gov.au
### Functional Retention and Disposal Authority

**Workers Compensation Commission (Records of former Compensation Court of NSW)**

**DA no:** DA166  
**Dates of coverage:** 1926 - 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Function/Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Disposal Action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.0.0</td>
<td><strong>DISPUTE RESOLUTION OF WORKERS COMPENSATION CLAIMS</strong></td>
<td>The function of managing the dispute resolution process through conciliation and judicial determination.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1.0</td>
<td><strong>Cases</strong></td>
<td>The activity of registering and handling workers compensation dispute cases and residual jurisdiction cases through conciliation and judicial determination by the first Workers Compensation Commission of NSW and the Compensation Court of NSW. Includes documents filed, correspondence, records of orders, medical examination reports, transcripts, awards and certificates.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1.1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Court files relating to cases, which have resulted in significant judgments and development of law. Includes cases included in Court reports.</td>
<td>Required as State archives.</td>
<td>Retain in storage 25 years, then archive.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 1.1.2 |  | Court files relating to the first 1000 cases commenced after the introduction of the workers compensation scheme in 1926 (from 1.1.1926) and then the first 500 cases after the following changes to the scheme and its administration:  
- Introduction of Uninsured Liability & Indemnity Scheme (from 1.1.1943);  
- Separation of judicial and administrative functions and appointment of Commissioners to hear cases less than $40,000 (from 1.1.1985);  
- Commissioners being given jurisdiction to hear cases at first instance (from 1.1.1988);  
- Introduction of resolution service (WCRS) to conciliate | Required as State archives. | Retain in storage 25 years, then archive. |
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| 1.1.3 | | disputes (from 1.1.1998);  
- Abolition of WCRS and establishment of Workers Compensation Commission (from 1.1.2002). | Retain minimum of 75 years after commencement of matter, then destroy. | In storage. |
| 1.1.4 | | Medical examination files and conciliation files. | Retain minimum of 75 years after commencement of matter, then destroy. | In storage. |
| 1.1.5 | | Documents and other items tendered as exhibits at hearings. | Retain minimum of 75 years after commencement of matter, then destroy. | In storage. |
| 1.1.6 | | Original documents produced under subpoena but not tendered at hearings. | Retain until matter closed, then return to owner or if owner cannot be located retain minimum of 10 years, then destroy. | In storage. |
| 1.1.7 | | Copies of documents produced under subpoena but not tendered at hearings. | Retain until matter closed, then return or dispose of in | In storage. |
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#### 1.1.8
Summary data about parties to cases and determinations made. Includes matter information data about cases in Phoenix Case Management system.

- Disposal Action: Required as State archives.
- Custody: Retain in storage for 6 months, then archive.

#### 1.1.9
Records relating to routine aspects of case management. Includes listing of cases for hearing, records of notices and confirmations issued, calendaring of cases for country circuits, case statistics, etc held in Phoenix Case Management system.

- Disposal Action: Retain minimum of 5 years after last action, then destroy.
- Custody: In storage.

#### 1.2.0
**Enquiries**

- The activity of handling enquiries about practices and procedures.

- Disposal Action: Retain minimum of 5 years after last action, then destroy.
- Custody: In storage.

#### 1.2.1
Records relating to requests for information about practices and procedures of the Court. Includes replies to enquiries.

- Disposal Action: Retain minimum of 5 years after last action, then destroy.
- Custody: In storage.

#### 1.3.0
**Hearings**

- The activity of hearing disputes.

- Disposal Action: Required as State archives.
- Custody: Retain in storage 25 years, then archive.

#### 1.3.1
Transcripts of reported Court judgments, which have involved development of the law.

- Disposal Action: Required as State archives.
- Custody: Retain in storage 25 years, then archive.

#### 1.3.2
Other transcripts.

- Disposal Action: Retain minimum of 75 years after commencement of matter, then destroy.
- Custody: In storage.
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<td>1.3.3</td>
<td>Recordings of hearings by shorthand or on tape/CD/video or other media. Includes log sheets that enable access to recordings and shorthand writers’ notebooks.</td>
<td>Retain minimum of 20 years after last action, then destroy.</td>
<td>In storage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.3.4</td>
<td>Records relating to daily operations of the Court hearings. Includes associates results sheets and court attendance records. Includes data in Phoenix Case Management system.</td>
<td>Retain minimum of 2 years after last action, then destroy.</td>
<td>In storage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.3.5</td>
<td>Records of judge’s notes and decisions. Includes benchbooks and judges’ notebooks.</td>
<td>Retain minimum of 25 years after last action, then destroy.</td>
<td>In storage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.4.0</td>
<td>Policy and procedure</td>
<td>The activity of determining policy and procedures for managing dispute resolution.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.4.1</td>
<td>Records relating to high-level policy, rules and significant practice notes. Includes minutes of rule committee and signed original practice notes.</td>
<td>Required as State archives.</td>
<td>Retain in storage 6 months, then archive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.4.2</td>
<td>Records relating to the development and issue of procedures, advices to practitioners and guidelines.</td>
<td>Retain until superseded, then destroy.</td>
<td>In storage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.0.0</td>
<td>Administration of the Compensation Court</td>
<td>The function of administering the Compensation Court and its predecessor the Workers Compensation Commission.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.1.0</td>
<td>Records relating to administration of the Court/Commission including general housekeeping, personnel and finance records.</td>
<td>Dispose of in accordance with general disposal</td>
<td>In storage.</td>
</tr>
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