



# Department of Environmental Management

## Records Management Policy

### **A Report of the Records Management Policy Working Group**

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The DEM Records Management Policy was developed as a team effort of representatives from all major Office and Divisions. The need of a formal records management policy was evident after the immense effort that was needed to gather information that was requested because of a major litigation case. Fred Vincent convened a Records Management Working Group who began to study this issue. The committee was broken up into four areas of investigation, i.e. Definition of Records headed by Debbie George, Archiving headed by Glenn Miller, Electronic Records headed by Warren Angel and Record Disposition headed by Tom Getz. In addition to DEM, Brien Brothman of the Secretary of State's Office was an invaluable addition to the working group. He was able to provide pointed guidance on many of the topics that we have to deal with especially the record archiving and retention schedule issues.

The committee was charged with developing a mission statement as the first order of business. The next topic tackled was record disposition. The first thing that was needed before we could proceed with this topic, was an inventory of all records generated and used throughout the Department. Thanks to the efforts of Barbara Raddatz and Lynne DeBritto, this inventory was organized and inputted into a database for future use.

The records management policy will allow DEM to manage its records in a more efficient manner. This groundwork achieved to date, could not have been accomplished without the cooperation of divisional and office representative who have helped in the committee process and the inventory work.

# DEM Records Management Program Description

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## **I. Executive Summary**

A DEM intra-agency-working group, under the leadership of Fred Vincent, Associate Director of the Bureau of Planning and Policy developed the DEM Record Management Policy. The agency was supported by the Secretary of State's Office. This working group met monthly since November 2002 and developed a policy that:

- Defines the records management responsibility of both management and employees throughout the agency.
- Defines what constitutes an official record.
- Establishes a clear policy for retention of records, which should address creation / collection, record maintenance and use and record disposition, i.e., storage, archiving and destruction of departmental records.
- Defines protocols for the destruction of obsolete records.
- A training protocol that will be used to disseminate information and train designated divisional personnel in the management of records according to the DEM policy.

## **II. Introduction**

Records management is the planning, controlling, directing, organizing, training, promoting and other managerial activities involving the life cycle of information. This includes the creation, maintenance (use, storage, retrieval) and disposal, regardless of media. Records management programs must manage organizational information so that it is timely, accurate, complete, cost-effective, accessible and useable. Providing information, in a timely manner, allows DEM to provide better constituent service.

All DEM employees will be creating and using government records. They may be in many formats: paper, electronic, audio-visual, maps, etc. Records document the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations and other activities of the Agency.

There are rules governing the use and destruction of all state records. It is the DEM employee's responsibility to protect state records, and there are legal implications for destroying records without the proper authority. This DEM Records Management Policy will provide guidance needed to manage records in an efficient manner.

DEM is responsible for the development and enforcement of environmental and natural resource regulations. There is a constant flow of information between the public, the regulated environmental community and DEM. This information supports agency decisions and enforcement issues. Documents need to be available to support this work.

Presently each division stores records as determined by their business practices. Long-term storage may entail packing records in a box and sending it to the basement in the Foundry Building, or long-term storage at the Capital Records Storage Facility. There is, however, no departmental index of the records stored. Although DEM maintains records in storage, there is generally no easy way to access this information other than to open boxes and search for the needed record. In some instances, programs like ISDS, Boating Registration, the Administrative Adjudication Division, the Director's Office and OCI have a business need to use old records and have developed systems for record retrieval.

Records need to be available to assist DEM in achieving its mission of protecting and managing the environmental resources of the state. A document control system needs to be developed to track a document during its life cycle, i.e. creation / collection, record maintenance and use and record disposition i.e., archiving or destruction.

### **III. Mission**

In October 2002, DEM convened a meeting of representatives of all offices and divisions to develop a DEM Records Management Policy. The mission of this group is stated below:

Whereas, the Department has determined a critical need to develop a comprehensive and consistent records policy and plan to better support its mission and programs, including enhancing customer services, and:

Whereas, it has established a committee to develop a policy and plan for records retention consistent with R. I. Gen. Laws § 38-3-6, as amended (Appendix A), as amended and its own stated objectives for managing, protecting and restoring Rhode Island's natural resources, and:

Whereas, the Committee is charged with developing a policy and plan that shall include recommendations both short and long term in the following areas:

- Defining what is a record.
- Establishing a clear policy for retention of records, which should address creation / collection, record maintenance and use and record disposition, i.e., storage, archiving and destruction of departmental records.
- Develop and disseminate information and train designated divisional personnel in the management of records according to established protocol.
- Identification by the Management Information Services Office of technology and methods that further implementation of the record policy and protocols including but not limited to the Permit Process Tracking & Information Systems (PPTIS) project, and

Whereas, the Department should investigate whether the creation of a centralized records inventory and repository will promote efficient and effective use, maintenance and retrieval of records and its feasibility.

The working group will develop a draft report in December 2002 and a final report by June 16, 2003.

## **IV. Records Management**

Records management is a fundamental administrative function that has practical ramifications on all phases of work that is being done in the agency. Most agency employees will be in the position of creating, reviewing, processing or filing records. It is incumbent on DEM to provide all employees the tools needed to ensure records are being properly handled. Following good records management practices will not only help to meet legal requirements, they will benefit the agency in many ways such as:

- Improving access to information;
- Controlling the growth of materials taking up valuable office space;
- Reducing operating costs;
- Minimizing litigation risks;
- Safeguarding essential information;
- Supporting management decision making; and,
- Preserving DEM history.

### **A. Purpose**

This policy provides the framework for specific guidance and provides detailed operating procedures governing records management organization, responsibilities, and implementation.

### **B. Scope and Applicability**

This policy applies to all records of the DEM regardless of medium (including all documents, papers, forms, letters, maps, books, tapes, photographs, films, sound recordings, magnetic, digital or other tapes, electronic data processing records, computer stored data, electronic mail messages), that are created, collected, processed, used, stored, and/or disposed by DEM, employees, as well as those acting as its agents, such as contractors, or grantees.

### **C. Policy**

It is DEM policy to manage agency records effectively and efficiently throughout their life cycle. The proper management of records will assist DEM in meeting its programmatic and administrative missions, preserve DEM records and promote public access to this information. This will be accomplished through the adequate and proper documentation of all policy decisions, procedures, and essential transactions in a manner that promotes accountability, establishes a historical record, and protects the legal and financial rights of the government and the privacy of individuals. Meeting these policy goals will require DEM to:

1. Plan and establish a framework for managing and overseeing an agency-wide records management program.
2. Integrate the records management system into DEM's Management Information Services Strategic Plan to promote effective management, communication, sharing, and transfer of information regardless of the medium or format in which it exists.
3. Inform its employees and agents of their responsibilities to manage records, and ensure that records management staff receive adequate training to carry out their responsibilities.

4. Manage records throughout their life cycle which includes the following components:
  - (a) Records creation /collection - An official record shall be created to appropriately document all agency functions, policies, decisions, procedures and essential transactions. Programs shall be provided with record keeping requirements for all official agency records for which they are responsible.
  - (b) Records maintenance and use - Record filing, indexing and storage systems shall be designed and documented to the extent appropriate and necessary, to maximize the usefulness of the records and allow retrieval throughout their life cycle.
  - (c) Records disposition - Records disposition schedules for all agency records shall be submitted to and approved by the State Archivist. No records may be destroyed without an approved disposition schedule. Once disposition schedules are approved, they must be carried out in a timely manner.
  - (d) Security for DEM Records – Adequate security provision will be made to ensure the authenticity, reliability, and integrity of all agency records, regardless of the material or medium used to make and store them.
5. Evaluate and/or develop hardware and software applications (such as electronic document filing, data base applications, scanning technology, or conversion to microfilm or optical disk) to improve the management of records. To the extent that the system or application affects the DEM's record keeping, the requirements noted in item 4 above shall be incorporated into these information management systems. These efforts will be coordinated with the Management Information Services Office.
6. Standardize the development of filing systems/structures by the Office of Management Services with Divisions and Offices, where appropriate, to provide an effective mechanism which facilitates ease of use, access, and disposition. Records shall be organized and indexed in such a manner as to be easily accessible to DEM employees and the public and to allow for integration across programs and information systems. These efforts will also be coordinated with the Management Information Services Office.

**D. Responsibilities**

The following responsibilities have been assigned to DEM personnel in order to implement the Records Management Policy:

1. **The Associate Director of the Bureau of Policy and Administration is responsible for:**
  - a) Creating a records management system that preserves records that document the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, and essential transactions of DEM.
  - b) Creating records management objectives, policies, procedures and essential transactions including documentation of information systems development.
2. **Associate Directors and Assistant Directors for Water Resources and Air Waste and Compliance shall:**
  - a) Designate a Records Liaison Officer from each Division / Office to oversee the program. The Records Liaison Officer serves as a point of contact for the Agency Records Officer and is responsible for managing and ensuring the implementation of an appropriate records management program tailored to the organization's requirements.
  - b) Implement a records management program within their area of responsibility to accomplish the objectives identified by policies and procedures developed by the Agency Records Management Officer.

- c) Develop records management oversight roles and communication networks with all program units including field offices to ensure that the records management program is implemented at all sites under their program jurisdiction.
- d) Develop and disseminate directives and operating procedures, as needed, to supplement Agency-wide policy to meet the unique records management needs of their organizations and to support a records management program within the organization.

**3. The Office of Management Services (OMS)**

OMS is responsible for leadership, planning, overall policy, and general oversight of the records management in the agency, and its incorporation into the broader DEM Management Information Services Strategic Plan. The Office of Management Services shall:

- a) Promulgate and communicate agency-wide policies and guidance that reflect records management missions and goals including a records retention schedule and incorporate state requirements.
- b) Ensure that senior agency staff is aware of their records management responsibilities.
- c) Conduct periodic evaluations of records management programs within the Agency.
- d) Provide oversight for contractors managing official Agency records.
- e) Provide records management briefings for all managers within DEM.
- f) Develop long-term storage or archival policies including compliance with the provision 38-3-5 of the Public Records Administrations Act (Attachment E) that deals with public record custody and disposal.
- g) Provide guidance to the department for a back-up system for essential records.

**4. The Chief of OMS shall:**

- a) Be responsible for:
  - i. Supervising the Records Management Officer who will manage the agency-wide records management program.
  - ii. Advising the Associate Director of the Bureau of Policy and Administration on records management issues and developing Agency-wide records management policies, procedures, guidance and training materials.
  - iii. Coordinating the approval of the agency's records disposition schedules and the transfer of records to the state Archives.
  - iv. Coordinating records management issues with other state agencies,
  - v. Providing technical advice and training to all DEM units on establishing and maintaining effective records management programs and will coordinate quarterly meetings of the Record Liaison Officers.
- b) Ensure that records management requirements and policies are developed consistent with the Management Information Services Strategic Plan.

**5. Division and Office Chiefs shall:**

- a) Identify record keeping requirements for major programmatic and administrative records series in all media.
- b) Assign records retention schedules for all records, determine the essential records under their control and implement the most responsive and cost-effective means for managing them.

- c) Implement the standardized file plans and indexing approaches developed by Office of Management Services, in consultation with program staff, where appropriate, to simplify the use of, access to, and integration of information within the organization.
  - d) Ensure that records are destroyed using proper authorization as specified in approved record disposition schedules.
  - e) Review records disposition schedules, file plans, and procedures on a triennial basis to ensure that they are current and update them as necessary.
  - f) Conduct a program of regular internal records management reviews to assist programs in implementing appropriate records management procedures.
  - g) Review other categories of written materials not specifically pertaining to regulated entities or public information (e.g., some kinds of contracts, internal memoranda, etc.) to determine the extent of control needed.
6. **The Office of Legal Services** shall:
- a) Develop the definition of a record.
  - b) Assist in determining what records are needed to provide adequate and proper documentation of Agency activities and in specifying appropriate retention schedules of agency records.
  - c) Monitor compliance with the Public Records Administration Act.
  - d) Determine if the DEM record keeping requirements are consistent with the rules of evidence requirements for state and federal administrative, civil and criminal cases.
7. **Program Managers** are responsible for ensuring that their programs following the policies outlined in the DEM Records Management Policy.
8. **Management Information Systems Office** is responsible for:
- a) Short-term Measures
    - i. Implement OC&I Record Indexing Data System department-wide.
    - ii. Establish an email retention policy.
    - iii. Establish and enforce software standards and versions (i.e. word processing – Word, spreadsheets – Excel, etc.)
    - iv. Formalize data backup protocols; currently Human Resources, Agriculture, Management Information Services and Office of Library Information Services perform system backups independently.
    - v. Develop guidance/protocol to assist staff in creating routine backups of local PC data. Currently, more than 50% of the department’s data is stored locally on staff personal computers with less than 5% of that data being routinely backed up.
    - vi. Develop plan to “clean” network servers and PCs of aged files.
    - vii. Develop plan to save information from departing employees’ PC and remove it from network servers. Make it available to a person who is responsible for that information.
    - viii. Develop protocol for the storage of photographic records.
    - ix. Improve security systems to reduce the potential for data loss (Short and long-term measures required)
    - x. Migrate DEM databases (excluding Informix and PPTIS) to dedicated database server(s) to allow for improved stability and security.
    - xi. Investigate requirements for maintaining historical record of DEM web information.
    - xii. Continued implementation of PPTIS
    - xiii. Install Correspondence Module.

- xiv. Assist in planning and implementing information management technology and reviewing and approving the purchase of records management equipment and services.
  - xv. Assign overall responsibility for the records management aspects of centrally provided information technology infrastructure, including local area network applications.
- b) Long-term Measures
- i. Develop an addendum to the DEM Records Management Policy that will provide guidelines on how to preserve records created, stored, or transmitted using electronic media including personal computers or other electronic office equipment.
  - ii. Centralize all email files (.pst files) on a server for improved security and data retrieval. Currently all such files reside on individual desktop computers making data retrieval nearly impossible.
  - iii. Develop a system that can handle the capacity of all users local PC data so that data can be migrated to a central server system.
  - iv. Develop formal Disaster Recovery Plan and System
  - v. Centralize data backup into one system, a storage area network (SAN)
  - vi. Replace and upgrade the Information Systems including legacy data migration.
  - vii. Develop Legacy Records policy. In order to maintain access to records in older systems, DEM must take measures to either continuously support those systems or migrate the records to newer systems. The record lifecycle is therefore tightly connected to the technology lifecycle. In short, electronic records live and die with the systems that support them.<sup>1</sup>
  - viii. Evaluate expanding the functionality of the PPTIS system to manage records received in non-electronic formats (i.e. scan documents into the system)
  - ix. Evaluate EQUIS and STORET systems as means for storing and sharing DEM environmental data.
  - x. Assist in planning and implementing information management technology and reviewing and approving the purchase of document management systems and services.

Documentary materials in electronic form include previously mentioned record categories and subcategories. Electronic information systems present special problems because of the diversity of the materials in the system, the fragility of the media, the potential for technological obsolescence, and the decentralized control over the materials. DEM must ensure that electronically generated records are identified and that the systems used to store records comply with record keeping requirements. Electronic record keeping systems must be designed to ensure the security and integrity of records, preservation of records for the time they are needed, and migration of data to other department systems or subsequent systems.<sup>2</sup>

Identification of resources – While a survey of other states has not been conducted yet, the resources to carry out the measures outlined below are significant both in personnel and financial resources. Also, the investment of time and money is not a one-time cost – to effectively carry out the measures below, a commitment must be

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<sup>1</sup> Kansas Electronic Records Management Guidelines, Kansas State Historical Society

<sup>2</sup> U.S. National Archives & Records Administration, [www.archives.gov](http://www.archives.gov)

made to support these efforts permanently. The amount of electronic data we manage increases exponentially on an annual basis and the formats of this data continue to evolve resulting in short life cycle. The resources required to preserve this data through time must be evaluated.

**9. All agency staff and agents of DEM shall:**

- a) Conduct work in accordance with DEM records management policy and procedures.
- b) Create and manage the records necessary to document their official activities. This includes creating appropriate records documenting meetings, conversations, electronic mail messages, telephone calls and other forms of communication that affect the conduct of official Agency business.
- c) Destroy records in accordance with approved record disposition schedules and never remove records from the agency without authorization.
- d) File personal papers and non-public record materials separately from official agency records.

## **V. Records Management Procedures**

### **A. Introduction**

DEM will be using the following procedures to implement the Records Management Policy. These procedures are to be used as guidance to the divisions and offices when they are developing their internal procedures.

#### **1. Record Definition**

The definition of record has been derived from two RI statutes: the Access to Public Records Act (RIGL §38-2-2) and the State Archives statute (RIGL §42-8.1-17). "Record" shall mean:

All documents, papers, letters, maps, books, tapes, photographs, films, sound recordings, magnetic or other tapes, electronic data processing records, computer stored data, electronic mail messages, and/or other material regardless of physical form or characteristics made or received pursuant to law or ordinance or in connection with the transaction of official business by an agency to ensure adequate and proper documentation of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, and essential transactions of the agency and to maintain and furnish the information necessary to protect the legal rights of the government and of the persons directly affected by agency's activities.

#### **2. Record Categorizing**

- a) Categories of Records include:
  - i. Program Records** – Are program specific records that are created, received and maintained by a program in the conduct of the mission functions for which it is responsible.
  - ii. Administrative Records** – Records which reflect routine, transitory, internal administrative or housekeeping activities relating to subjects and functions common to all offices/programs.
  - iii. Fiscal Records** – Records that address the financial budget allocation, status or expenditures of an office/program.
  - iv. Reference Records** – Documents that are used as a source of technical and/or general reference.

- b) The following categories are consistent with the Statewide Records Retention Schedule published by the Office of the Secretary of State:
  - i. Administrative Records,
  - ii. Fiscal Records, and
  - iii. Reference Records.

The Records Retention Schedule names specific records that fall within those categories.

3. **Record Subcategories** under each category of record include:
- a) **Current** – Records or files presently in the physical custody of organizational units, the maintenance of which is required for the conduct of current work.
  - b) **Inactive** –
    - i. Records worthy of preservation and which have long term archival value.
    - ii. Records that will be retired from office space for storing, servicing and ultimate disposition in accordance with the RIDEM Records Management Program.
  - c) **Temporary** – Records created incidental to performance of the mission. They are “operational”, “support” and “service” type records that are considered to be of temporary value to the Agency. Temporary records are often characterized as records that are used as an intermediate stage for transferring information from one record type to another.
  - d) **Permanent** – Records of continuing value which are necessary to conduct and document practices, procedures and decisions incidental to all department programs and the public.
  - e) **Non-Record Material** – Material of this nature includes blank forms, library materials, and working papers of fleeting value such as drafts, worksheets, informal notes, slips, etc.
  - f) **Confidential** – Records that contain non-public information and are protected by statute as non-public records.
  - g) **Essential** – These records consist of two types:
    - i. Records established for assuring continuity of operation of the Agency in an emergency and affirm the powers and duties of the Agency in the resumption of operations after an emergency.
    - ii. Records containing information necessary to protect rights and interests of persons.
  - h) **Archival** – Records are legally, administratively, fiscally or historically significant thus warranting continual preservation.

## B. Record Creation / Collection

### 1. Record Creation

All DEM records shall carry, on each cover page, either the official seal of the RI DEM and/or the printed name Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management. It shall also carry, on each page, an identifiable title that reflects its use, and a page number. On multi-page records, this information can be presented in a less prominent location, and/or in a smaller font, than on the first or title page.

Exceptions:

- (a) Materials produced entirely by another entity (e.g., EPA) but provided to the public by DEM.
- (b) Multi-page records (including attachments produced from original records) that provide public information need these data only on the cover page.
- (c) Web pages intended to provide general information, except for materials that already carry this information.

All DEM records, except those excepted in (1) above, shall carry, in some location on each page, an indication of the date of composition or revision. Divisions / Offices shall determine whether,

and which records requires a tracking designation unique to the records. Divisions / Offices shall determine whether, and how to track documents for purposes of assuring the use of the most current revision, identification of author, inventory, etc. records, including forms, which are in draft form shall be clearly identified as such, including any restrictions on circulation or use.

## **2. Control of Records – (Paper)**

- a) All records retained by the DEM documenting the activities of entities regulated by DEM, or subject to enforcement actions by DEM, shall be uniquely identified with at least the following information, which may be contained in the body of the record or added separately:
  - i. The number of the associated permit, license, or enforcement action if one exists;
  - ii. Name and location, or a unique identifier, of the facility or activity recorded;
  - iii. Date of creation of the record;
  - iv. Date of receipt of the record;
  - v. Name of the DEM employee, unit or program responsible for originating the record.
- b) This standard shall apply to records created by outside entities when received for use by DEM. This category of record includes correspondence, including electronic mail, initiated or received by DEM, and any filed copies of the same.
- c) Each division or office shall determine the level of identification and control applicable to other records, whether public records or not. Records for which a unique identifier cannot readily be created must be stored in such a manner that any particular record can be found on request.
- d) Temporary records (e.g., field notes, logs, data sheets), the data from which is entered into more permanent records, shall be maintained and stored according to record retention standards developed by each division or program unit in consultation with the State Archives.

## **3. Control of Forms – Paper**

- a) Forms, when filled in, may become public records and the standards of control are more stringent. Thus, in addition to the requirements in VB2a above,
  1. All DEM forms shall carry a document tracking designation that includes an identification of the issuing bureau; a unique number or alphanumeric designation; a date of composition or revision; and an identifier of revision.
  2. Each bureau shall implement a system to control forms in order to assure that when forms are revised, previous versions are removed from use in a timely manner depending on the significance of the revision, etc
  3. Any form that may become a public record must include, at a minimum, the following fields:
    - Date when the form was used / completed;
    - Record identification (e.g., facility permit number)
    - Name of the person(s) completing the form.

## **4. Control of Records – (Electronic)**

Standards specific to the control of electronic records and data will be developed as an addendum to this policy.

## **C. Record Maintenance and Use**

An effective records management system relies on DEM's ability to retrieve records and to make the existence of these records available to staff and the public. DEM needs to develop ways to physically

manage its files and to develop an indexing system that will allow the records to be easily filed and retrieved. As much as physical control, intellectual control will pay off with respect to the timely retrieval of the right information.

### **1. Central File Discussion**

There are several decisions that need to be made when setting up a records management program. The first issue that needs to be addressed is the intellectual classification of files, or an indexing system. DEM needs to determine if it wants to authorize a department records management officer who will have the authority to approve changes to the DEM indexing system. Centralizing this function will allow the development of a common indexing system and will minimize the development of inconsistent filing practices. The advantage of a centralized indexing system is the ability to retrieve information in a timely manner.

One of the most difficult decisions, and sometimes the most controversial, is whether or not records should be physically "centralized" or "decentralized." Centralization can refer to a single intellectual system for filing that the department records officer controls, and has sole authority to approve changes proposed by agency staff. Centralization ensures uniform filing methods, and serves to minimize the proliferation of poor filing practices that is beyond the control of the agency.

There are several issues to consider when making the decision on where records should be located. One way is to review the advantages and disadvantages of each system and choose the one, or combination, that has the most advantages for the situation. At this point DEM is not in a position to make a decision about centralizing files. Some of the pros and cons of implementing a central file system are detailed in Appendix B.

### **2. Technology Use Discussion**

Electronic issues including - e-mail, document creation, storage, backup; hardware integration (This section will be developed in the future when the DEM electronic record keeping requirements are outlined.) (Review Appendix F for additional information)

### **3. Record Retention Schedules**

A record retention schedule enables agency staff to manage their information in a rational, defensible manner, one that makes good business sense and good legal sense. A records retention schedule gives DEM legal authority to dispose of records in accordance with applicable statutory requirements and/or business process needs, unless the records happen to relate to a program imminently or already involved in litigation.

In November 2002, the divisions and offices responded to a survey on current record storage and disposal practices. The programs were asked to review record retention schedules that were developed by the Secretary of State's Office. This document provides guidance to the state agencies on their record retention requirements. This schedule details record series concerning the fiscal, personnel and general records that are used by state agencies and are considered by DEM as the common record series.

As part of this survey, questions were raised about what constitutes a record series. It was determined that some record series are stand-alone documents like newspaper clippings or purchase requisitions. In other instances, record series are defined by a number of documents. Examples of this include the DEM Enforcement record series that contain documents from the beginning of the complaint process to the final legal disposition of the case.

DEM identified two types of records series i.e., common record series and program specific record series. The divisions and offices are now working on identifying the records used in their area and have developed a record retention schedule for these record series. The record management officer will maintain a list of the record retention schedules. Appendix C is an example of a record retention schedule.

#### **4. Short-term storage (Storage in Foundry Building)**

DEM currently stores records in the basement of the Foundry. In most instances the files are not stored in a manner that makes retrieval easy. AAD, Wetlands, ISDS, OCI and Boating are programs whose files are managed properly. OC&I has developed a simple, efficient file storage and retrieval computer system for documents stored in this area. DEM is considering expanding this "Records Index Data System" (RIDS) to all programs and is determining hardware and software costs.

The Foundry storage area needs to be organized. The first step is to determine the kinds of records stored at this location. A protocol needs to be developed to have these records reviewed in an organized manner and sorted by program. DEM is investigating using a summer intern, under supervision, to begin this process. The programs will then have to determine the appropriate retention schedule for these records.

#### **5. Long-term Active Storage**

Long-term storage availability may be related to the success of the review of records in the basement of the Foundry and the success of the record retention schedule process. Excess capacity may be made available in the basement and the record retention process may eliminate the need for storing records in long-term storage. This issue needs to be reviewed in about a year after DEM goes through a cycle of record disposal.

DEM programs should also begin to evaluate records in other long-term storage sites to determine if they are covered by record retention schedules. These records need to be evaluated to determine if any new record series need to be developed. Appropriate records should be disposed and depending on space in the basement, remaining records could be moved to the Foundry for storage.

As their use declines, records should be removed from immediate office locations. Records whose usefulness has declined for purposes of conducting daily business should be retired to less valuable storage space outside the immediate office environment, and eventually even sent off-site when it makes good business sense. Records should be stored in these areas only until the retention schedule indicates the records could be destroyed.

Before records are sent to long-term storage the following questions should be asked concerning the use of the records:

- i. Are stored records necessary for day to day business referral operations?
- ii. Did these files lead to policy or document current business operations? Examples: correspondence, memos and reports.
- iii. Does the inactive file have fiscal aspects? i.e., cancelled checks, invoices, receipts and purchase orders.
- iv. Does the department and the state recognize the expense of retaining and maintaining these records in inactive storage?
- v. Are stored records duplicates of originals stored elsewhere?
- vi. Are the records filed in storage complete? If not, should they be removed?

## **6. Long-term Inactive Storage**

Inactive storage is used for permanent records that are stored in accordance with retention schedules at off site storage locations

### **D. Storage Requirements -Environmental Conditions**

Records need to be stored in an environmentally friendly atmosphere in order to ensure that documents can be used over a length of time. Once a storage site has been selected, it is important to maintain an environment that will best preserve the records. Temperature, humidity, light, and pollutants are the main concerns to address when providing a safe, clean records environment. Records storage areas should follow the following guidelines outlined in Appendix D.

### **E. Records Disposition**

**1. Stored Records** (Including a filing structure for the offices / divisions and storage in Foundry)  
This section will be developed after the initial review of the DEM record series.

**2. Archived Records**

DEM's records disposition policy strategy must address the management of archival records. The policy below follows the Rhode Island statute concerning archival policy (Appendix E). More specifically, DEM's retention scheduling process must include provision for dealing with archival records. This section provides guidance and procedures for managing archival records.

**a. What are archival records?**

42-8.1-2 (2) Archive – means an establishment maintained primarily for the storage, servicing, security, and processing of records that must be preserved permanently for historical, legal, or other value and need not be retained in office equipment and space. The Rhode Island State Archives is that establishment for Rhode Island government agencies.

42-8.1-13 State Archives or Archives of the State - means those official records in any and all media that have been determined by the archivist to have sufficient historical, legal, or other value to warrant their continued preservation by the state, and have been accepted by the state archivist for deposit in his or her custody.

DEM permanent records refers to those records in all media that DEM personnel deem to have continuing value which are necessary to conduct the long-term business practices of a program or the public. Examples include conformed ISDS applications and Boating Registration information. These records have no foreseeable destruction date.

**b. Archives and the Management of the Records Life Cycle**

Records are archived at the end of a record's life cycle. Nevertheless, planning for archival records must occur long before they reach their archival stage. The identification of records possessing archival value, and decisions about how they will be handled, must be undertaken during the development of records retention schedules (See Section IV C 3 above on records retention policy and procedure).

Appraisal is the process of evaluating records based upon their current use, informational content, historical significance, arrangement, and relationship to other records. The appraisal process occurs during records retention schedule development. Agency staff, in consultation with the Secretary of State's archival staff, identifies those record series that possess archival value, and determine how they will be managed when they reach the archival stage.

**c. The Identification of DEM Records for Archival Value**

The appraisal of records is usually conducted at the record series level, rather than at the level of single documents. This is true unless an agency officer decides that it is convenient for a single document type to be segregated and organized together as a separate record series. The appraisal criteria archivists use to determine whether a set of records possesses archival value are the following:

i. Legal Value definition:

The value of a record derived from its ability to support business transactions, agreements, and/or ownership, or to document the rights of citizens and the prerogatives of government. Some examples include: ownership and use of property; employment practices, contractual obligations etc.

ii. Fiscal /Financial Value definition:

Records that document the monetary value of property held, the receipt and disbursement of funds or the delivery of goods and services in exchange for funds. Not all fiscal records have the same value. For example: cancelled checks will have little value beyond short term use for proof of payment, if bank statements or ledgers provide a record of date and amount debited according to each check number.

iii. Evidential Value – definition:

The value of a record derived from its ability to provide legal, authentic, and adequate documentation of an organization's structure, activities, and functions.

iv. Historical Value – definition:

The value of a record based on the information it preserves relating to persons, places, activities, events, etc. and not necessarily based on the function of the originating organization. Examples: Wetland permits for commercial properties, highway approvals, water source protection, super fund sites, and acquisition of property. These records document the history of the department. Sometimes records are valuable because of their age or rarity, such as records of the 18<sup>th</sup> /19th centuries. These are closely associated with evidential records.

v. Informational Value – definition:

Records which contain information of use, not only to the creating person or organization, but also to researchers from a variety of fields of knowledge. Some examples: promotional pamphlets, newsletters, directories, special bulletins, catalogues, maps, publications.

**d. Storage for Archival Records**

Records deemed to possess archival value are eligible for storage at the State Archives at the end of the retention periods established in the records retention schedule. Once the records have been officially transferred, the cost of storage and preservation is also transferred to the state archives. The State Archives becomes responsible and accountable for their proper storage in a safe, secure environment, and for making them accessible to the DEM, as well as to the public.

### **3. Destroyed Records**

The Records Management Officer and the Records Liaisons will develop a schedule to destroy records according to the times specified in the record retention schedules. (This list of records that can be destroyed will be automatically generated once the DEM Record Indexing Data System is implemented.) The process to accomplish this task is as follows.

- a.** All units with approved retention scheduled will submit a Certificate of Records Destruction (Appendix G) to the Records Management Officer on a mutually agreed upon schedule.
- b.** The Records Management Officer will forward the Certificate of Records Destruction to the Secretary of State for approval.
- c.** When the Secretary of State approves the DEM request the Records Management Officer will keep track of the approved requests and notify the units that record destruction can commence.
- d.** Depending on the needs of the DEM program, records will either be recycled or shredded, if necessary.

It is DEM's policy to recycle destroyed records. Exceptions to this include may include records containing personal and confidential information that must be shredded.

### **F. Record Recovery Plan**

Protection of records against elements such as floods, fire, theft and loss through carelessness is an essential part of the records management role. Adequate measures must be taken to safeguard all records. While it is important to recognize the value of preventative measures, records managers should also have in place a plan specifically designed to secure DEM's essential records and to react effectively and efficiently in the event of a disaster. A business recovery plan should cover both prevention and reaction. It should be concerned with short to medium term measures enabling the organization to continue its business with minimum disruption. It should not be confused with business continuity management, which is concerned with service over the longer term, such as staff shortages in specialist areas.

This plan is aimed at record managers who, with no conservation or preservation skills, are faced with potential risks to their organization's records. It provides advice and guidance on the development and implementation of business recovery plans, and covers three main areas:

- Identification and protection of essential records, i.e.,
- Measures to minimize the occurrence of disasters
- Recovery plans and procedures in the event of a disaster

The plan applies to all records, including electronic records. Procedures for risk assessment and the identification of essential records are the same for records in all media. The elements of a Record Recovery Plan are included in Appendix H along with the DEM Record Recovery Plan (Appendix H1).

### **G. Training**

Records Management Training for DEM Staff is a necessity. DEM and the Secretary of State have developed guidelines for employee training (Appendix I). This training will have a generic component that will answer basic questions about the legal requirements and the need for records management policies. Training will also review DEM Records Management Policy and specific needs of the offices, divisions and employees.

## **V. Timeline for the Development of the Recommendations**

### **A. Record Creation / Collection**

This activity is completed. An initial inventory was generated in January. The Offices and Divisions has completed this initial records inventory.

### **B. Record Maintenance and Use**

DEM has requested an estimate in developing and implementing the new Records Indexing Data System (RIDS). This database development needs to be funded before this project moves forward.

Other issues that needs to be developed include the following:

- a. A training protocol that includes Departmental file retention/disposition schedules, records management policies and procedures and use of the Records Indexing Data System.
- b. Create guidance for organizing the records stored in the Foundry basement that includes final disposition of these records. (Completed by June 1, 03)
- c. Inspect and identify all records stored in the storage area. (Completed by August 03)

### **C. Records Disposition**

A draft record retention schedule for the records collected was in draft form by April 11, 2003 and retention schedules have been developed in consultation with the programs and Office of Legal Services. A phased approach will be used to finalize the record retention schedules. Once the unique DEM record series are developed, we will meet with the Secretary of State's Office to review the DEM proposed retention schedules for both unique and common records. The retention schedules for the Bureau of Policy and Administration will be finalized and submitted to the Secretary of State by June 16. The Bureau of Natural Resources will be the second group finalized (August 1, 2003). The Bureau of Environmental Protection will be finalized and submitted by October 1, 2003

All offsite storage facilities will be evaluated by the methods specified in the checklist in Appendix J by September 1, 2003. All completed checklists will be returned to the Assistant Director of Policy and Planning

### **D. Training**

Training is a key component for the implementation of the DEM records policy. Training will be accomplished in two phases and will consist of the following elements, general records training, and Division or Office specific training.

#### **Phase I**

General records training will provide the DEM employee with a basic overview on records issues. The training will cover topics such as:

- Why records management is important
- State requirements for records handling,
- Definition of a record, record series, record retention schedule
- Implementation of the DEM Records Management Policy

The Secretary State and DEM have developed a training course and we are in the process of determining the length of this element of training. Department employee trainers who have been trained by the Secretary of State will teach Phase 1 material.

## **Phase II**

Approximately one month after the Phase I training, the Records Management Officer will convene a meeting of the division / office record liaisons to assess the effectiveness of this training. This group will also be used to determine any gaps that need to be covered in future training.

## **VI. Resources Needed to Implement the Recommendations**

There were four areas identified to implement a DEM Records Management Policy, i.e.

- The naming of a Records Management Officer who will coordinate records management activities of the Department.
- The development of a Records Indexing Data System that will enable all divisions to organize their records before storage. The cost of developing the software is estimated to be \$12,000 – \$16,000.
- Hiring summer interns to assist in the organization and sorting of records stored in the basement of the Foundry.
- Development of a security protocol to ensure the integrity of records during the file review process.
- Novell servers and software upgrade and training and NAS hardware and software for electronic information storage and recovery.

## **VII. Short-term Strategies for Implementing the Recommendations**

DEM has made a conscious decision to develop a records management policy that will be implemented in phases. The task of developing and implementing this policy at once is beyond the resources of the agency. DEM has decided to develop procedures that will enable Divisions and Offices to begin to get their records organized. The development of record retention schedules will enable these units to begin the task of eliminating obsolete documents from their files. This will be accomplished in the following phased approach.

Phase I is the inventory stage. All offices and divisions have been surveyed on the kinds of records that are used in their business practices. This survey determined that all records fell into three categories. The first two categories are fiscal and personnel files that are common to all units and the third category is the records that are unique to each division / office. Record series and a record retention schedule was developed by each division / office. The retention schedule will enable each unit to dispose of obsolete records after approval from the Secretary of State's Office. The work of Phase I will be finished by the first week of May 03.

Phase II entails:

- Briefing Senior Management and Division/Office chiefs on the DEM Records Management Policy.
- Reviewing retention schedules by Office of Legal Services and the Secretary of State. The retention schedules will be reviewed in the following order, i.e., Planning and Policy, Natural Resources and then Environmental Protection.
- Inspecting and sorting records stored in the basement of the Foundry.
- Developing Training Manuals
- Training the Trainers / Record Liaisons

No.	Program Element	Completion Date	Lead Employee
<b>Phase I DEM Records Management Policy</b>			
1	Develop and send a records Management Survey to all divisions/Offices. With follow-up, we have achieved 100% participation.	December 02	Raddatz / Getz
2	Develop a Records Indexing Data System to support the records review process. The database presently consists of approximately 2000 records.	January 03	Raddatz
3	Identify all division/office record types that includes general administrative and program specific records.	April 11, 03	Record Liaisons
4	Forward the "DEM Draft Records Management Policy" to Division / Office Chief for their review and comment.	April 18, 03	Vincent / Getz
5	Review the record-type submissions and tentatively develop a record retention schedules.	May 5, 03	Getz

<b>Phase II DEM Records Management Policy</b>			
No.	Program Element	Completion Date	Lead Employee
1	Brief Director / Secretary of State on DEM Records Management Policy.	May 9, 03	Vincent / Getz
2	Brief Senior Staff / Division / Office Chiefs on Records Management Policy	May 16, 03	Vincent / Getz / Raddatz
3	Finalize retention schedules by meeting with all divisions and offices to review the schedules. The Secretary of State and Office of Legal Services will be enlisted to help in this review of retention schedules.	Bureau of P&P 6/16/03 Bureau of NR 8/1/ 03 Bureau of EP 10/1/03	Getz D. George T. Epstein
4	Develop criteria for organizing stored files.	May 16, 03	Miller
5	Hire summer interns to assist in the organization of stored files. Divisional Trainers to supervise project.	June 16, 03	
6	Finalization of DEM Records Management Policy	June 9, 03	Getz
7	Develop a records management-training program in conjunction with the Secretary of State's Office. Phase I –Records Management Training	Raddatz / Brothman	June 5, 03
8	Identification of 2 individuals from each Division / Office to serve as trainers.	Division / Office Chief	July 9, 03
9	Begin training trainers in general records management – Phase I	Brothman	July 9, 03
10	Begin DEM staff training sessions in Phase II.	DEM Trainers	July 23, 03
11	All off-site storage facilities shall be evaluated by the criteria in Appendix J to determine the appropriateness as a long-term storage site for DEM records.	DEM Office / Division Chiefs	Sept. 8, 03

## VIII. Long-term Strategies for Implementing the Recommendations

DEM has made significant progress in developing and is in the early phases of implementing the records retention schedule requirements. A few DEM employees have coordinated this initial phase. They have made this a priority over other work, but this can not continue over time. In order to press forward, additional resources need to be placed on this project. It is critical that a DEM Records Management Officer be named to coordinate the remaining development work and to supervise the on-going requirements of a records

management system. The chart below identifies some of the major components of work that needs to be accomplished.

No.	Program Element	Completion Date	Lead Employee
1	Name a DEM Records Management Officer.	Oct. 03	Director
2	Develop a records management security policy to protect records from being lost during the file review process	Oct. 03	Records Management Officer
3	Review all record types data with the intent of developing standardized naming conventions.	Jan. 04	Records Management Officer
4	Expand Record Indexing Design System to enable all divisions to use it when preparing records for storage.	Jan 04	F. Vincent
5	Develop departmental policies to insure that records stored in the storage area are stored according to departmental policy and removed on a cyclical basis.	Jan 04	Records Management Officer
6	Develop a list of essential documents that will be needed in case of a catastrophic event that destroys DEM records.	Jan 04	Records Management Officer with Records Committee
7	Identify and develop work flow charts that relate the division's work flow processes to the creation and maintenance of files for individual divisions.	March 04	Records Management Officer with Division / Office Chiefs
8	Develop a standardized file structure that will be used by all DEM programs.	April 04	Records Management Officer
9	Implement the record creation policy that will enable DEM to track all future records generated.	Sept. 04	Records Management Officer
10	Begin the process of compiling an inventory on DEM's electronic information systems (including ad hoc systems).	Jan 05	Chief MIS
11	Determine the extent of records stored at offsite locations and develop an inventory and record retention schedules for the documents.	Jan 05	Records Management Officer
12	Develop an electronic records management addendum to this policy.	Jan 05	Chief MIS
13	Evaluate the environmental and physical conditions of offsite record storage facilities using the checklist of Appendix J.	March 05	Div. / Office Chiefs
14	Finalize the central files decision.	June 05	F. Vincent
15	Begin to explore advanced technology relative to records management.	Jan 06	Records Management Officer

## **Appendix A – Rhode Island Public Records Custody and Disposal Law**

**§ 38-3-6 Public records custody and disposal.** – (a) Each agency shall prepare and submit to the program, in accordance with the rules and regulations of the program, record control schedules for all public records in the custody of the agency.

(b) The offices of the attorney general and the auditor general will advise the program on the legal and fiscal values of records covered by proposed records control schedules.

(c) Those records which are determined by an agency not to be needed in the transaction of current business but which, for legal or fiscal requirements, must be retained for specific time periods beyond administrative needs, shall be sent to the records center. The records will be kept in the center until time for disposition as provided in record control schedules.

(d) Public records possessing permanent value as determined by approved records control schedules shall be transferred to the public records repository when no longer needed by an agency in transaction of current business.

(e) Title to any record placed in the records center shall remain in the agency placing the record in the center.

(f) Title to any record transferred to the public records repository, as authorized in this chapter, shall be vested in the program.

(g) The program shall preserve and administer such public records as shall be transferred to its custody according to approved conservation and security practices, and to permit them to be inspected, examined, and copied at reasonable times and under supervision of the program; provided that any record placed in keeping of the program under special terms or conditions restricting their use shall be made available only in accordance with the terms and conditions.

(h) Provide a public research room where, upon policies established by the program, the records in the public records repository may be studied.

(i) The program may make certified copies under seal of any records transferred to it upon the application of any person, and the certificates, signed by the administrator or his or her designee, shall have the same force and effect as if made by the agency from which the records were received. The program may charge a reasonable fee for this service.

(j) No public record shall be destroyed or otherwise disposed of by any agency without prior notice to the program.

(k) The program shall adopt reasonable rules and regulations not inconsistent with this chapter relating to the destruction and disposal of records. The rules and regulations shall provide but not be limited to:

(1) Procedures for preparing and submitting record control schedules to the program.

(2) Procedures for the physical destruction or other disposal of records.

(3) Standards for the reproduction of records for security or with a view to the disposal of the original record.

(l) The program shall:

(1) Establish safeguards against unauthorized or unlawful removal or loss of records; and

(2) Initiate appropriate action to recover records removed unlawfully or without authorization.

(m) The program may prepare and publish handbooks, guides, indexes, and other literature directed toward encouraging the management, preservation, and uses of the state's public records resource.

## **Appendix B - Centralized Files Discussion**

### **Centralized Files**

A **centralized** filing system is:

- One in which the records for several people or units are located in one, central location; and,
- Generally, under the control of a records staff person or in the case of large centralized filing systems, several people.

#### **Advantages:**

- Responsibility is easily placed.
- Effective use of equipment, supplies and space.
- All related data kept together.
- Reduces duplication.
- Uniform service provided to all users.
- Improved security.
- Reduce use of engineers and scientists as file clerks.
- Possible overall reduction in space needed for files.

#### **Disadvantages:**

- Records may be too distant from staff for adequate service.
- Can result in increased personal filing systems.
- Requires full-time staffing.
- May require investment in more efficient filing equipment and/or automation.

### **Decentralized System**

A decentralized filing system is:

- One in which the files are located throughout the office, generally at individual work stations; and,
- Usually controlled by the person who creates and/or receives them.

#### **Advantages:**

- Records located near staff creating and using them.
- Does not require "extra" space needed for centralized files.
- Does not require full-time staffing.
- Staff feels more comfortable knowing they are in control of their own filing and retrieving.

#### **Disadvantages:**

- Confusion as to where information can be found, especially if a staff member is absent.

- Can result in "fragmented" documentation - information related to the same topic or subject filed in multiple places.
- Individual staff members may not know how to properly maintain their files.
- Lack of uniformity or consistency, even within an Office or Division. .
- Often requires more space since records are often stored in multiple locations.
- Engineers and Scientists time is spent filing. This is a support function.

**Combination System:**

There are ways to structure a program using a combination system. Centralized control is established through a "records liaison" or "records manager" who is the centralized point of contact for records management in the office and who has responsibility for maintaining the office file plan and ensuring established procedures are followed.

Here are some examples where specific types of records are maintained in a central location while the rest of the records are maintained at individual workstations:

- A centralized reference collection of documents;
- A file room for files which are inactive but which are not ready to be sent to the State Archives;
- A public reference room for files that are accessed by the public.

Those records which are maintained at individual work stations are also part of the organization's filing system and included in the office file plan so that everyone in the office knows where the records are located and who is responsible for maintaining them.

**Appendix C – Record Retention Schedule - Example**

Division Name	Record Type	Location Of Records	Storage Medium	Schedule Id	Record Description	Retention Time Line
ADMINISTRATIVE ADJUDICATION	ACCIDENT REPORTS	OFFICE	PAPER			
ADMINISTRATIVE ADJUDICATION	BUDGET	OFFICE	PAPER			
ADMINISTRATIVE ADJUDICATION	CASE FILES	OFFICE	PAPER			
ADMINISTRATIVE ADJUDICATION	CASE FILES	OFF-SITE	PAPER			
ADMINISTRATIVE ADJUDICATION	COMPUTER INVENTORY	OFFICE	PAPER			
ADMINISTRATIVE ADJUDICATION	DIRECT PURCHASE ORDERS	OFFICE	PAPER			
ADMINISTRATIVE ADJUDICATION	INVOICE VOUCHERS	OFFICE	PAPER			
ADMINISTRATIVE ADJUDICATION	MASTER PRICE AGREEMENTS	OFFICE	PAPER			
ADMINISTRATIVE ADJUDICATION	PERSONNEL	OFFICE	PAPER			
ADMINISTRATIVE ADJUDICATION	PERSONNEL	OFFICE	ELECTRONIC			
ADMINISTRATIVE ADJUDICATION	TIME SHEETS	OFFICE	PAPER			
ADMINISTRATIVE ADJUDICATION	TRAVEL	OFFICE	PAPER			

## Appendix D - Environmental and Physical Storage Requirements

### 1. Environmental Storage Requirements

- a. Storage temperature should fall within the range of a uniform 65-70 degrees Fahrenheit.
- b. Relative humidity should fall within the range of 45-50%. The storage climate is dependent on a constant (24 hours a day, 7 days a week), stable environment with minimal fluctuations in both temperature and humidity. Stable climate conditions will reduce the growth of mold. If mold is discovered, contact preservation personnel for further instructions. Lowering temperatures and relative humidity levels and increasing air circulation should help discourage future mold growth.
- c. Do not store records underneath water pipes. Please take into account the location of water pipes on all building floors. Leaks can travel from the top floor to the basement.
- d. Limit pest infestation by removing trash daily and prohibiting food and drink in designated areas. If necessary, set bug and mousetraps. Explore pest management control services and options that are consistent with personal health and safety, as well as record protection.
- e. Limit direct natural and artificial light that may damage records. Cover windows securely, store records in boxes and folders, and turn off lights when not in use. Light fixtures should be placed over aisles and not over shelving units.
- f. Air filtration systems are ideal in limiting dust and pollutants, but may be expensive. Other dust limiting methods include regularly changing furnace and air conditioner filters; using high-efficiency vacuum cleaners, which do not redistribute dust; not storing records near photocopying machines; and limiting carpet and wooden shelves in the storage area.

### 2. Physical Storage Requirements

The preservation of government records depends upon the use of proper supplies to safely store records. The following guidelines provide information on how to physically store records:

- a. Storing records in folders and boxes will prevent damage from light and dust, and ensure easy retrieval.
- b. Boxes should be uniform, and limited to 1-2 different sizes. This allows for easier storage and space allocation on shelves. A standard storage box is 1 cubic foot (10"x12"x15"), and will house both letter and legal sized records. Boxes should be acid free to slow record deterioration, and preferably double sided and double bottomed with lids to support the weight of paper records. Box weight should be limited to 40 pounds for ease of use. Locator numbers should be found on one of the outside sides of the box.
- c. Folders should be acid free, and are available in both letter and legal sizes. A supply of bond folders, in both letter and legal sizes, may also be of use in housing records and photographs.
- d. Avoid using rubber bands, and limit use of staples and paper clips. These items deteriorate and may damage records.
- e. Pencil is the preferable means of labeling folders. Adhesive labels may eventually fall off and ink may fade.
- f. Boxes must be stored off the ground and on shelves. The amount of shelving depends on the height of the room, and whether the staff will be dependent on ladders, [stepstools](#) or have a forklift available for record retrieval. Shelves should be tall and deep enough to accommodate a large number of boxes. Metal shelving is easily erected and sturdy.
- g. Shelves should not be placed directly against walls due to the possibility of moisture buildup, condensation, or leaks. Allow a minimum 12-inch distance between the shelves and wall.
- h. Aisles between shelves should be a minimum of 30 inches wide to allow room for box retrieval and possible cart traffic.
- i. Pallets may be used for transporting large quantities of records at one time, but are dependent upon available space. Carts may also be used to transport records.

- j. Fireproof cabinets should house the most valuable and permanent records, such as vital records and/or microfilm.

## **Appendix E - Rhode Island Statute § 38-3-5 Concerning State Archival Policy**

The state archival policy is detailed in Section 38-3 of the general laws. Under this statute, the Secretary of State is required under § 38-3-5 to:

- (1) Establish and administer a public records management program, including the operation of a record center or centers, and appoint a director who will apply efficient and economical management methods relating to the creation, utilization, maintenance, retention, preservation, and disposal of records.
- (2) Analyze, develop, establish, and coordinate standards, procedures, and techniques of record making and record keeping.
- (3) Insure the maintenance and security of records that are deemed appropriate for preservation.
- (4) Institute and maintain a training and information program in all phases of records management to bring to the attention of all agencies approved and current practices, methods, procedures, and devices for the efficient and economical management of records.
- (5) Make available a centralized program of microfilming for the benefit of all agencies.
- (6) Make continuous surveys of record keeping operations.
- (7) Recommend improvements in current records management practices, including the use of space, equipment, supplies, and personnel in creating, maintaining, and servicing records.
- (8) Establish and maintain a program, in cooperation with each agency, for the selection and protection of public records considered essential to the operation of government and to the protection of the rights and privileges of citizens.

- Review state law to determine the basic requirements for records archival.
- Review guidance from the Secretary of State's Office and determine if this information is specific enough to develop a recommendation for the archiving of DEM records.
- Develop recommendations for the archiving of DEM records including both paper and electronic.
- Research the internet, and survey the states, (especially the New England states), the federal government to determine if there are any models for records management that could be used to guide DEM's effort.

## **Appendix F - Guideline for the Documentation of Electronic Record-Keeping Systems**

### **1. Introduction**

DEM's record-keeping systems should produce accurate, secure, and reliable records and must be able to demonstrate consistent, controlled data handling during the active and inactive life of the data. These assurances are necessary for the following reasons:

- Electronic data may be easily altered, manipulated, damaged, and lost.
- Confidentiality of records can be problematic.
- Electronic data can become irretrievable after a short time span.
- Electronic records may not be legally admissible in court if they are maintained poorly.

The guideline serves two purposes. One, it serves as a checklist of important elements and points to areas which might otherwise be overlooked when designing or maintaining systems. Two, it serves as an outline that can be used by divisions and offices in the development of documentation of these systems. The Management Information Systems Office should produce an addendum to DEM's Records Management Policy using this guideline as an outline.

### **2. System Infrastructure**

System infrastructure consists of the physical parts and components that provide the mechanical foundation for running applications and programs. Documentation of the infrastructure is important because system failures and data loss can often be linked to weaknesses in the infrastructure.

#### **2.1. Management**

- Provide a narrative description of the entire system and/or its parts adequate for an understanding of its main purposes and functions. Document and log any changes to the equipment system design or layout.
- List system managers/overseers, and their responsibilities.
- List technical contacts with their duties and responsibilities.
- Provide network schematics, diagrams and physical location maps.
- Provide equipment requirements and specifications for each individual item.
- Provide or indicate a location of contracts, warranties, and licensing agreements.

#### **2.2 Hardware**

Examples: servers, desktops, mainframes, scanners, and jukeboxes, file cabinets.

- Provide a hardware inventory listing each item. Include with each item the name, make, model number, inventory number, functional features, size, color, location, manager, purchase date, vendor name and address, vendor contact name, and installation date.
- Provide or indicate a location of warranties, contracts maintenance log and documentation.
- Provide diagrams showing the physical location of each item.
- Maintain a maintenance log.

#### **2.3 Network Fabric**

This consists of the equipment and wiring that carries network traffic. Examples: routers, bridges, hubs, concentrators, and wires and cables such as twisted pairs, coaxial, and fiber optic.

- Provide an inventory listing each component. Include with each item the name, functional features, size, bandwidth, capacity, length, purchase date, and installation date.
- Provide a diagram showing routes and connections.
- Provide a list and map of all jacks and electrical outlets and an indication of their capacity.
- Document procedures for servicing, repairing, and replacing components.

#### 2.4 Software

Software includes operating systems and program applications.

Provide an inventory list of each piece of software. Document name, vendor, functional features, purchase order, version, and size in bytes, name of application, maker/creator, functional features, version, vendor, purchase and upgrade dates, and license agreements.

- Define operating system specifications.
- List managers, consultants, or contracted services personnel and their responsibilities.
- Provide documentation for programs including source code, debugging information, and flowcharts.

#### 2.5 Data Storage Media

Examples: magnetic tape, floppy disks, hard-drives.

- Provide an inventory by media type. Include with each item the name, make, item number, functional features, size, storage holders, storage capacity in bytes, predicted media shelf life (how long media can sit unattended before it begins to deteriorate), obsolescence projection (how long, and under what conditions, the type of media will be used before it becomes outmoded or superseded), vendors and suppliers.
- Provide specifications and procedures for the care and handling of each type of storage media.

### 3. System Operations

Operations descriptions should aim to promote accurate, reliable, and consistent processes as well as data and information.

#### 3.1 Records and Information Management

##### 3.1.1 Data Storage, Disposition, and Conversion

Produce, maintain, and use approved records disposition schedules. Records, including those in electronic format may only be deleted or destroyed in accordance with the approved disposition schedule and an approved application for destruction. The record disposition schedules should:

- Be able to delete documents by record series and provide deletion report.
- Be able to freeze disposition in case of systems review, audit, or legal matter.
- Be able to create snapshots.
- Develop and maintain a records storage ("archiving") cycle schedule detailing when and how to convert on-line data to near-line or off-line on

tapes, disks, hardcopy or other.

- Develop a disk replacement cycle schedule for stored media containing data with long retention periods.
- Be able to replace all disks and tapes every 5 years if disk shelf life cannot be easily determined.
- Test stored data yearly and replace any defective disks. Convert disk data to the most current version of the software and hardware configuration at this time.
- Store records of similar retention periods so entire record series can be deleted at designated time.
- Ensure stored data is not retained past the retention period of the data.
- Convert the records to other formats, mediums, and applications, especially hardcopy and standard electronic format such as ASCII. Note: Records that are to be maintained permanently may need special formatting. Contact the Archives for specifications and transfer instructions.

### 3.1.2 Security

Security should aim to minimize unauthorized addition, modification, alteration, erasure, or deletion of data, records, and documents. It should ensure that only authorized personnel have access to records. Security also entails provisions for backup and recovery of records and should:

- Describe password protection.
- Describe encryption.
- Describe electronic signatures,
- Describe call-in access protections.
- Describe virus protection.
- Describe individual computer terminal protections such as secure locations and viewing areas, locking screen-savers, and log-on procedures.
- Describe procedures to sanitize or 'scrub' any discarded hard-drives, disks, or tapes to avoid potential recovery of confidential or exempted information by unauthorized persons.

### 3.1.3 Authorizations and Privileges

Define authorized persons or positions and nature of the authorizations and privileges. Privileges may include viewing, creating, editing, deleting, querying and reporting rights. The systems operation should require:

- The identity of users and verify access through passwords.
- Audit trail documentation that has a separate set of authorizations.

### 3.1.4 Backup and Recovery

- Develop and maintain a backup schedule and procedures. Each cycle of the schedule should delineate descriptions of what is being backed-up, number of copies, location of copies, and cycle time period.
- The schedule should document back-up implementation, testing, and

restoration responsibilities and procedures.

- The format and media of the back-ups should be stable, meaning that the media will not deteriorate and the data will not become corrupted, and that hardware, software, and documentation will exist to render the back-ups useable for the duration of the back-up cycle.
- Maintain a minimum of 2 back-up copies for any important files. Keep copies dispersed. At least 1 copy should be off-site.
- For Mainframe and LAN applications maintain in addition to a series of daily back-ups, some long-term back-ups such as a monthly, a 6 month, and a yearly to guard against incremental or undetected data corruption or loss.
- Cross-reference the backup schedule, the data storage (archiving) schedule, and the records retention schedule to ensure that these separate processes are not working at cross-purposes.
- Archive or backup disks isolate records of similar retention periods so entire disk can be deleted at designated time.
- Archive or backup disks are not retained past the retention period of the data.
- Identify or code storage tapes and disks that contain sensitive proprietary materials that might need special handling due to the potential to read the data even after overwrites.
- Identify the number of times storage media may be written over before discarding.

### 3.1.5 Contingency Plans.

- Plans are adequate to restore operations to essential parts of the system.
- Identify vital records and vital records systems.
- Plan documentation is off-site and accessible.
- Provide contingency plans and workarounds involving each piece of equipment.
- Provide plans to meet different emergency scenarios.
- Document protection versus power interruptions.

### 3.1.6 Audit Trail

An audit trail records who did what, when, and under what authorizations. It provides a trail of activity pertaining to records and documents such as the viewing, copying, editing, indexing, classifying, filing, querying, sending, and disposing. Notes: While audit trails are useful for audit and security purposes, more often they are used for system troubleshooting. Audit trails are not a substitute for good preventative security measures.

- Typical Audit trail fields: Created by, creation date, updated by, updated date, station, operator document source (fax), type of access, status, record of errors encountered.
- Determine and document which transactions need a full audit trail such as logins, logoffs and dial ups.
- List and describe audit trails.

- Audit trails are stored separately from the input data, documents, and records and provided with a separate index to its contents.
- Audit trail data has its own restrictions on use.

### 3.1.7 Records Disposition and Conversion.

- Provide document flow charts. Establish backup procedures. See the security section of this guideline backup and recovery.
- Establish data storage procedures.
- Establish procedures for the transfer of data to the archives. Or in-house storage of records of permanent value, based on the retention requirements of special or general retention schedules.
- Outline procedures to convert to new or upgraded software application versions.
- Outline procedures to convert files from C drives to LAN.
- Outline procedures to convert floppies, by date and type.

## 3.2 Business Rules, Processes, and Procedures

### 3.2.1 Training Needs

- Operator training of staff in software, hardware such as scanners, indexing techniques.
- Data entry capture and handling.
- Document preparation and handling.
- Training classes or workshops.

### 3.2.2 Processes

- Importing transferring, filing, and exporting data, documents, and records received electronically.
- Describe import or capture procedures for data from email, email attachments, faxes, mail, spreadsheets, WEB forms, or other.
- Describe policy and procedures for transferring email and email attachments into email folders, word processing folders, hardcopy folders, or document management systems.
- Describe workflow and routing.
- Provide workflow diagrams and descriptions.

### 3.2.3 Classification, Naming, and Indexing

#### 3.2.3.1 Computer Directory Classification Scheme

- Provide a files and/or document classification scheme or outline.
- Describe directory, file, and document, naming conventions.

### 3.2.4 Database and Document Management Applications

- Describe programming code, design, and naming conventions.

- Provide an entity relationship diagram.
- List table names, number of fields.
- Field names: types, parameters, validations, verifications, access restrictions, descriptions, entry rules and procedures, data sources, (inputs, how gathered, where stored).
- Provide document flow charts.
- Describe use of multiple system user data locking methods.
- Form names, descriptions, screen dumps in design view and user interface view, and form menu path diagrams.
- Query names, descriptions, screen dumps of design and view, ad-hoc query capability description.
- Describe types of files, their names and their extensions such as DOC, TXT, TIFF, BMP, and RTF. Explain why these file types were chosen.

#### 3.2.4.1 WEB Sites

Overview. Provide enough documentation to be able to recreate the design and major components of the site from scratch.

- Describe overall purpose of the site.
- Describe major features and sections.
- Provide a diagram, map, list, and description of WEB pages and links.
- Describe data sources.
- Provide screen dumps of major pages of the site.
- Document interactive WEB form design code and processes.
- Describe storage of inactive data components and superseded versions of site.

#### 3.2.5 Retrievals and Queries

- Retrieval methods for authorized users.
- Retrieval use using indexes, text searches. Access to remote storage.
- Built-in querying vs. ad-hoc.
- Provide capability to respond to public records requests and to provide electronically redacted documents and reports.
- Provide enough documentation for filling public records requests to be able to recreate response identically.

#### 3.2.6 Reporting

- Produce a reports production schedule listing all reports and their descriptions, production cycles and their distribution.
- A procedure for producing reports.

### 3.3 Monitoring, Testing, Troubleshooting, and Review

The system should have ongoing quality assurance and review and be able to document continuing compliance through the periodic review of system procedures, standards, and policies. In general, test all elements described in the Documentation Manual. Produce a Systems Test and Inspection Manual, which describes tests, and testing methods.

### 3.3.1 System Inspection and Test Elements

- Compare how well original requirements and specifications are being met or if still applicable.
- Review the log of problems/solutions.
- Review documentation of substantive changes to the structure, design, codes, purposes, or uses of the system.
- Review system-monitoring reports for design and functionality.
- Check that the system documentation is current.
- Test retrievability of sample of records. Describe the nature of the statistical sampling.
- Test authenticity and quality of sampling of data, documents, reports, and images.
- Compare projected storage needs with actual.
- Review system component inventories for completeness and accuracy.
- Test for imprecise or non-indexing.
- Test to see if incorrect versions of applications or operating software are being used, on machines.
- Test that stored data is converted to current software.
- Compare expected record count vs. actual.
- Compare expected user count vs. actual.
- Compare expected retrieval count vs. actual.
- Compare expected quality vs. actual.
- Test that records have been properly identified and described, and storage tapes labeled correctly.
- Read statistically significant sampling of data on stored media to identify data loss, inability to find or retrieve data.
- Compare byte size recorded and actual on stored data.
- Test a sampling of scanned document images for completeness, image quality, resolution, density, and darkness, and their distribution.
- Test to determine if retention schedule reflects current records usage and that it is being applied on a regular basis.

**Appendix G - Certificate Of Records Destruction**

**State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations  
Rhode Island State Archives & Public Records Administration**

**Article I. CERTIFICATION OF RECORDS DESTRUCTION**

<b>1. Department</b>			
<b>2. Division</b>		<b>3. Date</b>	
<b>Section 1.01</b> In accordance with the Authority granted by Title 38 of the Rhode Island General Laws these records have met the legal retention requirements and are eligible for destruction.			
<b>4. Record Series Number (from schedule)</b>	<b>5. Record Series Title</b>	<b>6. Dates to/from</b>	<b>7. Volume</b>
<b>8. I certify that I have reviewed the above listed records and authorize their destruction.</b>			
Dept. Head or Records Custodian _____			
State Archivist & Public Records Administrator _____			

Signed and executed.

Certificate is a permanent record.(§42-8.1-10)

Form RI/RPA 003 (Rev. 5/99)

May be reproduced locally.

## Appendix H - Elements of a Record Recovery Plan

This material is based on Records Management Standards Business Recovery Plans, Standards for the management of Government records RMS 3.2

(<http://www.pro.gov.uk/recordsmanagement/standards/recovery.htm>)

### 1. Responsibilities

The Records Officer is responsible for safeguarding all the records of their organization, including the safe-keeping, accessibility and retention of records for as long as required, the transfer of those public records selected for permanent preservation, and the timely destruction of records no longer required.

The Records Officer is responsible for:

- Maintaining a business recovery manual;
- Attending the scene of an emergency;
- Taking administrative responsibility for a business recovery operation;
- Assessing the scale of damage and deciding on what is required to handle the situation;
- Summoning recovery teams as necessary;
- Informing senior management and contractors' representatives;
- Working with the local fire department and other services;
- Providing reports of incidents and evaluation of business recovery plan effectiveness;
- Making arrangements for training and awareness.

Business Recovery Teams will be designated by the Associate Director of the Bureau of Policy and Administration with consultation with Senior Staff and are responsible for salvage operations and for assisting the Agency Records Officer.

### 2. Risk Assessment

The identification of risk to records and information falls into four main categories:

- Flood
- Fire
- Security
- Infestation, environmental pollution, etc.

#### Flood

Water damage is the most common form of disaster to affect records. Record managers should undertake these actions to minimize the risk of damage:

- Identify and check regularly potential internal and external hazards (for example, heating systems, water tanks and water pipes).
- Identify and check regularly potential penetration hazards (for example, windows, gutters, skylights, and drains).
- Ensure that heating and air-conditioning systems are regularly checked and serviced.
- Consider the possibility of installing flood alarm systems (for example, sensors on water tanks).
- Raise bottom storage shelves five inches above floor level.
- Fit top storage shelves with metal covers.
- Consider boxing important series of records.
- Obtain information on local flood danger periods.
- Never put records on the floor.

## **Fire**

Records managers should be aware of precautions that should be taken to minimize fire damage. In identifying their own risks the following actions can be undertaken:

- Ensure that all existing fire regulations in respect of doors, extinguishers, and alarm systems are enforced.
- Maintain a list of inflammable substances and isolate them from the building.
- Keep storage areas clean and tidy.
- Check electrical wiring regularly.
- Maintain liaison with local fire prevention officers.

## **Security**

Each building and each collection of records poses its own security problems. Record managers should minimize the risk to their holdings from loss or theft. The following actions should be undertaken:

- Caretakers/security guards should check all entrances to buildings, including ground floor windows and basements, after closing time each day and at least once every twenty-four hours during weekends and holidays.
- Buildings with no caretaker or security cover should be fitted with an automatic intruder alarm system.
- All staff members should be aware of the need for good security (for example, good key control; checks on criminal records; and identification procedures).

## **Other**

Unlikely risks to the records, such as infestation from insects and animals, and environmental pollution, should also be taken into consideration. Prevention measures, including traps and poisons, and filtering systems, might be taken.

# **1. Essential Records**

## **a. Identification**

Essential records are records that are critical to the Agency in carrying out its function in emergency and post-emergency situations, and in protecting the legal rights or interests of individuals and the Agency. The selection of records must include those of archival or research value as well as those that have no lasting value but would be valuable during and after an emergency. DEM records are essential for DEM or state or local agencies to perform the following functions:

- Ensure that plans for potable water supplies are available to meet needs in case of an emergency.
- Provide guidance on what are acceptable levels of hazardous agents that might be or have been introduced into the environment.
- Provide post-emergency reconnaissance support for water supply and sewage systems and information on the location and products/byproducts of facilities that generate hazardous waste, hazardous materials transport, storage, and disposal or on the location of hazardous waste sites.
- Provide guidance on the levels of radioactivity at which protective actions must be taken.

The following guidelines are to be used when selecting essential records:

- The type of information needed by DEM during an emergency.
- The value of the records in meeting this need.
- The availability of this information elsewhere.

When selecting legal rights and interests in records, consideration is given to:

- What rights and interests require the Agency's protection?
- What is the value of the records in protecting those rights and interests?
- Is this information available elsewhere?
- Exclude records supporting legal rights that can be reestablished through affidavit and are well known to those involved?
- Exclude records that are duplicated, as a matter of standard practice, by local government?
- If the same records are needed for both emergency operations and legal rights and interests purposes, are records either designated as emergency operating records and handled accordingly or designated as both types and, after duplication, stored separately?
- Does your office designate for essential records purposes only the minimum volume of records consistent with the program's objectives?

**b. Protection**

There are three options for protecting essential records:

- Duplication and dispersal (the duplicate may be in paper or alternative format, such as microform or CD)
- Use of fireproof and secure storage facilities
- Remote storage

The storage of records in electronic form may involve significant risks but many of these risks can be avoided by the use of adequate storage plans and strategies. A back-up system is generally recommended.

**2. Recovery Plan**

**(This needs further discussion with the Secretary of State. A centralized state governmental unit should be considered for parts of this. Maybe there should be a state contract to effectuate a and c below.)**

The business recovery plan brings together the actions necessary at the time of an incident, the needs to be addressed, and initiation procedures. The plan must be reviewed at least once a year and updated, if necessary. The plan should cover:

- Identification of business recovery teams,
- Training and awareness programs,
- Supplies and services,
- Back-up and off-site storage arrangements,
- Essential records.

**a) Recovery Teams**

Teams of three or four people should be formed to undertake salvage operations under the supervision of the ????. ) Perhaps an agency should call a contractor to do this under a master state contract. I would think that either the Associate Director of the Bureau of Policy and Administration or the Chief of OMS would make this call.

**b) Training and Awareness**

It is essential that all staff, especially new staff, is made aware of potential hazards, what to look out for, and what to do in the event of an emergency. This should be part of general health and safety awareness programs. Information distributed to staff must be regularly updated.

**c) Supplies and Services (This part of the plan could be handled by a contractor.)**

The plan must include lists of staff having specific responsibilities, with their contact details, which may need to be summoned in an emergency. A list of services, companies and individuals, with contact details, should also be made. Those that might be needed in an emergency include:

- Conservation document salvage service,
- Deep freeze facility,
- De-humidifiers.

There are a number of organizations providing document salvage services or deep freeze facilities. If it is likely that such a service will be required, it is advisable that they be contacted for details before an emergency occurs. By doing this it is possible to evaluate services and costs before an emergency.

In case of an emergency it is likely that alternative provisions for storing records will be required. The recovery plan must include the location and contact details of back-up storage facilities, which may be off-site.

The plan should include priority lists of what items should be salvaged first. The inventory of essential records (see 5.1.5 above) could be used for this exercise.

## Appendix H-1 – DEM Model Recovery Plan

### REACTION PROCEDURE

#### 1. During Working Hours

- 1.1 For emergencies occurring during working hours, it is essential that every member of staff be acquainted with procedures to raise the alarm.
- 1.2 The Associate Director of the Bureau of Policy and Administration must be contacted. That person should be aware of maintenance or building work in progress in order to be able to assess the disaster situation effectively in so far as it affect records and information.
- 1.3 If the incident cannot be contained, the State Contractor must be contacted.
- 1.4 No records should be moved until the arrival of the Associate Director of the Bureau of Policy and Administration who will assess the damage and the help required in the first instance.

#### 2. Out of Working Hours

- 2.1 Night security guards should take any action that will reduce or limit the potential damage, if it is safe to do so. This might include:
  - Turn off stopcocks.
  - Switch off electric lights.
  - Unplug appliances.
  - Close doors and windows.
- 2.2 Even if the incident can be contained, The Associate Director of the Bureau of Policy and Administration must be informed.
- 2.3 If a disaster cannot be contained, the emergency services must be informed and the following personnel must be contacted immediately:

- |   |          |
|---|----------|
|   | Tel no.  |
| • <i>name</i> The Associate Director of the Bureau of Policy and Administration | xxx xxxx |
| • <i>name</i> Chief of OMS  | xxx xxxx |
| • <i>name</i> DEM Director<br>[or designated staff]                             | xxx xxxx |
- 2.4 The Associate Director of the Bureau of Policy and Administration must visit the site and, after assessing the disaster, contact the State Contractor:

- |  |          |
|--|----------|
|  | Tel no.  |
| • <i>name</i> State Contractor primary contact   | xxx xxxx |
| • <i>name</i> State Contractor alternate contact | xxx xxxx |
- 2.5 No records must be removed until the arrival of the Associate Director of the Bureau of Policy and Administration who will assess the damage to the records and the help that is required in the first instance. They will:
    - Contact the state contractor if necessary.
    - Contact appropriate staff.
    - Select area(s) to be used for the assessment of damaged records.
    - Allocate staff rest area(s).

- 2.6 If it seems that the emergency will mean the closure of the office, the Associate Director of the Bureau of Policy and Administration must contact the DEM Director to inform him/her of the situation. Emergency procedures not directly concerned with the management of records and information should then be implemented (for example, procedure in case of a power cut).

## **RECOVERY PROCEDURE**

The information below could be in the state contract for the recovery of documents. DEM employees should not be responsible for this task.

### **1. Instructions for Recovery Contractor**

- 1.1 When alerted about a disaster the Recovery Contractor must view the disaster location as soon as possible and assess the situation, in order to estimate the extent of the disaster recovery procedures and back-up facilities required.
- 1.2 The Recovery Contractor must contact the their Recovery Teams and appraise them of the situation to begin recovery efforts.
- 1.3 The designated conservation document salvage service or deep freeze facility must be contacted and informed about the disaster.
- 1.4 On arrival at the disaster location, contact must be made with the Associate Director of the Bureau of Policy and Administration.
- 1.5 Air-drying will be suitable for small quantities of records that have only been slightly damaged by water. Thus, if the disaster can be contained in this way, the following procedures should be followed:
  - Summon the requisite number of people from the Recovery Teams to deal with the situation.
  - Use fans and de-humidifiers to assist the drying process.
  - Stand damp volumes upright and gently fan out the pages; interleave with blotting paper, if possible.
  - Interlace pages of books printed on coated paper and photographic prints with silicone release paper to prevent blocking.
  - Place blotting paper between individual sheets of files.
  - Change blotting paper regularly
  - Do not attempt to separate material stuck together; this is a job for expert conservators.
- 1.6 Small amounts of dry fragmentary material (resulting, perhaps, from fire damage) should be gathered and made available to staff of the business area to which the records belong in order that it might be identified and salvaged, if necessary.
- 1.7 If the disaster cannot be contained, summon as many members of the Recovery Teams as possible. They will work under the direction of the State Contractor. When they arrive at the location of the disaster, security staff should issue them with special passes for which they must sign when entering or leaving the building. They must also be issued protective clothing.
- 1.8 Designate an assessment area to which damaged material can be taken. The major requirement for this area is sufficient space to lay out records and pack material for freezing.
- 1.9 Arrange for the installation of emergency lighting, if necessary.
- 1.10 A suitable rest area for the recovery staff should be provided. The contractor will be required to supply food and water for the recovery team.

- 1.11 Before any full-scale salvage operation is begun the Recovery Teams must be briefed on the following:
- Allocation of tasks,
  - Location of assessment area,
  - Location of rest area,
  - Location of first aid room.
- 1.12 A log of events must be kept (including photographs, if possible) and a final report on the disaster made to senior management.
- 1.13 Communication between teams must be maintained at all times.

## **2. Instructions for Chief of Management Services**

- 2.1 When alerted about a disaster the following members of staff must be contacted before going to the disaster location. They should be put on alert for possible further action:

[name]	[Address]	[tel. no]
--------	-----------	-----------

[these staff members might be those most closely concerned with the particular records that have been damaged or senior management]

## **3. Instruction for Business Recovery Teams**

- 3.1 Get to the location of the disaster as quickly as possible. 3.2 Having been issued with a special pass and protective clothing, report to the Business Recovery Officer.
- 3.2 Make sure that you have the following information:
- Location of damaged records,
  - Task assignment,
  - Assessment area,
  - Rest area,
  - Location of first aid facilities,
  - Location of areas that are declared out of bounds.
- 3.3 Areas adjacent to the location of the disaster should be protected by plastic sheeting to protect them from further damage.
- 3.4 When records are removed they must be labeled in the most convenient way to indicate their title/reference and location.
- 3.5 Damaged records must be removed from the location of the disaster to the assessment area using plastic crates. Records should be removed from the floor first, keeping them open or closed as found. When removing records from shelves, the top shelf must be emptied first, working sequentially towards the bottom shelf. The records should be placed in plastic bags to prevent further damage before they are loaded into the crates. Boxed records might be moved without having to place them in crates.
- 3.6 Material slightly damaged with water can be treated by fan drying.
- 3.7 Dry but fragmented material should be placed in a designated area, ready for inspection by staff from the business areas to which the records relate. If possible, they should be sorted by business area.
- 3.8 Records that have suffered bad water damaged must be packed in plastic bags and packed into boxes. Lists of material removed must be kept, showing the number of the box in which the material has been packed. The boxes must then be taken to a collection area for transportation to the allocated deep freeze facility. Freezing records in this way will prevent further damage

while awaiting attention. Other badly damaged records should be set aside for the attention of the designated conservation document salvage service.

3.9 After records have been removed, excess water should be mopped up.

#### **4. Restoration of the Disaster Area**

- 4.1 The disaster area should be restored to normal use as soon as possible. The prime responsibility for this will rest with the facilities management staff.
- 4.2 Temperature and relative humidity readings should be taken as soon as the disaster area has been cleared.
- 4.3 De-humidifiers (to reduce relative humidity) and fans (to increase air circulation) should be installed, if necessary.
- 4.4 Walls, ceilings, floors and shelving should be washed thoroughly with a fungicide (such as sodium ortho-phenyphenol solution in water) to inhibit mould growth.
- 4.5 Areas can be put back to use when the temperature and relative humidity levels have stabilized at acceptable levels for a period of seven days

# **DEM RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY TRAINING OUTLINE**

**PREPARED BY:**

**Barbara Raddatz and Thomas Getz**

**In cooperation with: Brien Brothman of the Secretary of State's Office**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Records management is the planning, controlling, directing, organizing, training, promoting and other managerial activities involving the life cycle of information. This includes the creation, maintenance (use, storage, retrieval) and disposal, regardless of media. Records management programs must manage organizational information so that it is timely, accurate, complete, cost-effective, accessible and useable. Providing information, in a timely manner, allows DEM to provide better constituent service.

All DEM employees will be creating and using government records. They may be in many formats: paper, electronic, audio-visual, maps, etc. Records document the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations and other activities of the Agency.

There are rules governing the use and destruction of all state records. It is the DEM employee's responsibility to protect state records, and there are legal implications for destroying records without the proper authority. This DEM policy on records management will provide guidance needed to manage records in an efficient manner.

DEM is responsible for the development and enforcement of environmental and natural resource regulations. There is a constant flow of information between the public, the regulated environmental community and DEM. This information supports agency decisions and enforcement issues. Documents need to be available to support this work.

## **FOREWARD FROM THE DIRECTOR**

DEM Staff developed the DEM Records Management Policy as a team effort. This policy outlines the process by which DEM Bureaus, Offices and Divisions will manage the records of the Department. This policy should not be seen as another additional responsibility, but rather, records management should be viewed as an integral part of the business practice of the agency. This policy will increase the effectiveness of the agency by allowing records to be shared between offices and will allow all programs to properly dispose of obsolete records. This policy will also facilitate the efficient retrieval of records that are stored to better serve the public and our internal customers.

The records management policy recognizes that agency personnel needs to be trained in the proper management of records. The material presented in this document will provide agency staff with the tools and information needed to implement this policy. I heartily endorse this policy.

This policy is the first step in managing our records. This policy details the manner by which paper records are managed. I am looking forward to our ability to extend this policy to the electronic media.

## **MISSION**

In October 2002, DEM convened a meeting of representatives of all offices and divisions to develop a DEM records management policy.

The Department determined that a critical need existed to develop a comprehensive and consistent records policy and plan to better support its mission and programs, including enhancing customer services.

The Department established a committee to develop a policy and plan for records retention consistent with Rhode Island Law 38-3-6 and its own stated objectives for managing, protecting and restoring Rhode Island's natural resources.

The Committee was charged with developing a policy and plan that would include both short and long term recommendations in the following areas:

- ◆ Definition of a record.
- ◆ Establish a clear policy for retention of records which would address creation, collection, record maintenance and use and record disposition.
- ◆ Develop and disseminate information and train designated divisional personnel in the management of records according to established protocol.
- ◆ Identification by the MIS Office of technology and methods that further implementation of the record policy and protocols including but not limited to the Permit Process Tracking and Information Systems (PPTIS) project.
- ◆ Investigate whether the creation of a centralized records inventory and repository will promote efficient and effective use, maintenance and retrieval of records and its feasibility.

## PURPOSE OF RECORDS MANAGEMENT

There are many definitions of records management. One common one is "the field of management responsible for the systematic control of the creation, maintenance, use, and disposition of records".

The life cycle of a record forms the heart of records management. It is the span of a record's existence, from its creation through its use and storage, to its final disposition or preservation as a historical document.

The life cycle of a record usually consists of three stages:

- ◆ **Creation or receipt:** The planning, controlling, directing, organizing, training, promoting, and other managerial activities involved in records creation.
- ◆ **Maintenance and use:** Allows proper documentation of the policies and transactions of DEM's stated Mission and the effective and economical management of agency operations.
- ◆ **Final disposition:** Allows for the proper storage and indexing of records for efficient use of the records. Records will also be disposed based on retention schedules approved by the Secretary of State, the Auditor General and the Attorney General, and allows appropriate historical documents to be transferred to the State Archives.

## AGENCY RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY

It is DEM policy to manage agency records effectively and efficiently throughout their life cycle. The proper management of records will assist DEM in meeting its programmatic and administrative missions, preserve DEM records and promote public access to this information. This will be accomplished through the adequate and proper documentation of all policy decisions, procedures, and essential transactions in a manner that promotes accountability, establishes a historical record, and protects the legal and financial rights of the government and the privacy of individuals. Meeting these policy goals will require DEM to:

1. Plan and establish a framework for managing and overseeing an agency-wide records management program.
2. Integrate the records management system into DEM's information resources management program to promote effective management, communication, sharing, and transfer of information regardless of the medium or format in which it exists.
3. Inform its employees and agents of their responsibilities to manage records, and ensure that records management staff receive adequate training to carry out their responsibilities.
4. Manage records throughout their life cycle that includes the following components:
  - ◆ RECORD CREATION/COLLECTION - An official record shall be created to appropriately document all agency functions, policies, decisions, procedures and essential transactions. Programs shall be provided with record keeping requirements for all official agency records for which they are responsible.
  - ◆ RECORDS MAINTENANCE AND USE - Record filing, indexing and storage systems shall be designed and documented to the extent appropriate and necessary, to maximize the usefulness of the records and allow retrieval throughout their life cycle.
  - ◆ RECORDS DISPOSITION - Records disposition schedules for all agency records shall be submitted to and approved by the State Archivist. No records may be destroyed without an approved disposition. The programs should destroy records in a timely manner once dispositions are approved by the General Auditor and the Attorney General.
  - ◆ SECURITY FOR DEM RECORDS - Adequate security provisions will be made to ensure the authenticity, reliability, and integrity of all agency records, regardless of the material or medium used to make and store them.
5. Encourage the Information Management Unit to assist Offices/Divisions to develop software applications and to evaluate hardware applications (such as electronic document filing, data base applications, or conversion to microfilm or optical disk) to improve the management of records. To the extent that the system or application affects the DEM's record keeping, the following requirements shall be incorporated:
  - ◆ **Record creation** - Applications shall allow for the creation and maintenance of records sufficient to meet the documentation needs of DEM.
  - ◆ **Record storage** - Records shall be physically located and maintained in an economical manner that allows for easy retrieval, access, and dissemination if appropriate.

- ◆ **Records disposition** - The records within the information system shall be scheduled and the system shall be capable of deleting records or transferring them to the State Archives as required by their disposition schedule.
6. Standardize the development of filing systems/structures by the OMS/IMU, where appropriate, to provide an effective mechanism which facilitates ease of use, access, and disposition. Records shall be organized and indexed in such a manner as to be easily accessible to DEM employees and the public and to allow for integration across programs and information systems.

## **STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES**

State employees are responsible for generating and keeping records of their work. State employees have four basic obligations regarding state records:

- ◆ Create records needed to perform the business of their agency, record decisions and actions taken and document activities for which they are responsible.
- ◆ Take care of records so that information can be found when needed. This means setting up good directories and files and filing materials regularly and carefully in a manner that allow the record to be safely and efficiently retrieved.
- ◆ Carry out the disposition of records under their control in accordance with agency records schedules and state regulations.
- ◆ File personal papers and non-public records material separately from official agency records.

## **RECORDS MANAGEMENT GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **WHY KEEP RECORDS?**

Records are kept to:

- ◆ Increase business effectiveness through optimal information use
- ◆ Protect public interest
- ◆ Provide accountability for agency work
- ◆ Document agency activities and accomplishments
- ◆ Economical and effective management of public's money, agency space and your time
- ◆ Comply with state and other laws and regulations

## **WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF RECORDS MANAGEMENT?**

Records support an agency's ability to fulfill its mission. Every organization, including State agencies, must address well-defined objectives that add value, either by achieving the agencies goals or by reducing costs. Since records contain information, a valuable resource, it is essential to take a systematic approach to the management of records.

### **Records Management:**

- ◆ Contributes to the smooth readily available operation of the agency's programs by making the information for decision-making and operations readily available
- ◆ Helps deliver services in a consistent and equitable manner
- ◆ Facilitates effective performance of activities throughout an agency
- ◆ Protects the rights of the agency, its employees, and its customers
- ◆ Provides continuity in the event of a disaster
- ◆ Protects records from inappropriate and unauthorized access
- ◆ Meets statutory and regulatory requirements including archival, audit, and oversight activities
- ◆ Provides protection and support in litigation
- ◆ Allows quicker retrieval of documents and information from files
- ◆ Improves office efficiency and productivity
- ◆ Provides better documentation more efficiently
- ◆ Supports and documents historical and other research
- ◆ Frees up office space for other purposes by moving inactive records to storage facilities
- ◆ Avoids unnecessary purchases of office equipment (i.e. filing cabinets)

## **RECORDS CREATION**

Definition of a record:

A record is any document, in any medium, made to serve as a record of the conduct of the affairs of the business or agency.

Before creating a record ask:

- ◆ Does this record document an agency specific task?
- ◆ Will it be used to document the legal position of the agency?
- ◆ Will it have historical value?

Avoid creating and keeping personal files that are not part of the official record. These personal records usually contain personal observations, opinions, criticisms and other information that would not be appropriate in the official file and may not constitute agency policy.

Avoid keeping records longer than the established records retention schedule, unless specifically asked to do so.

### **Records usually consist of four components:**

#### **Context**

- ◆ Refers, minimally, to information about:
- ◆ The time of creation (date and time)
- ◆ Place in the agency, or person or organization that made or received the document.
- ◆ The information model or classification system of which the records forms a part.

#### **Content**

The information that a record creator explicitly meant to capture and convey to an intended recipient or audience.

#### **Record Structure**

Structure refers to the manner in which a record creator chose to arrange the data for presentation. Examples include a letter, a newsletter, a contract, a report, data sets, and various forms of graphic presentation and audio accompaniments.

#### **Metadata**

Metadata is structured information that allows us to describe, find, control, or manage other information. Metadata might include information about:

- ◆ Who (individual) created the record
- ◆ Which organization created the record
- ◆ The functions of the creating organization.
- ◆ When and where it was created
- ◆ What other documents or records are related to it.

**GENERAL RECORDS TYPES ARE DEFINED AS FOLLOWS:**

**Program Records**

**Administrative Records**

**Fiscal Records**

**Reference Records**

For additional information, see the “DEM Records Management Program Description” Manual, page 10, #2 Records Categorization.

**RECORDS SUB-CATEGORIES ARE DEFINED AS FOLLOWS:**

- ◆ Current
- ◆ Inactive
- ◆ Temporary
- ◆ Permanent
- ◆ Non-record material
- ◆ Confidential
- ◆ Essential

For additional information, see the “DEM Records Management Policy”, page 11, #3 - Record Subcategories.

## **RECORDS MAINTENANCE AND USE**

### **FILING PROCEDURES**

Each program should consider developing filing procedures that will facilitate retrieval of records and then the ultimate destruction of the records as prescribed by the record retention series. Programs should consider setting up files in chronological order, where appropriate to facilitate record destruction.

### **RECORDS CIRCULATION AND CONTROL**

The records manager will coordinate with the individual Divisions.

### **RISK ASSESSMENT**

The records manager will perform a risk analysis in coordination with the Divisions. The identification of risk to records and information falls into three main categories:

- Flood
- Fire
- Security
- Infestation

#### **Security**

Each building and each collection of records poses its own security problems. Records managers should minimize the risk to their holdings from loss or theft. The following actions should be undertaken:

Building rental contracts should be reviewed to ensure security guards will check all entrances to buildings, including ground floor windows and basements, after closing time each day and at least once every twenty-four hours during weekends and holidays

Buildings with no caretaker or security cover should be fitted with an automatic intruder alarm system

All staff members should be aware of the need for good security (for example, good key control; checks on criminal records; and identification procedures)

#### **Infestation**

The Records Management Officer and the record liaisons should evaluate unlikely risks to the records, such as infestation from insects and animals, and environmental issues like high humidity and dust. The need for prevention measures, including traps and poisons, and air conditioning systems should be also be evaluated by the records management officer.

For more information, see “DEM Records Management Policy” page 29, #2 - Risk Assessment.

## **RECORD RETENTION SCHEDULE**

Records Retention reduces the risk of legal exposure, reduces the cost to manage information, increases access to records and allows the agency to make more informed decisions using the most current information.

A retention schedule is a timetable that identifies the length of time that a record must be retained in active and inactive status before final disposition.

### **FILE NAMING CONVENTIONS**

DEM needs to address the area of file naming conventions. We have had some discussion on this subject, and have found some materials, i.e., “Standard Word Abbreviations”, “Standard Address Abbreviations requested by the U.S. Postal Service” and a “Glossary of Records Management Terms”. All these documents are included in this document for your use.

Briefly, file naming should reflect an organization's business functions and activities as they are documented by records. A file should have a:

- ◆ **Key word**, which represents the business function the agency,
- ◆ **Activity descriptors**, which describe the more specific activities taking place
- ◆ **Subject descriptors**, which describe the more specific subjects or topics relating to the matter to be documented.

#### **SERIES DESCRIPTION**

- ◆ Name of Unit and/or program
- ◆ Record function
- ◆ Characteristics and contents of records

#### **RETENTION PERIODS**

Retention periods will be determined in the development of the record retention schedules. Retention periods will be determined based on the business needs of the program. Retention periods may change depending on the program needs of the records. Changes in retention schedules need to be approved by the Secretary of State.

## RECORDS DISPOSITION

Records should be maintained in a manner that will prevent non-record material, i.e., blank forms, library materials, and working papers of fleeting value such as drafts, worksheets, informal notes, slips, etc. from being included into the record. Records should also segregate non-public records from the file. According to DEM and state policy, these records include the following:

◆ **Employee records**

Identifies records relating to individuals that are not deemed public records under the Act. The only information deemed public as it relates to individual employees is the name, gross salary, salary range, total cost of paid fringe benefits, gross amount received in overtime, and other remuneration in addition to salary, job title, job description, dates of employment and positions held with the state, work location, business telephone number, the city or town of residence, and date of termination.

◆ **Trade secrets**

Commercial or financial information obtained from a person, firm or corporation which is of a privileged or confidential nature. Trade secrets are not public records. Trade secrets consist of any formula, pattern, machine or manufacturing process which may give the user an advantage over its competitors who do not know or use it. Trade secrets can also be confidential business information. If in doubt that something provided to the Department falls in this category, contact the Chief Legal Counsel within the Office of Legal Services.

◆ **Law enforcement records**

Department files that involve criminal investigation are not open for public inspection. Please contact the Chief of Criminal Investigations, or the Chief of Enforcement and the Chief Legal Counsel for further advice.

◆ **Records not available by law or rule of court to an opposing party in litigation**

These documents include:

- 1) Privileged attorney/client communications, i.e., any and all documented communications to or from DEM Office of Legal Services including letters, memos, email messages, telephone conversation notes, notes from meetings where counsel was present);
- 2) Attorney work-product: any materials prepared by DEM legal staff or prepared for the legal staff at its request, especially if related to anticipated litigation. If a matter is currently in litigation, then a party may not use a subpoena or access to records request to obtain information that the party would not be entitled to in the legal action.

◆ **Preliminary drafts, notes, impressions, memorandum, working papers, and work products**

These records include: 1) draft documents, 2) non-final or draft filed reports or site inspections; 3) scrap papers and/or scratch notes; 4) inter-office memos, memos to file; 5) opinions, impressions, hypotheses, conjecture, belief; 6) notes of telephone conferences or meetings.

◆ **Correspondence exception**

Correspondence of or to elected officials with or relating to those they represent and correspondence of or to elected officials in their official capacities.

◆ **Property acquisition documents**

The contents of real estate appraisals, engineering, or feasibility estimates and evaluations made for or by an agency relative to the acquisition of property until such property has been acquired.

◆ **Investigatory records**

All investigatory records pertaining to violations of statute, rule or regulation other than records of final actions taken provided that all records prior to formal notification of violations or noncompliance shall not be deemed to be public.

◆ **Other records**

Records, reports, opinions, information, and statements required to be kept confidential by federal or state law, rule, rule of court, regulation, or by state statute.

**Note: This is not a complete list of documents that the APRA exempts from disclosure. For a full list, see RIGL § 38-2-2(4)(i)(A)-(W).**

## **OVERVIEW OF MAJOR FILE PLAN (Central vs. Decentralization)**

There are several decisions that need to be made when setting up a records management program. The first issue that needs to be addressed is the intellectual classification of files, or an indexing system. DEM needs to determine if it wants to authorize a department records control officer who will have the authority to approve changes to the DEM indexing system. Centralizing this function will allow the development of a common indexing system and will minimize the development of inconsistent filing practices. The advantage of a centralized indexing system is the ability to retrieve information in a timely manner.

One of the most difficult decisions, and sometimes the most controversial, is whether or not records should be physically "centralized" or "decentralized." Centralization can refer to a single intellectual system for filing that the department records officer controls, and has sole authority to approve changes proposed by agency staff. Centralization ensures uniform filing methods, and serves to minimize the proliferation of poor filing practices that is beyond the control of the agency.

There are several issues to consider when making the decision on where records should be located. One of the best ways to approach it is to review the advantages and disadvantages of each system and choose the one, or combination, that has the most advantages for the situation. At this point DEM is not in a position to make a decision about centralizing files. The pros and cons of implementing a central file system are detailed in Appendix B of the records Management Policy.

## **LISTING OF MAJOR RECORD SERIES**

DEM has reviewed all units within the agency and identified 2000 record series. A majority of the series falls within the definition of the Department of Administration General Schedule 1 and 2. These series identify the administrative and fiscal records that are common to all state agencies. DEM has also identified its unique record series that are used in the programs. (Show some examples.)

## **RECORD LIAISONS**

Will be chosen by the each office or division of the Department. The liaisons will work closely with the records management officer in implementing the records management policy and will be key personnel in providing feedback to and from staff on implementation and operational issues.

## **FILE PLAN**

The Records Manager will coordinate the file plan with each Division.

## **RECORDS CLEANUP**

### **DISPOSING OF RECORDS**

Official State agency records must be listed on an approved agency Retention and Disposal Schedule or General Records Schedule, and may be disposed of only in accordance with provisions of the appropriate schedule. Non-record items (see definition in the Glossary) may be disposed of by an agency after they have fulfilled the immediate needs in the office

The Records Management Officer and the Records Liaisons will develop a schedule to destroy records according to the times specified in the record retention schedules. The process to accomplish this task is as follows.

- ◆ All units with approved retention scheduled will submit a Certificate of Records Destruction to the Records Management Officer on a mutually agreed upon schedule.
- ◆ The Records Management Officer will forward the Certificate of Records Destruction to the Secretary of State for approval.
- ◆ When the Secretary of State approves the DEM request the Records Management Officer will document the approved requests and notify the units that record destruction can commence.
- ◆ Depending on the needs of the DEM program, records will either be recycled or shredded, if necessary.

There are three types of non-record or disposable materials:

- ◆ Extra copies of documents and other materials that an employee drafts, signs, reviews, or otherwise acts upon, provided that the official record copies are properly filed;
- ◆ Library materials acquired solely for reference; and
- ◆ Stocks of forms, publications and processed documents.

See “DEM Records Management Policy” page 20, #3 – Destroyed Records.

### **SENDING RECORDS TO STATE ARCHIVES**

See “DEM Records Management Program Description” Manual page 20, C – The Identification of DEM Records for Archival Value.

## **RECORD SERIES**

A record series is a group of documents or file units maintained and related to a particular subject or function of an agency or office or is derived from a particular agency or office. The series title should be as specific and descriptive as possible.

Examples of records series:

- ◆ Case Files Series
- ◆ Project Files Series
- ◆ Application Files Series
- ◆ Subject Files Series

## GLOSSARY OF RECORDS MANAGEMENT TERMS

**Active Record:** A record needed to carry out an organization's daily business. A record which is routinely or frequently used.

**Administrative Records:** Records that reflect routine, transitory, internal, administrative or housekeeping activities relating to subjects and functions common to all offices/programs.

**Appraisal:** The process of evaluating records based upon their current use, informational content, historical significance, arrangement, and relationship to other records.

**Archival Records:** Records are legally, administratively, fiscally or historically significant thus warranting continual preservation.

**Archival Value:** The value as determined by appraisal which defines a record(s) as being worthy of permanent or indefinite preservation using certain criteria such as legal value, fiscal/financial value, evidential value, historical value, and Informational value.

**Archives:** An establishment maintained primarily for the storage, servicing, security, and processing of records that must be preserved permanently for historical, legal, or other value and need not be retained in office equipment and space. The Rhode Island State Archives is that establishment for Rhode Island government agencies.

**Closed file:** A file in which no more documents may be placed.

**Confidential Records:** Records that contain non-public information and are protected by statute as non-public records.

**Correspondence Management:** A management control function used to regulate the volume and quality of correspondence processed by an organization.

**Destroyed Records:** Records that have been stored to the limits indicated in the record series retention schedules are eligible to be destroyed.

**Disaster Plan:** A written plan which has been approved and adopted by the governing body which defines in detail how records will be handled prior to, during, and after a disaster.

**Disposal Material:** Informational materials kept for convenience or reference are not records under the definition provided in the General Description of a record. Consisting primarily of working papers and duplicate copies of official records, they are created at the discretion of the employee. Disposable materials are not necessary for conducting or documenting official business. However, such materials may meet the definition of agency records under the FOIA or Public Access.

**Disposition:** The final action taken on a record, usually occurring after the expiration of its retention period (destruction, archival preservation, or microfilming, etc.).

**Document:** Recorded information that can appear on a variety of formats (paper, microforms, audiotapes, computer tapes or disks, etc.). This term is frequently used interchangeably with "record."

**Essential Records:** Essential records are records that are critical to the Agency in carrying out its function in emergency and post-emergency situations, and in protecting the legal rights or interests of individuals and the Agency.

**Evidential Value:** The value of a record derived from its ability to provide legal, authentic, and adequate documentation of an organization's structure, activities, and functions.

**Facsimile:** An electronic means of transferring an exact reproduction of an image from one location to another.

**File:** (1) A collection of related records treated as a unit. (2) The action of arranging records into a predetermined sequence.

**File Classification System:** A means of arranging files into subject groups or categories in a systematic and logical way. This system can use numbers, letters, codes, etc. as identifiers.

**Fiscal Records:** Records that address the financial budget allocation, status or expenditures of an office/program.

**Fiscal Value:** The value of a record based on its ability to document decisions and activities related to monetary issues.

**Forms Management:** The policies and procedures that establish standards for the creation of all forms within an agency or organization. This includes development of design, analysis, review, and revision of forms.

**Historical Value:** The value of a record based on the information it preserves relating to persons, places, activities, events, etc. and not necessarily based on the function of the originating organization. Examples: Wetland permits for commercial properties, highway approvals, water source protection, super fund sites, and acquisition of property. These records document the history of the department. Sometimes records are valuable because of their age or rarity, such as records of the 18<sup>th</sup>/19th centuries. These are closely associated with evidential records.

**Inactive Record:** A record that is infrequently used. It should be stored separately from frequently used (active) records for the duration of its retention period.

**Informational Value:** Records that contain information of use not only to the creating person or organization but also to researchers from a variety of fields of knowledge. Some examples: promotional pamphlets, newsletters, directories, special bulletins, catalogues, maps, publications.

**Intrinsic Value:** The inherent value (manuscript appraisal, the worth in monetary terms) of a document dependent upon such unique factors as age, circumstances of creation, rare information, and display value.

**Legal Value:** The value of a record derived from its ability to support business transactions, agreements, and/or ownership, or to document the rights of citizens and the prerogatives of government. Some examples include ownership and use of property, employment practices, contractual obligations etc.

**Life Cycle (of a record):** The span of a record's existence, from its creation through its use, and storage to its final disposition or preservation as an archival **Microfilm:** A reproduction of a document on fine-grain, high-resolution film, which reduces the document in size.

**Non-Record Material:** Material of this nature includes blank forms, library materials, and working papers of fleeting value such as drafts, worksheets, informal notes, slips, etc.

**Official Copy:** The copy of a record which has the original signature or seal, or which is deemed the official copy by the governing body.

**Permanent Record:** Records of continuing value which are necessary to conduct and document practices, procedures and decisions incidental to all department programs and the public.

**Program Records:** Are program specific records that are created, received and maintained by a program in the conduct of the mission functions for which it is responsible.

**Record:** The definition of a record has been derived from two RI statutes: the Access to Public Records Act (RIGL §38-2-2) and the State Archives statute (RIGL §42-8.1-17). “Record” shall mean:

All documents, papers, letters, maps, books, tapes, photographs, films, sound recordings, magnetic or other tapes, electronic data processing records, computer stored data, electronic mail messages, and/or other material regardless of physical form or characteristics made or received pursuant to law or ordinance or in connection with the transaction of official business by an agency to ensure adequate and proper documentation of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, and essential transactions of the agency and to maintain and furnish the information necessary to protect the legal rights of the government and of the persons directly affected by agency's activities.

**Records Center:** A facility for the low-cost storage, maintenance, and reference use of inactive records, pending the ultimate disposition of those records.

**Records Inventory:** A detailed survey of the volume, scope, and complexity of the records of an organization or agency.

**Records Management:** A field of management that is responsible for the systematic control of all records created by or transmitted to a local government or agency. Records management extends through creation, maintenance, use, and disposition of records.

**Retention Period:** The length of time that a specific record series should be retained in offices or records centers. This is usually based on an estimation of the series' frequency of use in current and anticipated business

**Records Retention Schedule:** A document establishing a timetable for the life cycle of records for a local government or agency, from the time of the records creation, through their disposition.

**Reference Records:** Documents that are used as a source of technical and/or general reference.

**Record Series:** File units or documents arranged in accordance with a filing system or maintained as a unit because they result from the same accumulation or filing process, the same function, or activity because they have a particular form; or because of some other relationship arising out of their creation, receipt, or use.

**Temporary Records:** Records created incidental to performance of the mission. They are “operational”, “support” and “service” type records that are considered to be of temporary value to the Agency. Temporary records are often characterized as records that are used as an intermediate stage for transferring information from one record type to another.

**Unscheduled Records:** Documents that meet the definition of a record under the Record definition disposition schedule approved by the Secretary of State are unscheduled records. Such records cannot be destroyed until a disposition schedule has been approved by the Secretary of State.

## Appendix J – Offsite Storage Evaluation Checklist

The Storage Checklist is a tool to evaluate the storage conditions of your facility, and should be used in conjunction with the Storage of Government Records Guidelines. Please refer to this document for greater explanation of the points evaluated in the checklist.

	Storage Checklist	Yes	No
1.	Storage temperature: 65-70 degrees Fahrenheit		
2.	Relative Humidity: 45-50%		
3.	Storage climate is constant (24 hours a day, 7 days a week)		
4.	Storage area is clean and dust-free		
5.	Storage area allows for easy access and retrieval		
6.	Storage area encourages air circulation		
7.	Storage area has weight bearing floors		
8.	Storage area has high ceilings		
9.	Storage area separated from public use areas		
10.	Storage area secure limiting unauthorized access		
11.	Building has an alarm system		
12.	Compliance with state and local fire codes		
13.	Presence of fire alarms		
14.	Smoke detectors		
15.	Fire extinguishers		
16.	Sprinkler system		
17.	Water detectors		
18.	Carpet removed in storage areas		
19.	Building has a secure roof		
20.	Leak free basement		
21.	Storage area only houses collection items		
22.	Collection is not stored underneath water pipes		
23.	Windows covered to limit sunlight		
24.	Windows have UV protective glass		
25.	Storage lights are off when area not in use		
26.	Light fixtures are placed over aisles and not over shelving units		
27.	Storage areas have an air filtration system		
28.	Inventory details the location of the collection items		
29.	Metal shelving		
30.	Wooden shelves are lined to protect collections		
31.	Collection stored off the ground and on shelves		
32.	Shelves able to accommodate large number of boxes		
33.	Shelves are not placed directly against walls		
34.	Aisle minimum 30 inches wide to accommodate traffic		
35.	Fireproof cabinets for valuable and permanent records		
36.	Building allows for expansion of storage space		
37.	Your organization has a Disaster Plan		