

GOV029 – Records Management Policy

1. POLICY CERTIFICATION

Policy title:	Records Management Policy
Policy number:	GOV029
Category:	Council Policy
Classification:	Governance
Link to Strategic Plan Goals:	GOAL 1: Strong Leadership through Good Governance, Strong Financial Management, Corporate Planning, and Operational Support
Link to Strategic Plan Strategy:	Further strengthen Corporate Governance and Financial Sustainability
Link to Business Plan Strategy:	Goal 1: Achieve best practice in Governance within the term of Council
Status:	Approved

2. PURPOSE

This Policy affirms Roper Gulf Regional Council's (RGRC) commitment to its legislative obligations to ensure the establishment and maintenance of comprehensive records management practices so as to comply with its *Local Government Act*, *Information Act*, and *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth) obligations.

3. ORGANISATIONAL SCOPE

This policy applies across all RGRC, and to all elected and appointed members, and employees.

The scope of the information which falls within the scope of this policy includes all information prescribed by the Records Management Standards for a Public Sector Organisation pursuant to ss 137, 138 *Information Act*, and records prescribed by Part 5 of the *Local Government (Administration) Regulation* including:

- 1) All administrative, functional and operational information and the records they form, as created and managed by RGRC to ensure that RGRC meets its legislative obligations, as well as ensuring that information and records are protected from unauthorised or unlawful access;
- 2) All information within RGRC information management systems, including all operational environments and business units, activities and undertakings;
- 3) All records and information managed and maintained by RGRC on behalf of the Territory and/or the Commonwealth;

4. POLICY STATEMENT

The *Local Government Act* and *Information Act* (and their statutory instruments) require RGRC to make and keep full and accurate records of its operations and activities. All records created by RGRC personnel during the course of their duties, including those created by elected and appointed members, and employees, are considered to be public records of the Territory (Part 9 *Information Act*).

RGRC has a legislated obligation to its constituents and to the Territory to ensure that the principles of effective records management are implemented. This ensures that:

- 1) Operational communications and decisions are captured as official records;
- 2) The evidentiary chain is kept intact, maximising transparency and accountability;

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- 3) Information is available for ongoing operational purposes;
- 4) Storage costs are minimised through accountable disposal of records;
- 5) A historical record of RGRC is maintained.

RGRC may on occasion engage in providing services for/on behalf of the Commonwealth, which may bring on additional records management obligations in addition to those it already has as a Public Sector Organisation (s5(1)(d) *Information Act*).

RGRC affirms its commitment in meeting all its prescribed and legislated Records Management obligations, including compliance with applicable law of the Territory and the Commonwealth.

5. DEFINITIONS

Australian Privacy Principles (APPs)	Commonwealth principles for Government agencies which outline the collection, classification, storage, use and disclosure of personal and sensitive information. Schedule 1 – <i>Privacy Act 1988</i> (Cth)
Executive	Staff members who hold delegated executive powers and responsibility.
Information Privacy Principles (IPPs)	Territory principles for Government agencies which outline the collection, classification, storage, use and disclosure of personal and sensitive information. Schedule 2 – <i>Information Act</i>
Information Rights Management	Management of information and records' access rights, determining, implementing and maintaining the appropriate level of security required to protect information and records from unauthorised and unlawful access or disclosure by/to various parties.
Public Sector Organisation	Section 5 <i>Information Act</i> definition of organisations which are considered to be public (government) organisations for the purposes of the <i>Information Act</i> . s5(1)(d) prescribes local government council bodies to be Public Sector Organisations for the purposes of the <i>Information Act</i> .
RGRC	Roper Gulf Regional Council
Record	Information created, received, and maintained as evidence and information by an organisation or person, in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transaction of business (ISO 15489 – International Standard on Records Management).

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Territory	Northern Territory
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6. PRINCIPLES

All RGRC members and employees are required to ensure that records are created and maintained in a manner consistent with the approved RGRC records management system.

RGRC members and employees are further required (IPPs, APPs, Parts 7.3, 9.4 *Local Government Act*) to ensure that confidential information cannot be accessed by unauthorised persons, and sensitive information is released only to persons inside and outside RGRC who are authorised, and have a lawful access need.

Members and employees must ensure that they make a diligent effort to ensure that they implement strong Information Rights Management and take all reasonable steps to ensure RGRC information is protected from unauthorised access and/or disclosure.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) has overall responsibility to ensure that financial and other records are properly made and maintained (s101(g) *Local Government Act*, Part 9 *Information Act*), however this requirement applies to all RGRC members and employees within their area of responsibility.

The CEO has overall responsibility for RGRC records and information management programs covering policies, procedures, training and advice, records classification and disposal tools, and management of the corporate records management system, management of corporate archives, including provision of reference and access services, records storage, quality assurance and life-cycle management. All RGRC members and employees are required to ensure that they diligently support the CEO to ensure that RGRC's obligations are met.

Activities and operational matters transacted electronically must be managed in accordance with this policy. The medium of the record is immaterial to how it is managed; the critical factor is the subject matter and its content, rather than the format.

The preferred method for managing information within and without RGRC is to capture, distribute and dispose of records throughout their life-cycle electronically using the prescribed Electronic Document and Record Management System (EDRMS). This is most efficiently and cost-effectively managed by minimising the creation of hard-copy documents in favour of the electronic.

Electronic records fall into two (2) main categories:

- (i) unstructured documents saved to network drives and emails;
- (ii) information held in the EDRMS.

All unstructured information such as documents and emails which are evidence of business transaction are primary records must be held in the prescribed EDRMS.

Removable media must not be used to store confidential or sensitive information as they are subject to a number of risks including being easily damaged, lost, stolen, or otherwise compromised.

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The Governance and Corporate Planning business unit should be consulted whenever new databases and automated systems are being implemented, to determine record management requirements and ensuring compliance with legislative obligations.

7. REFERENCES

Acknowledgements (original author/source documents)	NSW Police Force Records and Information Management Policy Statement
Related Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GOV015 Legislative Compliance Policy GOV005 Communications Policy HR005 Confidentiality and Privacy Policy
Related Publications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Information Act</i> <i>Local Government Act</i> <i>Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)</i> Records Management Standards for public sector organisations in the NT ISO 15489 – International Standard on Records Management Records Retention and Disposal Schedule (NT)
Related Supporting Documents	NIL

8. DOCUMENT CONTROL

Policy Number	GOV029
Policy Owner	Manager - Governance and Corporate Planning
Approved By	Council
Approval Date	28 February 2018
Revisions	NIL
Amendments	NIL
Next revision due	June 2021

10. CONTACT PERSON

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