



## **Maintenance of public archives**

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### **Instruction to approved repositories for physical (non-digital) archives**

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## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Mandate

This instruction is issued under section 26(2)(c) of the Public Records Act 2005.

Public archives are public records under the control of the Chief Archivist.

Approved repositories are bodies authorised to accept the deposit of public archives for safekeeping.

Under section 26(2)(c) of the Public Records Act 2005 the Chief Archivist may impose standards or conditions, or issue instructions to, an approved repository for specified purposes.

### 1.2 Background

On 1 July 2014 the *Storage Standard* and other mandatory standards issued under the Public Records Act were revoked and replaced with the *Records Management Standard for the New Zealand Public Sector*. The *Records Management Standard* did not apply to archives managed in approved repositories. It was a records management standard rather than an archives management standard. The instruction issued in July 2014 therefore provides for the continuation of the control regime set out in the *Storage Standard* beyond the life of that standard.

On 1 July 2016, the *Records Management Standard for the New Zealand Public Sector (2014)* was revoked and replaced with the *Information and records management standard*. This standard applies to public offices and local authorities. This instruction still applies.

### 1.3 Scope

This instruction applies to all approved repositories authorised under the Archives Act 1957 or the Public Records Act 2005.

This instruction applies to all physical (non-digital) public archives that have been transferred to the control of an approved repository.

## 2 Requirements

I instruct approved repositories to maintain physical public archives in accordance with the following requirements:

### 2.1 Identification and Control

1. Archives are registered and described in a system that supports effective identification, location, retrieval and tracking.
2. Archives must be arranged in an orderly manner, and be well managed so that order is maintained.
3. Procedures for managing the location and movement of archives are documented and implemented
4. Procedures for handling archives are documented and implemented..

## 2.2 Facilities

5. Archives are stored in a dedicated area, separate from public spaces. Storage areas must allow ongoing access to archives by authorised users.
6. Archives are stored in areas that meet the preservation needs of their format.
7. The building in which archives are stored must comply with the New Zealand Building Code that applied at the time of construction and associated codes and standards, and be appropriate for use in storing archives.
8. The building in which archives are stored must have adequate drainage systems to prevent flooding.
9. Dedicated storage areas for archives must be protected against the external climate.
10. Dedicated storage areas for archives must be protected against internal hazards e.g. piping systems, vermin or fire caused by an electrical fault.
11. A building maintenance programme must be in place.

## 2.3 Protection against Disaster

12. Natural and human-made hazards have been identified, documented and mitigated.
13. A current disaster management plan and procedures must be in place, documented and known to staff.
14. Staff responsible for archives must be trained in emergency procedures to protect and salvage the records.
15. There must be a comprehensive fire protection system and equipment for the building, in compliance with the New Zealand Building Code that applied at the time of construction.

## 2.4 Security

16. Restricted access archives are identified and protected from unauthorised access.
17. Access to archives storage areas must be controlled and restricted to authorised staff.
18. Dedicated storage areas for archives must be intruder resistant and have an intruder alarm system.

## 2.5 Shelving and Packaging

19. Archives must be stored using shelving or equipment appropriate to the format and size of the items.
20. The minimum height for the lowest shelf must be 150mm off the floor.
21. Archives must be packaged in containers which are clean, in good condition and appropriate to the format and size of the items.

## 2.6 Environmental Control

22. Archives must be stored away from sunlight and artificial light.
23. Magnetic media must be stored away from magnetic fields.
24. Food and drink are prohibited in areas where public archives are stored or handled
25. Incoming collections are checked for signs of infestation before being introduced to storage areas.
26. Pest activity and potential pest habitats are regularly monitored and records of monitoring are kept.
27. Archives must be stored in conditions where the relative humidity is never above 60% RH or below 30% RH.
28. Archives must be stored in conditions where the temperature is never above 25 degrees Celsius.

29. Archives must be stored in conditions where relative humidity does not fluctuate by more than  $\pm 5\%$  RH in a 24 hr period, and seasonal variations are not more than  $\pm 10\%$  RH over a year.
30. Archives must be stored in conditions where temperature does not fluctuate by more than  $\pm 2$  degrees Celsius in a 24 hr period, and seasonal variations are not more than  $\pm 5$  degrees Celsius over a year.
31. Environmental conditions for archives must be regularly monitored, and records of monitoring must be kept.

## **2.7 Transfer and public access**

32. The repository has identified all public archives in its possession and can distinguish them from other holdings.
33. All public archives in the possession of the repository have been formally transferred into the control of the Chief Archivist and deposited with the repository.
34. Open access public archives are available to members of the public free of charge as soon as is reasonably practicable after a request to inspect the record is made.