



Title of Policy	Records Management Policy		
This applies to	All Employees of Central Darling Shire Council		
Author	Michael Boyd	Date approved:	
Position of Author	General Manager	Authorised by:	
Legislation, Australian Standards, Code of Practice	State Records Act 1998 - including standards and retention and disposal authorities issued under the Act State Records Regulation 2010 Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 Privacy and Protection of Personal Information Act 1998 Evidence Act 1995 Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 Local Government Act 1993		
Related Policies/Procedures	Nil.		

Purpose and application of this Policy

The purpose of the Records Management Policy is to ensure that full and accurate records of all activities and decisions of the Central Darling Shire Council are created, managed and retained or disposed of appropriately, and in accordance with relevant legislation. This will enable Council to achieve information accessibility as well as business enhancement and improvement. It will also meet its obligations for accountability while ensuring that it protects the rights and interests of Council, its staff, clients and the community.

All Council staff and Councillors must comply with this policy, and any associated recordkeeping procedures, in their conduct of official business for Council. This policy applies to records in all formats, including electronic records.

Records as a resource

Council recognises that records are a vital asset to:

- facilitate information accessibility, and enhance business by supporting program delivery, management and administration
- deliver customer services in an efficient, fair and equitable manner
- provide evidence of actions and decisions and precedents for future decision making, and
- protect the rights and interests of Council and the community.

Records Management Program

1. Objectives of the Records Management Program

A records management program is a planned, co-ordinated set of policies, procedures, people, systems and activities that are required to manage records.

Council's Records Management Program seeks to ensure that:

- it has the records it needs to support and enhance ongoing business and customer service, meet accountability requirements and community expectations
- these records are managed efficiently and can be easily accessed and used for as long as they are required
- records are stored as cost-effectively as possible and when no longer required they are disposed of in a timely and efficient manner
- Council complies with all requirements concerning records and records management practices including the NSW Government's objectives for recordkeeping
- records of longer term value are identified and protected for historical and other research.

2. Elements of the Records Management Program

Creation and capture

Staff should ensure that they create official records of all decisions and actions made in the course of their official business. This includes, but is not limited to, letters, emails, file notes, meetings, phone conversations and social media interactions. For example, if business is transacted by telephone, file notes of the key points in the conversation should be documented. Official meetings should include the taking of minutes.

All records defined by the organisation as important to create should be captured into Council's recordkeeping systems so they can be managed appropriately.

Records should be placed on an official file. Files are registered in the records management system and given a unique number. File titles are developed within a Business Classification Scheme based on that provided by NSW State Records.

Storage and Maintenance

Current hardcopy records should be stored in appropriate and secure premises. Any use of the hardcopy records should be noted in the records management system. Rarely used records or records no longer in use for official purposes that are still required to be retained in accordance with the current Retention and Disposal Authority should be forwarded to an appropriate off-site storage facility.

Electronic records (such as emails) of short term value which have not been archived in the records management system will be disposed of at suitable intervals. Electronic records of long term or archival value should be retained online wherever possible.

Maintenance of electronic records can also entail the migration of data. Migrations must be authorised and must produce authentic, complete, accessible and useable records.

Disposal

Administrative records common to all or many public offices such as financial and personnel records are covered under general retention and disposal authorities compiled by State Records NSW. Council recommends that disposal actions are assigned to records in all formats at creation to ensure they are managed appropriately. No records of Council can be disposed of unless in accordance with these retention and disposal authorities.

Any sentencing of records must be supervised by the Director Business Services (or other authorised person). Approval and signed authorisation for retention, destruction or transfer of records must be sought from the Director Business Services (or other authorised person) before any disposal takes place.

Contractors and outsourced functions

All records created by contractors performing work on behalf of Council belong to Council, and are State records under the State Records Act 1998. This includes the records of contract staff working on the premises as well as external service providers.

Contracts should clearly state that ownership of records resides with Council, and instructions regarding creation, management, and access to the records created.

Responsibilities

General Manager

- Ensures that Council complies with the requirements of the State Records Act 1998 and the standards and requirements issued under the Act.

Director Business Services

- Ensures that the Records Management Program is adequately resourced
- Has ownership of the Records Management Policy
- Ensures the preservation of digital records is addressed in policy, planning and implementation of the Council's records management program
- Ensures that the essential characteristics of digital records are identified prior to any preservation process taking place
- Reports to the State Records Authority on the records management program
- Provides support and infrastructure to ensure that records kept in electronic form are managed so that they are accessible, readable, inviolate, complete, comprehensive, and authentic for as long as required
- Implements information security measures
- Performs routine and comprehensive system backups of data
- Ensures the migration of digital records or digital control records/metadata is conducted carefully and in line with the conditions stated in the General Retention and Disposal Authority.

Director Business Services

- Compiles recordkeeping procedures and standards in relation to all aspects of records management
- Monitors compliance with the Records Management Policy and recordkeeping procedures and makes recommendations for improvement or modification of practices
- Establishes and maintains a customised recordkeeping metadata scheme and business rules regarding how metadata is to be managed
- Assists with automated metadata capture, for example, ensuring that details of format are automatically saved into the records management system
- Manages Council's records management software
- Authorises the disposal of records, in liaison with the relevant staff
- Ensures that all staff are aware of their recordkeeping responsibilities
- Coordinates a records management training program
- Develops strategic and operational plans for the records management program
- Formulates and maintains thesaurus and retention and disposal authorities
- Responsible for the conduct of records management operations.

Business Unit Managers

- Ensure that records are created and managed within their business unit in a way which complies with the Records Management Policy and recordkeeping procedures
- Provide feedback on the success of migration processes to help ensure records remain authentic, complete, accessible and useable
- Ensure that staff are trained in how to create and manage records
- Authorise the destruction of records, along with the Director Business Services
- Consult with the Director Business Services when introducing new activities and systems to ensure that records are created, and that relevant terms appear in the thesaurus
- Determine legislative requirements for records relating to their specific activities
- Ensure that contract with service providers contain records management clauses in accordance with this Records Management Policy.

All Staff

- Comply with Records Management Policy and recordkeeping procedures
- Create full and accurate records of their business activities, including records of all decisions and actions made in the course of their official business. This includes letters, emails, meetings, phone conversations and social media
- Ensure that all records are saved into the organisation's recordkeeping systems.

Councillors and Administrators

- Comply with Records Management Policy and recordkeeping procedures
- Create full and accurate records of their business activities related to Council, including records of all decisions and actions made in the course of their official Council business. This includes letters, emails, meetings, phone conversations and social media

- Ensure that all records are saved into Council's recordkeeping systems.

Contractors

- Manage records that they create on behalf of Council according to the terms of their contract.