



# AFP Practical Guide on records disposal using Normal Administrative Practice (NAP)

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## 1. Disclosure and compliance

This document is classified **UNCLASSIFIED** and is intended for internal AFP use.

Disclosing any content must comply with Commonwealth law and the [AFP National Guideline on disclosure of information](#).

## Compliance

This instrument is part of the AFP's professional standards framework. The [AFP Commissioner's Order on Professional Standards \(CO2\)](#) outlines the expectations for appointees to adhere to the requirements of the framework. Inappropriate departures from the provisions of this instrument may constitute a breach of AFP professional standards and be dealt with under Part V of the [Australian Federal Police Act 1979](#) (Cth).

## 2. Acronyms

<b>AFP</b>	Australian Federal Police
<b>AS ISO</b>	Australian Standard International Standards Organisation
<b>NAP</b>	Normal Administrative Practice

## 3. Definitions

**Commonwealth records** - is defined in s. 3 of the [Archives Act 1983](#) (Cth).

**Disposal** - means, as referred to in AS ISO 15489 Part 1, 3.9:

- processes associated with implementing records retention, destruction or transfer decisions and documented in disposition authorities or other instruments
- any action that changes the circumstances of a record or removes a record from its usual setting
- destruction, damage, alteration, or transfer of custody or ownership of records.

**Disposal authority** - means written approval by the National Archives of Australia for an agency to dispose of a class of Commonwealth records.

**Normal Administrative Practice (NAP)** - means, for AFP purposes and s. 24 of the [Archives Act 1983](#) (Cth) an agency practice, not disapproved by the National Archives of Australia, to create, manage or dispose of information.

**Official AFP information** - information created or held by the AFP relating to its administration or its functions under s. 8 of the [Australian Federal Police Act 1979](#) (Cth). This means any document, record, information, object, or data received, created, captured, collected or stored in any AFP record keeping system that is:

- information in any form, oral or recorded, concerned with the operations, plans, organisation or administration of the AFP
- the record of any official AFP business transaction or activity
- received from third parties and stored in any AFP system in either hardcopy or electronic form.

**Records** - is defined in s. 3 of the [Archives Act 1983](#) (Cth).

## 4. Authority to create this Practical Guide

This Practical Guide was created by the Chief Information Officer using power under s. 37(1) of the [Australian Federal Police Act 1979](#) (Cth) as delegated by the Commissioner under s. 69C of the Act.

## 5. Introduction

This Practical Guide assists appointees to identify AFP record types which may be lawfully disposed of in the normal course of business using Normal Administrative Practice provisions of the [Archives Act 1983](#) (Cth). The guide complies with National Archives of Australia standards and should be read in the context of the [AFP National Guideline on the management of records](#).

## 6. Destruction as NAP

The AFP normally requires authorisation from the National Archives of Australia to lawfully dispose of official AFP information. However, section 24 of the [Archives Act 1983](#) (Cth) allows for disposal without this authority where Normal Administrative Practice (NAP) applies to disposing of records containing no obviously valuable information.

The NAP provision is not intended to replace the records disposal arrangements agreed to in disposal authorities.

**If in doubt** about whether NAP applies, put the document in a record keeping system or contact [Records Management](#) for advice.

NAP usually allows the following Commonwealth records to be disposed of:

- superseded manuals or instructions (except for a master set which includes the superseded portions)
- library material (except for assets to be 'written-off')
- catalogues and trade journals
- information copies of press cuttings, press statements or publicity material
- letters of appreciation or sympathy
- requests for **copies** of maps, plans, charts, advertising material or other stock information
- address lists and change of address notices
- calendars, office diaries and appointment books (unless identified in records disposal authorities as having additional value)
- facsimiles, where a photocopy has been made for file
- rough drafts of reports, correspondence, or routine or rough calculations
- draft documents produced for internal (within the team) consultation which do not contain significant changes of direction or alteration of the intent of the document
- routine statistical and progress reports compiled and duplicated in other reports
- abstracts or copies of formal financial records maintained for convenient reference
- telephone messages, when the fact of the call or the content of the call is not relevant to AFP business
- 'With Compliments' slips
- non-acceptance of invitations
- trivial electronic mail messages or notes not related to agency business
- out-of-date distribution lists.

## 7. NAP disposal methods

Records disposed of under Normal Administrative Practice provisions must be disposed of appropriately. Records may contain personal or confidential information therefore disposers must ensure such information does not survive the destruction process and become liable to unauthorised disclosure.

## 8. When NAP must not be used

In some instances the Normal Administrative Practice (NAP) provision must not be used.

**If in doubt** about whether NAP applies, put the document in the recordkeeping system or contact the AFP Records Management team for advice.

To decide if records can be disposed of through NAP, appointees must consider whether unique and valuable information would be lost. For example, a telephone message from a minister containing information important to AFP business must be kept if it is not recorded elsewhere.

### **NAP must not be used for:**

- disposing of records documenting significant operations which may have a long-term value
- allowing the destruction of records which document the rights and obligations of the government or private individuals
- culling papers from files. Papers should only be culled according to a specific disposal authority. Culling can destroy the integrity of files because one piece of paper may have little value, but collectively the papers may present a complete picture of the activity documented
- disposing of business related email before it becomes part of the formal record
- in relation to policy documents
- disposing of significant drafts of documents which provide evidence of changes in direction or AFP-wide comment
- audio and video tapes of records of interview
- accountable diaries, field books and notebooks
- charge sheets and charge books.

## 9. Further advice

Any queries relevant to the content of this guideline may be referred to [Records Management](#).

## 10. References

- [Australian Federal Police Act 1979](#) (Cth)
- [Archives Act 1983](#) (Cth)
- [AFP National Guideline on the Management of Records](#)
- Australian Standard ISO 15489:2002 Records Management