

# SESLHD PROCEDURE COVER SHEET



**Health**  
South Eastern Sydney  
Local Health District

<b>NAME OF DOCUMENT</b>	Records - Management of Paper Originals of Imaged Records
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<b>FUNCTIONAL GROUP(S)</b>	Records Management – Corporate
<b>KEY TERMS</b>	Records Management; Imaged, scanned, source records, copied records, destruction
<b>SUMMARY</b>	This procedure describes the circumstances and conditions under which the destruction of certain original or source records is permitted under the provisions of the State Records NSW - General Authority GA 45 / <i>State Records Act 1998</i> after they have been copied.

## COMPLIANCE WITH THIS DOCUMENT IS MANDATORY

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### 1. POLICY STATEMENT

The purpose of the procedure is to describe the circumstances and conditions under which the destruction of certain original or source records is permitted under the provisions of State Records NSW - General Authority GA45 Original or source records that have been copied and the *State Records Act 1998*. Paper originals of records which have been scanned or imaged and appropriately managed within SESLHD approved recordkeeping systems may be destroyed, provided that conditions have been met and the destruction of the paper originals is documented.

### 2. EXCLUSIONS

Permission is not given under this procedure for the destruction of original records or source records that were created prior to 1 January 1980 and are required as State archives or required to be retained in agency.

A full list of exclusions from the provisions of this procedure are detailed in **Appendix 1** and in section 1.4 Excluded records of [GA45 Original or source records that have been copied](#).

### 3. RESPONSIBILITIES

All Local Health District staff that capture records in approved recordkeeping systems by digitising or scanning original or source records then destroying the paper originals are required to comply with this procedure.

### 4. DEFINITIONS

**Disposal:** A range of processes associated with implementing appraisal decisions, these include the retention, deletion or destruction of records in or from recordkeeping systems.

**Records:** Recorded information, in any form, including data in computer systems, created or received and maintained by an organisation or person in the transaction of business or the conduct of affairs and kept as evidence of such activity.

**Retention periods:** Specify how long records should be kept by the organisation, either in the office or in offsite storage, before disposing of them. The retention periods specified in this schedule are suggested minimum retention periods only except if otherwise noted. Where the retention period is based on a statutory or mandatory requirement the records must be kept for that period.

**NSA** – Not State Archive: records not required as State Archives

**SA** – State Archive: records required as State Archives

**Source Record:** an original record

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### 5. PROCEDURE

#### 5.1 Conditions for destruction of imaged originals

If a record was created after 1 January 1980 and qualifies to be destroyed after it has been imaged in terms of its disposal status, then destruction of the paper original is only permitted where the imaging is done in accordance with certain conditions. Those conditions are:

All requirements for keeping the records in their original format have been assessed and fulfilled. For example: there is no known event which may change the record's disposal status, such as a determination by the Local Health District on a matter or a pending legal case.

Copies are made which are authentic, complete and accessible, refer to State Records NSW- General Authority GA45 Original or source records that have been copied [Section 2 – guidelines for use](#) and the copies are kept for the authorised retention period (that is, the retention period that applied to the original paper record).

#### 5.2 Original or source records are kept for quality control purposes for an appropriate period of time after copying

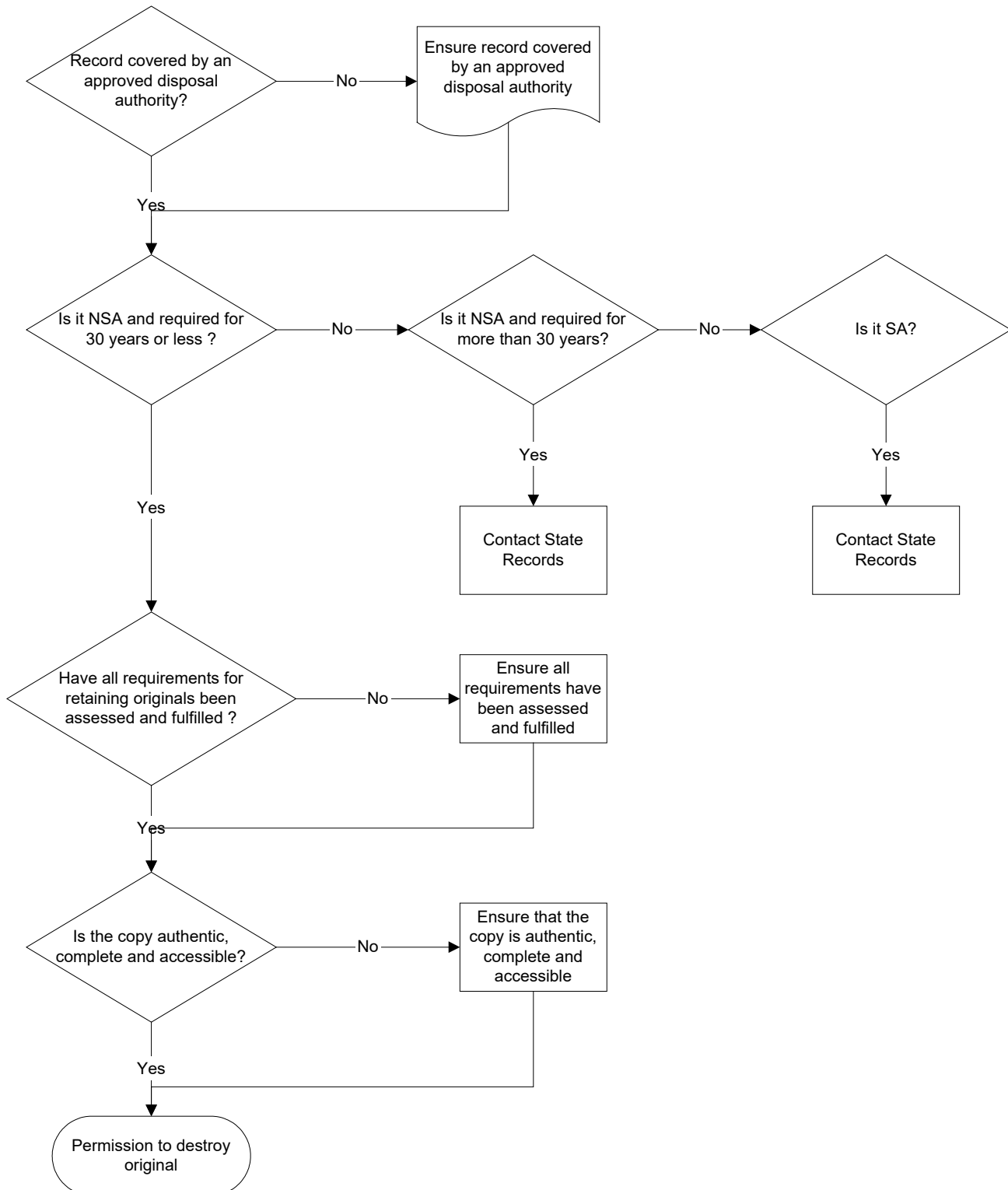
An appropriate retention period will be:

- based on the robustness of digitisation processes, including quality assurance processes
- suitable for the type of business to which the records relate
- determined in consultation with relevant business units Managers.

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### 5.3 Flowchart for using the General Authority 45 –Destruction of Original or source records that have been copied



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### 5.4 Records that are 'born electronic'

It should be noted that records that are 'born electronic' such as emails, word documents or web pages may be retained in the electronic form for as long as required, including State archives. It is not a requirement that these records be printed and retained in hard copy format, as long as they are managed electronically within the Local Health District's recordkeeping systems.

## 6. DOCUMENTATION

[GA45 Original or Source records that have been copied](#)

Appendix 1 – Exclusions

Appendix 2 – Checklist for disposal of original or source records after copying

Appendix 3 – Frequently asked questions

## 7. VERSION AND APPROVAL HISTORY

Date	Version No.	Author and approval notes
November 2004	0	Published
September 2005	1	Revised
October 2006	2	Revised
February 2011	3	Revised
November 2012	4	Revised
February 2015	5	Changes made by Records Coordinator, Executive Services following release of State Records NSW GA 45 Original or source records that have been copied
May 2020	6	Records Management Coordinator - Minor changes and updates to hyperlinks
May 2020	6	Minor review endorsed by Executive Sponsor Processed by Executive Services prior to publishing
18 December 2023	6.1	Minor review to update Senior Responsible Officer for Records Manager to Director, Digital Health (CIO) and update broken hyperlinks.
7 July 2025	6.2	Minor review to update Senior Responsible Officer for Records Manager to Head, Office of the Chief Executive and Position responsible to Manager Executive Services.

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### Appendix 1 – Exclusions

The following records are excluded from the provisions of this authority and cannot be destroyed after copying:

1. original or source records that were created prior to January 1, 1980 and are required as State archives or required to be retained in agency. (Public offices wishing to copy and destroy the originals of records that fall within these categories should contact State Records NSW).
2. original film (including photographic negatives) or analogue audio-visual material that are required as State archives
3. State archives that have been retrieved or are on loan from Museums of History NSW or its regional repositories. These records must be returned to Museums of History NSW or the relevant regional repository.
4. records subject to a legislative or Government policy requirement that the original record not be destroyed
5. records that are considered to have intrinsic value in their original format e.g. records that have a cultural, iconic, heritage or aesthetic value as a physical artefact
6. records documenting special circumstances personal information of high personal value to the subject of the record
7. source records that have been used as the input or source records for migration, refer [General Authority GA48 Source records that have been migrated.](#)

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### Appendix 2 – Checklist for disposal of original or source records after copying

Before you commence a project	Yes	No
Are the records covered by a current approved disposal authority?		If no, then the originals or source records cannot be destroyed after copying.
<p>Do the records come within any of the following categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the records were created prior to 1 January 1980 and are required as State archives or required to be retained in agency</li> <li>the records are original film negatives of audio-visual material required as State archives</li> <li>the records are State archives that have been retrieved or are on loan from Museums of History NSW</li> <li>the records are subject to a legislative or Government policy requirement that the original record not be destroyed</li> <li>the records have intrinsic value in their original format</li> </ul>	If yes, then the originals or source records cannot be destroyed after copying. State Records NSW for further advice.	
Are the records source records that have been used as the input or source records for migration?	If yes, then the General retention and disposal authority: source records that have been migrated should be used.	
Are the records being copied because they are damaged or deteriorating?	If yes, you must contact State Records NSW for advice.	

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Has a risk and cost benefit analysis been conducted?		If no, then this is recommended. See Benefits, costs and risks of business process digitisation and Costs and risks associated with back-capture digitisation in the guidance on Managing Digitisation Programs and Projects for more information.
Have required technical specifications and formats for the copies been identified and documented?		If no, see Technical specifications in the guidance on Managing Digitisation Programs and Projects for more information.
Have quality assurance benchmarks and processes been identified and documented?		If no, see Benchmarks and quality assurance in the guidance on Managing Digitisation Programs and Projects for further information.
Have business or recordkeeping system requirements for ongoing management of the records that have been copied been identified and documented?		If no, see Strategies for the long term management of digital images in the guidelines on Managing Digitisation Programs and Projects, and the advice on how to Effectively manage the migration of your digital records from the Designing, implementing and managing systems webpages for more information.



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<p>Have you contacted State Records NSW for advice?</p> <p>State Records NSW can provide advice about requirements, excluded records, what intrinsic value is, whether a conservation assessment may be required, etc.</p>		<p>If no, you must contact State Records NSW if you are planning to copy and then destroy damaged or deteriorating records or if you are undertaking a back capture project that will involve the copying of records required as State archives.</p>
<p>Have the originals or source records of any excluded categories of records been separately identified and arrangements made for their ongoing retention by the organisation or transfer as State archives?</p>		<p>If no, contact NSW Museums of History NSW for further advice about options for transfer or ongoing management of these records.</p>
<p>Can the authenticity of the copies be supported?</p> <p>For example, are the copies the product of established, authorised and monitored processes supported by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• policy and procedures</li> <li>• the use of standard formats and the highest technical specifications that can be supported</li> <li>• system documentation, including documentation of any image enhancement techniques</li> <li>• the use of 'read-only' and other security controls to prevent alteration of the copies.</li> </ul>		<p>If the answer is no to any of these, then the originals or source records cannot be destroyed until processes are put in place.</p>
<p>Have quality assurance benchmarks and processes been implemented and monitored to establish that complete copies of the records have been made?</p> <p>Quality assurance processes should verify or establish to an appropriate degree of certainty:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the copies are legible at the required level of detail</li> <li>• all pages, annotations, attachments and enclosures are captured</li> <li>• colour is reproduced to the required extent.</li> </ul>		<p>If the answer is no to any of these, then the originals or source records cannot be destroyed until these conditions have been satisfied.</p>

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<p>Can the retention and accessibility of the copies be supported for as long as they are required to be retained? For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the copies and their related metadata are stored and managed in systems that have recordkeeping functionality</li> <li>adequate, persistent and searchable descriptive metadata is present to retrieve the records</li> <li>the copies are maintained within systems managed and operated by appropriately skilled staff</li> <li>retention, access and security requirements for ongoing management of the records has been identified and documented.</li> <li>the records can be migrated if required.</li> </ul>		<p>If the answer is no to any of these, then the originals or source records cannot be destroyed until appropriate system management planning and controls are in place.</p>
<p>Have the source or original records been kept for an appropriate length of time after copying for quality control purposes?</p>		<p>If no, then the original or source records cannot be destroyed until appropriate quality assurance processes have been undertaken.</p>
<p>For records required as State archives, have procedures been put in place to transfer the records to the Digital State archives once they are no longer required for current business?</p>		<p>If no, contact Museums of History NSW for further advice or see the Archives management page on our website for more information about the transfer of digital records as State archives.</p> <p><a href="https://mhns.wa.au/government-services/state-archives-agency-services/">https://mhns.wa.au/government-services/state-archives-agency-services/</a></p>

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Other considerations	Yes	No
Is there an expectation amongst stakeholders that the organisation will retain the original records?	If there is, it may be prudent to advise that the organisation has a policy to copy records and destroy the originals.	
Has a conservation assessment been undertaken?		A conservation assessment may be appropriate in some circumstances, e.g. back-capture projects involving original records in a deteriorating condition or plans, audio-visual records or other non-standard formats that are required as State archives.

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### Appendix 3 – Frequently asked questions

#### 3.1 What does 'copying' include?

Copying includes digitisation, scanning, microfilming, reproduction of photographs and audio-visual material from negatives and photocopying.

#### 3.2 What records can't I destroy after copying?

You cannot destroy:

- pre-1980 records required as State archives or required to be retained in agency in a retention and disposal authority
- records where the conditions have not been met – see [conditions](#).
- records that are [excluded](#).

#### 3.3 What does retain in agency mean?

'Retain in agency' is a term used in disposal authorities where no minimum retention period has been set, therefore there is no approval to destroy the records or to transfer them to Museums of History NSW.

#### 3.4 How do I know what records are required as State archives?

They are listed as 'Required as State archives' in functional or general retention and disposal authorities issued by State Records.

#### 3.5 What is the 1980 cut-off date about?

The 1980 cut-off date only relates to records that are required as State archives or 'retain in agency' in a retention and disposal authority issued by State Records NSW. The originals or source records of any records that are required as State archives or to be retained in agency predating 1980 cannot be destroyed after copying.

The pre 1980 cut-off date does not apply to those records where destruction is permitted under a retention and disposal authority issued by State Records NSW.

#### **3.6 What do I do with the originals of records required as State archives that have been copied and that pre-date 1980? Do I have to hang onto them?**

These can be transferred to Museums of History NSW after the completion of the copying and associated quality control processes if they are no longer required for ongoing business use or reference. Museums of History NSW do not charge for storage of State archives but there may be resource costs involved in preparing records for transfer and an access direction will be required.

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Contact [Museums of History State Archives Agency Services](#) for advice before undertaking back-capture copying projects that involve records that are required as State archives. There are a range of issues surrounding the management and handling of the originals in back-capture projects that should be considered at the planning stage of the project.

### 3.7 What if I am not sure about the quality of the copying process?

If you are not sure about this, then you should retain the original records until:

- you can confirm the copying meets the conditions set out in the General authority,
- the records have reached their minimum retention period, or
- if they are required as State archives and they are no longer required for current business, you can transfer them to Museums of History NSW.

### 3.8 Do I have to destroy the originals of records that have been copied?

No – State Records NSW does not compel destruction.

If you have concerns regarding the copying or quality assurance processes then you most definitely should not destroy the originals until these issues have been resolved. If records are required as State archives and you think they may have intrinsic value in original format, contact Museums of History NSW to discuss potential transfer of the originals as State archives.

### 3.9 Can I apply to State Records NSW for permission to destroy records that pre-date 1980 and are required as State archives or required to be retained in agency?

Yes. State Records NSW will consider requests to destroy records that fall outside the scope of General Authority 45 on a case-by-case basis.

### 3.10 What if the original or source records are required as State archives or required to be retained in agency and are damaged or deteriorating?

You need to contact [Museums of History State Archives Agency Services](#)  
[transfer@mhns.wa.au](mailto:transfer@mhns.wa.au)

### 3.11 What do I do with original negatives of audio-visual material required as State archives?

Contact [Museums of History State Archives Agency Services](#). Normally we will require that the material is digitised and then the digital copy and the original material can be transferred as State archives.

### 3.12 Can I sell or give away the originals after copying?

No - this would constitute a breach of the State Records Act 1998.