



MEMO

From Government Records Service Director

To Permanent Secretaries and
Heads of Department

Ref. (42) in GRS T&C/50/2

(Attn : Departmental Records Managers)

Tel. No. 2195 7818

Your Ref.

Fax No. 2463 5200

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Mandatory Records Management Requirements: Drawing up an Action Plan to Identify and Protect Vital Records

Purpose

In accordance with paragraph 24 of General Circular No. 2/2009 entitled “Mandatory Records Management Requirements”, bureaux and departments (B/Ds) are required to draw up an action plan not later than April 2012 to establish and implement a vital records protection programme. This memorandum provides advice on the general procedures for B/Ds’ reference.

Drawing up an Action Plan

2. Vital records are those records containing information essential to the continued and effective operation of an organization during and after an emergency or disaster. B/Ds should identify and protect their vital records to ensure uninterrupted operation of major business functions. As the first step, B/Ds are required to **draw up an action plan not later than April 2012** to establish and implement a vital records protection programme.

3. Recently, we have received a number of enquiries from B/Ds on how to develop an action plan. In this connection, B/Ds are advised to make reference to the Records Management Publication No. 6 "**Manual on Vital Records Protection**"¹ (the Manual) promulgated by the Government Records Service (GRS) to draw up the action plan, taking into account their specific operational and records management needs.

¹ The Manual is accessible at <http://grs.host.cgo.hksarg/pub6.htm>.

4. **Section 3.1 - Steps for programme establishment** of the Manual sets out 11 key procedural steps to establish and implement a vital records protection programme in B/Ds. These procedural steps are in fact the actions and tasks to be included in the action plan to guide the programme implementation in a manageable and controllable manner. A reasonable timetable, including the commencement and completion dates for each action and task together with designated roles and responsibilities of parties concerned should be set out in the action plan. B/Ds may also include other relevant information, e.g. estimated resources and costs to be spent on implementing the vital records protection programme in the action plan if deemed useful.

5. For easy reference, the procedural steps are reproduced at the **Appendix** with cross-reference to Parts III - VII of the Manual.

Enquiries

6. Should you have any enquiries, please contact the undersigned or Mr. Steve Chow at 2195 7789.

(Miss Annie Loo)
for Government Records Service Director

Encl.

**Manual on Vital Records Protection -
Key Procedural Steps to Establish
Departmental Vital Records Protection Programme**

Step		Cross-reference to the Manual
1.	Obtain management support and commitment for the programme	Section 3.2 in Chapter III
2.	Formalize the programme by designating personnel for programme planning and coordination	Section 3.2 in Chapter III and Appendix A
3.	Conduct risk analysis/assessment	Sections 3.3 - 3.5 in Chapter III, Appendices B and C
4.	Identify vital records and prepare vital records schedules	Chapter IV, Appendices D and E
5.	Determine records protection methods	Chapter V and Appendix F
6.	Draw up vital records schedules for each of identified vital records series and register the schedules with Government Records Service if necessary	Section 4.5 in Chapter IV and Appendices D and F
7.	Arrange for building modification and maintenance improvement	Chapter VI and Appendix G
8.	Establish procedures to select, protect and update vital records	Chapters IV – VII. Each B/D should take into account its own business and operational needs to develop the departmental procedures
9.	Prepare or identify sources of supplies, equipment and services for records protection and recovery	Section 5.4 in Chapter IV ^{note} (for advice on microfilming vital paper records). In respect of advice on specific types of supplies, equipment and services relating to preservation of records, B/Ds may contact GRS.
10.	Assign detailed programme responsibilities to ensure that vital records are properly maintained in usable and retrievable conditions as and when needed	Chapter VII
11.	Conduct staff training as well as programme testing and revision	Sections 7.4 - 7.6 in Chapter VII

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