

Queensland State Archives' Appraisal Statement

Identifying public records appropriate for retention in the custody of
the archives

December 2024

Security classification: Public

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Preamble

As custodian of nearly 200 years of Queensland's documented history, Queensland State Archives (QSA) is dedicated to ensuring the recorded memory of government is preserved and proactively managed for the benefit of all Queenslanders.

Alongside this documented history, we recognise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities have had an ongoing connection to this land. As the archives is a place for learning, we also acknowledge that First Nations peoples are our traditional knowledge keepers and have their own keeping places. QSA affirms our support for the 2019 *Tandanya Adelaide declaration* in which archives around the world agreed to work respectfully through past, current and emerging complexities and challenges, towards recognition and confirmation of the place and rights of First Nations peoples in the world and in archives.

QSA is committed to maintaining professional integrity when appraising public records of the Queensland Government and aims to support public authorities with the identification of public records with ongoing cultural, social, legal, community and historical value and interest.

The appraisal of public records – and the associated identification of records with enduring value that are appropriate for permanent retention – is the cornerstone of determining which public records should form the basis of Queensland's documentary cultural heritage. Under the *Public Records Act 2023* (the Act), QSA has a mandate to identify public records of permanent value and make decisions about their retention.

To assist with determining whether public records have enduring value, QSA has developed both general and specific appraisal characteristics, in accordance with our foundational appraisal principles, to guide our decisions. By applying these characteristics, QSA aims to retain and preserve public records of enduring value for the benefit of present and future generations.

Context

Authority

This Archives Appraisal Statement is issued on the authority of the State Archivist under section 47 of the *Public Records Act 2023* and comes into effect on 5 December 2024.

This Appraisal Statement applies to the records of all Queensland public authorities.

Authorised by Acting State Archivist: Jennifer Kidd

Date: 5/12/2024

Purpose

The purpose of this Appraisal Statement is to:

- Promote the integrity of the appraisal process by providing a transparent framework of characteristics for identifying and selecting public records to be retained permanently as state archives

- Ensure community expectations and the protection of citizens' fundamental rights and entitlements are reflected in the appraisal characteristics
- Assist public authorities to identify and appraise public records with enduring value for permanent retention, including those with significance to Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- Shape the scope and breadth of Queensland's archival collection.

While appraisal is relevant to all public records, this Appraisal Statement will focus on the characteristics guiding the identification and appraisal of public records for permanent retention.

Our foundational appraisal principles

When appraising public records, QSA follows best practice appraisal as set out by the Australian Society of Archivists in its *Statement on Appraisal*. We affirm that appraisal should be:

Principle	How the principle is applied
Supportive of First Nations cultures and knowledge methods	Raising awareness of the diversity of Queensland's histories and honouring the commitments made in the Tandanya-Adelaide declaration (2019) and the Act. Includes selecting and preserving public records documenting First Nations peoples culture and knowledge methods.
Lawful	Complying with any statutory or other legal obligations for the creation, maintenance and disposal of public records.
Accountable and transparent	Retaining evidence of a public authority's decision-making, performance, achievements and conduct when carrying out its functions.
Responsive to stakeholders	Keeping public records until the resolution of any process under which stakeholders may lawfully seek access.
Planned and consistent	Occurring systematically in line with QSA guidance and repeated as circumstances (e.g. business practices, legislation, computer systems, etc.) change.
Comprehensive, with documented justifications	Adequately documenting business activities, retention requirements, appraisal characteristics (where relevant), and consideration of community interests.
Considerate of resources	Identifying permanent value records that can be transferred to QSA, and temporary value records that can be disposed of after a minimum retention period, reduces unnecessary storage and maintenance costs.

The Archives Appraisal Statement is consistent with the Australian/New Zealand Standard SA/SNZ TR ISO 21946:2020 *Information and documentation – Appraisal for managing records*.

Introduction

What is appraisal?

QSA is responsible under the Act for identifying public records with enduring value to the relevant public authority, the community, and/or Queensland as a whole. The significance of public records with enduring value does not decrease over time and they are retained permanently as state archives. QSA is also responsible for authorising minimum retention periods for all other public records. The identification of the value of public records occurs through the process of appraisal.

Appraisal involves evaluating a public authority's business activities to determine which public records should be made and captured and how long they need to be kept to meet business needs, accountability requirements, and community expectations. Minimum retention periods are authorised by the State Archivist in a retention and disposal schedule, with the supporting analysis of business activities and community expectations documented in an appraisal log.

Appraisal can be applied prospectively for records that do not yet exist and retrospectively for public records already made. Public records can be in any format including paper, digital, and film and can be organised in recordkeeping systems, business systems, network drives, or reside in email and social media accounts.

Appraisal is a planned and consistent process based on evidence. It requires documented research and analysis to provide a transparent rationale for the retention or non-retention of public records. Appraisal is complex and involves an evaluation of the ongoing government and community value of records against the cost of preserving and making these public records accessible forever. QSA's selection process is underpinned by an assumption that only a small proportion of all public records will be retained as state archives.

While this Appraisal Statement applies to public records in all formats, appraisal of digital records brings significant additional challenges. Digital technologies and business processes produce a diverse collection of highly complex digital record formats (e.g. smartphone apps, machine learning algorithms, and social media content). All these public records, and any connected information needed to identify or contextualise the record (e.g. logs and/or metadata), must be appraised so that those with enduring value can be retained permanently as state archives.

In the future, as we deal with ever increasing velocity and volume of information, appraisal will increasingly involve an element of risk assessment. The use of emerging technology such as artificial intelligence (AI) tools may assist with managing this challenge.

Benefits of appraising public records

Public records provide evidence of the decisions and actions of Queensland public authorities, and support transparent and accountable government; however, for most public records the evidentiary and accountability value associated with their retention diminishes over time. This means that most public records can be disposed of once the minimum retention requirements, as authorised by the State Archivist in a retention and disposal schedule, have been met.

The benefits of appraising public records include:

- Ensures public records are made, kept and maintained for as long as required
- Identification of public records to be retained permanently as state archives for the preservation of Queensland's documentary and cultural heritage
- Assessment of public authority risks and identification of vital public records (i.e. risk mitigation)
- Cost savings and efficient use of resources by not storing public records longer than necessary or migrating electronic records that could otherwise be disposed of prior to migration
- Transparent, accountable and consistent legal disposal of public records under the Act.

Determining whether public records have enduring value

Criteria for determining public records with enduring value fall into two categories:

- General appraisal characteristics
- Specific appraisal characteristics (grouped by appraisal themes).

To be appraised as warranting permanent retention as state archives, public records would in most circumstances fall within one or more of the specific appraisal characteristics outlined in this Statement. However, not all public records that fall within the definition of an appraisal characteristic will be selected for permanent retention.

QSA will work with public authorities to select the best documentary evidence (e.g. summary information, case files, etc.) and, in some instances, we may retain more than one source of evidence where there is an ongoing community need.

Generally, only a small proportion of all public records made by government will be kept as part of the state archives. Final responsibility for confirming which public records meet the appraisal characteristics and will be retained permanently as state archives remains with the State Archivist, who has statutory independence when making decisions on the retention and disposal of public records.

General appraisal characteristics

In some instances, public records may have enduring value even if they were not identified for permanent retention under a disposal authorisation. QSA has identified several general appraisal characteristics which are also considered when appraising public records. These considerations support informed decisions about what we keep permanently as state archives.

Public records may have enduring value and warrant retention as permanent state archives if:

Characteristic	Includes
Aesthetic or artistic quality	Where public records have intrinsic value, due to special qualities and/or characteristics of the original medium, that add to their significance.

Characteristic	Includes
	<p>This includes both physical and digital forms such as sketches, NFTs (non-fungible tokens), manuscripts, photographs, maps, architectural drawings, and engravings.</p> <p>Factors considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Craftsmanship, originality, representative value, and significance of the creator • If the content depicted is of interest or significance • Evidence of outstanding artistic, design, innovation or technical accomplishment.
Artifactual quality (representative samples only)	<p>Evidence of technological development such as: early press copies, glass-plate negatives, wax-cylinder sound recordings, and early digital formats.</p> <p>QSA will also consider physical features that are unique, curious, or historically significant.</p> <p>Includes: texture of paper, wax seals, imprints and watermarks; inks; early or unusual bindings; and obscure digital formats.</p>
Authoritative source	<p>Public records which provide the authoritative source of evidence where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are multiple copies of the information held, and • The records also meet one of the specific appraisal characteristics.
Complementary and/or relates to existing holdings	<p>Where the public records complement and add research value to an existing QSA series of permanent public records, for example an index when we already hold the correspondence.</p> <p><i>Note: this is rarely used as these public records usually fall within a specific appraisal characteristic.</i></p>
Consolidated	<p>Public records which provide a consolidated summary of substantive decisions or actions.</p>
Rarity and/or uniqueness	<p>Public records which may be rare because of their age, or which may be the only remaining example of a type of public record that once existed.</p> <p>Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The only public records existing for a geographic area, public authority or activity • Public records that document functions and activities that differ from the current responsibilities of the public authority • Unique public records providing details of a time and place • Legacy public records of a public authority that no longer exists.

While public authorities have a responsibility under the Act to ensure the safe keeping and preservation of a public record, occasionally concerns around the quality and accessibility of public records, or the resources needed to preserve and make them accessible, may lead to QSA excluding some public records that would otherwise be appraised as state archives.

Public records which may be excluded are those with:

Issue of concern	Includes
Lack of integrity or context	<p>Public records which lack integrity due to concerns with their reliability, completeness and accessibility. This includes public records with no context or where the context cannot be reasonably reconstructed (e.g. loose visual images with no metadata).</p>

Issue of concern	Includes
	<p>Serious technical defects affecting the usability of public records may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Password protected or encrypted files with no passkey • Digital public records that require highly specialised/expensive proprietary software • Corrupt, damaged or virus-infected digital media • Where the hardware to access the public record no longer exists. <p><i>Note: where QSA deems the information is uniquely significant, further solutions for retrieval may be investigated.</i></p>
Poor physical condition	<p>Poor physical condition preventing preservation/access, or which poses a threat to more stable public records in the state archives collection.</p> <p>For instance where the item:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is illegible • Cannot be physically accessed (e.g. all pages are stuck together into a solid block), or • Is contaminated by a hazardous substance (e.g. asbestos, radioactive material, etc). <p><i>Note: when public records appraised as permanent are affected by water, smoke, mould, and pests and can be salvaged, QSA requires that these be preserved by the public authority.</i></p>
Too costly to preserve	<p>The long-term costs of storage, preservation and access are prohibitive, and salvage efforts are impractical (e.g. an item is completely fragmented).</p>

Specific appraisal characteristics

QSA has identified seven specific appraisal characteristics to assist in the identification of public records with enduring value for permanent retention as state archives. All characteristics are equally significant and their arrangement in this Statement does not imply an order of priority.

Several specific appraisal characteristics contain the qualification that a particular action, issue and/or impact must be “significant”. Generally, the following factors, and the level of their impact on the government or the community, contribute to the degree of their significance:

- Extent of the population affected
- Government expenditure or commitment
- New or changed policy position
- Political or legal ramifications
- Public reaction or sensitivity
- Public safety implications
- Social, cultural, artistic, economic or environmental impact
- Extent of profound changes to lives of individuals, families or communities.

These specific appraisal characteristics are applicable to public records in any format and the examples provided in this Statement are for illustration only and are not an exhaustive list.

Characteristic 1 – First Nations Peoples and Cultures

Public records that provide evidence of First Nations peoples, communities, traditions, cultures, worldviews and methods of creating, sharing and preserving valued knowledge. Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples have cared for this land for thousands of years and sovereignty has never been ceded. Archives are important for First Nations peoples, helping to preserve cultural heritage, history, and identity for future generations. They hold vital records that enable communities to reconnect with ancestors, as well as traditional knowledge, languages and customs.

The Queensland Government is one of the parties responsible for historical records about Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples. These records exist because of past government legislation which allowed Queensland Governments to control, regulate and document the lives of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This has created a legacy of trauma and suffering that continues to impact contemporary communities but has also resulted in a vast collection of historical records that provide insights into the lives, cultures and languages of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Although these public records were made about First Nations peoples, not made with or for First Nations peoples, they remain a highly valuable source of knowledge regarding Queensland's recorded history.

Additionally, public authorities should also retain public records that support the revitalisation of First Nations cultures and reconnect languages, communities and families.

Evidenced by public records of:

- Connection to place, land and/or sea especially prior to colonial settlement
 - Location of ancestral remains, burials and memorial sites
 - Flora and fauna management
 - Survey reports
 - Recorded interviews, cultural performances and oral histories
 - Anthropological research into First Nations peoples' heritage: includes lands, language, social/religious practices, artefacts, histories, genealogies and artworks.
- Recognition as original inhabitants
 - Mabo case files and transcripts of evidence
 - Enshrining land rights in Queensland legislation (e.g. land transfers and title return to First Nations peoples, and cultural heritage area management)
 - Native Title determinations submitted to the Federal Court
 - Native Title compensation.
- Significant cultural heritage areas, objects, and archaeological evidence
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage register
 - Archaeological excavations, surveys, inspections, radiocarbon site dating and fieldwork reports
 - Cultural heritage assessments, reports, conservation, images and original research
 - Custodianship and custodial responsibilities for cultural and sacred sites/artefacts, includes measures to avoid/minimise harm to cultural heritage.
- Impact of Government policies on First Nations communities and families
 - Forced removal off country
 - Repatriation of ancestral remains, burial goods and secret and/or sacred objects
 - Establishment and findings of major bodies of review (e.g. Royal Commissions) with a direct impact on First Nations peoples (e.g. Aboriginal Deaths in Custody).

Evidenced by public records of:

- Challenges of accessing standard government services, and efforts to address the gap between First Nations peoples and non-First Nations people
 - Queensland Closing the Gap policies, annual report, snapshot report and implementation plan
 - Consultation with Traditional Owners, First Nations advisory committees, and communities
 - Public records that assist with the re-establishment of family links broken under previous government separation policies.
- Specific programs aimed at supporting communities (e.g. educational programs or Government champion program).
- Government administration of all aspects of the lives and affairs of First Nations peoples prior to the abandonment of such policies
 - Personal records for First Nations individuals
 - Control of marriage and relationships
 - Family separations: includes removals, institutional care, adoption and fostering arrangements
 - Provision of rations, education, medical treatment and healthcare
 - Financial management: includes control of wages, finances and personal property
 - Management of missions, settlement dormitories and reserves
 - Control over employment, personal movements and places of residence: includes government employment such as police trackers, surveyor guides and National Park rangers
 - Inquiries into Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs administration.

Examples of public records not required:

- Case files of First Nations people that receive government services that are not specifically directed at, or specifically provided to, First Nations people (e.g. First Nations students in state schools)
- Records about First Nations people that would not help reconstruct First Nations communities and families impacted by government policies, nor show cultural connection to place (e.g. scholarship programs or employment training schemes specifically directed to First Nations peoples).

Characteristic 2 – Authority, Establishment and Structure of Government

Public records providing evidence of the source of authority, establishment and structure of Queensland government (including all public authorities and local governments). This includes public records that define the functions of government, such as the nature and extent of the government's jurisdiction, obligations and powers.

Evidenced by public records of:

- Legislation and subordinate legislation (regulations): includes development, commencement and review.
- Formal instruments authorising the establishment or dissolution of a public authority, its functions and operations
 - Governor in Council approvals
 - Ministerial duties outside the Minister's current portfolio which are official assignments from the Premier and may lead to the creation of a new public authority
 - Changes to Ministerial portfolio responsibilities.
- Formal arrangements of governing bodies: includes terms of reference, constitution and business registration.
- Major reforms of the state's political and administrative structures and institutions
 - Research and reports into restructure proposals
 - Final, approved versions of machinery of government changes, including restructures and organisational charts.
- Legal delegations to perform duties and functions of the State: includes Ministerial delegations and delegations to a Chief Executive Officer or a statutory office holder.
- Judgements or rulings determining the extent of jurisdictions and powers
 - Supreme Court determinations of the validity of legislation
 - Court determinations that the power to charge a person is not within the provisions of a specific Act
 - Judgements that a tribunal/lower court does not have the necessary power/jurisdiction to have dealt with a matter.
- Agreements with other state governments and the Commonwealth regarding responsibility for functions: includes contracts, complementary legislation and other policies/outcomes of National Cabinet and/or Ministerial Councils.
- Gazettal of Queensland government proceedings (e.g. Queensland Government Gazette).

Examples of public records not required:

- Operational delegations to employees within public authorities.
- Transfer arrangements to move core functions and staff to other public authorities as a result of an organisational restructure or machinery of government change.

Characteristic 3 – Primary Functions and Programs of Government

Public records providing evidence of Queensland government functions, programs, deliberations, decisions and actions which influence the administration of government and the people of Queensland. These public records relate to primary functions, programs and significant issues faced in governing the state of Queensland. Examples include public records documenting the background, basis, and outcomes of those decisions and actions.

The significance of functions, programs, issues and associated decisions and actions will be assessed in relation to how critical they are, or were, in the administration of the Government and their influence or impact on the people of Queensland.

Evidenced by public records of:

- Complaint investigations that consider issues with government decision-making or processes.
- Decision making by Cabinet, Cabinet committees, local governments, governing boards, advisory bodies, and high-level committees (e.g. agendas, minutes and supporting documentation).
- Establishment and findings of major bodies of review such as Royal Commissions, Commissions of Inquiry/ Review, and Boards of Inquiry/Review
 - Final reports/recommendations and the Queensland government response
 - Implementation of any findings or recommendations of the Inquiry (e.g. policy reviews and changes).
- Accountability and integrity body investigations (e.g. Ombudsman investigations).
- Legal precedents and amendments set by Supreme Court decisions.
- Management of the Queensland economy and accounting for public expenditure/finances
 - State budget papers and summary annual account statements not captured in an annual report
 - Auditor-General's significant audits, investigations and reports.
- Whole-of-government and high-level policies issued by government to regulate an industry or government itself, including establishing standards of professional conduct
 - Policy proposals, development, consultation, evaluation reports and reviews
 - Endorsed policies and implementation plans.
- Implementation of major decisions through the formulation of procedures and strategies (e.g. Public Service Commission directives).
- Management of Crown assets on behalf of the community (e.g. Crown land).
- Design and construction of public buildings, major infrastructure and state-wide planning schemes
 - State-wide planning scheme and/or town plan
 - Specifications for the design and construction of major infrastructure
 - Public private partnerships.
- Registration of regulated professions (e.g. medical and legal profession regulation).
- Ministerial submissions, advice and briefings from public authorities to their Minister relating to contentious or significant issues.
- Ministerial media statements.
- Constitutional process of adjusting electoral boundaries to reflect demographic and population changes.
- Define the functions and operations of government (e.g. public authority annual report).

Examples of public records not required:

- Records of subcommittees supporting boards or committees, where reports are submitted to the main decision-making body or decisions are of limited scope or impact.
- Registers that provide evidence of accountability for specific periods e.g. registers of local council elected member interests, allowances and benefits.
- Internal policy and procedure documents of a public authority that interpret and implement public policy, such as work health and safety policy and procedures.

Characteristic 4 – Enduring Rights and Entitlements

Public records providing evidence of the legal status of individuals and groups within the community, as well as their fundamental rights to participate in the affairs of the state, and to lay claim to entitlements and protection provided by the state. This includes public records documenting the significant interaction of individuals with government, which are necessary to protect their rights and entitlements.

Evidenced by public records of:

- Legal proof of identity or status
 - Registration of significant life events such as births, donor conceptions, adoptions, marriages, sexual reassignments, and deaths
 - Official changes of name (e.g. deed polls).
- Registration of persons or organisations that establish rights and entitlements
 - Electoral rolls listing persons who were entitled to enrol and eligible to vote
 - School admission registers for public primary and secondary schools.
- Current and past ownership of, or rights to, land, property and waters (since colonisation)
 - Land titles, parish plans and easements which document property rights and entitlements
 - State forests, timber reserves and nature conservation areas
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander land (e.g. transferable and claimable land) and native title.
- Civil rights of citizens
 - The authority of executors or administrators to administer a deceased estate following a grant of probate.

Examples of public records not required:

- Individual cases documenting evidence of authority to act for a specified period
 - Licences granted for asbestos removal
 - Local government licences and registrations to conduct an activity or profession (e.g. tattooists)
 - Permits or authorisation to act under the law.

Characteristic 5 – Significant Impact on Individuals

Public records providing substantial evidence of the significant impact of Queensland government decisions and actions on individuals and communities, the interaction of people with the government, and the influence of the Queensland community on government decision-making. This includes public records that might be required where the government's actions alter or change the lives of individuals or groups of people, particularly the most vulnerable members of Queensland society.

Public records that display this characteristic may be made or received by public authorities and organisations performing functions on behalf of government as well as public authorities within government.

Evidenced by public records of:

- Registration of people receiving a service or participating in a program which provides information establishing relationships of people and places, and which will be of ongoing community interest.
- Individual cases of government intervention in people's lives which had far reaching impact or influence
 - Institutionalized care of individuals
 - Document government making key decisions on behalf of the person (e.g. guardianship and prison admission/discharge records)
 - Establish precedent.
- Issues with services and programs intended to support vulnerable Queenslanders, such as appeals and investigations.
- Identifying the persons, groups or areas affected by the implementation of policy decisions (whether positively or negatively)
 - Representations and appeals against the decisions/actions of government or legislature
 - Petitions documenting significant community opposition to government actions or policies.
- Impact of legal decisions on the lives of individuals and communities and the setting of precedents for community behaviour (e.g. criminal court decisions).
- Planning and decision-making in relation to issues significantly affecting the community
 - Data analyses, reports, decision outcomes and implementation, and reviews into an issue
 - Documentation of the initial impact of a new government program or service.
- Handling of significant incident and emergency responses and investigations, involving fatalities, permanent incapacities, potential transmission of fatal diseases or exposure to toxic substances.
- Handling of deaths in the care or custody of Queensland public authorities.

Examples of public records not required:

- Individual cases that document the routine operation of government regulation and service delivery
- Records that would be owned and managed by the person if their affairs were not managed by the government (e.g. Public Trustee bill payments)
- Information provided by a public authority to an individual, where recordkeeping responsibility belongs to the person (e.g. results given to students at public primary and secondary schools)
- Records of worker use of, or exposure or likely exposure to, hazards known to have a cumulative or delayed health effect such as asbestos.

Characteristic 6 – Queensland Society and Culture

Public records substantially contributing to the knowledge and understanding of aspects of the history, society, culture or people of Queensland. This includes public records relating to events, persons, places and phenomena of social, environmental, cultural, aesthetic, scientific, research or technical significance to the broader community and public records that provide a representation of the Queensland way of life including work, education, leisure and culture.

While public records arise from and document government activity, they may warrant retention as permanent public records because of relevance beyond government functionality. For instance, a routine approval of a building's construction may warrant permanent retention as it concerns a building that becomes renowned for its architectural significance.

This characteristic may also include public records that are retained due to rarity (for example due to age) or comprise the only extant record of a function, public authority or geographic area.

Evidenced by public records of:

- Sites of conservation, cultural, social, spiritual or heritage significance
 - Identification, development, site management, and/or heritage registration.
- Individuals or organisations that have significantly contributed to Queensland society
 - Award recipients and titles administration (e.g. conferring the title of "Honourable" to eligible persons).
- Queensland's population and its circumstances (e.g. statistical data).
- Major social, economic, cultural or scientific discoveries or developments with significance to, or a special relationship with:
 - Queensland (e.g. management of major projects/economic resources)
 - Specific regional/local communities (e.g. Mayoral speeches at significant regional/local occasions).
- Major advances, changes or achievements, in a particular field or area, and the key contributors:
 - Technical, botanical, scientific, social science, genealogical, medical or another specialist research (**note: any potential uses must be fully explained and justified for this criterion to be applied**).
- Those which significantly add to an understanding of a particular time for different types of people - how people lived, what they thought, what their major concerns/issues were:
 - Council rate records
 - Approval of university curricula
 - Changes in government programs and services that demonstrate a new approach or direction
 - Reports on major social issues: includes development, community/government reaction and impact.
- Major events, developments or trends in political, social, legal or economic history
 - Premier's speech notes
 - State funerals and memorial services.

Evidenced by public records of:

- Strategic/high level planning and management of significant cultural events and celebration
 - Olympic and Commonwealth Games event delivery
 - Establishment of unique events run by local councils (e.g. local government centenary)
 - Delivery of artistic and performing arts activities by State run cultural institutions (e.g. QPAC master program and season brochures).
- Development and management of cultural collections (e.g. museums, art galleries, libraries, and archives).
- Disaster recovery following a major disaster or serious incident (e.g. cyclone, floods, etc).
- Political and ceremonial engagement between Queensland and other sovereign states and powers (e.g. Official visits by Heads of State, Heads of Government and members of the Royal Family).

Examples of public records not required:

- Routine approval to conduct events
- Arrangements for staging and marketing events and productions.

Characteristic 7 – Environmental Management and Change

Public records providing evidence of the Queensland government's significant actions in relation to environmental management and change, including government responses to the impact of climate change and the occupation, management and use of the state's natural resources.

This also includes public records that contain a history of land use which has, or may, impact on the health and well-being of the Queensland community, the economy and the natural environment, and records that may contribute to an understanding of climatic change, weather patterns and natural disasters. address current issues such as threatened and extinct species and climate change.

Evidenced by public records of:

- Evidence of land use and occupation
 - Land planning (e.g. State land plans) and approved planning schemes (e.g. town plan)
 - Registers of Natural Resources Rights
 - Tidal works in a coastal management district
 - Survey field books.
- Environmental data collections, research and analysis for planning and decision-making relating to:
 - Significant environment or resource management issues (e.g. hydrographic charts and flood maps)
 - Substantial incremental and local environmental changes (e.g. ecosystem damage and habitat loss)
 - Observations and images of the natural environment and environmental changes (e.g. sea level rises and rainfall, temperature and soil feature statistics).

Evidenced by public records of:

- Government functions and programs which have far reaching impact or influence on the environment
 - Climate adaption and risk strategies, including government response to the impact of climate change
 - Programs and strategies addressing threats to flora and fauna species
 - Conservation and recovery plans for priority threatened species and protected areas
 - Restoration and rehabilitation of natural environments
 - Spread and control of diseases or biological agents
 - Pest eradication programs
 - Major changes to land or water use (e.g. establishment of National Parks and Marine Parks).
- Regulation of environmentally relevant activities
 - Register of development approvals for environmentally relevant activities
 - Significant environmental protection orders (e.g. direction notices)
 - Significant audits and investigations to monitor compliance with environmental management legislation and licences.
- Potential for contaminants to be released into the environment
 - Development approvals for coal seam gas extraction and mining
 - Identification, monitoring and rehabilitation of toxic sites and land fill sites.
- Central control and management for catastrophic natural disasters
 - Planning records, incident reports, response and recovery.
- Queensland herbarium identification of regional ecosystems and new species of plants, algae, fungi and lichens in the state (e.g. Census of the Queensland Flora and Fungi).

Examples of public records not required:

- Detailed records of environmental impact on a very specific location, especially private property (e.g. installation of on-site wastewater systems)
- Detailed public records for environmental restoration projects
- Property development applications for every property.

Glossary of key terms

The following definitions have been sourced and/or adapted from the *Act* and the QSA [Glossary](#) of recordkeeping and archival terms:

Term	Definition
Permanent value	Public records that, having regard to any archives Appraisal Statement: a) have been identified for ongoing retention under a disposal authorisation; or b) otherwise have enduring value and are appropriate for retention in the custody of the archives. (<i>Schedule 3 of the Act</i>)
Enduring value	The ongoing usefulness or significance of public records, based on the evidential, administrative, financial, legal, informational and historical values that justify the permanent retention of public records. These public records have enduring value to the state of Queensland, the relevant public authority, the community, and/or Australia as a whole and therefore need to be kept indefinitely. (<i>QSA Glossary</i>)
Permanent records / Permanent retention	Public records with a permanent retention are required to be kept indefinitely because they have a high enduring or archival value. (<i>QSA Glossary</i>)
Public record	<p>A public record is information recorded on, in or by using any medium that is made, received or kept in the course of a public authority carrying out activities for a purpose of the authority, including the exercise of its statutory, administrative or other public responsibilities and that evidences the activities, affairs or business of the authority.</p> <p>A public record includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> any information connected to a public record to identify or contextualise the record (e.g. metadata, logs) a copy of a public record a part of or a copy of a part of a public record a Ministerial record or a record of an Assistant Minister.

Acknowledgements

- Australian Standard - [*AS ISO 15489.1:2017 Information and documentation – Records Management, Part 1: Concepts and principles*](#)
- Australian/New Zealand Standard - [*SA/SNZ TR ISO 21946:2020 Information and documentation – Appraisal for managing records*](#).
- International Council on Archives - [*Tandanya Adelaide Declaration*](#) - ICA
- Australian Society of Archivists – Position papers: [*ASA Statement on Appraisal*](#) and the [*Policy Statement on Archival Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples*](#)
- Council of Australasian Archives and Records Authorities - [*CAARA Policy 10 – Management of Records Relating to Native Title Claims*](#) and the [*CAARA Members recommit to the aims of the Tandanya-Adelaide Declaration*](#)
- State Records South Australia – [*Appraisal Standard*](#)
- National Archives of Australia – [*How we select national archives*](#)
- Queensland legislation including: [*Public Records Act 2023*](#), [*Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003*](#), [*Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Act 2003*](#), [*Queensland Heritage Act 1992*](#).

QSA also gratefully acknowledges the work of government archival authorities in other jurisdictions which has been used as a benchmark for consistency and best practice in records' appraisal.

Further information

More information about Queensland Government recordkeeping can be found at forgov.qld.gov.au/recordkeeping.

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