

## Corporate Policy on Electronic Records Management

### 1. Scope of Policy

This policy aims to meet the requirements of good records management to cover all the electronic record collections and planned electronic records of the National Measurement Office. The policy covers:

#### [Section 2 – Records Management Requirements](#)

The requirements that must be met for the records themselves to be considered as a proper record of the activity of the organisation

#### [Section 3 – Process Requirements](#)

The requirements for systems and processes that deal with records, the quality and reliability which must be maintained to provide a valuable information and knowledge resource for the whole organisation

#### [Section 4 – Transitional Requirements](#)

Its place within the strategic and policy framework of the organisation

#### [Section 5 – Linked Policies](#)

The implementation plan across the organization

#### [Section 6 – Technical policy](#)

The use of approved technical solutions

#### [Section 7 – Preservation Policy](#)

The resources needed to preserve the record intact

#### [Section 8 – Registration](#)

The policy governing Registration process

#### [Section 9 – Access Policy](#)

The policy governing access

#### [Section 10 – Security Policy](#)

The policy governing security

#### [Section 11 – Policy review](#)

The policy for reviewing the policy and checking the quality of implementation will be updated according to a development plan issued within the policy-making areas of the National Measurement Office.

### 2. Records Management Requirements

- 2.1. Electronic records within the National Measurement Office are to be clearly identified following a pattern of treatment similar to that previously given to paper records. Overall responsibility for the management of electronic records is vested in a nominated individual (Electronic Records Manager) who in the National Measurement Office's case is the Agency Records Officer. The IT Manager and Records and Resources Manager will support the Agency Records Officer. Records must be able to be preserved and stored for the required period within the National Measurement Office. They will be selected using a defined selection

criteria and can be transferred to other organisations for future preservation, or destroyed once they are no longer of operational use. In order to ensure that the information constitutes a record the organisation is required and endeavours at all times to ensure that:

**2.1.1. The record is defined**

It is a piece of information created or received by any individual, employed by or contracted by the Agency that relates to business and has potential administrative, legal, financial, accountability or historic value.

**2.1.2. The record is present**

The information needed to reconstruct activities and transactions that have taken place is recorded.

**2.1.3. The record can be accessed**

It is possible to locate and access the information and present it in a way that is true to the original presentation of the information

**2.1.4. The record can be interpreted**

A context for the information can be established showing when, where and who created it, how it was used and how it is related to other information

**2.1.5. The record can be trusted**

The information and its representation exactly matches that which was actually created and used, and its integrity and authenticity can be demonstrated beyond reasonable doubt

**2.1.6. The record can be maintained**

The record can be deemed to be present and can be accessed, interpreted and trusted for as long as necessary and on transfer to other approved locations, systems and technologies.

### 3. Process Requirements

3.1. The National Measurement Office deems that electronic records are an asset that requires careful control and the diligent application of standards to all systems and processes within the organisation. The systems and processes will be required to:

3.1.1. Identify whether they deal with records, electronic records or potential electronic records

3.1.2. If they do deal with such records, the system or process must maintain them so that the record nature remains intact

3.1.3. Provide information on the records or potential records as required for inclusion as part of a collection in the inventory of record collections

3.1.4. Provide the records for registration, transfer or disposal according to the records management guidance

3.1.5. Keep the records secure and monitor access in accordance with records management guidance

3.1.6. Have regard for legal requirements such as Data Protection, Freedom of Information and copyright legislation.



## 4. Transitional Requirements

- 4.1. The National Measurement Office will monitor electronic records and potential electronic records to ensure that:
  - 4.1.1. Records that should be captured are being processed electronically if they do not appear in the paper record.
  - 4.1.2. There is no unwarranted duplication between the paper and electronic record collections.
  - 4.1.3. There is a distinction made between the electronic documents which are printed, printed records that reside in the paper record systems and other original documents that are retained as electronic records
  - 4.1.4. An inventory of record collections will be created to ascertain the nature and type of records and potential records within collections. Care must be taken to ensure a good level of control of the record creating systems and that the records nature is preserved appropriately in the transitional period
  - 4.1.5. The Electronic Document and Records Management System (EDRMS) should clearly show where the record is located and in which form it is held.

## 5. Linked Policies

- 5.1. There will be requirements in other policies that electronic records must meet.
- 5.2. The following are made explicit by reference:
  - 5.2.1. Following best practice  
Electronic records should be managed in accordance with relevant codes of practice for records management – in particular, the BS/ISO 15489-1 that provides an overall guide to best practice in records management
  - 5.2.2. The department's e-business strategy  
Electronic records will underpin e-business providing records for business use, corporate knowledge management and evidence-based policy making, evidence for accountability and historical use.
  - 5.2.3. Freedom of Information  
Electronic records will have to adhere to procedures under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the associated Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on the Management of Records
  - 5.2.4. Data Protection  
Electronic records will have to adhere to procedures under the Data Protection Act 1998.
  - 5.2.5. Existing records policy  
(That is, paper-based policies)
  - 5.2.6. Audit policy  
Electronic records will have to meet audit requirements.

## 6. Technical policy

- 6.1. The National Measurement Office applies technical criteria to the technologies that process electronic records. This ensures that:
- 6.1.1. It is technically possible for the electronic records to meet record requirements starting from when they are created and for as long as they are needed
  - 6.1.2. Systems will be selected on the basis of how well they will cope with electronic records, to prevent any loss of the record because of incompatibility or insufficient safeguards being used
  - 6.1.3. Records management systems adhere to the minimum functional requirements as stated in the National Archives publication 'Functional Requirements for Electronic Records Management Systems'.
  - 6.1.4. The systems designed for records management are capable of and useful for record keeping activities
  - 6.1.5. Metadata is captured and can be used for referencing the information by using defined terms that are user-friendly and accurate.

## 7. Preservation policy

- 7.1. The National Measurement Office seeks to preserve electronic records during any change in the infrastructure so that they can still satisfy the original policy requirements. Preservation needs must be satisfied when there are changes in:
- 7.1.1. The technology that processes the electronic records and how this affects the way records are processed throughout the records' existence
  - 7.1.2. Organisational structures and how these are interpreted and give the records context
  - 7.1.3. The definition of terms used in the metadata and within the records themselves
  - 7.1.4. The classification of the electronic records including how the records are grouped and described so that they can be presented in a way consistent with the original understanding of the subject when the record was created.

## 8. Registration policy

- 8.1. The approach the National Measurement Office has to registration involves the registry:
- 8.1.1. Classifying of the records into series called 'classifications' that have meaningful titles and a consistent reference code
  - 8.1.2. Setting a responsibility on individuals forming record items to allocate them to a classification and if necessary a sub-classification or sub-sub-classification
  - 8.1.3. Having sequences of reference numbers that can cover classifications with both electronic and paper records
  - 8.1.4. Checking that the correct records have been allocated to the sequence and that meaningful titles are used
  - 8.1.5. Auditing lists of the references used so that the registration system makes sense and records can be found in appropriate search sequences.

## 9. Access policy

- 9.1. The National Measurement Office will use access controls to allow the records to be viewed by all relevant parties, and offer a mechanism for opening up some of the information for use outside this group. The actual controls will depend on many factors but the general principles can be summarised as:
- 9.1.1. Electronic records will be made available for continuity of actions. The creators and managing individuals or groups should have access to relevant information
  - 9.1.2. Roles or bodies within the organisation that have been identified as being able to make an accurate judgement will decide on the sensitivity of the record. This judgement may be on a whole series or simply cover individual items. It will identify any restrictions on the records and it will highlight any groups or individuals within the organisation who should have access
  - 9.1.3. Any judgements, including any background reasons for withholding or masking information within the record or record series, are to be recorded. The resulting record will be kept for at least as long as the records in question; however it may not have the same access status as the main record
  - 9.1.4. The organisation will not seek to put blanket restrictions on a record series if only some of the individual records are judged sensitive
  - 9.1.5. Electronic records are subject to the Public Records Act 1958 and the organisation will ensure that they are treated accordingly. Access will be needed for appraisal decisions to be implemented. The nature of the access will be defined for records judged to be of a sensitive nature
  - 9.1.6. Information taken from the records or record metadata may be subject to legislation requiring it to be either withheld or made more widely available outside normal business needs (or even outside the organisation itself). For example there may be a need for compliance with Data Protection or Freedom of Information legislation
  - 9.1.7. All records are part of the corporate memory. Unless restricted, due to legislation or as a result of a judgement, they will be made readily available within the organisation. This may be subject to volume restrictions because of technical limitations or copyright reasons
  - 9.1.8. Any access arrangements will be made for a specified duration and these will be reviewed according to a schedule identified during appraisal

## 10. Security policy

- 10.1. The National Measurement Office takes all reasonable steps to ensure that the electronic records and processes dealing with them are secure. Once recorded and registered in the system, they will be safe from alteration, misinterpretation or loss. The steps include:
- 10.1.1. Informing staff and complying with records management best practice
  - 10.1.2. Using a corporate policy and organisational procedures, where they exist, and helping to determine new policy and procedures where they do not
  - 10.1.3. Training staff to use the records management systems for an accurate representation of the records using only relevant metadata, thereby ensuring

consistency in record registration and metadata without loss of context and control

- 10.1.4. Auditing the systems to trace any deviation from procedure
- 10.1.5. Offering solutions to rectify mistakes or altering the procedures to accommodate better ways of working
- 10.1.6. Setting up business continuity plans to ensure a constant service is maintained in spite of any technical or strategic hitches that may occur
- 10.1.7. Enforcing access restrictions with user IDs and passwords, setting user lockouts
- 10.1.8. Maintaining disaster recovery plans that include replicating electronic records on a physically secure back up and safeguarding the information from technical failures.
- 10.1.9. Implementing strict back-up cycles with updates for new records and metadata, ensuring that any destroyed or transferred records are also promptly physically cleaned from the back-ups
- 10.1.10. Labelling the replicated records as a replica set and making sure these cannot be used as the master set, unless the original has been destroyed accidentally or following a disaster

## 11. Policy review

- 11.1. The National Measurement Office will endeavour to follow the policy within all relevant procedures and guidance used for operational activities. Interpretation of the policy will be monitored and there will be a regular planned audit to assess how the policy is being put into practice. The audit will seek to:
  - 11.1.1. Identify areas of operation that are covered or not covered by the policy and to identify which procedures and/or guidance should adhere to the policy
  - 11.1.2. Follow a mechanism for adapting the policy to cover missing areas if these are critical to the creation and use of electronic records and use a subsidiary development plan if there are major changes to be made
  - 11.1.3. Set requirements by implementing new procedures, including obtaining feedback where the procedures do not match the desired activity
  - 11.1.4. Highlight where non-conformance to the procedures is occurring and suggest a tightening of controls and adjustment to related procedures such as security and access.