



**THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES RECORDS
CENTRES AND DEPARTMENTAL RECORDS**



Introduction:

The National Archives Records Centres and Departmental Records is a publication that aims at providing a concise description of various services and procedures, and other information that may not be readily available about Records Centres. The Records Centres operates under the provisions of the National Archives Act 1986, serving Government, Local authorities and Parastatals. It is hoped that after reading this publication user departments will appreciate the role of the National Archives Records Centre in records and information management and the need for proper records and information management.

Compilation:

This manual was compiled by staff of the National Archives' New Records Centre.

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THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES RECORDS CENTRES AND DEPARTMENTAL RECORDS

The National Archives is charged with the responsibility of providing a records and information management service to Government ministries and departments, local authorities and parastatals. In terms of the National Archives of Zimbabwe Act 1986, it must ensure that public records are created, used, maintained and disposed of in an organized way that promotes the efficient and economic handling of information.

More records are being created today than ever before. As the country progresses, so too does the volume of records increase. One of the basic aims of records and information management is to keep pace with this avalanche of paper so that it does not clog the offices creating it, and so that material worthy of permanent preservation is not lost in the process.

The Government alone generates approximately 7 000 meters of records each year. As only 6 per cent of this is worth preserving permanently, the importance to our country of a sound records and information management service is obvious.

This publication describes how the records and information management programme of the National Archives assists *you* in managing records. It outlines the procedures for you to follow when transferring records from your registries to the records centres of the National Archives, and the way in which these records are organized and stored in the Records Centres and retrieved when required for reference.

The involvement of the National Archives in records and information management begins at the very point when records are created or received by a ministry or department, through to their disposal by destruction or preservation as public archives.

June 1994

*S. Njovana
Director*

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF ZIMBABWE ACT 1986

You should take notice of the following sections of the National Archives of Zimbabwe Act that control the management of all government, local government and parastatal records:

6. (1) subject to the provisions of subsection (2) the Director may, in respect of any Ministry
- a) inspect and examine the records of that Ministry;
 - b) give advice or instructions concerning the filing, maintenance and preservation and, when necessary, the transfer to the National Archives of the records of that Ministry;
 - c) give instructions with regard to the retention or destruction of the records of that Ministry.

Functions of
Director
in respect of
public records

(2) Before performing any function in terms of subsection (1) the Director shall consult the Secretary of the Ministry concerned and, in the event of any dispute or disagreement arising as to the performance of any such function, the matter shall be referred to the Ministry responsible for the administration of the Ministry concerned for decision and his decision shall be final.

(3) Where the Director gives any instructions in terms of subsection (1), it shall be the duty of the Ministry concerned to comply with such instructions.

Functions of
Director in
respect of
records of
local
authorities
and statutory
bodies

7. (1) The Director may request any local authority or statutory body for access to its premises for the purpose of
- a) inspecting and examining its records;
 - b) giving advice relating to the filing, maintenance and preservation of its records;
 - c) making recommendations with regard to the retention or destruction of its records.

(2) Where a local authority or statutory body declines to comply with a request made in terms of subsection (1), such local authority or statutory body shall advise the Director in writing of its reasons thereof.

(3) On receipt of any reasons from a local authority or statutory body in terms of subsection (2), the Director may make representations in the matter to the Minister responsible for or having authority in respect of , the local authority or statutory body concerned, who may take such action in the matter as he considers proper.

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES RECORDS AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME HELPS MINISTRIES, DEPARTMENTS, LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND PARASTATALS

- The records management programme controls public records by distinguishing between the few worthy of permanent preservation and the mass which sooner or later must be destroyed.
- The records are stored in Records Centres in Harare, Bulawayo, Gweru, Masvingo and Mutare
- The economical high-density storage system results in savings in office accommodation and floor space.
- A speedy and accurate file issue and reference service is provided.
- Professional records officers are available to advise you on any matters regarding the creation, storage, destruction or preservation of records.
- Government ministries, departments, branches and offices can use the service without charge.
- Statutory bodies and local government authorities are required by the National Archives Act 1986 to organize their records systematically and may, if they so desire, have their records stored for them on payment of an annual storage fee.
- The Harare Records Centre houses the Audio-Visual Unit which stores non-documentary records.

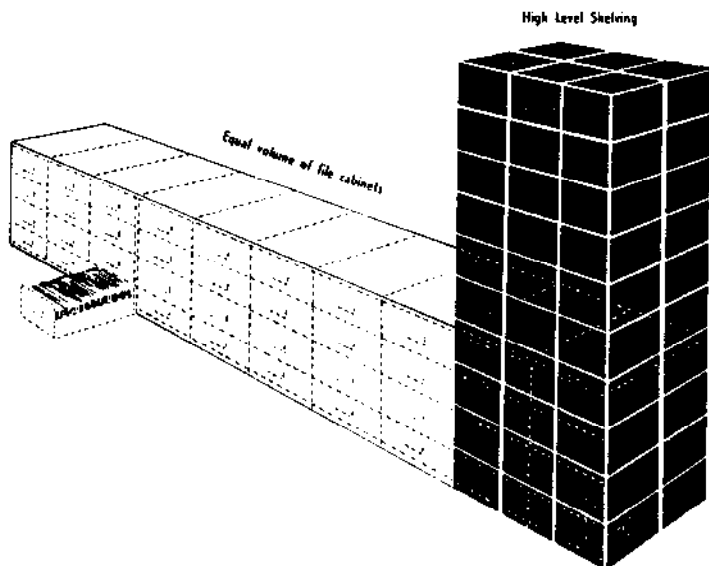


Records Centre Repository Unit: standard 1 cu ft records storage boxes preserved in high-density steel shelving.

RECORDS CENTRES SAVE MONEY

- **ACCOMMODATION**

The cost of storing records in office accommodation is many times greater than storage costs in high-density Records Centres.



- **EQUIPMENT**

The cost of storing records in high-density Records Centres is considerably less than storing them in office equipment.

Consider, for example, the relative retail cost of equipment:

Four-drawer steel filing cabinet	\$1929.00
High-density shelving for equal volume of records	— <u>1265.00</u>
Saving in equipment costs	\$ 664.00

- Bear these facts in mind before ordering additional filing cabinets or equipment. Check your present record holdings; perhaps a part, possibly a large part, of your papers could be transferred to a Records Centre, making the acquisition of additional equipment unnecessary.
- **SPACE**
Files transferred from offices enable expensive office accommodation to be used for more creative purposes. For example, three filing cabinets in an office, with the space to get at them, occupy as much floor area as a typist with her desk.

HOW RECORDS AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT WORKS IN THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

- As soon as the records are reasonably inactive, they should be listed by registry staff on RM 101 forms provided by Records Centres, packed in a standard box and transferred to the nearest Records Centre.
- At the Records Centre, a check is made of the deposit. Retention periods are allocated to the different classes of the records in accordance with existing standing instructions. The records are then shelved in economic high-density accommodation.
- The depositing ministry or department is supplied with a record of the transaction so that the exact location and retention period of every file deposited becomes known.
- The depositing ministry or department may withdraw files deposited in a Records Centre whenever they are required for reference.
- Records Centres do not deal with individuals. Departments are therefore discouraged from referring members of the public to us.
- All records transferred are regarded as strictly confidential to depositing departments and cannot be referred to by any other department without the *written authority* of the depositing department.
- The Records Centre is viewed as a logical extension of your registries in ministries and departments and exists in order to service semi-current records.

RECORD STORAGE BOXES

- The key to the procedure is the use of standard one cubic foot storage boxes; these are issued to offices by the Records Centres as part of the service. A register of issues is kept and offices are expected to account for boxes issued to them. Boxes should not be used for any other purpose than transferring records to the Records Centres.
- The box illustrated overleaf is for general use. Being collapsible it can be posted to outstations in packets of ten. It is suitable for the transmission of records by personal delivery or by rail or road motor services; if either of the latter two methods are used, however, the boxes must be secured with string. Full boxes can also be posted.
- Please pay strict attention to the following points:
 - Do NOT pack records too tightly; the boxes must not be bulging or distorted. Departments are discouraged from underpacking boxes whenever possible. Boxes have the same cross-section as a standard filing cabinet; whenever possible, files should be inserted in a vertical position. Records should be positioned with filing numbers uppermost, so as to facilitate retrieval.
 - Do NOT write on boxes. All writing *must* be confined to the green label which is for the use of the depositing Department.

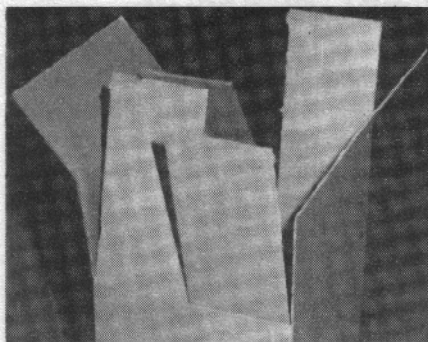
FOR USE OF DEPOSITING DEPARTMENT

Box No. 1

Deposit No. 1/94

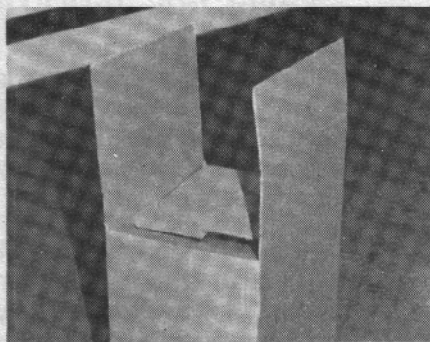
**No other writing should
appear on this box.**

HOW TO ASSEMBLE BOXES



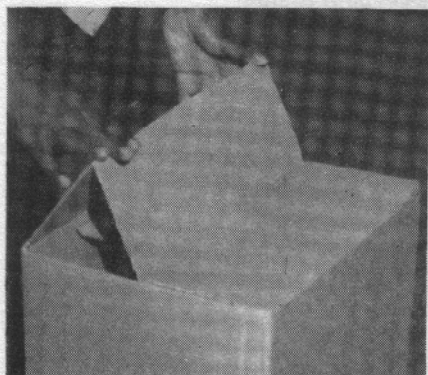
STEP 1

Open box out from the flat position



STEP 2

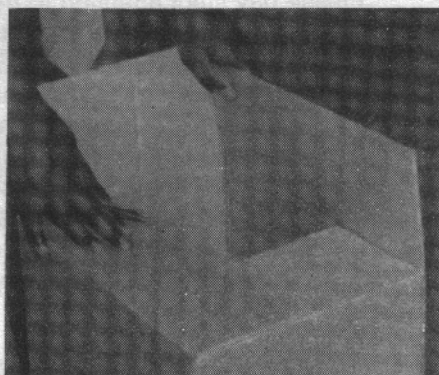
Fold the four narrow flaps across



STEP 3

Insert the two broad folded flaps through the groove thus formed

N. B.—Small flimsy papers should not be packed loosely into the box as there is the possibility of their slipping through the groove in the base



STEP 4

Turn the box the right way up. Bend the broad flaps downwards to form the floor of the box. These flaps are held in this flat position by the weight of the files packed in the box.

PROCEDURE FOR TRANSFERRING RECORDS TO A RECORDS CENTRE

- **DEFINITION OF RECORDS**

The term "records" means correspondence files, forms, reports, requisitions, vouchers, maps and any other written or graphic material containing information used in transacting the business of an office.

- **SELECTION OF RECORDS FOR TRANSFER**

Records should be transferred to a Records Centre as soon as the rate of reference to them has diminished to a point where it is only casual rather than regular. In the case of financial records it is not necessary to wait until audit has been completed as the records can be issued from the Records Centre back to the department for this purpose. Advice on the selection of records for transfer is readily available from Records Centre staff.

- **PACKING OF BOXES**

Records should be packed in boxes in numerical, chronological or alphabetical order, depending on the filing system of which they form part.

Where possible, the contents of a box should be confined to records of the same type.

Records which are too large to fit into a box, for example registers, should be tied into bundles, the size of a box and labelled.

Box files must not be sent; the papers should be removed, tied with string and labelled with the title of the file before packing.

The only writing permitted on a box must be confined to the green label; there is one on every box.

- **TRANSFER OF RECORDS**

The contents of each box should be briefly described on Form R.M. 101, Records Transmittal List, illustrated on the next page, with sufficient detail to identify items for future reference. Lists *must* be neatly typed.

Transmittal Lists must be made for each consignment of records, and consignments must be numbered from 1 onwards every year. The packing number in the first column is only temporary; the same number should be written on the green label on the box. *Nothing else should be written on the box.* Bundles should be similarly numbered on the wrapping.

Transmittal Lists are made out in triplicate by the registry staff. Two copies are sent with the consignment, while the third copy is retained temporarily in your office. At the Records Centre box and location numbers are allocated to the records received; this information is entered on the Transmittal Lists and the second copy is returned to the depositing ministry or department. On receipt of the second copy from the Records Centre, the temporary copy held by the registry must be destroyed, and the second copy must be safely filed in your archives file.

Three or four orderly transfers every year are far better than one large and often times haphazard transfer every 3 or 4 years.

Before transferring staff files, departments should consult PSC Circular no 110/3 dated 1 January 1985.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

R. M. 101

Page No.*.....1

Deposit No.*.....1/87

RECORD TRANSMITTAL LIST

Ministry/Department/Office **PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATOR – MARONDERA**

Box, bundle or volume No.*	Description of records*	covering dates		for Records Centre use		
		From	To	Destruction date	Location	Box No.
1	PROVINCIAL AUTHORITY MINUTES	12-5-79	9-11-83			
2	CIVIL CASE RECORDS 1-75		1983			
3	76-138	1983				
4	139-220	1983				
5	1-83	1984				
6	MARRIAGE REGISTRIES	1981	1985			
7	FIREARM CERTIFICATE					
A	A1-400	1981	1984			
8	CORRESPONDENCE:					
	PV MWACHETA WATER SUPPLY	1978	1982			
9	CASH VOUCHERS 1-235	1983	JAN			
10	RECEIPT BOOKS	1981	1983			
11	FARM CORRESPONDENCE FILES					
	L. J. BOTHA - J.D. THOMPSON	1980	1984			
12	STAFF FILES A -Z	1981	1985			

Records forwarded by:

Deposit received at Records Centre,
checked and processed by:

Name: F. CLAVER

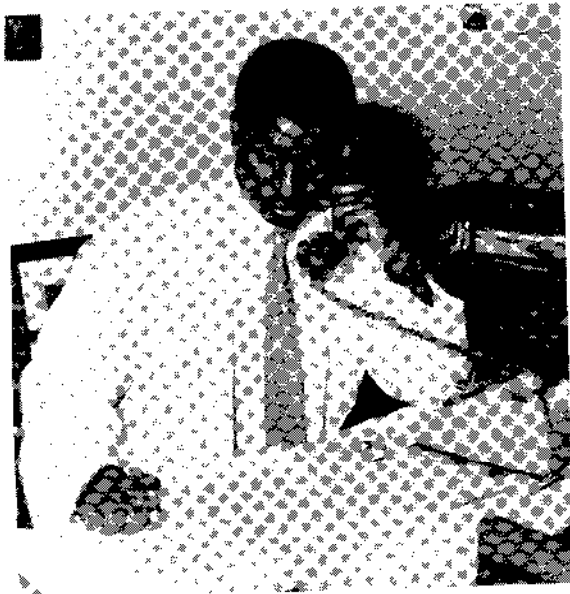
Name.....

Date: 11 Nov. 1993

Date.....

See notes on other slide.

USER DEPARTMENTS REFERENCE SERVICE



Records Centre, Harare
Telephone: 726926

Records Centre, Bulawayo
Telephone: 70310

Records Centre, Gweru
Telephone: 4694

Records Centre, Masvingo
Telephone: 64178/9

Records Centre Mutare
Telephone: 63815

- Requests for records may be made through the post, or by telephone. In both cases the item is sent to the depositing department by the quickest possible means.
- Regular deliveries of records are made in Harare, Bulawayo, Mutare, Masvingo and Gweru

DISPOSAL OF RECORDS

- Retention periods for all classes of records are determined by a Records Committee after consultation with depositing departments. These retention periods are then incorporated into Standing Instructions in terms of which appropriate action is taken by Records Centre staff on future consignments of the particular classes of records covered.
- Retention periods are periodically reviewed and updated in the light of changing circumstances.
- Many records accrue which are common to all departments, and these records are disposed of on the basis of common Standing Instructions. So far two main sets of these instructions have been drawn up—"Classes Common: Accounting" and "Classes Common: Miscellaneous"—copies are obtainable on request.
- Copies of Standing Instruction for the records of individual departments may be obtained upon request from any Records Centre
- Departments may themselves destroy records in accordance with Standing Instructions applicable to their records. However, in any case of doubt of the interpretation of a Standing Instruction advice should be sought from a Records Centre.
- If a department has no facilities for the destruction of records in terms of the Standing Instructions the records can be sent to a Records Centre where facilities are available. However, departments still have to list such records in detail and submit the list to the Records Centre before destruction.
- Departments should take note of the disposal date inserted in the Destruction column on the Transmittal List.
- A brief on the Zimbabwe Records Committee is on page 19.

R. M. 102

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

REQUEST FOR RECORDS

(to be completed in triplicate)

For Records
Centre Use
REQUEST NO.

1889/94

Department/Office... **PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

Date... **6/4/94**...

Address for delivery of goods... **PAX HOUSE, UNION AVENUE, 4TH Floor**.....

Requested by: N. MARERE	Anticipated date of return:	
Description of Records	RECORDS CENTRE NUMBER	
	Location	Box No.
..... 200/A/3/3 Vol 3	R 17 - 1 - 14 - 3R	261741
..... A/V/107 Vol 2	R 17 - 1 - 14 - 3F	2617445
..... C/F/36 Vol 1	R 17 - 2 - 8 - 6 R	262521
.....		

For Records Centre use

Telephone request received by | Records sent to Dept. by | Records issued at Archives | Date of reminder

E . SANGO

- When requesting a record, the location and box number of the material required must be cited (these numbers appear on the receipted copy of the Records Transmittal List).

**STANDING INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE DISPOSAL OF
ACCOUNTING RECORDS
CLASSES COMMON**

<u>Type of Record</u>	<u>Disposal</u>
Staff returns, monthly	Destroy 2 years from date thereof
Stock ledgers	Destroy 3 years from date thereof, subject to all audit requirements having been met
Stock-taking sheets	Destroy 3 years from date thereof, subject to all audit requirements having been met
Time sheets	Destroy after 2 years subject to audit requirements being met
Trial balances	Destroy 1 year from date thereof subject to audit requirements being met
Vouchers:	
Cash and journal supporting documents	Transfer to Records Centre 2 years from date thereof; to be destroyed after 5 years, subject to their having been audited (except those relating to Trust Funds, which are to be preserved permanently)
Workshop job sheets	Destroy after 2 years ,subject to all audit requirements having been met

STANDING INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE DISPOSAL OF RECORDS

MINISTRY OF HEALTH

<i>FILE REF</i>	<i>DESCRIPTION OF RECORDS</i>	<i>SUGGESTED DISPOSAL</i>
1/A/-	Mission files	Destroy after 5 years
F/3/2	"Laundries: Facilities:Extensions: Equipment Staffing"	" " "
F/6/	"Management: Hospital Advisory Committee"	Preserve
F/13/2	"Information Received About Hosp- ital and Laboratory Equipment".	Destroy after 2 years
F/24/3	"Health Buildings Planning Group: Agenda, Minutes and Relevant Correspondence".	Preserve
F/24/14	"Planning Committee: New Salisbury Central Hospital."	Preserve
F/30/1	"Central of Outstanding Hospital Debtors by the Directors of Medical Services"	Destroyed after 6 yrs
F/30/2	"Requests to Write Off Hospital Fees Incurred by Military and Old Age Pensioners".	Destroy after 6 years
F/30/7	"Hospital Debtors: Mining Land- owners"	Destroy after 6 years
F/47/A-Z	"Ministry of Health Debtors"	Destroy after 6 years
F/H/-	"Building and Grounds:- Hospital"	Destroy after 5 years

THE ZIMBABWE RECORDS COMMITTEE

- The Records Committee was established in terms of section 8(1) of the National Archives of Zimbabwe Act, 1986.
- The functions of the Committee, among others, shall be to make recommendations to the Director as regards the retention or destruction of records.
- The Committee meets from time to time to deliberate on departmental disposal authorities (Standing Instructions and Schedules). When passed, these are maintained by Records Offices who use them to determine retention periods for particular record classes.

OTHER FUNCTIONS OF THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

- The National Archives is the storehouse of the Nation's history.
- The following archives are preserved: central, federal and local governments; certain statutory bodies; historical manuscripts and archives of individual, corporate bodies, churches and missions.
- The National Library is an integral part of the National Archives. The collection include—books, pamphlets, periodicals, maps, films, records, tapes and photographs.
- A display gallery illustrates the history of the country from earliest times up to the present.
- Oral history programmes record personal and traditional aspects of history.
- The National Archives is responsible for editing and publishing historical material and administer two privately subscribed Trust Funds for this purpose.
- A photographic service with extensive document and pictorial copying facilities is available for Government departments and for members of the public.
- The document restoration section deals with the whole range of documentary and printed material.
- A reading room, with comprehensive finding aids (indexes, catalogues, guides, reference books, etc.) and a quick and efficient retrieval service, is provided for researchers.
- The Audio-Visual Unit stores such non-documentary records as films, phono-discs, tapes etc and offers copying services for a fee.