Government of South Australia

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State Records
of South Australia

GDS21 Certification Process

What is GDS21 Certification?

General Disposal Schedule 21 (GDS21) has been developed to provide state and local government agencies with the means to dispose of hardcopy source records, after they have been rendered into digital format by the process of scanning and capturing them into an electronic document and records management system (EDRMS) or a line of business system.

GDS21 applies to official records digitised in the manner outlined above. It does not apply to records that were 'born digital'.

For an agency to scan and then dispose of source records it must first be GDS21 certified. GDS21 certification is the process an agency undertakes to gain approval for the capture and storage of digitised records and subsequent disposal of the temporary source records. Hardcopy source records with a permanent retention value are to be retained permanently as are any digitised versions.

Certification under GDS21 can be gained for a compliant EDRMS, a compliant business system, or for a non-compliant EDRMS or business system. A compliant system is one that has been evaluated and tested against the South Australian suite of standards to ensure that the records are inviolate, the capture of metadata is adequate and the risks associated with system obsolescence are mitigated.

A non-compliant system is one that has either not been evaluated and tested as described above, or has been tested but found to be non-compliant.

When does an agency seek GDS21 Certification?

An agency may seek GDS21 certification to enable:

- implementation of digitisation as a routine, integrated process in daily records management operations (eg digitisation of all incoming/outgoing hardcopy correspondence), and/or
- initiation of a digitisation project to convert a defined set of hardcopy records into electronic form

Regardless of whether an agency is seeking GDS21 certification for a digitisation project or for ongoing daily operations, the following five steps are required to be completed.

What are the benefits of GDS21 Certification?

Developing an agency digitisation policy and processes for the digitisation and disposal of source records provides opportunities to:

- re-engineer business processes, improve quality, efficiencies and promote consistency
- reduce storage, management and access costs
- improve customer service, work procedures and access through speedier retrieval of digital records rather than original paper records, particularly for time-critical matters

- increase the capacity for knowledge transfer and the reuse of information, enabling staff to be more efficient with their time
- improve work efficiency, as digitised records can be distributed across networks and viewed concurrently, copied, disseminated to, accessed and used by multiple stakeholders quickly and easily
- minimise risks in regard to longer-term temporary or permanent value records being lost or destroyed
- enable faster, authorised disposal of hardcopy source records and capture of their digitised counterparts into EDRMS or business systems.

How does an agency become GDS21 certified?

1. Read the relevant standards and other information

Agencies should read the following documents which provide a basis for planning the implementation of a successful digitisation program, including the scanning process and management and disposal of source records and digitised records.

Digitisation of Official Records and Management of Source Records Guideline: deals with the digitisation of paper source documents and the subsequent management and disposal of these and their digitised counterparts. It addresses the application of digitisation technologies when integrated with either an EDRMS or business system.

Technical Requirements for the Scanning of Official Records: provides information regarding format and resolution requirements for scanned documents.

General Disposal Schedule 21: provides agencies with the means to dispose of source documents and their digitised counterparts after the source documents have been rendered into digital format by the process of scanning and capturing them into either an electronic document and records management system (EDRMS) or a business system with adequate recordkeeping functionality.

2. Test and evaluate the EDRMS / business system for compliance

Agencies should carry out testing and evaluation to ensure that the EDRMS or business system meets the five key principles of Risk Management, Reporting, Metadata, Accessibility and System Integrity. This will ensure:

- the systems capture official records to a minimum and consistent standard
- records can be efficiently transferred/migrated between compliant systems
- facilitation of the effective and efficient transfer of permanently sentenced electronically generated records to an State Records SA (SRSA) digital archive (yet to be established).

An EDRMS should be tested and evaluated for compliance using the

- *Document and Records Management Systems Standard*
- *South Australian Recordkeeping Metadata Standard (SARKMS)*
- *EDRMS Design Standard*
- *EDRMS Functional Specification Standard*

A business system should be tested and evaluated for compliance using the

- *Management of Official Records within a Business System Standard*

- *Functional Specification for Records in a Business System Standard*

- *South Australian Recordkeeping Metadata Standard (SARKMS).*

All of these documents are available from the SRSA website www.archives.sa.gov.au.

This process may have been undertaken during implementation or upgrading of the system. Where this is the case, the process does not need to be repeated if the system conditions, settings and operations have remained the same, documentation of the testing has been retained, and the senior agency officer (eg CEO, CIO) who will be certifying compliance is satisfied that all stated requirements are met.

3. Document metadata mapping

As part of certification, the agency is required to state that their system captures and maintains the mandatory recordkeeping metadata elements identified in the *South Australian Recordkeeping Metadata Standard* (SARKMS).

The agency should provide to State Records a document which maps metadata elements from SARKMS to the equivalent table/field within the EDRMS or business system. The mapping document should also include reference to mandatory metadata from the Victorian Electronic Recordkeeping Standard (VERS).

The *Metadata Mapping* information sheet, available from the SRSA website, provides a template for and examples of metadata mapping.

The *EDRMS Design Standard* contains Metadata Profiles and a Metadata Dictionary which are useful references when matching equivalent SARKMS and VERS metadata elements to EDRMS tables/fields. The Metadata Dictionary identifies VERS metadata that is to be captured within a system, but which may not have an equivalent in SARKMS.

4. Develop and implement a policy

The agency is required to develop and implement a policy on the digitisation and disposal of temporary source records. The policy needs to:

- outline the business requirements regarding retention and disposal of temporary source documents,

- detail the system's capability for managing the digitised records as the official corporate record,

- provide detailed information on the types of records being digitised,

- specify timeframes for the retention and disposal of the source records.

The identification of record types may look something like this:

Source document record class	GDS/RDS name or number	GDS/RDS item no.	GDS/RDS retention period	Retention of source record after digitisation
Financial management - Accounting	GDS15	5.2.1 5.2.2 5.2.5 5.2.7 5.2.9	5 years or less	6 months
Financial management - Accounting	GDS15	5.2.3 5.2.4 5.2.8	7 years or less	12 months
Compensation - Insurance – workers compensation	GDS15	2.57.1 2.57.2	30 years after policy expires	5 years
Compensation – Insurance – loss or damage to property	GDS15	2.57.3	5 years after policy expires	12 months
Personnel – Authorisation – delegations to CEs and other officers in statutory positions	GDS15	12.14.1	Permanent	Permanent

When developing a policy for the retention and disposal of source records, the agency should distinguish between classes of records, take in to account the value of the records and assess risks. For example, what procedures are in place to ensure that the digitised records are authentic, complete and accessible?

An agency should obtain legal advice prior to developing their policy to ensure the destruction of specific source record types is not detrimental to the interests of the agency or its clients.

When new classes of records are being considered for the digitisation process, a new or updated policy must be provided to State Records.

Agencies need to maintain awareness of changes to GDS15 and RDS. Policies should be reviewed when disposal schedules are updated, as retention periods can change and this will affect the retention/disposal of source records.

When designing business processes for digitisation, consider the SRSA recordkeeping advice *Day Batching of Official Records* and *Management of Hybrid Files*.

5. Submit a certificate

A certificate must be submitted to the Manager, Government Recordkeeping, State Records, giving an undertaking by a senior agency officer (eg CEO, CIO) that the EDRMS or business system complies with the stated requirements.

These certificates can be found as Attachments 1-3 of GDS21.

Submission of the metadata mapping document, policy and certificate to State Records is likely to be undertaken in stages and involve consultation with State Records staff.

Notification of GDS21 Certification

The Manager, Government Recordkeeping will notify the agency of successful GDS21 Certification.

Disposal of records

Digitised records that are the official records may only be disposed of in accordance with a current disposal schedule applicable to official records. That is, sentenced as temporary under a current disposal schedule, after the specified retention period, and after submitting an Intention to Destroy Records Report to SRSA. Agencies must keep a record listing all records destroyed noting the relevant disposal authority

GDS21 authorises disposal of only those classes of temporary source records identified in the agency's published policy and only after they have been retained for the time designated in that policy. Agencies need to retain their own lists of temporary source records that have been destroyed.

If an agency wishes to dispose of temporary source records that are not identified in the policy, but are covered by a disposal schedule, the policy should be amended and forwarded to SRSA.

Source records that are not included in a current disposal schedule are to be retained pending approval of a disposal schedule.

Further reading

General Disposal Schedule 21 for management and disposal of source documents and digitised versions after digitisation, SRSA

Digitisation of Official Records and Management of Source Documents Guideline, SRSA

Victorian Electronic Recordkeeping Standard (VERS) 99/007 Public Records Office of Victoria, http://prov.vic.gov.au/government/vers/standard-2

Contracting and Official Records Standard and Guideline, SRSA

Day Batching of Official Records Recordkeeping Information Sheet, SRSA

Management of Hybrid Files Recordkeeping Information Sheet, SRSA

Version control

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