

GOVERNMENT RECORDS SERVICE GUIDE

PRIMER FOR INFORMATION SCHEDULE REVIEWERS

Who Should Read this Guide?

Anybody who is reviewing a draft information schedule to provide feedback before it is approved and implemented. This includes program area experts and authorities, legal counsel, members of the Information Management Advisory Committee, and members of the public participating in the public consultation process.

Information Schedule Basics

The BC Government uses information schedules to classify and schedule all types of information (records) relating to a government body's administrative and operational functions. When an information schedule for a particular program or function is developed or amended, key people must review it to ensure that it describes functions and information accurately, and sets timetables that meet operational/administrative, legal, fiscal, and accountability requirements. That's where you come in.

Information Schedules: Why Do We Need Them?

Information schedules ensure that government information is accessible and kept as long as needed, and that information whose value has expired is destroyed in a timely, secure manner. They serve as **timetables** governing the life cycle of information, and also as **classification** tools that place the information in the context of related records and systems.

Government information includes records and data stored in a variety of places, such as:

- LANs / fileshares
- Outlook
- EDRMS TRIM
- databases
- spreadsheets
- file banks

Approval Process for Information Schedules

The *Information Management Act* requires schedules to be APPROVED before the information they cover can be destroyed or sent to archives. How do we achieve this?



Want to know more about the CRO, GRS, GCPE, and IMAC? See last page of this guide.

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Why Do You Need to Review This Information Schedule?

You have valuable expertise and your feedback is needed. Each schedule needs to be endorsed by relevant subject matter experts, legal counsel, and executive. Members of the public are also encouraged to share their perspectives and expertise during the public consultation process.

Who Can Complete the Legal Counsel Review?

Information schedules usually undergo a legal review before they are submitted to IMAC. Legal review is conducted by a Legal Services solicitor (for ministries) or by in-house counsel (for the broader public sector).

How Do You Read an Information Schedule?

There are 4 types of schedules (see figure below). All schedules have these basic parts:

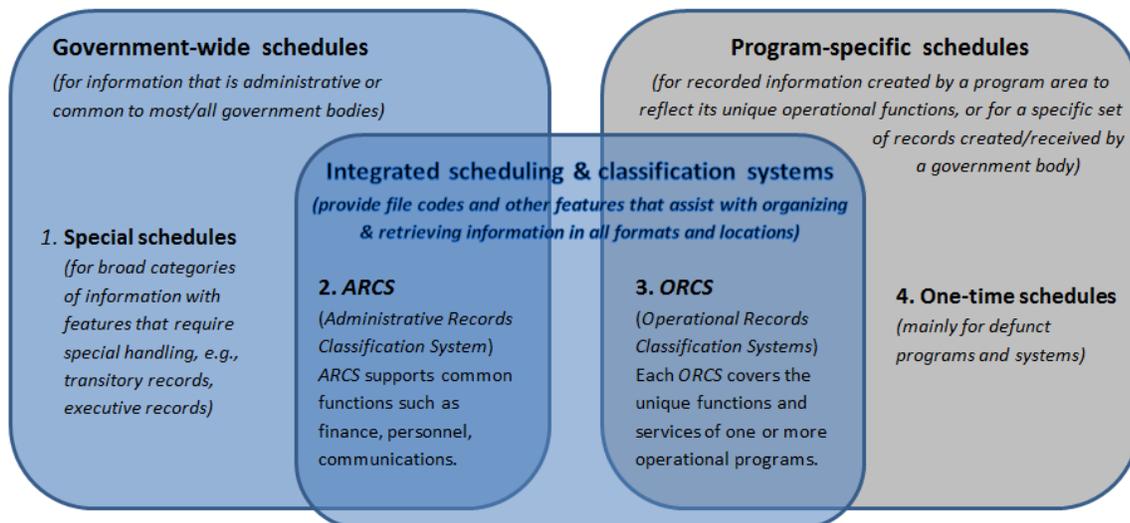
- **Primaries and Secondaries:** The core sections of the schedule are organized according to **primary** and **secondary** numbers and titles, with explanatory notes describing arrangement, file contents, file closure triggers, **archival appraisal** rationales, and other relevant information.
- **Retention Schedules:** The prescribed timetables governing the **life cycle** of a file from creation to final disposition, displayed in columns on the right-hand side of all primary pages, using codes that are outlined in the Key (next page).



Many schedules also have these parts:

- **Executive Summary:** A high-level overview of the entire information schedule, focussed on the records with long-term value (i.e., to be retained for a long period or transferred to the **government archives**). This section should help you pinpoint record categories of interest.
- **Systems Section:** A descriptive listing of the electronic systems containing data covered by the schedule, with links to relevant secondaries.

THE 4 TYPES OF INFORMATION SCHEDULES



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Key to Information Schedule Codes and Acronyms

The following codes and acronyms are used throughout each information schedule:

Information schedule titles: **ARCS** = *Administrative Records Classification System*
 ORCS = *Operational Records Classification System*

Office information: **OPR** = Office of Primary Responsibility

Records life cycle: **A** = Active
 SA = Semi-active
 FD = Final Disposition

Active and semi-active period codes: **CY** = Calendar Year
 FY = Fiscal Year
 NA = Not Applicable
 SO = Superseded or Obsolete
 w = week
 m = month
 y = year

Final disposition categories: **DE** = Destruction
 FR = Full Retention
 SR = Selective Retention
 NA = Not Applicable
 OD = Other Disposition

Special flags: **FOI** = Freedom of Information / Protection of Privacy
 PIB = Personal Information Bank
 VR = Vital Records

For further explanation of terms, see the [ARCS and ORCS User Guide](#).

Additional Information

Contact your [Records Officer](#) or check out the Records Management website.



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RM Agencies, Officials, and Terms relevant to this guide

Key terms and agencies mentioned in this guide are briefly described here. See the [RIM Glossary](#) for full definitions, and explore the [RM Website](#) for more records management guidance.

AGENCIES AND OFFICIALS

CRO	The Chief Records Officer is established under the <i>Information Management Act</i> to be responsible for oversight and central direction for information management in the BC Government. This role has been assigned to the Associate Deputy Minister of Finance.
GRS	Government Records Service is the central agency in the BC Government responsible for records management, under the authority of the CRO. GRS reports to the CRO.
GCPE	Government Communications and Public Engagement is the government organization responsible for citizen engagement. As such, it partners with GRS to conduct public consultations for proposed information schedules, via the GovTogetherBC website.
IMAC	The Information Management Advisory Committee is a committee established under the <i>Information Management Act</i> to advise the CRO on proposed information schedules. IMAC provides a senior level perspective on accountabilities and appropriate disposition. This committee consists of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• CIRMO Assistant Deputy Minister (chair)• Comptroller General• Senior counsel, Legal Services Branch• Royal BC Museum Chief Executive Officer/delegate• Risk Management Branch Executive Director• GRS Executive Director• Any other persons appointed by the Minister of Finance

TERMS

Archival Appraisal	A GRS archivist determines the recommended final disposition of records during schedule development, identifying those with permanent value to government and society, so the government archives can preserve and provide access to them.
Primary	The basic building block of information schedules. Each primary relates to a function or activity, and has a number and a descriptive title under which specific records are classified and arranged.
Secondary	The title and number assigned to a specific category of records (i.e., a file series or dataset). Several related secondaries may be grouped within one primary. The combination of a secondary code, primary code, and schedule number or acronym provides a unique identifier (e.g., ARCS 195-45).