

GOVERNMENT RECORDS SERVICE GUIDE

HOW TO USE THE REDUNDANT SOURCE RECORDS SCHEDULE



This guide will help government employees apply the [Redundant Source Records Schedule](#) (RSRS). This schedule covers original source records that have been replaced by exact copies. Once these copies have been verified against the original source records for quality control purposes (i.e., to make sure there is no loss of functionality, completeness, or usability), the copies become the [official file copies](#). In most cases, the original source records are now eligible for immediate destruction. However, the original source records may still need to be retained if they are scheduled for archival preservation (see category 3 below), or are scheduled to be retained for a specified period after being copied.

REDUNDANT SOURCE RECORD TYPES / CATEGORIES:

1. Electronic communications that are copied for ongoing retention/filing (non-transitory)
2. Records in unreadable formats (i.e., temporarily encrypted for secure transmission)
3. Transformed/converted source records (for access, storage, or preservation purposes)

Also see the [RSRS Quick Reference Guide on the back page!](#)

1

Electronic Communications (Non-Transitory)

These are any form of electronic communication for which a copy has been made and filed, making the source record redundant.

EXAMPLES:

- Emails
- Instant messages
- Tweets
- Text messages

DESTROY THEM:

When you've confirmed that...

1. The official file copies, including attachments, have been made, classified and saved into the office recordkeeping system.
2. The relevant records schedule (*ARCS/ORCS*) does not specify that source records must be kept to meet business, legal, audit, or archival (SR or FR) requirements.

For more information on managing email and transitory records, check out the [RM Guides](#) section of the Records Management website.

2

Records in Unreadable Formats

These are source records that are temporarily encrypted (i.e., transformed into an unreadable format) for secure transmission, or to restrict unauthorized access. Once sent or received, they are decrypted by a recipient with proper authorization, and the encrypted version is no longer necessary. For further information, see the Information Security Branch [Policy Summary on Encryption](#).

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EXAMPLES of Encrypted Records:

In accordance with the government-wide [Information Security Policy](#), any portable devices containing government information or records will be encrypted. **This will include messages or documents:**

- Sent or received by government laptops, Blackberries, or tablets
- Stored on portable media (e.g., thumb drives)
- Encrypted for other security purposes

DESTROY THEM:

When you've confirmed that...

1. They've been properly decrypted and verified.
2. The decrypted records have been saved, and filed in the office recordkeeping system.
3. The relevant schedule does not specify that the encrypted source records must be kept to meet business, legal, audit, or archival (SR or FR) requirements.

3

Transformed/Converted Source Records

These are records that have been moved to a new system environment and records converted to a new format/medium for access, storage, and preservation.

EXAMPLES of Converted Records:

- Imaging projects (e.g., scanning documents to create electronic versions)
- System or format conversions and upgrades
- Data that is routinely transferred (e.g., in nightly batches) from one system to another system designated for storing and/or processing the data

See the following section for key points to consider when applying this schedule to records conversion projects.

DESTROY THEM:

When you've confirmed that...

1. Official file copies have been made and verified against the originals, in accordance with applicable best practices, standards, and project specifications AND
2. The official file copies have been classified and saved into the office recordkeeping system AND
3. The relevant records schedule does not specify that the source records must be kept to meet business, legal, audit, or archival (SR or FR) requirements AND
4. Your Records Officer has signed the records destruction authorization form (using the [ARS653 form](#) or, for broader public sector, the ARS518).

GET THE SIGN-OFF BEFORE PROCEEDING: With transformed/converted source records, your Records Officer will have to sign and file a records destruction authorization before you can proceed. This authorization doesn't have to be completed for every individual record, however – it can relate EITHER to the project, or the ongoing business process.

REPRODUCTION – THE IMPORTANCE OF BEST PRACTICE

Whenever a record is copied, converted, migrated, or decrypted to supersede a source record, quality control checks and copy verification are essential. Follow all applicable best practices to ensure that the new version maintains the **accuracy, authenticity, and usability** of the original.



Always verify the reproduction before proceeding!



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APPLYING THE SCHEDULE – A STEP-BY-STEP CHECKLIST

Use the following questions to help you and your business team address all relevant policy and records scheduling requirements.

DO NOT destroy the originals if they are scheduled to be kept or if you are uncertain whether a schedule applies. Contact your supervisor or your [Records Officer](#) if you require further clarification before proceeding.

a) Are these records covered by an approved records schedule?

The appropriate schedule may be the [Administrative Records Classification System](#) (ARCS), one of the government-wide [special schedules](#), or an [Operational Records Classification System](#) (ORCS) or ongoing records schedule.

For help determining which schedule covers your records, check with your local records management contact or supervisor.

IF NOT: If you've checked all relevant schedules and have been unable to determine that the records are covered, speak to your records management contact, or contact your Records Officer for assistance.

b) Does the schedule already document this conversion process?

Some ORCS contain explicit provisions for redundant source records. For example, in certain cases, source records need to be kept in their original format to meet the government's business, legal, audit, or archival requirements. You will need to comply with these provisions. Look for relevant classifications in the ORCS (primaries and secondaries), and review the notes that appear under them.

IF IT DOES: If the conversion process *is* already documented, the notes in the relevant schedule should provide you with further instructions about the conversion process. Contact your records management contact or your Records Officer if you require further clarification; **DO NOT** destroy the originals until you are sure that the schedule permits this.

EXAMPLES THAT DOCUMENT CONVERSION:

- **BIRTH REGISTRATIONS** - Under the *Vital Statistics ORCS*, birth registrations are regularly microfilmed, and both the microfilms and the originals are fully retained (FR) because "these records are so important for [establishing citizens' rights] that both paper originals and microfilm versions of the records will be retained". See: *Vital Statistical Services ORCS* (Schedule 163600): secondary 24070-30.
- **ARCHAEOLOGICAL PERMIT REPORTS** - The *Archaeology ORCS* provides a note directing staff who are preparing reports for microfilming to set aside the records that are unsuitable for microfilming (typically photographs and maps). The microfilmed original records are destroyed, but those not filmed are boxed for full retention (FR). See: *Archaeology ORCS* (Schedule 170415): secondary 11150-25.
- **PHARMACARE FORMS**: Under the *Pharmacare Services ORCS* (approved prior to the *RSR Schedule*), the scanning process for Fair PharmaCare forms is documented and there is no requirement for originals to be kept. The ORCS also details how to handle pre-scanning project documents plus switching from a microfilm program to a scanning program. See: *Pharmacare Services ORCS* (Schedule 123389): primary 70315.

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c) Are any of the source records scheduled for full or selective retention?

If this is the case, and the schedule makes no mention of the conversion/reproduction process, a GRS archivist will need to review the appraisal statement and determine whether the source records must be retained for transfer to the government archives.

For all records with FR/SR final disposition scheduling, the source records **cannot be destroyed without the written endorsement of a GRS archivist**. Contact your Records Officer to arrange this.

IF NOT: If the records have a DE (destroy) final disposition, and all other criteria have been satisfied, then the source records may be destroyed in accordance with government's disposition standards.

EXAMPLE OF FR SOURCE RECORDS:

MINERAL LAND TAX FOLIO FILES – All maps, reports, and correspondence related to mineral land tax are scheduled for full retention “because they document the history of mineral land ownership and usage in the province since 1974.” If these files are ever scanned, a government archivist will need to provide written endorsement that the scanned versions meet the requirements for transfer to the archives before the originals can be destroyed. See: *Mineral, Oil, and Gas Revenue ORCS* (Schedule 159500): secondary 20210-30.

d) Will the new records be created in accordance with standards?

Your project team is responsible for ensuring that the reproduced documents are accurate, authentic and usable if needed for ongoing management purposes (e.g., financial accountability), as court evidence, or for any other special reason. Depending on the value of the records and the scale of the project, you may need to consult your legal advisor or financial officer. To ensure a project is both cost-effective and compliant with quality control standards, consider using the services of [BC Mail Plus](#).

The standard for reproduced documents is the *Microfilm and Electronic Images as Documentary Evidence* (National Standard of Canada, CAN/CGSB-72.11-93). See also RIM Policy 5-10-02 [Microfilm and Electronic Images as Documentary Evidence](#).

Do not destroy the originals until you're sure that the copies meet your business needs!

SOURCE RECORDS: DESTROY OR RETAIN?

<p> Projects and processes for which source records CAN be destroyed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Migrating data to upgraded hardware/software that provides the same function and values as the predecessor/legacy system. 2. Converting/normalizing source records to a standardized format suitable for storage/preservation (e.g., archival format). 3. Copying information to a storage media suitable for longterm preservation. 4. Scanning paper files and destroying the originals after the imaged versions have been verified for quality and are managed in an electronic system. 	<p> Source records that CANNOT be destroyed under this schedule:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Original records have been appraised for full retention, and an archivist has determined that under the approved schedule, the source records must be transferred to government archives. 6. Source records have been explicitly scheduled in the relevant ORCS, and must be retained for a specified period (e.g., 2 years) before they can be destroyed.
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QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE FOR THE RSRS

WHAT	DEFINITION	EXAMPLES	DESTROY THEM IF:
1 Electronic Communications (non-transitory) <i>See section 1 for more examples</i>	Any form of electronic communications that have been copied and made redundant.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Emails• Instant messages• Tweets• Text messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Official file copies have been made and verified against the originals• Official file copies have been filed and saved into the office recordkeeping system• Source records are not specified as FR or SR in the relevant schedule, or have a special note indicating their retention
2 Records in unreadable formats <i>See section 2 for more examples</i>	Source records that are temporarily encrypted for secure transmission and other purposes.	Documents, records, or files that are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sent or received by government laptops, Blackberries, or tablets• Stored on portable media such as thumb drives• Encrypted for other security purposes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Records have been properly decrypted and verified• Official file copies have been filed and saved into the office recordkeeping system• Source records are not scheduled as FR or SR, and do not have a special note requiring their retention
3 Transformed / converted source records <i>See section 3 for more examples</i>	Records that are moved to a new system environment and records converted to a new format / medium for access, storage, and preservation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Imaging projects (e.g., scanning documents to create electronic versions)• System or format conversions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Official file copies have been made and verified against the originals in accordance with best practices, standards, and project specifications• Official file copies have been classified and saved into the office recordkeeping system• Source records are not specified as FR or SR in the relevant schedule, and are not needed to satisfy ministry / agency accountability requirements• Your Records Officer has signed the records destruction authorization form

Additional Information

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