

RECORDED INFORMATION MANAGEMENT MANUAL

Government Records Service	New RIM Number: RIM 201
Province of British Columbia	Approval Date: 2015/05/06
Policy: RECORDS SCHEDULE DEVELOPMENT, APPROVAL AND AMENDMENT Specifications: RIM 201A <i>Specifications for the Records Schedule Approval Process</i> RIM 201B <i>Specifications for Administrative Amendment of Records Schedules</i>	
AUTHORITY	
From <i>Core Policy and Procedures Manual, 12.3.3 Part III: Managing Information:</i> General: Government must appropriately provide access to, manage, preserve and dispose of its records in compliance with the <i>Document Disposal Act</i> , the <i>Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act</i> , and other relevant legislation, policies and standards, in order to <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ensure government accountability;• provide evidence of its activities and organizational structure;• document its responsibilities, rights and entitlements; and• preserve records of enduring value. Records deemed to have enduring value will be preserved in the government archives. Government records are eligible for final disposition when their scheduled active and semi-active retention periods have expired. The Government of British Columbia standards for the classification and scheduling of its records are documented in the Administrative Records Classification System (ARCS), the Operational Records Classification Systems (ORCS), ongoing records schedules and other approved records schedules. Policy: (b) 2. Ministries must develop records classification systems for their operational records (ORCS).	
Security Classification: PUBLIC	

1. SCOPE

This policy establishes the basic requirements for developing, approving, and amending records retention and disposition schedules (**records schedules**), and for linking records to their business context via **integrated records classification and scheduling systems**.

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1.1 Authority

- [Document Disposal Act](#) (RSBC 1996, c. 99)
- [Core Policy and Procedures Manual \(CPPM\), c.12](#)

1.2 Applicability

Ministries, agencies, boards, commissions, and Crown corporations covered by the *Document Disposal Act*.

2. POLICY

As stipulated by the *Document Disposal Act (DDA)*, **government records** must be disposed of according to approved records schedules. These schedules prescribe timetables that govern the records **life cycle** for the purposes of:

- Ensuring that records are retained as long as required for business purposes,
- Ensuring that records with permanent value are identified and protected, and
- Ensuring that other records are routinely destroyed when no longer needed.

The *Act* prescribes approval processes that must be completed before records can be **destroyed**, transferred to the **legal custody** of the government archives, or transferred outside of government (**alienation**).

A **classification** component is required in most records schedules for the purposes of:

- Enabling filing/categorization and retrieval of records in an office **recordkeeping system**,
- Linking records to one another and their business context, and
- Reflecting the functions, activities and purposes they serve, as well as their value to the **creating agency**.

2.1 Principles for Developing Records Schedules

When records are scheduled, the following principles apply:

Principle I Government records must be scheduled. All records created and received in the course of business by offices subject to the *Document Disposal Act* need to be covered by approved records schedules.

Principle II Records schedule development must be based on an evaluation of records and recordkeeping needs, i.e., records appraisal. Record schedules are developed based on an analysis of business activities and work processes to determine the nature of the records, and how long they need to be kept. Records appraisal requires:

- Knowledge of the existing records and recordkeeping context,

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- Knowledge of business, legal, and technical requirements,
- Risk assessment,
- Consultation with appropriate representatives and stakeholders, and
- Documentation of sources, analysis, and records appraisal decisions.

Principle III Records schedules must identify records with permanent value that warrant retention in the government archives. This assessment is known as **archival appraisal** and must be conducted by a Government Records Service (GRS) archivist.

Principle IV Records schedules must comply with standards. The content and structure of the records schedule must comply with applicable standards established in the *Standard ORCS Kit* manual maintained by GRS. The essential components of a records schedule are:

- Identification numbers,
- Description of records and their functions, as well as relevant work processes where appropriate,
- Retention timetables,
- Trigger events for file closure, and
- Disposition actions.

Principle V The authenticity and usability of records depends upon metadata that links them to their business context and functions. Typically, records schedules provide this context via integrated records classification and scheduling systems. Classification metadata “tags” enable offices to:

- Organize records by business function within the office recordkeeping system, for purposes of access and integrity, and
- Retain and dispose of records accurately and efficiently.

Principle VI Records schedules must be maintained, amended, and replaced as needed to reflect current records. Best practice is for each ministry/agency to regularly review its **operational records** (assisted as required by GRS) to identify any that require new or amended records schedules. See section 2.4 for guidance on amending records schedules.

GRS is responsible for maintaining *Administrative Records Classification System (ARCS)* and other government-wide schedules by regularly reviewing relevant recordkeeping requirements. In addition, GRS may also initiate the development or amendment of other records schedules (e.g., when required by changes to records appraisal).

2.2 Types of Records Schedules

The BC Government creates and uses two categories of records schedules.

2.2.1. Integrated records classification and scheduling systems facilitate retrieval and filing of key records in government recordkeeping systems. These are:

- a) **ARCS**, for **administrative** and **common records**; and
- b) *Operational Records Classification Systems (ORCS)*, for the full range of **operational records** relating to one program or functional area.

2.2.2. Records schedules with little/no classification component include:

- a) program-specific **ongoing records schedules** (ORS), for one or a few categories of records relating to one specific function;
- b) government-wide **special schedules**, for broad categories of records which may apply to all ministries and agencies; and
- c) **one-time records schedules**, for a specific set of records not covered by any ongoing schedule.

2.3 Approving Records Schedules

Each records schedule needs to be developed, reviewed, and endorsed to ensure it is **accurate** and **usable**, and meets the requirements of the *Document Disposal Act* and GRS standards. The basic steps for this are outlined in *RIM 201A Specifications for the Records Schedule Approval Process*.

Records schedules require endorsement from the following entities and persons before they can receive legislative approval:

- a) **Ministry/agency staff** with responsibility for the records, including:
 - Review by subject matter experts in the relevant program areas, and
 - Endorsement by the Deputy Minister/agency head or delegate.
- b) The relevant **Records Officer** (RO), either as a member of GRS staff (for ministry ROs) or as a member of the staff of a broader public sector (BPS) agency.¹
- c) **GRS staff** assigned responsibility for records schedule development and/or review.
- d) **Legal counsel** review is recommended to provide advice about possible legal risks associated with the assigned retention periods for the records. This review is intended to protect the records' **legal value** and ensure they are retained as long as needed to protect government against significant legal

¹ RO endorsement is essential because the RO is the senior records management expert for a ministry or agency, and will take a lead role in implementing the records schedule once it is approved.

risks, while also meeting business requirements. For this review, ministries use Legal Services Branch; BPS agencies employ their own lawyers.

- e) [Public Documents Committee](#) (PDC), a committee established under the *Document Disposal Act* to review and endorse records schedules. It includes representatives from the Royal BC Museum and Ministry of Justice Legal Services Branch, as well as the Comptroller General. Administrative services are provided by a member of GRS staff who serves as PDC Secretary.
- f) **For most records schedules**, the next reviewer is [Select Standing Committee on Public Accounts](#) (a legislative committee generally referred to as the Public Accounts Committee [PAC]). The PAC reviews schedules and recommends approval to the **Legislative Assembly**, which grants approval by resolution.

For schedules that cover only records that are over seven years old,² the next reviewer is, instead, **Executive Council** (i.e., Cabinet). Any schedules sent to Executive Council may be approved via an Order-in-Council.

Once the Legislative Assembly or Executive Council has approved a records schedule, the ministry/agency is authorized to apply its retention periods and **final disposition** to relevant records.

2.4 Amending Records Schedules

Records schedules should be amended to reflect any changes in records and recordkeeping, due to a variety of causes (e.g., new or amended legislation, ministry/agency reorganization, digitization projects, refinement of archival appraisal criteria). Amendments must meet the same standards as new records schedules. There are two types of amendments: formal and administrative.

2.4.1 Formal Amendments

Formal amendments require the same development, review and approval process as new records schedules.

A formal amendment is required when:

- The records schedule no longer accurately reflects the records that are being created; i.e., changes are needed to add or remove categories of records covered,
- The records need to be retained for a shorter or longer period of time than scheduled,
- A new System Overview³ is added, and/or

² A schedule that covers only microfilmed records more than two years old can also be sent to Executive Council, however no such schedules have been proposed for many years.

³ This is an ancillary section of an *ORCS*, which profiles an **electronic system** and identifies the classifications within the *ORCS* that apply to its inputs, outputs, and the data and records it contains.

- The final disposition needs to change.

Typically, schedules need to be updated when the functions and activities of the office(s) using the records schedule change.

Where appropriate, a schedule may be deemed obsolete and replaced rather than undergoing amendment.

2.4.2 Administrative Amendments

Administrative amendments need to comply with the same standards as formal amendments; however, they require endorsement only from two authorities (the responsible GRS manager, and the Secretary of the Public Documents Committee)⁴. See RIM 201B *Specifications for Administrative Amendment of Records Schedules*.

An **administrative amendment** is appropriate when the required change will not materially alter the scope of the records covered or their retentions. The categories of administrative amendments are established in RIM 201B.

One-time records schedules are not eligible for administrative amendment, however all types of ongoing records schedules are eligible.

2.5 Documenting Approval Status

The approval status of a records schedule (or a portion of it), including the date last approved or revised, must be clearly displayed throughout the records schedule documentation using methods prescribed in GRS standards.

In addition, a **Register of Amendments** (form ARS642), must be established when the first amendment is approved, and updated with information about each subsequent amendment.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1. Government Records Service (GRS)

GRS is the central records services agency responsible for administering the records scheduling process established in the *Document Disposal Act*, including:

- a) Establishing government-wide standards (e.g., the [Standard ORCS Kit](#)) for the content and format of records retention and disposition schedules,
- b) Developing government-wide and ministry-specific records schedules and amendments to them, based on records appraisal, and advising agencies responsible for their own records schedule development and amendment,

⁴ Prior to the official endorsement, a GRS schedule developer/archivist drafts the amendment, and seeks RO endorsement.

- c) Reviewing all draft schedules and amendments to ensure they meet the government-wide standards,
- d) Conducting archival appraisal and developing archival appraisal statements for inclusion in the schedules,
- e) Administering the endorsement and approval processes, and
- f) Publishing integrated records classification and scheduling systems and special schedules as they are approved and amended, as well as other ongoing records schedules as appropriate.

3.2. Ministries and Agencies

Ministries and BPS agencies are responsible for ensuring that the records schedules meet their business needs, and for facilitating records schedule development, review, approval and amendment processes by providing:

- a) Business-area subject matter expertise (to records schedule developers and GRS reviewers, as well as the PDC),
- b) Access to relevant records,
- c) Legal review if required (i.e., a ministry arranges for a Legal Services solicitor or a BPS agency arranges for legal counsel to review the records schedule and advise them of potential legal risks that would entail when records are disposed of in accordance with the schedules), and
- d) Endorsement of the schedules once the records categories and timetables are accurate and appropriate.

BPS Records Officers are also responsible for leading the development of records schedules and amendments, and for assisting with their review and approval.

3.3. Public Documents Committee (PDC)

The PDC is responsible for reviewing and endorsing draft records schedules to ensure that they serve government recordkeeping needs, and incorporate and reflect corporate information values (e.g., fiscal, legal, and archival requirements).

The PDC Secretary is responsible for reviewing and endorsing administrative amendments in accordance with this policy, RIM 201B, and precedents.

3.4. Select Standing Committee on Public Accounts (PAC)

The PAC reviews records schedules and, if appropriate, recommends approval to the Legislative Assembly.

3.5. Legislative Assembly

The Legislative Assembly grants approval of records schedules by resolution.

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RELATED POLICIES AND SPECIFICATIONS

The following specifications are founded upon this policy:

RIM 201A *Specifications for the Records Schedule Approval Process*

RIM 201B *Specifications for Administrative Amendment of Records Schedules*

Policies and specifications that closely relate to this policy include:

RIM 102 *Government Recordkeeping*

RIM 102A *Specifications for Identifying Administrative and Operational Records*

RIM 202 *Records Schedule Implementation* **Draft**

RIM 203 *Appraisal of Government Records* **Draft**

RIM 501 *Records Destruction*

RELATED GUIDES – see RM Guides and Online Training Modules

ORCS Primer for Reviewers

Preparing for Legal Review of Records Schedules

Revision History: First approved: 2015/05/06 Revised: n/a

This supersedes the following policies:

- 02-07 *Review and Approval of Records Retention and Disposition Schedules under the Document Disposal Act*
- 02-08 *Administrative Amendment of Approved Records Schedules*
- IM/IT Supplement 2007 (*policy supplement to CPPM formerly posted by IM/IT Governance Branch of the Office of the Government CIO*): 12.3.3 III (a) iii. *Components of a Recorded Information Management Program*

Index and Glossary Terms – see [RIM Glossary](#) for definitions of terms that appear in bold blue text (for the first usage of each term in the policy, as well as below)

Amendment of records schedules	Final disposition	Operational records
Alienation	Government records	ORCS
Archival appraisal	Integrated records classification and scheduling system	Public Documents Committee
ARCS	Life cycle	Recordkeeping system
Authenticity	Legal review	Records appraisal
Classification	Legal custody	Records Officer
Creating agency	Legal value	Records schedule
Common records	Metadata	Special schedule
Destruction of records	One-time records schedule	<i>Standard ORCS Kit</i>
<i>Document Disposal Act</i>	Ongoing records schedule	Usability
Electronic system		