Normal Administrative Practice (NAP)

There are two types of information found in ACT Government agencies. These are:

- **Records required for agency business**: Transactions that provide evidence of business activities — for example, client records, personnel records, development of policy issues and records of the rights and obligations of the agency. These records must be captured into an agency recordkeeping system.

- **Material of ephemeral value**: Information messages that may have a business context but are not part of a business transaction — for example, notification of a meeting or personal or social messages. This material does not need to be captured into an agency’s recordkeeping system.

Each agency’s Records Management Program establishes Normal Administrative Practice (NAP) for the agency. NAP allows for the destruction of ephemeral, duplicate or transitory material to be carried out as part of normal agency practices and procedures.

NAP is designed to reduce the need for formal approval of destruction for ephemeral information. It is not a replacement for approved Records Disposal Schedules, which also form part of an agency’s Records Management Program.

A Records Disposal Schedule is a list of record retention periods, approved by the Director of Territory Records, which gives agencies approval to dispose of records. Records Disposal Schedules also list records that are of enduring or archival value that are to be retained as Territory Archives.

Material that **may** be destroyed using the NAP provision:

- Rough notes, calculations or diagrams used for the creation of records.
- Duplicates and copies of documents (which have not been annotated in any way) where the original is safely retained within the agency’s recordkeeping system - ensure this is the case before destroying the copy.
- Drafts where the contents have been reproduced in a final document - for other substantive drafts, refer to the note below.
- Facilitative items such as personal emails, appointment diaries or calendars, “with compliments” slips.
- Modifications and updating of data as part of the running of established electronic software programs, where such processes do not result in the loss of data of continuing value.
- Published materials used as reference only including pamphlets, leaflets and brochures.
- Information from other organisations that is not essential to an agency’s functions.
- Personal material such as invitations, tickets, brochures.
NOTE: Some of the above suggested examples of NAP may be captured within classes of Records Disposal Schedules where they are deemed to be of greater importance as evidence and should therefore be retained for a specified minimum period of time. If there is any doubt regarding the destruction of items under the provision of NAP, retain as a record for appropriate appraisal and sentencing.

Material that **must not** be destroyed using the NAP provision;

- **X** Official records, that is, those records that are essential to the ongoing business of an agency. For example, registered files, official minutes, regulations, agreements, legal records and financial records, which affect or define an agency’s functions and activities.
- **X** Records required to be retained by Records Disposal Schedules approved by the Director of Territory Records or information required to be retained for any specific time by an Act or Regulation.
- **X** Records containing essential information of the rights and obligations of the Territory or of any persons.
- **X** Information likely to be required for the determination of any action in any inquiry, court or tribunal.
- **X** Information that is outlined as part of a disposal freeze.
- **X** Material of significance or public interest relating to political, social and economic affairs and history of the Territory.

To ensure that NAP is being used in a suitable manner, consider the business carried out by the agency and the records required to appropriately support this work. What may be considered ephemeral in nature for one agency could have evidential value for another.

For clarity, it is recommended that an outline of the records or items covered under NAP be documented within the agency’s Records Management Program.

*See the Territory Records Guideline 3 – Assess for further advice.*