What is a “Record”?  

**Purpose**

This Records Advice has been prepared to provide ACT Government employees with information for understanding their responsibilities for creating official government records, information and data.

**Background**

The *Territory Records Act 2002* (the Act) defines a ‘record’ as the information created and kept, or received and kept, as evidence and information by a person in accordance with a legal obligation or in the course of conducting business. This includes information in written, electronic or any other form.

The Act requires all ACT government organisations to make and keep full and accurate records. These records must be maintained or managed by the organisation to provide evidence of business activities. This means that all documents and information, whether hardcopy or digital, made or received by ACT Government organisations, that provide evidence of a business activity, are records.

Records may be in any form, including:

- Office documents (i.e. Word, Excel, PowerPoint), e-mail, digital images
- Information and data held within, and extracted from, business systems
- Audio (e.g voicemails) or video, including hosted materials on websites (e.g. YouTube)
- Communications on social media applications
- Handwritten documents
- Paper, microform, digital
- Maps, plans, drawings, photographs etc.

**Tool**

The Territory Records Office has a simple tool to help ACT Government entity staff determine what is considered a record.

The tool can be found at - *Is it a Record?*

**Record types found across government**

Record types will vary across government because of the diverse range of functions it performs. It is however important to note that there are common types of records with

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1 http://sharedservices/territoryrecords/Is%20it%20a%20record/index.htm
evidential or business value that will be found across government. These frequently used types will include, but are not limited to:

- ‘Common’ (the type that everyone may use) records – policies, procedures, documentation, forms and correspondence. e.g. staff manuals, rosters, travel bookings;
- Financial records – invoices, bank account records, customer billing reports;
- Project records – correspondence, notes, proposal and product development documentation; and
- Case files – client records, personnel records, contracts and other legal files.

Further to this, information and data in business systems may constitute a record, if it is used in the context of a business transaction or decision process. Such sources of records, information and data must also be managed in accordance with the Standard for Records, Information and Data and associated guidelines.

**For more information**

Standard for Records, Information and Data

Guideline to the Identify Principle

Guideline to the Metadata Principle