



RECORD MANAGEMENT STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP)

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE			
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RECORDS MANAGEMENT STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This procedure effects and is subject to the conditions of the BTP Records Management Policy.
- 1.2 The purpose of this procedure is to outline the responsibilities and requirements of BTP in terms of records management. Levels of responsibility are set out for various management levels, as well as all BTP employees. Individual procedures are highlighted at each stage of the record management process from capture and registration, through to naming, filing, storage and disposal.
- 1.3 This procedure applies to England, Wales and Scotland.
- 1.4 This procedure applies to all BTP officers, staff, Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs), Special Constables and those acting as our servants or agents.

2 KNOWLEDGE

2.1 Terms and Definitions

- **ARCHIVE** - A storage function to hold records that must be retained for a significant period of time.
- **FILE PLAN** - A structure within which records (and non-record material) in any format can be stored.
- **ISO 15489-1:2001** - The international standard providing a benchmark against which record management systems can be measured.



- MoPI - The Code of Practice on the Management of Police Information issued in 2005, designed to provide a common national framework for the management of police information.
- RECORD - Information created, received and maintained by the Force in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transaction of business. Records include papers, maps, photographs, machine-readable materials or other documentary materials regardless of medium
- RECORD CAPTURE - The process of determining that a record should be made and kept.
- RECORD RETENTION SCHEDULE - A document providing mandatory instructions for what to do with records (and non-record materials) no longer needed for current business.
- RECORD REGISTER - A document providing formal recognition of the existence of a record or record series.
- UNSTRUCTURED RECORD - Any record not held in an electronic database.

2.2 Responsibilities

2.2.1 The Deputy Chief Constable is responsible for the success of the records management programme, ensuring the allocation of resources and promoting these procedures throughout BTP.

2.2.2 The Information Compliance Unit is responsible for establishing overall records management policies, procedures and standards for BTP and implementing processes in line with ISO 15489-1:2001, the Code of Practice on The Management of Police Information 2005 (MoPI) and the Lord Chancellor (2002) Code of Practice on the Management of Records issued under section 46 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

2.2.3 Department Heads and Area Commanders are responsible for ensuring that their officers and staff create and keep records as an integral part of their work and in accordance with



established policies, procedures and standards. This group provide the resources necessary for the management of records and liaise with Information Compliance on all aspects set out in ISO 15489-1:2001.

2.2.4 All employees create, receive and keep records as part of their daily work and must do so in accordance with established policies, procedures and standards. This includes disposing of records only in accordance with the authorised Retention Schedule.

3 PROCEDURES

3.1 Record Capture

3.1.1 Record capture involves deciding which documents are captured, who will have access and for how long they are retained.

3.1.1 Guidelines for identifying documents that do not need to be retained include deciding if the document does not:

- commit BTP to an action
- contain any obligation or responsibility
- contain information connected to business for which BTP is accountable.

3.1.2 Capturing a record is achieved by placing it within a structured filing system, either in a paper-based or electronic record system. In this way the document is connected to other documents providing context for the person who will subsequently retrieve the information.

3.2 Record Registration

3.2.1 A record register is required to track unstructured records to enable important records to be located and effectively managed.

3.2.2 A register must be functionally structured and in an appropriate format. Guidance on Developing a Records Register is available (see the Appendices section).



3.2.3 The more detailed the information recorded in the register, the more effective it will be as a management tool. It must contain the following information for each entry:

- Unique identifier
- Title
- Location
- File plan position
- Activity dates
- Owner and provenance
- Relationship with other records
- Retention decisions
- Access restrictions
- Physical characteristics
- Security classification.

3.2.4 The register must be developed and maintained over time as part of a routine process.

3.2.5 Use of the Protective Marking scheme is required for all records. Guidance on Protective Marking for BTP documents is available.

3.3 Naming Conventions

3.3.1 Naming records consistently, logically and in a predictable way will distinguish similar records from one another, ensuring that the right records can be retrieved efficiently. Naming Conventions for Electronic Documents guidance is available (see the Appendices section).

3.3.2 The names of documents must take into account the following considerations:

- Accurate description of the contents
- Consistent use of date, number and name formats
- Avoidance of jargon, acronyms or abbreviations
- Identification of version status.



3.4 Functional File Plan

- 3.4.1 All unstructured records in any medium will be held within a functional file plan. An exemplar functional file plan and guidance on implementation are available (see the Appendices section). BTP will use a version of the NPIA SMART File Plan, as applicable.
- 3.4.2 A file plan must be developed for the collection of records held by a Unit, Department, Area or Station. This will be based on the function of the record series to be filed rather than its subject or creator.
- 3.4.3 All BTP officers, staff and others who file within the system will be trained in its use.

3.5 Record Storage

- 3.5.1 When records are sent to off-site archiving, either to BTP storage or to a commercial agency, they must be appropriately packaged and recorded. Guidance is available in the Management of Police Information Archives project intranet pages and managing paper record storage on BTP premises (see the Appendices section).
- 3.5.2 Health and safety issues must be considered when packing and storing archive boxes, including box weight and storage space.
- 3.5.3 Some records may be moved to commercial storage because, although immediate access is not required, there are legal, operational or business requirements to retain them. In this instance, refer to the Management of Police Information Archives – Use of Commercial Storage SOP/076/07.
- 3.5.4 When records are destroyed by a commercial agency, the certificates of destruction must be kept in accordance with the Record Retention Schedule.



3.6 Records Disposal

- 3.6.1 The Record Retention Schedule governs the time period particular record series are retained. This can be governed by legislation, regulation or by professional best practice.
- 3.6.2 Areas, Stations, Units and Departments are responsible for both the records they create and those that come into BTP through them. Working copies of any documents must be destroyed immediate after the work for which they were copied has been closed. Printouts from computer databases must not be retained after their purpose has been fulfilled. Guidance is available on Developing Selection Criteria for Record Retention (see the Appendices section).
- 3.6.3 The destruction method required for all documents is based on the protective marking on the document. Full instructions on methods can be found in the Destruction Guidance (see the Appendices section).

4 APPENDICES

For access to the guidance listed below, please visit the [Information Standards Unit Intranet page](#).



4.1 List of Guidance

4.1.1 Record register procedure:

- Developing a Records Register and sample record register
- Protective Marking for Police Documents (Information Security guidance)

4.1.2 Naming conventions procedure:

- Naming Conventions for Electronic Documents
- Controlling Versions of Documents (in preparation)

4.1.3 File plan procedure:

- SMART File Plan
- Benefits of using the File Plan
- Implementing the File Plan
- Filing with the File Plan
- Filing Records in the File Plan

4.1.4 Record storage procedure:

- CycMOPA guide
- Managing Scanned Records
- Managing Paper Record Storage on BTP Premises

4.1.5 Disposal of records procedure:

- Record Retention Schedule (in preparation)
- ACPO Record Disposal Guidelines (to be superseded by the above)
- ACPO(S) Record Retention Guidelines (to be superseded by the above)
- Developing Selection Criteria for Record Retention
- Destruction Guidance (Information Security guidance)



4.1.6 General guidance:

- Dealing with Legacy Electronic Records
- Dealing with Legacy Paper Records
- Legal Obligations in Records Management
- Managing e-mail Messages as Records
- Managing our Information
- Managing Records away from the Office
- Managing your Records before you leave
- Record Management terms glossary
- Signature authentication for records management