



COUNCIL OF AUSTRALASIAN ARCHIVES
AND RECORDS AUTHORITIES

CAARA Policy 25

Arrangement for records of joint Royal Commissions - Statement of Principles

Status: Current
Adopted: November 2017

CAARA acknowledges the traditional custodians of Country and their continuing connection to land, sea and community.

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Current

1. Relevant staff of CAARA member organisations will monitor government activity in order to identify upcoming joint Royal Commissions and inform CAARA of them.
2. When a joint Royal Commission is established, CAARA will agree on the archival authority with lead responsibility for liaising with the Royal Commission on recordkeeping matters. This archival authority will act as CAARA's representative to the joint Royal Commission.
3. In cases where the Commonwealth is involved, the default position will be that lead responsibility is assigned to National Archives. In cases where CAARA agrees this would not be the preferred position or where the Commonwealth is not involved, CAARA will determine the lead archival authority based on:
 - where the head office is located;
 - where the legislation is first enacted; and
 - whether any jurisdiction has a special responsibility, interest or role.
4. The archival authority acting as CAARA's representative will initiate contact with the Royal Commission as soon as practicable after establishment to ensure all recordkeeping matters are considered from the outset.
5. The joint Royal Commission will be subject to the standards, policies and requirements of the archival authority which CAARA has determined should take lead responsibility.

6. The lead archival authority will be available to the joint Royal Commission to provide advice on all recordkeeping matters, with the aim of ensuring the creation, capture and retention of a full and accurate record of the royal commission.
7. It is the responsibility of the lead archival authority to provide advice to the Royal Commission to support:
 - the appointment of suitably qualified and experienced records management staff;
 - the selection and implementation of effective systems to manage their records;
 - the development and implementation of recordkeeping policies and procedures;
 - compliance with standards and requirements, particularly those relating to capture, retention and disposal;
 - staff education and training on the importance of creating and managing records; and
 - records are created and managed digitally, to increase efficiency and enhance accessibility.
8. The lead archival authority will periodically report to CAARA on progress and issues. A CAARA Working Group will be formed to assist and support the lead archival authority if required.
9. CAARA, with advice from the lead archival authority, will agree a preferred option for the custody, access and disposal arrangements for the records of the joint Royal Commission and communicate and advocate this position to government. The default position will be that CAARA agrees that the jurisdiction of the lead archival authority take custody of the records and that the access and disposal regime of that jurisdiction will apply.
10. CAARA will work with relevant government agencies (State and Commonwealth) to ensure that the agreed position is formally recorded and communicated to all relevant parties prior to the Royal Commission winding up, including obtaining relevant directions and agreements under sections 22(3) and 22(6) of the Archives Act 1983.

11. The lead archival authority, with advice from CAARA, will liaise with relevant agencies to determine an appropriate transfer program for records of archival value, noting that where ongoing administrative use (including to respond to FoI requests) is expected that records may be retained by the relevant government agency for a period prior to transfer to the lead archival authority.