

Use of the *Guidelines and Functional Requirements for Records in Business Systems* by Queensland public authorities

Queensland State Archives (QSA), in conjunction with the National Archives of Australia and with the support of the Australasian Digital Recordkeeping Initiative, has developed the *Guidelines and Functional Requirements for Records in Business Systems*.

Authority and Compliance with the Guidelines and Functional Requirements

Queensland State Archives is responsible for the provision of policy advice relating to a wide range of strategic information management and recordkeeping issues for Queensland public authorities.

The State Archivist has issued the *Guidelines and Functional Requirements for Records in Business Systems* in accordance with section 25(1)(f) of the *Public Records Act 2002*.

These Guidelines and Functional Requirements form one part of a wider framework that aims to promote best practice recordkeeping and information management in Queensland public authorities. As an international document, QSA was unable to include additional relevant information within the document for Queensland public authorities about its use within the Queensland environment. This Public Records Brief aims to provide this additional information.

Compliance with *Information Standard 40: Recordkeeping* requires agencies to manage all public records, irrespective of the format. The Guidelines and Functional Requirements is a best-practice guide to assist agencies with the management of records in business systems.

Many public authorities operate large numbers of business systems. When implementing a plan to assess compliance of existing business systems for adequate recordkeeping controls, QSA recommends the undertaking of a risk-based prioritisation activity.

Purpose of the Guidelines and Functional Requirements

The *Guidelines and Functional Requirements for Records in Business Systems* were developed to assist agencies to meet their recordkeeping responsibilities for public records created by business systems¹.

Public authorities may use the document to:

- Learn about the processes and requirements for identifying and managing records in business systems
- Develop requirements for functionality for records to be included in a design specification when building, upgrading or purchasing business system software
- Evaluate the records management capability of proposed customised or commercial off-the-shelf business system software, or
- Review the functionality for records or assess compliance of existing business systems.

¹ Business systems are automated systems that create or manage data about an agency's activities, for example, e-commerce systems, finance systems, human resources systems, and client relationship management systems. In this context, they **exclude** Electronic Records Management Systems and Electronic Document and Records Management Systems.

Structure of the Guidelines and Functional Requirements

The document is divided into two main sections:

- **Guidelines** – this section outlines a process for determining an agency’s need for records and identifying records within business systems, along with advice for applying the Functional Requirements.
- **Functional Requirements** – this section provides an overview of the high-level functional requirements for records in business systems and outlines a recommended set of mandatory and optional records management functional requirements for business systems software. The intent of these specifications can be realised through interfacing or integrating the business system with an eDRMS or by building the functionality into the business system itself.

Definitions and linkages with other Queensland State Archives advice

Because the Guidelines and Functional Requirements have been developed for an international audience and are targeted at staff responsible for designing, reviewing and/or implementing business systems in organisations, such as business analysts, rather than records management staff, they include a range of terminology that is not typically used in other QSA publications. When utilising the Guidelines and Functional Requirements, Queensland public authorities should be mindful in particular of the use of:

- “Determining needs for evidence of events, transactions and decisions” – Those public authorities with approved Retention and Disposal Schedules will have undertaken some of the processes outlined within Section 2.3 of the Guidelines and Functional Requirements for identifying public records. Queensland public authorities should refer to the *Guideline for the Development of Retention and Disposal Schedules*² for more detailed advice in this regard, and in order to ensure that schedules are written, in consultation with QSA, to reflect appropriate appraisal decisions.
- “Disposition” – The *International Standard on Information and Documentation – Records Management, ISO 15489* defines disposition as ‘a range of processes associated with implementing retention, destruction or transfer decisions that are documented in disposition or other instruments’. Queensland public authorities should substitute the word ‘disposal’ for all instances of the term ‘disposition’ within the Guidelines and Functional Requirements. Similarly, a ‘Disposition Authority’ equates to an approved Retention and Disposal Schedule.
- “Metadata” – the Guidelines and Functional Requirements include a number of requirements for recordkeeping metadata and make reference to jurisdiction-specific metadata standards. The capture of metadata by Queensland public authorities must meet the minimum requirements within the *Queensland Recordkeeping Metadata Standard*³.

For more information

For more information on recordkeeping in business systems, see:

- Public Records Brief: [International Council on Archives’ Project - Principles and Functional Requirements for Records in Electronic Office](#)
- [Guidelines and Functional Requirements for Records in Business Systems](#)

For more detailed guidance on the management of public records visit the Queensland State Archives’ website at <http://www.archives.qld.gov.au>, or contact us on:

Telephone: (07) 3131 7777

Email: info@archives.qld.gov.au

² <http://www.archives.qld.gov.au/government/appraisal.asp#guideline>

³ <http://www.archives.qld.gov.au/downloads/QRKMS.pdf>