

When to make and keep records of blogs (Weblogs)

This Public Records Brief provides advice to authorities on how to create, keep and manage records of blogs (also known as weblogs) if they contain information that should be managed as a public record.

What are blogs?

Blogs are online publications that usually consist of periodic articles listed in reverse chronological order (most recent article first).

Blogs are often used by individuals as online diaries or as a topical digest of opinions, perspectives and advice. However blogs are also becoming popular as a business communication mechanism used to reach a broader range of clients than traditional paper-based publishing programs.

When is a blog a public record?

A blog is a public record if it provides evidence of the decisions or actions undertaken by a public authority during its business activities. For example, records of a blog may need to be created if it:

- provides information about an authority's programs or services;
- gathers responses or information that is later used to inform a decision or a policy position; or
- is used as a diary of actions that document a work process.

A blog is not a public record if:

- it is only a compilation of external resources; or
- it is not part of a staff member's role or related to their involvement in agency work processes.

Recordkeeping considerations for blogs

1. Consider recordkeeping requirements when agency policies on the use of blogs are being created. It is much easier to build recordkeeping requirements into acceptable use policies and workflows if they are considered when these are established.
2. Make staff aware that their recordkeeping responsibilities apply to blogs. Public records are determined by information content, not their format.
3. Consider how records of blogs will be managed within your recordkeeping system, and where they fit in retention and disposal schedules. Can your recordkeeping system keep electronic records? If it can't, how will blog records be managed? Records created from blogs should be sentenced and managed using QSA's *General Retention and Disposal Schedule for Administrative Records* in conjunction with agency-specific schedules, as with all other records.

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

