

Recorded Information Management Policy 01-04

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DISTINCTION BETWEEN ADMINISTRATIVE AND OPERATIONAL RECORDS

1. OVERVIEW

This policy establishes criteria for distinguishing between administrative and operational records.

1.1 Authority

- [Document Disposal Act](#) (RSBC 1996, c. 99)
- Treasury Board [Core Policy and Procedures Manual \(CPPM\), c. 12](#)

1.2 Applicability

- Ministries, agencies, boards, commissions, Crown corporations and other public bodies (“other bodies”) covered by the *Document Disposal Act*.

2. POLICY

Government records will be classified as either administrative records or operational records, regardless of media or format. The management of all government records must be implemented using two classification systems:

- the government-wide *Administrative Records Classification System (ARCS)* and
- program specific *Operational Records Classification Systems (ORCS)*

This policy applies to records in all media, including paper records, electronic data (analogue or digital), or special media such as photographs, audio-visual records, CDs, mylar maps, and so on.

3. STANDARDS

3.1 Distinction between Administrative and Operational Records

3.1.1 Administrative Records

Administrative records relate to the internal activities and functions that are common to all ministries and other public bodies, such as the management of buildings, properties, equipment, supplies, finance, personnel and information technology. Administrative records also relate to common management functions such as meetings, committees, information services, records management, freedom of information and protection of privacy, security and risk management, cooperation and liaison, forms and manuals, and so on. Administrative records are classified and scheduled in accordance with the government-wide

Administrative Records Classification System (ARCS).

3.1.2 Operational Records

Operational records relate to those mandated functions that are unique to a ministry or other body, for which it is responsible for performing according to statute, regulation or policy. An operational record is unique to the ministry or body that created it. Operational records are classified and scheduled in accordance with program-specific *Operational Records Classification Systems (ORCS)*.

3.2 Operational Records Classification Systems (ORCS)

ORCS are the government-wide standard for the organization, retrieval, storage, and disposition of operational records of public bodies. The approved content and format standards for *ORCS* can be found in the *Standard ORCS Kit*. The Corporate Information Management Branch, in consultation with the Public Documents Committee, establishes the standards.

Primaries and/or secondaries covering administrative records should not be incorporated into *ORCS*. However, in some cases *ARCS* classifications or schedules may not reflect the activities, scope or responsibilities of a ministry or other body for specific categories of administrative records. Corporate Information Management Branch will determine whether these records may be incorporated into an *ORCS* on a case-by-case basis during the *ORCS* review process.

3.3 Central Agencies

ARCS does not cover the operational records of central agencies such as the Corporate Procurement Solutions, Office of the Comptroller General, Queen's Printer, BC Public Service Agency, etc. that document the unique mandated functions of these agencies. These records are operational, and are covered by central agency *ORCS*. Central agencies classify their administrative records (i.e., those records that document their internal administrative activities, rather than their operational government-wide functions) under *ARCS*.