

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is a Record Survey and what is the purpose of conducting it now?**

The Record Survey is a listing of 'record series' or groups of records. It is not a file list. The purpose of the Record Survey exercise is to provide an overview of the current holdings of an office (including volume of official records) and develop retention guidelines for what records should be transferred to ARMS, disposed of or moved to a new location.

### **What are the benefits of conducting a record survey and generally preparing your records for CMP restacking?**

The benefits of this exercise are:

- Reduce record volume and associated storage space;
- Reduce packing and moving of unnecessary records;
- Improve business recordkeeping and the management and organization of files;
- Reduce duplication as well as paper and files in office;

### **What are some of the risks of not preparing your records for the CMP?**

- Critical knowledge assets may be lost or become inaccessible during the move;
- Increased staff time to locate information;
- Increased exposure to risk;
- Increased storage costs;
- Reduce office efficiency and effectiveness;

### **Who is responsible to complete the Record Survey?**

The Record Management Focal Point is responsible to ensure the survey is submitted to ARMS in a timely fashion. However, the survey should be completed by the staff member who is most knowledgeable about the content and recordkeeping practices of the office.

### **Does every unit have to conduct a Record Survey?**

It depends. The current holding of every unit should be represented in the Record Survey. One Record Survey can represent several units if several units have similar record series. If your Department or Unit completed a survey in 2008 when moving out of the Secretariat building, there may not be a need to resubmit a survey. In general, if your Department or Unit does not have an approved retention schedule, you should complete a survey.

### **What if I do not submit a Record Survey, can I still transfer my records to ARMS?**

All records to be transferred to ARMS are subject to retention schedules, so if there is an existing retention schedule for your materials, we will accept them. See ARMS website link for details: <http://archives.un.org/ARMS/content/retention-policies>

However, if you do not submit a record survey, ARMS may be unable to provide assistance or guidance if there are problems concerning file storage space in the new location.

**What do I include in the Record Survey?**

All Record Series of official business records should be included in the survey.

**What do I not include in a Record Survey?**

Non-record materials such as personnel papers, documents, publications, working papers should not be included in the survey.

**When should I submit the Record Survey?**

As soon as possible, but it would be appreciated if you could submit at least a draft of the survey by the end of October. This will enable some time to review the submission and address any issues.

**What will be the results and when and how will I get them?**

We hope to provide feedback during November/December. Implementation of the results, either transferring or disposing of records will take place beginning in January 2012. Results will be sent to the Records Focal Point as they are made available.

**How much time will it take to complete the Record Survey?**

It depends on how organized and well maintained your current records are.

**What are the Transfer and Disposal procedures for official records?**

Once Retention Guidelines are established, see the ARMS website (link below) for information concerning transfer and disposal procedures including forms and detailed instructions. <http://archives.un.org/ARMS/records-transfer-disposal>

**What are the disposal procedures for material that are not official records?**

Non-record items may be disposed of any time, through the general recycling procedures through FMS.

**How do I dispose of confidential or sensitive materials?**

ARMS provides the following guidelines on records disposal, including disposal of confidential or sensitive records.

[http://archives.un.org/ARMS/sites/ARMS/uploads/files/Records\\_Destruction\\_Guideline.doc](http://archives.un.org/ARMS/sites/ARMS/uploads/files/Records_Destruction_Guideline.doc)

ARMS also provides the following information regarding the management of sensitive information more generally:

<http://archives.un.org/ARMS/content/information-sensitivity>

**What if I have additional questions?**

Send an email message to [arms@un.org](mailto:arms@un.org) with CMP Survey in the title.