



Section 16 – Transferring Records to UN ARMS

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Introduction – Why do you need to transfer records?

Records need to be transferred to UN ARMS for one or more of the following reasons:

- Your mission is being liquidated
- The records are inactive and no longer needed for reference, but have not reached their retention period as specified in the **Peacekeeping Operations Retention Schedule** (PORS)
- The records will be safer if looked after by the UN ARMS staff
- Other people, including colleagues and external researchers, need access to them

It is also important to note that records may not stay in one location for the whole of their life, particularly in missions.

Main Things to Remember about Transferring Records to UN ARMS

- Develop the habit of regularly transferring records to ARMS as soon as they are no longer needed in the mission. Do not wait until the mission liquidates.
- Apply PORS (Peacekeeping Operations Retention Schedule) to all your records, irrespective of format. PORS indicates how long to keep records and how their disposition should be managed.
- Contact ARMS staff about the transfer process for all records (including electronic)
- Transferring records to ARMS helps protect them for as long as they are needed.
- Following ARMS procedures means records will be found when they are needed.

When should you transfer your records?

You:

- **SHOULD** transfer records as soon as they are no longer needed by the mission
- **MUST** transfer records at liquidation of your mission.

Regular transfers and disposals

ARMS recommends that you transfer records when they are no longer needed by the mission. Disposal of records can be done in-situ in line with PORS. The



schedules are like timetables to help you manage your records, transfers as well as disposals.

When your mission is liquidated

You MUST transfer records when your mission is liquidated. This applies to both paper and electronic records. Contact UN ARMS about the processes required for transferring all records, including both paper and electronic.

When your mission is coming to a close you will need to prepare your recordkeeping system for the liquidation too. Except for those files required for the actual mission liquidation (e.g. master files on audit observations and responses), all files should be closed by the last day of the mission's mandate. Using the records retention schedule you should then review all your files. Either prepare them for transfer to ARMS in New York, or for their destruction in the mission (but only according to the retention schedule or specific approval from ARMS).

The DPKO/DFS Liquidation Unit may also request that financial and selected administrative records be sent to ARMS ahead of the other records so they will be available for expediting the liquidation phase of the mission. For more information see the Office of Mission Support's [DPKO Liquidation Manual](#).

Overview of the Transfer Process Steps

The following Phases identify the steps to transfer records from a mission to UN ARMS at Headquarters:

Phase I – Preparation

1. Review PORS and identify relevant Record Series for your records;
2. Determine appropriate Retention Schedules of each relevant Record Series;
3. Identify records to be disposed based on PORS (contact ARMS if there are any questions concerning retention) and make internal arrangements for destruction on the mission premises.
4. Identify records to be transferred to ARMS;
 - a. separate records that can be sent sooner from records that may need to be kept until the office is officially closed;
 - b. obtain standard record storage boxes from local source;

Phase II - Authorization

5. Contact ARMS (arms@un.org) to establish contact with the staff in charge of processing mission record transfers;



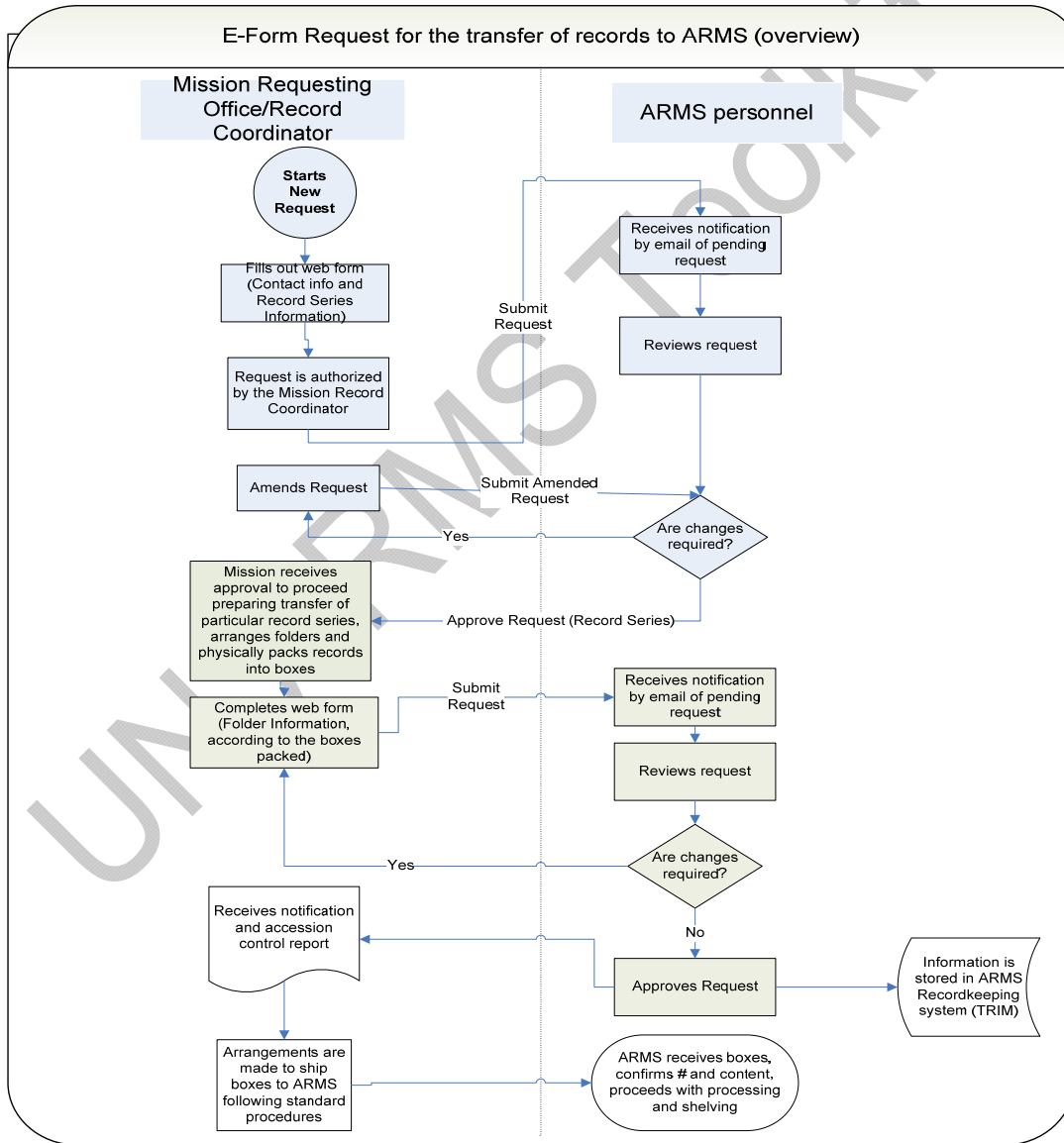
6. Records transfers are done using an electronic form. Access to the electronic form is available on the UN Secretariat Intranet iSeek. On the menu bar click on *Tools* and *ARMS Transfer E-Form* and login with your Lotus Notes webmail ID and password). Review E-form Guide for detailed instructions;
7. Complete User Contact information;
8. Complete Record Series information;
9. Submit to Mission Record Coordinator;
10. Mission Record Coordinator reviews, approves and submits to ARMS;
11. ARMS approves Record Series submission and authorizes Record Series to be transferred to HQ;
12. Once authorization is received, pack standard record boxes with approved record series, each record series should have a separate labelling/numbering sequence (see boxing instructions for details);
13. Once boxes are packed, complete Box/Folder information in e-forms for each record series. The description of folders is required for each box of each record series
14. Submit Box/Folder information directly to ARMS;
15. ARMS reviews, approves or requests amendments to the folder lists
16. ARMS authorizes shipment of records once record transfer is approved;

Phase III – Record Transfer

Arrange shipment following standard operating procedures on the Mission Liquidation Manual



Graphic: overview of the records transfer process





UN ARMS Toolkit



Phase I - Preparation

Review PORS - The Archives and Records Management Section (ARMS), Department of Management, and DPKO-DFS jointly developed the PORS (http://archives.un.org/unarms/en/unrecordsmgmt/unrecordsresources/PORSv2_Jan2009.pdf) and its accompanying Guidelines (http://archives.un.org/unarms/doc/retentionschedules/PORSv2_Guidelines_Nov2009_Final_ForPublication.pdf) to assist field missions in the proper disposition of the accumulated records. The schedule is the authority under which field offices carry out the specified disposition of their records. The PORS should be referred to in identifying the Retention or Disposition of records and determining what records should be disposed and what records should be transferred to ARMS.

Separate out non- records -Remember that United Nations printed documents and publications (which you may have collected for reference) are not records and should not be transferred to ARMS. Once you are clear which records you wish to go you must check you have the right materials.

Identify records to be disposed

Based on PORS review retention schedule to determine what records can be disposed in situ. This would normally be administrative records or records that have exceed their normal life cycle.

Administrative Records are records which support and provide evidence of the administrative responsibilities of the office, such as finance records (budget, procurement etc.), personnel files, or office manuals/procedures etc.

In addition

You may also remove the following items from the records:

- UN printed documents and publications (which you may have collected for reference)
- Blank forms, stationery etc.
- Personal items
- file fittings (e.g. hanging files, file guides/dividers, paper clips etc.)

Identify records to be transferred to ARMS

These records are normally substantive records which have a longer retention.



Substantive Records are records which support and document the operational, policy and strategy work of the office, such as project files, subject/topic files etc.

In addition,

All records should already be filed in either manila or pressboard folders. If they are not, they should be placed in manila folders and labelled with a description (subject or title) and covering date range. Records stored in any other type of folder, cover or binder must be removed.

Be on the look out for signs of infestation by insects or other pests. If you find any your mission's records manager must ensure that the records are treated immediately and that all records being transferred to ARMS are fumigated prior to their leaving for New York. The [Guideline on Preventing and Treating Insect Infestation](#) provides further guidance.

Separate into Record Series

Now you can sort your records in to series (they may already be stored this way). You can use the mission file plan or the [Taxonomy for Recordkeeping in Field Missions of Peacekeeping Operations](#) to help you identify the series, or contact ARMS for advice (email arms@un.org).

Obtain Supplies

Check that you have an adequate box (ideally like the one in the photo):

- Construction: Corrugated container, store-a-file boxes with built on cover
- Size: Letter legal record retention LL-15
- Weight: 200T B-flute
- Dimensions: Outside - length 16", width 13", height 10.5"



Check that you have the right number of boxes:

- 1 filing cabinet drawer = 2 feet = 2 boxes

Boxes should be sourced locally through your office or mission administrator

Coordinate with ARMS

In order to ensure an efficient and effective transfer of records, contact ARMS (arms@un.org) to ensure proper coordination throughout the transfer process.

Recordkeeping Toolkit for Peacekeeping Operations



In Summary:

- Review PORS
- Prepare files, separate records to be disposed from records to be transferred
- Obtain standard record storage boxes locally
- Contact ARMS
- Complete e-forms to request authorization to transfer particular record series
- Pack and label the boxes
- Complete forms with box and folder information and submit to ARMS
- IMPORTANT PLEASE NOTE THAT YOU ARE SUBMITTING AN E-FORM REQUEST FOR TRANSFER TWICE; ONCE TO AUTHORIZE A PARTICULAR RECORD SERIES AND ONCE TO AUTHORIZE THE BOX/FOLDER INFORMATION
- Receive final authorization for transfer
- Ship the boxes

Phase II Authorization

Contact ARMS (arms@un.org) to establish contact with the staff in charge of processing mission record transfers;

Records transfers are done using an electronic form. Access to the electronic form is available on the UN Secretariat Intranet iSeek. On the menu bar click on *Tools* and *ARMS Transfer E-Form* and login with your Lotus Notes webmail ID and password). Review E-form Guide for detailed instructions



Welcome, Steve Service

From this page you can:

- Access your Inbox to view your pending actions (1 request pending)
- View all your existing requests
- Create a new request

This electronic form replaces Form RMS 34, RMS 36A and RMS 50. For instructions please click [here](#). We would welcome your feedback and comments.

Complete User Contact information;

- Your details as the person requesting the transfer
- Details of your office (the transferring office or office of origin)
- The creating office (if it is different to the transferring office)
- Details of the authorised or designated officer responsible for the records i.e. Record Coordinator

(New Request)

Status: NEW

Prepared By: Maria Eugenia Ponzio/NY/UNO On

Department:* Department of Management

Office / Service / Division:* Office of Central Support Services

Branch / Section: Facilities and Commercial Services Division

Unit: Commercial Activities Service

Archives and Records Management Section

-- select one --

Phone:* 3-2815

Room / Building:* Q-306

Record Coordinator:* -- select one --

Chief of Section:*

Select a Record Coordinator from the list
The Record Coordinator will need to approve the request before ARMS receives it.

Comments

No comments.

Next Actions:

Complete Record Series information;

Important – include a different record series for each separate record group that you wish to transfer



- The date range (earliest record and latest record in any of the files for this series)
- A description of the records series (copy it from your retention schedule – PORS)
- The highest security level for any of the records included in this transfer (see Chapter 17 on Information Security)
- The PORS retentions or a suggested retention period for the records (ARMS will seek clarifications if you suggest a retention different to that in PORS)

Comment [UN1]: Refer to the chapter of the toolkit on information security

Record Series

Type of records: * Administrative Substantive

Record Series Title: * Chronological Files - Incoming & Outgoing

Record Series Description: Copies of outgoing and incoming correspondence, memos, code cables, faxes, etc., arranged chronologically for quick reference. The record copy must be placed in the relevant subject file or record series in the office originating or taking action.

Retention Schedule: * Current year + 1

Date Range: * Earliest Date: Latest Date:

Security Classification: * -- select one --

Number of Boxes Requested: * 0

You may include more than one Record Series in your request:

Record Series

Select All :: Deselect All

Status	Record Series Title	Retention	Earliest Date	Latest Date	# Boxes Req.
<input type="checkbox"/> New	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Chronological Files - Incoming & Outgoing	Current year + 1	13/02/2007	21/06/2007	1
<input type="checkbox"/> New	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Records Management Files	Superseded	01/02/2006	05/12/2006	1

Total # of boxes: 2

Buttons: Add New Series, Delete Record Series

Comments: No comments. Add Comments

Next Actions: Submit to Record Co-Ordinator

Submit to Mission Record Coordinator (make prior arrangements with ARMS concerning RC);

The Mission Record Coordinator reviews, approves and submits to ARMS;

ARMS approves the record series submission.

Based on the record series listing, ARMS may be in the position to further authorise destruction of obsolete records. This reduces your workload and allows records to be destroyed in the mission rather than shipping them to Headquarters for destruction. You should follow the guidance on record destruction in this toolkit.

Pack Boxes



Once authorization is received, pack standard record boxes with approved record series, each record series should have a separate labelling/numbering sequence (see boxing instructions for details);

Pack boxes according to the following instructions. It will ensure that files are physically protected during shipping and when they are in storage.

Things to remember:

- Pack files vertically in the box (lying the box on its side during packing may make it easier to do)
- Pack files so that any labels face upward and away from where the lid joins the body of the box (see diagram below)



- Pack no more than one foot of records (half a filing cabinet drawer) in each box – it is very important not to overfill boxes, for your safety and that of others working with them

Label boxes

Please label your boxes clearly so that they can be easily identified.

Labels should include:

- The Mission acronym
- Office of origin (e.g. UNMIS/General Services Section/Board of Inquiry)
- Record series name
- Date span
- Box running number/total number of boxes (e.g. Box 2 of 5)

Submit Box/Folder information through the electronic form

Once the boxes are packed, complete the box and folder information in e-forms for each record series. The folder information is required for each box within each record series. This information is sent directly to ARMS for review.

ARMS reviews, approves or requests amendments to the folder lists



Box Number:*	Folder Title:*	File Number:	Earliest Date:*	Latest Date:*
2			02/2007	05/2007
<input type="button" value="Save Folder"/>				
Select All :: Deselect All				
Box #	Folder Title	File Number	Earliest Date	Latest Date
1	<input type="checkbox"/> Budget Submissions	120.33	02/2007	05/2007
	<input type="checkbox"/> Functional Charts	111.3	02/2007	05/2007
	<input type="checkbox"/> General Correspondence		02/2007	05/2007
2	<input type="checkbox"/> Inventories		02/2007	05/2007
	<input type="checkbox"/> Project Plans		02/2007	05/2007
Next Actions: <input type="button" value="Done"/>				

ARMS will review the box folder information and authorises shipment of records once all the steps of the record transfer is approved.

Phase III Shipping your boxes to ARMS

Once all the records are ready to be shipped, contact ARMS at arms@un.org to receive the most up-to-date shipping address. Officials responsible for the shipment of mission records to ARMS must ensure that only non-UN owned 20-foot ISO sea containers are used for this transfer.

In addition, you should instruct the freight forwarding company to send:

- The original bill of lading (not a copy) - necessary for getting United States Customs to release the shipment
- A written estimate of the date of arrival in New York to the Freight Forwarding Unit, Second Floor, 304 East 45th Street, New York, NY 10017, U.S.A., telephone (212) 963-9403; fax (212) 963-9866. This will prevent unnecessary storage charges at the port of disembarkation.

Transferring residual records to ARMS

You may need to keep hold of some records from a transfer (by special arrangement with ARMS staff) or you may have missed some records by accident at the time of transfer. In either case they must be sent to ARMS as soon as possible to ensure that all records in the series are kept together and managed as a whole.



Confirmation of transfers to ARMS

ARMS staff will formally log their receipt of your files and add them to their system based on the information you have supplied in the forms. This is called accessioning your records.

For Missions that are active or liquidating, we will be send a copy of the RMS 33 – Accession Control form back to the originating office for future reference. If you need to retrieve any records from ARMS, referring to the information on these forms will help speed the process.

For Liquidating Missions, ARMS will send a copy of the RMS 33 to the proper DPKO/DFS authority.

Example completed RMS 33 - Accession Control Form:

 Archives and Records Management Section ACCESSION CONTROL REPORT	
Retain this report with your active records to facilitate servicing reference request. To request records submit a request to arms@un.org using form RMS-51	
Accession Information:	
Accession number	2009/0316
Title	UNOMIG - Records of Field Missions Administered by DPKO, United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia - 24/09/2009
Date	24/09/2009
Office of Origin	United Nations Secretariat/Field Missions Administered by DPKO/United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia/Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General/Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General/Office of the Chief Administration
Records	Angela Adzinba



Coordinator	
Requestor	Liudmila Sagaria
Room Number	D111
Linear Feet	3
Request Number	PKO-LSAG-20090923-00448967

Record Series

Record Series Title: Oversight: Evaluation

Record Series Number: 2009/0316-0001

Description: Records include: programme and mission monitoring evaluation records, including mandatory internal evaluations (self-assessments) and discretionary internal evaluations (self-evaluation); evaluations of mission military components and formed police units.

For monitoring and evaluation of contracted service providers in the field:, see PKO.PRO.

Retention Schedule: PKO.OVE008 (C + 15)

Earliest Date: 01/05/2004

Latest Date: 17/08/2009

Highest Security Level: Confidential

Linear Feet 2

List of folders

Box	Folder Title	Earliest	Latest	File
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#		Date	Date	Number
1	OVE. Rebuttals	09/04/1995	23/12/2005	
1	OVE. Rebuttals	01/03/2000	23/12/2005	
1	OVE. Rebuttals	01/05/2004	26/12/2008	
2	Rebuttal. ePAS	01/08/2007	28/12/2007	
2	<i>Rebuttal</i>	<i>01/08/2008</i>	<i>26/12/2008</i>	

Etc....

UN ARMS TOOLKIT



Other Relevant Toolkit Sections

- Section 17 - Access to and use of Records and Archives
- Section 18 - Destroying Records

Related Documents

- DPKO Liquidation Manual (Office of Mission Support, DPKO)
- Guideline on Preventing and Treating Insect Infestation (ARMS)
- Peacekeeping Operations Retention Schedule (PORS) (ARMS 2006)
- Taxonomy for Recordkeeping in Field Missions of Peacekeeping Operations (ARMS, 2006)

Forms

- E-Forms Transfer Request
- RMS 33 – Accession Control form

Glossary

File Classification Scheme: a system of organizing and grouping files to ensure that records and files of the same function and activities are filed together and can be identified and retrieved. Classification schemes are also referred to as records plans or file plans.

Record series: a group of records that all arise from and support the same activity or function, with the same format or profile of information, for example project files. Although the subject matter for individual instances will be unique all the records in a series have the same disposition requirements and can be managed at series level.

Retention schedule: a timetable for records which sets how long they need to be kept at the various stages of their life. It also specifies what should happen to them, for example transfer to other storage, to the archives, or destruction. It is organized according to record series, because all the records in a series will have the same value and will need to be kept for the same amount of time once the file is closed.



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

I don't have a retention schedule. How do I get one?

ARMS has developed the PORS (Peacekeeping Operations Retention Schedule) which gives instructions on how long to keep and disposition requirements for records relating to mission support, mission operations and mission management. It is available on the ARMS website.

What if we miss the schedule deadline?

If the records have only one year or less before they will be destroyed, if possible, keep them until their scheduled date of destruction, which you can arrange with ARMS.

UN ARMS Toolkit