



**Australian Government**  
**National Archives of Australia**

# **Corporate Plan 2009 – 2012**

September 2009

the archives  
naa.gov.au

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Each year the National Archives of Australia (the Archives) identifies a set of strategic priorities that combine the outcomes that we are seeking to achieve and the strategies, policies and approaches that we intend to pursue to achieve those goals. These are consistent with the Archives' Strategic Direction statement included within the Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio Budget Statements.

This Corporate Plan identifies our key priorities for the next three years and provides the pathways to deliver these priorities. It enables longer-term planning within the Archives and forms the basis on which we will make strategic, financial and other decisions for that period. In turn, detailed workplans and staff performance agreements have been developed to ensure that the business priorities are achieved.

We will report our actual achievements to the Parliament in the National Archives of Australia's Annual Report.

## **2. DIRECTOR-GENERAL'S OVERVIEW**

Looking forward, our strategic priorities centre around possible changes to our legislation resulting from freedom of information reforms, increasing our storage capacity, and our growing need to capture, store, preserve and provide access to the increasing quantity of digital records.

The 2009-10 Budget provided funding to enable the Archives, the National Library of Australia and the National Film and Sound Archive to work together to investigate ways to manage, preserve and provide access to digital material.

Our other key priorities are our staff and the need to complete a workforce plan, which will provide a structure to ensure that people-based strategies will be implemented to achieve the Archives' business needs. We will continue to look for new opportunities to improve our business operations – the way we work and the way we deliver our services, particularly in a tight financial environment.

We will continue to build on our important role as an accountability agency of government.

Over the next three years, the Archives will continue to deliver its core business, providing advice and dealing with government agencies, managing, preserving and making records available, and helping Australians become more aware of the rich national history held within the Archives.

## **3. OUR OUTCOMES AND PLANNING CONTEXT**

The Archives' 2009-10 Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS) outlines two planned outcomes and three programs for the Archives:

Outcome 1 – Authentic, reliable and useable Commonwealth records through the provision of information management products and services to Australian Government agencies

Program 1.1 – Delivering information management products and services

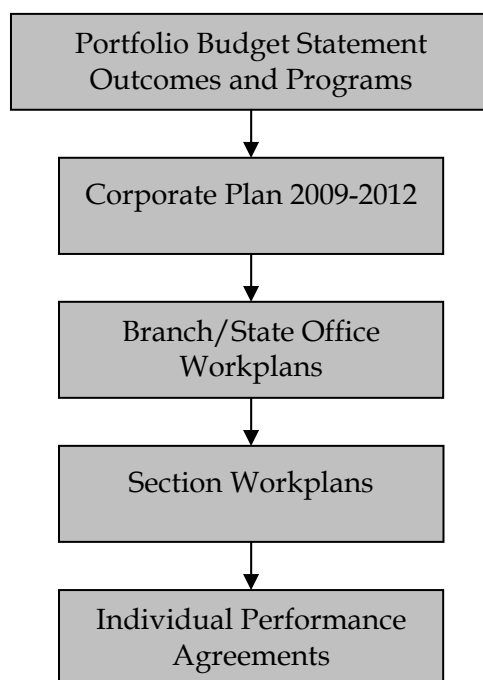
Outcome 2 – Greater understanding of our heritage and democracy through preserving, describing and providing access to the national archival collection

Program 2.1 – Securing, describing and preserving records of national archival value

Program 2.2 – Providing an accessible, visible and interpreted national archival collection.

The Archives' program key performance indicators, deliverables and resourcing, as outlined in the PBS, are measured and reported to government in the Annual Report.

The strategic priorities outlined in this document and the pathways to achieve them direct the annual Section, Branch and State Office Workplans, which are then incorporated by all staff into their role in delivering those plans, through their individual performance agreements. These linkages aim to ensure that the relationship between each work goals of our staff and our high level strategies are clear.



## 4. OUR VALUES

### **We are committed to the Australian Public Service Values and Code of Conduct**

We undertake to behave at all times in accordance with the Values and Code in our dealings with our stakeholders, clients and each other.

### **We are committed to the role of records in society**

We recognise the importance of information management to accountable, efficient and effective government.

We undertake to manage, preserve and make accessible the records that have been entrusted to us.

### **We are committed to working together to achieve our goals**

We undertake to continue to develop the professional and technical competence of our staff in order to meet our outcomes.

## 5. CORE BUSINESS RESPONSIBILITIES

The *Archives Act 1983* (Archives Act) identifies the key roles and responsibilities of the Archives. In particular, the Objects of the Archives Act are:

- (a) to provide for a National Archives of Australia, whose functions include:
  - (i) identifying the archival resources of the Commonwealth; and
  - (ii) preserving and making publicly available the archival resources of the Commonwealth; and
  - (iii) overseeing Commonwealth record-keeping, by determining standards and providing advice to Commonwealth institutions; and
- (b) to impose record-keeping obligations in respect of Commonwealth records.

The Archives fulfils these functions by pursuing a range of core business activities.

**Table 1: Core Business Responsibilities of the Archives**

Responsibility	Strategy
Help Australian Government agencies to meet their records management responsibilities	We develop standards, policies and guidelines, and provide practical products and services to assist Australian Government agencies to adopt good information management practices
Determine how long Australian Government agencies should keep their official records	We work with Australian Government agencies to ensure that the important information that documents their core business is identified and retained for as long as necessary to satisfy the business needs of agencies and the rights and entitlements of the Australian people

Identify records of enduring national significance as archival resources of the Commonwealth	We negotiate with Australian Government agencies to identify records of enduring national significance and ensure their appropriate maintenance.
Collect the records of the leaders of our nation	We offer our leaders the option of placing their personal records in the care of the Archives as they provide an invaluable complementary context to the official records that we hold
Transfer archival value records from Australian Government agencies	We plan and manage the transfer of records from Australian Government agencies and we ensure the optimal use of the space in our storage facilities across Australia.
Enable agencies to continue to access the records of their business which we hold	We facilitate access to records by their controlling agency on the agency's premises or in the Archives reading rooms, depending on the age and condition of the record and in accordance with our Act
Catalogue and index all the records that we hold	We list and describe our holdings so that they can be controlled and made available to users
Identify and preserve records that we hold that are at the highest risk of deterioration	We house the records that we hold in appropriate environmental conditions and we employ expert preservation staff and dedicated funding for preservation treatments
Provide access to the records that we hold in accordance with our Act	We facilitate access to the information that is in the open period, through our reading rooms, education programs, exhibitions, promotional events and websites.
Promote understanding and appreciation of the archival resources of the nation	We produce publications, present exhibitions, hold events and publicise the collection to enhance the public's knowledge and use of the collection.

## 6. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

While our core business functions represent our key, ongoing responsibilities, our approaches to these functions are informed by our changing circumstances. For the next three years, the Archives has identified the following five priorities on which it will place its primary focus in order to deliver its outcomes to government and the community. Some of these priorities continue from previous years, although their character and focus continues to evolve as we make progress towards our targets and in response to our environment. The strategic priorities are integral to our three-year Corporate Plan, and each year we will return to them to refine our goals, measure our progress, and learn from our challenges and achievements.

Each strategic priority is mapped to one or both outcomes and primary responsibility is assigned to one or more areas of the Archives. In addition, significant impacts on or contributions from other areas of the Archives are identified. This is not intended, however, to suggest that other areas within the organisation have no contribution to make to a particular priority. The work of the Archives is complex, and any area of our endeavour involves both a contribution from and an impact on all parts of the organisation. Also indicated below each priority are the steps required in 2009-10 to progress towards our targets. Table 2, on pages 10-11, outlines the pathways to deliver our strategic priorities over the next three years.

**SP1: Appropriate Storage for the Collection**

Relevant outcome – Outcome 2

- Primary Responsibility:
  - Corporate Services
  - Operations and Preservation
- Significant Impacts:
  - Finance (CFO)

The Archives' current storage and preservation facilities are very close to full capacity. They are also aging and costly to operate, especially in terms of their energy costs. A new building to provide increased storage capacity remains our highest priority.

In 2008-09, the Archives began the process of securing these necessary facilities.

*In 2009-10, we will develop a new business case with the aim to re-secure government investment in appropriate storage and preservation solutions for the Archives.*

**SP2: The Digital Environment**

Relevant outcome – Outcome 1 and 2

- Primary Responsibility:
  - National Coordination
  - Operations and Preservation
- Significant Impacts:
  - Access and Communication
  - Government Information Management
  - Finance (CFO)

Transfers of records from agencies in digital formats are increasing. The Archives will need to manage, preserve and provide access to these records. For some time now, the Archives has been developing its capability to assist government to manage its digital information, to act as a digital archive for the Commonwealth and to provide access to born digital records. We have proven the feasibility of our approach and built our skills, processes and infrastructure.

Most recently we have sought to partner with our colleagues in other Commonwealth collecting institutions, who face similar digital challenges. Together we aim to develop efficient and effective responses to the digital deluge.

*In 2009-10, we will further develop the business case with the aim to secure government investment in the solutions to manage, preserve and provide access to digital information.*

**SP3: Legislative Review**

Relevant outcome – Outcome 1 and 2

- Primary Responsibility:
  - National Coordination

- Significant Impacts:
  - Access and Communication
  - Government Information Management
  - Finance (CFO)

The Archives Act was originally drafted in conjunction with the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act). These two areas of administrative law have long operated in tandem.

The Government intends to improve the accountability and transparency of government, including through changes to the FOI Act and the Archives Act, which will present significant challenges and opportunities for the Archives. Just as the original drafters ensured that these two key laws were closely linked, the Archives intends to respond to this renewed accountability focus in a positive and proactive way, including through an examination of potential changes to the Archives Act aimed at achieving the Government's policy objectives.

*In 2009-10, we will contribute positively to freedom of information reform and implement its results as appropriate.*

*In 2009-10, we will respond to the Government's increased expectations for accountability for information management.*

#### **SP4: Valuing and Developing Our People**

Relevant outcome – Outcome 1 and 2

- Primary Responsibility:
  - Corporate Services
- Significant Impacts:
  - Access and Communication
  - Government Information Management
  - National Coordination
  - Operations and Preservation

In 2008-09, the Archives commenced quarterly workforce metrics reporting so that it could more effectively analyse its workforce to meet its business needs. In 2009-10, this work will be complemented by the completion of a comprehensive workforce plan. A key focus of this Plan will be the need to continue to value and develop our people so that the Archives and its staff can effectively operate in what is now a dynamic, ever changing and demanding public service. The expectation to do more with less will continue over the life of this Plan. It is critical that we continue to develop strong leadership and management capability and to provide interesting and challenging work with flexible conditions of service so that we can retain and attract the best possible people to meet our current and future business needs.

*In 2009-10, we will provide staff with the opportunity to contribute to decisions about the management of the Archives through our biannual staff survey.*

*In 2009-10, we will finalise a workforce plan, with a particular emphasis on continuing to build the capability of our staff to meet future business challenges.*



**SP5: Increasing Our Business Effectiveness**

Relevant outcome – Outcome 1 and 2

- Primary Responsibility:
  - Operations and Preservation
  - Access and Communication
  - Corporate Services
- Significant Impacts:
  - National Coordination
  - Government Information Management

The Archives continually seeks to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of our delivery of outcomes to government and the community. As a government agency we have an ongoing responsibility to make sound use of our funding, and this responsibility is even more critical in the current financial environment. It is good practice to periodically re-examine our existing policies and processes so that we can continue to make improvements, particularly by taking advantage of technological developments.

*In 2009-10, we will complete a comprehensive review of our business systems and develop an implementation plan in response to its recommendations.*

*In 2009-10, we will continue to explore ways in which technological developments can enhance access to our collections.*

*In 2009-10, we will implement the outcomes of our comprehensive pricing review in order to ensure that we can develop all appropriate revenue opportunities.*

**Table 2: Pathways to deliver our Strategic Priorities**

2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
<i>Appropriate Storage for the Collection</i>		
We will develop a new business case with the aim to re-secure government investment in appropriate storage and preservation solutions for the Archives.	Subject to approved funding, we expect to pursue Public Works Committee approval and begin the land acquisition, if required, and building design processes for a new archives preservation facility.	Subject to approved funding, we expect to complete design and begin construction of our new archives preservation facility. We also expect to start planning and preparation for the relocation of records and staff to the new facility.
<i>The Digital Environment</i>		
We will further develop the business case with the aim to secure government investment in the solutions to manage, preserve and provide access to digital information.	Subject to approved funding, we expect to begin to develop digital archive capacity on the scale needed to cater for the archival digital records produced by the Australian Government.  We will pursue the digital copying of obsolete audio visual formats to preserve audio visual archival material at risk.	Subject to approved funding, we expect to implement digital archive capacity on the scale needed to cater for the archival digital records produced by the Australian Government.  We will pursue the digital copying of obsolete audio visual formats to preserve audio visual archival material at risk.
<i>Legislative Review</i>		
We will contribute positively to Freedom of Information reform and implement its results as appropriate.  We will respond to the Government's increased expectations for accountability for information management.	We expect to identify potential reforms to the Archives Act to support Government policy objectives and achieve administrative efficiencies.  We expect to seek policy approval for reforms and commence preparation of legislation to effect same.	We expect to undertake legislative change processes and implement outcomes.

2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
<i>Valuing and Developing Our People</i>		
<p>We will provide staff with the opportunity to contribute to decisions about the management of the Archives through our biannual staff survey.</p> <p>We will finalise a workforce plan, with a particular emphasis on continuing to build the capability of our staff to meet our future business challenges.</p>	<p>We expect to implement strategies arising from the 2010 Staff Survey</p> <p>We expect to continue to implement actions from the workforce plan, including developing the capability of our staff through targeted learning and development opportunities.</p>	<p>We expect to conduct the 3<sup>rd</sup> Archives' Staff Survey in March 2012.</p> <p>We expect to continue to implement actions from the workforce plan, including developing the capability of our staff through targeted learning and development opportunities.</p>
<i>Increasing our Business Effectiveness</i>		
<p>We will complete a comprehensive review of our business systems and develop an implementation plan in response to its recommendations.</p> <p>We will explore ways in which technological developments can enhance access to our collections.</p> <p>We will implement the outcomes of our comprehensive pricing review in order to ensure that we can develop all appropriate revenue opportunities.</p>	<p>We expect to pursue high priority core business systems development projects in accordance with our implementation plan.</p> <p>Continue to explore ways to use technology to enhance access to our collection.</p>	<p>We expect to pursue high priority core business systems development projects in accordance with our implementation plan.</p> <p>Continue to explore ways to use technology to enhance access to our collection.</p>