Saskatchewan Archives Board

ARMS 2006

Administrative Records Management System 2006

For Saskatchewan Government Departments, Crown Corporations, Agencies, Boards and Commissions

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PREFACE

The Saskatchewan Administrative Records System (SARS) was first approved by the Legislative Assembly in 1993. Three years later a section relating to Information Systems and Technologies was added. Beginning in 2001, the Saskatchewan Archives, in consultation with a number of departments, commissions and boards, began to update and revise SARS. This revised version, renamed the Administrative Records Management System (ARMS), was approved by the Legislative Assembly on June 16, 2003 for use by government departments, agencies, commissions and boards. In 2004-05 the system was updated and revised to include crown corporations. The input and support of officials across government has been greatly appreciated, and has contributed substantially to the enhanced quality of the system.

While maintaining the comprehensiveness of SARS, ARMS 2006, as with ARMS, offers a more streamlined classification system with fewer primaries and secondaries. As well the simplified retention schedule first introduced in ARMS has been retained in ARMS 2006. One of the most significant additions to ARMS 2006 is the final disposition column and the detailed procedures for the proper use of this column. Use of these procedures will facilitate the speedy disposition of administrative records that have met the required retention period.

Those departments that have not yet implemented the common classification system will find that the regular application of ARMS 2006 will result in significant savings in terms of space, retrieval time, and the disposition process. These efficiencies will translate into financial savings for your agency and the government as a whole. I encourage all provincial government institutions to become familiar with and implement the Administrative Records Management System 2006 as soon as possible.

The staff of the Government Records Branch of the Saskatchewan Archives has developed this ARMS 2006 manual for your use. I trust you will find it easy to use and beneficial to your organization.

Trevor J. D. Powell
Provincial Archivist

ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS CLASSIFICATION, RETENTION, AND DISPOSAL SYSTEM
(*The Saskatchewan Archives Act, 2004*)

Administrative Records Management System 2006

It is hereby recommended under the authority of *The Archives Act, 2004*, being Chapter A-26.1, of *The Statutes of Saskatchewan, 2004*, that the public records listed in the attached **Records Schedule** named **Administrative Records Management System 2006 (ARMS 2006)**, belonging to **DEPARTMENTS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN, CROWN CORPORATATIONS, COMMISSIONS, BOARDS, AGENCIES OR OTHER BRANCHES OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE OF SASKATCHEWAN** and successors in charge of such documents, be classified, retained, and disposed of as indicated.

To enable the selection and transfer of records with historical significance to the Saskatchewan Archives Board, government institutions must follow, for records listed in this schedule, the Disposal and Transfer Guidelines for Administrative Records developed by the Saskatchewan Archives Board.

This retention schedule replaces Schedules No.10, 326, 329 and 356 and portions of all other records retention schedules predating 1993 that pertain to administrative records.

Any public records not listed in this schedule or in an approved operational records schedule will be considered to have permanent value and will be retained until such time as they are included in an approved records schedule or authorized for disposal by an order-in-council or statute.

"Permanent" shall mean that the documents shall be preserved permanently either by retention within the department or by transfer to the Saskatchewan Archives Board.

This schedule pertains only to records deemed to be official records. "Official Record" shall mean a record that is retained for legal, fiscal, operational or historical purposes *within* each **Government Department, Crown Corporation, Agency, Board, Commission, or other institution of the Executive Government of Saskatchewan.** Official Records can be the original and only copy of a record, a microfilm copy, an electronic copy or any other replacement copy of a record after verification. Legal and fiscal concerns for storage media must be satisfied before a record is designated as Official. All records created, deposited or received by a government institution in the administration of public affairs in Saskatchewan must have a designated "Official Record" that resides within that government institution.

"Additional Record" shall mean any copy of an Official Record. Additional records shall be disposed of in accordance with *authorized* policies and procedures established by the **DEPARTMENTS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN, CROWN COPORATIONS, COMMISSIONS, BOARDS, AGENCIES OR OTHER BRANCHES OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE OF SASKATCHEWAN** and without written authorization from the Provincial Archivist.
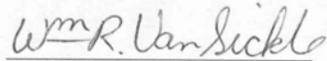
PUBLIC RECORDS COMMITTEE

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Date: _March 21, 2006_

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Legislative Librarian, Legislative Library

Date: _March 21, 2006_

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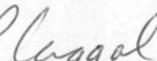
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Date: _March 21, 2006_

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Date: _March 21, 2006_

Approved by the Public Records Committee: _March 21, 2006_

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Administrative Records Management System 2006 (ARMS 2006) is an executive tool to assist government departments, boards, commissions, agencies and crown corporations in proper information management. ARMS 2006 combines a comprehensive classification system for administrative records with an up-to-date records schedule.

ARMS 2006 is based on records management theories and practices tested and proven in other provincial governments, in the federal government and in organizations around the world. The idea is simple: combine an easy-to-use records classification system with a retention schedule and institutions will have a far greater degree of control over their information. Staff members will always know where information is located and when it can be disposed of.

The Saskatchewan Administrative Records System (SARS) was passed in May 1993 and revised over a two year period ending in June 2003. That revision resulted in the amalgamation of a number of primaries, the deletion and addition of other primaries, and changes to format and retention information. In 2004-2005 a further review of the manual was undertaken to incorporate changes necessary for use by crown corporations, as well as the addition of a final disposition column, added in order to facilitate provisions of *The Archives Act, 2004*.

This version of the ARMS 2006 manual contains all the information you will need to use the new system. Included are complete lists of all primaries and secondaries, a detailed index, glossary of terms, a how-to section, reference to the operational records system, information on the disposal process and concordance tables from both SARS and ARMS to ARMS 2006 for easy reference to changes made to the original.

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Chapter 1.   INTRODUCTION

In today's information driven environment an efficient information management system is essential for all government offices. Recorded information provides the basis for all government activities, from employee information to medical statistics to policies and procedures. *Information is important!*

Records are your "institutional memory", they are necessary for decision making and policy development, for legislative compliance, for fiscal and legal requirements and for almost every aspect of day-to-day office work. An effective information management system provides quick and easy access to your institution's memory, it reduces the volume and cost of paperwork and control, and it greatly improves institutional efficiency. It also reduces storage costs, provides evidence of disposal of records which have met their retention periods, provides an accountability structure and ensures the preservation of your institution's and province's history.

The Administrative Records Management System 2006 (ARMS 2006) combines two of the basic tools of information management: a classification system and a records retention schedule. A classification system is necessary for the filing and retrieval of information. The schedule indicates the minimum time an office must retain a record (based on administrative, legal and fiscal requirements) and serves as a legal tool for disposal of the record once its usefulness is complete.

ARMS 2006 deals exclusively with administrative records commonly found in all units of government. ARMS 2006 does not apply to:

- Operational records (see 2.1 for definition)

- Non-government Records (see 2.1 for definition)
  - transitory records
  - published records
  - non-work related records

Information on operational records systems is available from the Government Records Branch of the Saskatchewan Archives Board. See Chapter 4.

1.1   Background

Accountable management of public records is not new to Saskatchewan. From the very earliest days records were maintained for a variety of purposes including public administration, land titles, and records of births, deaths and marriages. Since 1945 the Saskatchewan Archives Board has played a prominent role in records management, principally through the instrument of records schedules and by acquiring and preserving records of continuing historical significance. Records management during the early life of a document has typically been the responsibility of the office creating or

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acquiring the record. With the Administrative Records Management System 2006, the Saskatchewan Archives Board is providing ongoing support to government institutions in the day-to-day management of information in government.

The Saskatchewan Administrative Records System (SARS) was initially developed by the Saskatchewan Archives Board (SAB) in response to *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIPP) passed in 1991. The re-named system continues to be maintained as part of the core program of the SAB.

1.1.1 Legislation

In Saskatchewan there are two main statutes which dictate aspects of information management in government: *The Archives Act, 2004* and *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.*

The Archives Act, 2004

> It is a requirement of *The Archives Act, 2004* that all government institutions prepare records schedules for all of the public records created or held by the institution and that, following approval of the schedule(s) by the Public Records Committee, that every records schedule applicable to that institution be implemented. A records schedule as defined in *The Archives Act, 2004* is a "formal plan that identifies the public records that are subject to the plan, establishes a classification system and retention periods of those records and provides for their disposition."

> *The Archives Act, 2004* authorizes government institutions to destroy any public record, subject to the Disposal and Transfer Guidelines for Administrative Records, in their custody without the written permission of the Provincial Archivist, providing the record is **"administrative in nature and is addressed in a common administrative records schedule approved by the public records committee."**

The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

> *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* gives the public the right to access information in government. There are some restrictions on that right. However, if an access request is made, records must be located and accounted for prior to the decision on access being made. If the information is not available the institution should be able to demonstrate that records were disposed of properly. This requires proof that the records were destroyed in accordance with *The Archives Act, 2004* with the approval of the Provincial Archivist and the Public Records Committee, or that they were transferred to the Saskatchewan Archives or some other government institution. Government institutions have thirty days to make the decision on access.

> **All government institutions are accountable to the public for their records in the same way they are accountable for monetary expenditure.**

1.2   Your Responsibilities

1.2.1 Classification System

Government institutions are responsible for efficient and proper management of government information in compliance with the requirements of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, The Archives Act, 2004* and other relevant legislation. ARMS 2006 is a tool which assists government institutions in fulfilling these responsibilities and meeting the demands of the changing environment. The ARMS 2006 classification system is based on division by function and subject, which makes the system flexible enough to accommodate reorganizations and any new filing situations. The system's hierarchical structure, with each classification level becoming more specific and definite, creates quick and easy access to information. The integration of a retention schedule with the classification system facilitates disposal of information. As specified in *The Archives Act, 2004*, government institutions are required to use ARMS 2006 as both a retention schedule **and** a classification system for their administrative records.

1.2.2 Retention Schedule

The retention schedule applies to all government institutions in Saskatchewan and must be used when disposing of records. For government departments, crown corporations, boards, commissions and agencies, ARMS 2006 supersedes Schedule No. 10, Schedule 326, Schedule 329, Schedule 356 and **ALL** portions of other retention schedules pertaining to administrative records. Keep in mind, however, that **any portion of your current schedule which deals with operational records is still in effect** until your new Operational Records System is approved.

1.3   Benefits of ARMS 2006

1.3.1 Easy organization of records

ARMS 2006 will simplify daily use of information because:

- It is easy to follow.

- It can be consistently applied throughout your organization.

- It allows for greater accessibility.

- It will provide accurate and consistent classification of records throughout government.

- It simplifies information exchange.

- It will reduce training requirements when relocating staff.

- It is not affected by organizational changes in government institutions.

1.3.2 Fewer "active" records

Proper use of ARMS 2006 will result in the regular disposal of records which are no longer required in your office. This will mean:

- Fewer records to be searched for administrative or FOIPP requests.

- Prompt and accurate disposal of records which have met their retention periods.

- An accurate audit trail of record disposal.

- Transfer to the Archives of records with historical value.

1.3.3 Legislative Compliance

ARMS 2006 will help you meet many information-related legislative requirements. For example:

- Compliance with *The Archives Act, 2004* will be quick and simple.

- An effective records classification system will allow quick retrieval of records requested under FOIPP legislation. Quick retrieval means more time is available to review the record before deciding on questions of access.

- ARMS 2006 ensures that records are kept for the period of time necessary to satisfy any legal, fiscal and administrative requirements stated in relevant legislation and ensures timely disposal of records containing personal information as required by The Overarching Personal Information Privacy Framework for Executive Government and The Crown Sector Privacy Framework.

1.3.4 Cost Savings

Poor records management can be very costly to government. Time spent in trying to locate missing records, as well as storage costs for maintaining records beyond their administrative and legislative requirements all have a fiscal impact on your institution. As well, lost or missing records can result in substantial litigation costs.

- The integrated records retention schedule and classification system will ensure a more efficient management of files and the timely disposal of records.

1.3.5 Security and Privacy

Application of the ARMS 2006 standardized classification system and retention schedule may facilitate the process of identifying records containing information of a personal or confidential nature and ensure that consistent security measures are applied to all the records. Improper management and disposal of records can compromise security and the privacy of clients, increasing the risk of liability for government and for individual citizens.

These benefits are even more significant when ARMS 2006 is combined with an up-to-date Operational Records System (ORS). Information on developing a new system is available from the Saskatchewan Archives Board.

Chapter 2. HOW TO USE ARMS 2006

2.1 Definitions

The following definitions are important for your understanding of ARMS 2006. Additional terms are defined in the Glossary of this manual.

ADDITIONAL RECORD: Refers to any other copy of a record (other than the official record) required for administrative purposes. Additional records cannot be disposed of without an approved policy. For more information, see the Saskatchewan Records Management Guidelines.

ADMINISTRATIVE RECORD: Records pertaining to administration or "housekeeping" activities of the organization not central to the mandated function of the institution in question. For most government departments and some crown corporations, administrative records may include the management of facilities, property, material, finances, human resources, and information systems.

CHRONOLOGICAL FILES: These files consist of records compiled to serve administrative purposes only - they do not include records of a transitory nature created for short-term reference purposes (e.g. convenience photocopies).

CONVENIENCE COPIES: Copies of records produced for short-term reference. These can be photocopies, electronic records or any other copy provided a classified and scheduled record exists. Convenience copies do not need to be scheduled.

DESTRUCTION: Destruction occurs when records have served the required retention period and have been identified for destruction according to the Final Disposition (FD) column in ARMS 2006 or if the records have been reviewed by the Saskatchewan Archives Board and determined to possess no long-term historical significance.

DESTRUCTION NOTIFICATION: Used for **ADMINISTRATIVE** records with **DESTROY (D)** in the Final Disposition Column of ARMS 2006. Notification is sent to the Saskatchewan Archives Board advising that certain administrative records have met their retention periods and have been destroyed. A *Destruction Notification Form*, which is provided by the Saskatchewan Archives Board, must be used. This includes the name of personnel authorizing destruction (head of institution or designate), date of destruction, where the destruction took place, who witnessed it, and the method of destruction.

DISPOSAL REQUEST: Request sent to the Archives to request disposal of **OPERATIONAL** records that have met their required retention periods. Disposal can include destruction or transfer of records to the Saskatchewan Archives Board. Disposal requests must be made on a *Disposal Request Form*, which is provided by the Saskatchewan Archives Board. An inventory must accompany the *Disposal Request Form*. Inventory forms are available from the Saskatchewan Archives Board. Other inventory forms (department or Records Centre) may be used, providing the relevant information is included.

DOCUMENT: A single record item (letter, memorandum, form, etc.).

FINAL DISPOSITION: The action taken with regard to the disposal of inactive records. Final disposition can involve either the physical destruction of records or appraisal; appraisal can result in transfer of the records to the Saskatchewan Archives Board for permanent preservation, or for unselected records, authorization to destroy.

FINAL DISPOSTION COLUMN: Column in ARMS 2006 which provides information on the final disposition of administrative records.

GOVERNMENT RECORDS: Government records include all recorded information that relates to the transaction of government business, regardless of physical form, including documents, maps, electronic records, e-mail, drawings, photographs, letters, vouchers, papers, etc. which are received, created, deposited or held by an office of a department, agency, board, crown corporation, commission, or other institution of the Government of Saskatchewan.

NON-GOVERNMENT RECORDS: Not all records created by government institutions are considered a government record and, therefore are not subject to the requirements of *The Archives Act, 2004*. Such records include transitory records [records of temporary usefulness that are needed only for a limited period of time, to complete a routine task, or to prepare an ongoing document (i.e. convenience (duplicate) copies, advertising material, blank forms, etc.)], published records, non-work-related records (i.e. employees' personal e-mails and letters, records of other organizations with which an employee is involved, but not as part of the government business, i.e. associations, community organizations, etc.), etc.

OFFICIAL RECORD: Refers to the official copy of a record that is retained, within your institution, for legal, fiscal, operational, or historical purposes. It exists to fulfill long-term financial, legal and audit requirements. It can be the original and only copy of the record or a replacement copy that is designated as official. Legal concerns for storage media, as defined by *The Electronic Documents Act* and *The Saskatchewan Evidence Act*, must be satisfied before a record is designated as official.

OPERATIONAL RECORD: Records which relate to the operations and services provided by an office in carrying out the functions for which it is responsible according to statute, mandate, or policy. In most cases, operational records are distinct from common administrative functions and are unique to each government institution.

PUBLICATIONS: Generally includes books, magazines, pamphlets, printed annual reports, etc.; i.e. any published material with the exception of master copies of institutional publications. In the context of e-mail, messages and digests received from listservs and newsgroups are also publications, and may be disposed of without a schedule or a disposal request. It is important to note however that while documents are not considered government records according to *The Archives Act*, *The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act* specifies that Saskatchewan government institutions must deposit six copies with the Legislative Library before discarding their own publications.

RECORD: Recorded information, regardless of medium (paper, computer disks, electronic, microfilm, e-mail, photographs, maps, etc.) or characteristics. A record can refer to a single document or a group of documents in a file folder. Throughout ARMS 2006, "record" most commonly refers to a file folder which may contain a single document, paper or electronic, or many documents.

RECORD APPRAISAL: The process of determining the historical value of records for possible transfer to the Saskatchewan Archives Board.

RECORD or **FILE CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM**: A logical and systematic arrangement of records or files into subject groups or categories. This arrangement is based on some definite scheme of natural relationships using numbers, letters or key words for identification.

RECORD SERIES or FILE SERIES: A group of similar or related records that are normally used and filed together as a unit and can be evaluated as a unit for determining the record retention period.

REQUEST FOR APPRAISAL: Used for <u>**ADMINISTRATIVE**</u> records with **APPRAISAL REQUIRED (A)** in the Final Disposition column (FD) in ARMS 2006.   Request sent to the Saskatchewan Archives Board asking for an archival review of administrative records that have met their retention period and have been identified for appraisal in ARMS 2006.   Records will either be transferred to the Archives for permanent archival retention or identified for destruction. A *Request for Appraisal Form* must be used. Forms are available from the Saskatchewan Archives Board. An inventory must accompany the *Request for Appraisal Form.* Inventory forms are available from the Saskatchewan Archives Board. Other inventory forms (department or Records Centre) may be used, providing the relevant information is included.

SCHEDULE: Records Schedules are the authority by which government organizations may dispose of records no longer required. The schedule is an effective tool for records management which provides a classification system, a concise and convenient description of each record and its required retention period. All Records Schedules must be approved according to the procedures set out in *The Archives Act, 2004.*

TRANSITORY RECORDS: Records of temporary usefulness that are needed only for a limited period of time, to complete a routine task, or to prepare an ongoing document. They are not required to meet statutory obligations or to sustain administrative or operational functions. Once they have served their purpose, they should be destroyed.

2.2   Records Classification

2.2.1 Division by Function

The records classification system in ARMS 2006 has as its principle element a division by function. This is combined with a block numeric system of coding or numbering where blocks of numbers are assigned to broad function or subject groupings.

The function-based system is flexible enough to accommodate a variety of record-keeping practices and thus allows individual institutions to fine-tune the system to best suit their needs. It is a simple, logical grouping of functions and subjects that allows organizational changes to be made without affecting the file structure and retention. The hierarchical structure, with each level becoming more specific and definitive, creates quick and easy access for information retrieval.

2.2.2 Sections

ARMS 2006 is arranged into three basic levels of record description - Sections, Primaries and Secondaries. Each level is based on the administrative function the information supports and each level is progressively more specific than the last.

The first major division of ARMS 2006 is into six groups representing the six basic administrative functions of government offices: **Administration, Buildings and Properties, Equipment and Supplies, Finance, Human Resources,** and **Information Systems and Technology.**

2.2.3 Primaries and Scope Notes

Within each major functional group or section, records are classified under a heading or **primary** title. This is the first level of description for that record. ***Each primary relates to a function, activity, or general subject***. It does not reflect record type (i.e. correspondence or memoranda). Primaries are arranged in a logical order, in most cases alphabetically. ARMS 2006 provides **scope notes** within each **primary** explaining what type of records appear within that **primary**.

For example the following primaries appear in the ***Equipment and Supplies Section***:

> **3015   Equipment and Supplies - Contracts**   *The scope notes inform the user that this primary is intended for*: Records relating to the administration of contracts pertaining to equipment and supplies. Includes rental, lease to purchase, equipment maintenance, supporting documentation, specific contracts, tenders, expressions of interest, requests for proposal (RFP's), etc.

> **3070   Building Materials**   *The scope notes inform the user that this primary is intended for:* Records relating to building materials and supplies such as lumber, hardware, etc.

> **3315   Office**   *The scope notes inform the user that this primary is intended for* Records relating to office machines, supplies, and stationery, including procurement, justification, user specifications, issue, maintenance and repairs.

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ARMS 2006 includes a complete list of primaries which are available for use in any   government office; however, it is important to know that your office will not need every primary. In fact you will probably need less than half of those available. They are included in ARMS 2006 because they apply to administrative records kept in other offices in government.

2.2.4 Secondaries

Within each primary are secondaries, which are subdivisions of a primary. **Most primaries have four standard secondaries:**

- **Policy and Procedure**. This includes records relating to procedures, regulations, and precedent or management decisions. *Policy and Procedure* appears in every primary as file number **00**.

- **General.** This secondary is intended to be used sparingly. It can be used ONLY if the records are not required to support financial, legal or specific administrative functions.
  General appears as a secondary in every primary (with the exception of general primaries) as file number **01**.

- **Reports and Statistics.** This secondary includes reports and statistics; it can include one-time reports or cyclical reports relating specifically to the primary in question. *Reports and Statistics* appears in most primaries as file number **20**.

- **Subject and Case files**. These include records and information on one topic brought together to facilitate information retrieval (e.g. general product and service information) or records that pertain to a specific time-limited entity (e.g. specific product history files.)   Subject and case file numbers typically range from **02** to **99**.

  For example, the *3315 Office* **primary** includes the following **secondaries**:
00	Policy and Procedure
01	General
02	Product and Service Information
03	Office Supplies and Stationery
20	Reports and Statistics
50	Office Machine Research Files
55	Office Machine History/Case Files

2.2.5 Tertiaries (and beyond)

In many cases the secondary subject or case files provided in ARMS 2006 are quite general and may need to be further divided to accommodate particular needs. Individual offices can create **tertiaries** (or further divisions) under existing **secondaries** for internal use. For example:

Office Machine History/Case Files could be divided into separate files (**tertiaries)** for each piece of equipment in your office or it could be kept as a single file.

Each tertiary will have the same retention period as the secondary under which it falls.

ARMS 2006 always proceeds from the general to the specific. Classification develops in a hierarchical structure such as in the diagram below:

Section	**Primaries**	**Secondaries**	**Tertiaries**
		3070-00 Policy and Procedure	
		3070-01 General	3070-02/service provider
	3070 Building Materials	3070-02 Product and Service Information	3070-02/supplier name
		3070-03 Supplies	3070-02/prices
		3070-20 Reports and Statistics	
3000 Equipment And Supplies		3070-50 Product Research Files	
		3315-00 Policy and Procedures	
		3315-01 General	
		3315-02 Products and Services	
	3315 Office	3315-03 Office Supplies and Stationary	
		3315-20 Reports and Statistics	3315-50/photocopier
		3315-50 Office Machine Research Files	3315-50/fax
			3315-50/printer
		3315-55 Office Machine History/Case Files	

2.2.6 Numbering

The numbers from 0 to 9999 have been reserved for ARMS 2006. Numbers 10000 and higher have been set aside for the Operational Records Systems (ORS).

ARMS 2006 is broken into six major sections. A range of 1000 numbers is assigned to each section.

Section 1:   Administration   **1000-1999**
Section 2:   Buildings and Properties   **2000-2999**
Section 3:   Equipment and Supplies   **3000-3999**
Section 4:   Finance   **4000-4999**
Section 5:   Human Resources   **5000-5999**
Section 6:   Information Systems and Technology   **6000-6999**

Secondary numbers are also pre-assigned. Within the secondary breakdown:

00 is reserved for Policy and Procedures
01 is reserved for the General file
20 is reserved for Reports and Statistics
02 to 49 are typically subject files
50 to 99 are typically case files.

Please note: Secondary numbers are established by the Saskatchewan Archives Board. They CANNOT be added at the Government Institution level.

Tertiaries may be given a numeric, alphabetical or alpha-numeric designation. The decision on type of designation has been left to the individual offices.
For example within the *Equipment and Supplies Section* (3000-3999) the *Office* primary is numbered **3315**. The *Office Machine History/Case Files* secondary is numbered **55**. Your office may wish to break this file into tertiaries for a postage machine and a photocopier. To do this you could assign another level of numbers to these new files or create an alphabetic code which is easily understood by everyone. Hence the file number for postage machines might be **3315-55/post**, and for the photocopier **3315-55/copy**.

2.3   Records Schedules

Retention:
ARMS 2006 incorporates a **retention schedule** into the classification system outlined above. It provides a fully comprehensive and up-to-date schedule for all administrative records in government.
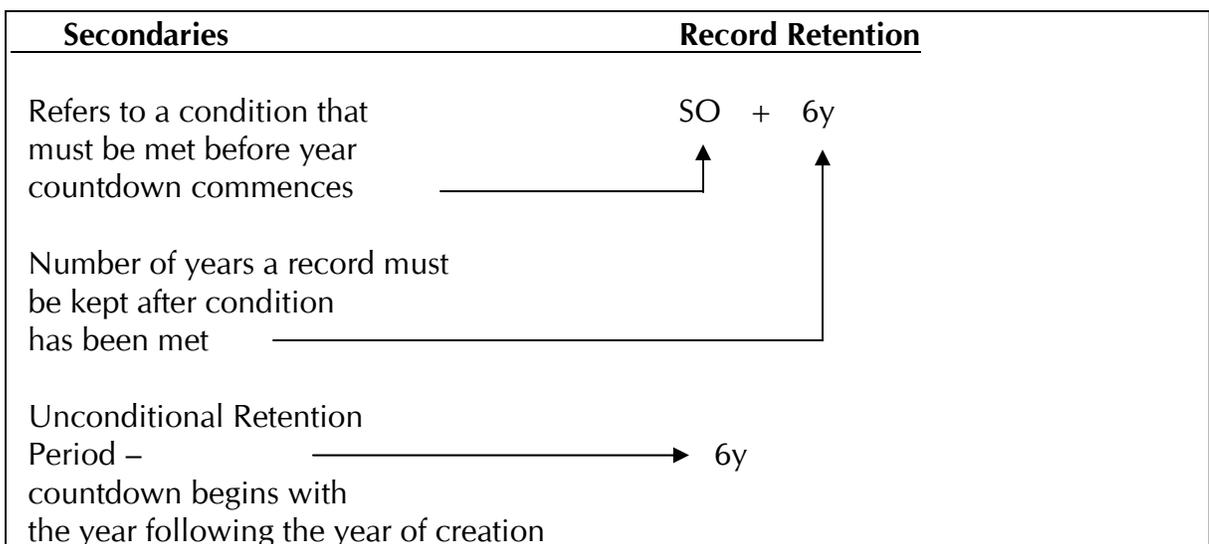
A **Records Schedule** is an essential tool for information management. As required by *The Archives Act, 2004* it provides a classification system, as well as a timetable for retention and disposal of public records held by government institutions. The retention schedule is a list of records with assigned retention periods determining for how long the records **must** be retained. Please note, however, that these retention periods are the **minimum time** a record must be retained. In rare cases, certain records may be subject to specific legislation, regulations, or other directives and the suggested retention periods may not be sufficient. Consultation with legal counsel may be necessary.

All schedules are approved by the *Public Records Committee*. It is the principle means by which the public maintains control over documents used in government offices on its behalf.

2.3.1 How to Read and Understand the Retention Information

All the retention information in ARMS 2006 is contained in the Retention column on the right side of each page. As shown below, the retention information reflects the total amount of time that **the official record** must be retained.

For further information on official vs. additional records see 2.3.2.

Secondaries	Record Retention
Refers to a condition that must be met before year countdown commences	SO + 6y
Number of years a record must be kept after condition has been met	
Unconditional Retention Period – countdown begins with the year following the year of creation	6y

2.3.2 Official Records

As an additional tool to help reduce the quantity of records in government, ARMS 2006 refers only to **Official Records.** The **Official Record** means the official copy of a record that is retained for legal, fiscal, operational, or historical purposes. Official Records can be:

- The original and only copy of a record;

- A microfilm copy, electronic copy, or any other replacement copy of a record after verification. Legal and fiscal concerns for storage media must be satisfied before a record is designated as official.

The **Official Record** exists to fulfill long-term financial, legal, and audit requirements. The term **Additional Record** refers to any other copy of a record required for administrative purposes. Once the **Official Record** is identified it allows for the earlier disposal of **Additional Records**. Individual Government Institutions may dispose of additional records providing the institution has developed and approved written internal policies and procedures for disposal of additional records. Copies of the policies and procedures should be forwarded to the Archives for review prior to their final approval.

See *The Saskatchewan Records Management Guidelines for more information on additional records.*

Official Records *may not be disposed of except in accordance with **The Archives Act, 2004**.* **See chapter 5 "Disposing of Records" for procedures related to the destruction or transfer of records to the Archives.**

2.3.3 Codes

The following codes are used for retention periods:

SO   Superseded or Obsolete

N/A   Not applicable -- a retention period is not required for this classification

> * Denotes an exception to the rule or that a condition is applied to the retention of the record. Refer to the bottom of that page for additional information.

A number combined with a "y" indicates the length of time in years a record must be retained prior to disposal. The number **must** always be read as "**current fiscal year plus (the number of years listed)**." For example:

> 2y current fiscal year PLUS two years
> 4y current fiscal year PLUS four years
> 6y current fiscal year PLUS six years

2.4   The Complete Picture

Within ARMS 2006 all of the above information is combined in an easy-to-read format.

If you are gathering information on various photocopiers being considered
for your office, you would create a file using the following steps:

> 1. Check the ARMS 2006 index for office machines. It refers you to *primary number* **3315**.

> 2. Read the *scope notes* to determine if it is the correct primary.

> 3. Choose the appropriate *secondary*. In this case, because no machine has yet been purchased, the information would be classified under the **Office Machine Research File** secondary.

> 4. You have now determined that the correct classification is **Office - Office Machine Research Files**. The file number is **3315-50**.

> 5. You can now place the file number on the information itself (this way you avoid having to repeat classification of the record if it is removed from the folder) and place the information in the correct file, or open a new file if necessary.

The retention information for **3315-50 Office Machine Research Files** is as follows:

> 50 Office Machine Research Files SO + 2 y

ARMS 2006 has informed you that the information contained in this file must be retained until superseded or obsolete (i.e. the information is no longer relevant) plus two years past the fiscal year in which it was created.

Chapter 3.   FOR THE FUTURE

3.1   Amending and Updating

As the records of government continue to change it is recognized that ARMS 2006 will require on-going amendments and updates in order to remain relevant. The system is designed to accommodate changes with a minimal impact on your office needs. Further revisions will be greatly influenced by you - the user. **The Archives is very interested to hear <u>any</u> concerns - large or small - you may have regarding ARMS 2006.** Please call us at 787-0734 or email recordhelp@archives.gov.sk.ca**.**

Chapter 4. OPERATIONAL RECORDS SYSTEM (ORS)

Operational Records relate to the operations and services provided by a government organization in carrying out the functions for which it is responsible according to statute, mandate, or policy. Operational records are distinct from administrative records and are unique to each government organization. Operational records usually consist of client files, program files, and subject files of specific application or interest to your government institution.

Because of the unique nature of operational records, ORS cannot be developed in a common schedule format as with ARMS 2006. Rather, they are developed on an agency-by-agency basis in consultation with archivists from the Saskatchewan Archives Board.

Operational records schedules are designed to be compatible with the Administrative Records Management System 2006 (ARMS 2006) in that they are block-numeric systems of classification and numbering. Records are arranged in simple, logical groupings that allow for organizational changes to be made without affecting the file structure and schedule. The classification system is hierarchical in structure, meaning the headings start out very broadly, and become more narrowly defined as needed. The system is based on the function of the record, and is flexible enough to accommodate a variety of record keeping systems.

4.1 Benefits

There are many benefits to having an up-to-date operational records schedule, including:

4.1.1 Legislative Compliance

The integrated records retention schedule and classification system will enable you to comply with the requirements of *The Archives Act, 2004*.

It will also allow you to produce information requested under *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIPP) within the required thirty day period because it provides a complete up-to-date inventory of all current and stored records, reduces the number of older records to be searched and provides an accurate audit trail of records disposal.

The Overarching Personal Information Privacy Framework for Executive Government states that government institutions must ensure that personal information is disposed of

in a timely and accountable manner. ARMS 2006, ORS and the Records Disposition System (RDS) provide a fully documented audit trail for the disposition of all records.

4.1.2 Credibility

All government departments are required to demonstrate proper records management techniques and apply them to the disposal of records. A records retention schedule and classification system will greatly enhance your abilities in this regard.

An effective records classification system allows quick retrieval of records requested under FOIPP legislation. Quick retrieval means more time is available to review the record before deciding on questions of access.

4.1.3 Cost Savings

Poor records management can be very costly to government. Time spent trying to locate missing records, storage costs for maintaining records beyond their administrative and legislative requirements, all have a fiscal impact on your institution. Furthermore, improper disposal of records can compromise security and privacy of clients, increasing the risk of liability for government

4.2   Creating Operational Records Systems

The process for creating or updating records schedules is governed by *The Archives Act, 2004* and includes the following components:

1.   **The Government Institution**
      Staff members within each government institution know their own operational records and their functions. They are best placed to inventory operational records and recommend retention periods. Government offices, with assistance from the Archives, are therefore expected to develop their own operational records schedules relevant to their institution.

2. **The Saskatchewan Archives**

Staff at the Saskatchewan Archives Board work in consultation with government departments when developing ORS. Archivists are available to provide advice on various issues including adequate retention periods, to review all drafts of records schedules, and to help ensure that schedules are presented to the Public Records Committee for approval in an acceptable format.

3. **The Public Records Committee**

All records schedules must be approved by the Public Records Committee. Their role is to ensure that all fiscal and legal requirements are met. The Public Records Committee reviews all schedule submissions. A representative from the office submitting the schedule is also present to answer any questions and present arguments. The Public Records Committee may approve, amend or reject the schedule.

Further information relating to Operational Records Systems development can be found in the Archives publication Operational Records Systems (ORS Development - Reference Guide. This publication is posted on the Archives website (www.saskarchives.com) or may be obtained by contacting our office at 787-0734 or recordhelp@archives.gov.sk.ca

Chapter 5.   Disposal of Records

All official government records must be retained by the responsible government institution for the length of time designated in the applicable records schedule. Once the retention period described in these schedules is met, official records may be disposed of using the procedures for either the **Disposal and Transfer Guidelines for Administrative Records** (detailed in Section 5.1) or the **Records Disposition System for Operational Records (**detailed in Section 5.2). Additional records are disposed of through institution-specific **approved** additional records disposal policies (see The Saskatchewan Records Management Guidelines).

5.1. Disposal and Transfer Guidelines for Administrative Records

5.1.1 Introduction

The Archives Act, 2004 authorizes government institutions to destroy any public record in their custody without the written permission of the Provincial Archivist providing the record is **"administrative in nature and is addressed in a common administrative records schedule approved by the Public Records Committee.**" In order to facilitate this provision of the Act, this manual has been revised to include both a 'Final Disposition' column and procedures for the proper use of this column.

These procedures describe the process for disposal of administrative records of government institutions that are covered by ARMS 2006. Disposition includes the destruction of records, as well as transfer to the Saskatchewan Archives Board. This includes **ALL FORMATS** of records, including electronic.

Before a government institution is in a position to destroy or transfer the administrative records it creates or acquires, the government institution must be using ARMS 2006 for both classification and disposition purposes. It must also have written records management policies and procedures and the Head of the institution must assign responsibility for "signing off" on the destruction of records to a position or positions at a senior management level. Government Records Branch (GRB) will provide group training sessions, as well as individualized advice and assistance, to government institutions to aid in fulfilling these requirements. Please contact GRB for further information.

Institutions unable to fulfill these requirements should follow, for administrative records, the procedures described in section 5.2 of this manual (Records Disposition System for Operational Records.

5.1.2 Final Disposition Column

ARMS 2006 provides information regarding the final disposition of administrative records. The Final Disposition column (FD) will contain one of the following:

A   Appraisal is required for possible transfer to the Saskatchewan Archives Board

D   Records may be destroyed

5.1.3 Procedures for disposal of records designated "Appraisal Required" (A)

An appraisal occurs when the records have met the requirements of their retention periods and have been identified as "A" in the Final Disposition (FD) column in ARMS 2006.

Department Records Manager
1   Identify records designated for archival appraisal as indicated in the Final Disposition column in ARMS 2006.

2   Prepare inventories of the material designated for archival appraisal. (Forms are available from the Saskatchewan Archives Board (SAB) for use; internal department inventory forms or records centre inventory forms may be used provided the relevant information is included).

3   Send a *Request for Appraisal Form* (available from the SAB), signed by the head of the institution (or designate), along with the records inventories to the Provincial Archivist.

Archivist, Government Records Branch
4   Appraise records and identify those required for archival retention.

5   Send the list of historically significant records to be acquired by the Archives to the department personnel responsible for records management. Send documentation confirming the appraisal and authorization that records not selected for archival retention may proceed to destruction.

Department Records Manager
6   Select identified archival records and contact the Government Records Branch to arrange for their transfer to the Archives.

Archivist, Government Records Branch
7   Confirmation will be sent to the department personnel when the material is accessioned into the holdings of Saskatchewan Archives Board.

Destruction: All remaining records not selected for archival retention may proceed to destruction according to steps 3 and 4 of Section 5.1.4.

5.1.4 Procedures for disposal of records designated "Destroy" (D)

Department Records Manager

1   Identify records that have served their retention periods and that have been identified for destruction in the Final Disposition column in ARMS 2006.

2   Prepare detailed inventories of the material designated for destruction. Confirm that retention periods and other conditions have been met and that the records are indeed administrative, and have been related to the appropriate primary and secondary in ARMS 2006.

Institution Head (or designate)

3   Authorize destruction of records by signing the *Destruction Notification Form*.

Department Records Manager

4   Destroy records authorized for destruction. Prepare a *Destruction Notification Form* (signed by head of the institution or delegate) and send a copy to the Saskatchewan Archives Board, including the inventory of records destroyed. *This inventory will be used for audit purposes by the Archives – the department/branch is responsible for retaining records that document destruction of material.* The *Destruction Notification Form* must contain the following information: date of destruction, where destruction took place, who witnessed it, and the method of destruction.

Note: Government offices using external shredding or recycling services should follow their department's policies with respect to the provisions of The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPP), The Health Information Protection Act (HIPA), and any other legislation governing information access and privacy.

Once records have exceeded their useful lifetime you should proceed quickly with their disposal. The Overarching Personal Information Privacy Framework for Executive Government states that "personal information should be retained only as long as necessary for the fulfillment of its stated collection purpose, or as specified by law." Records containing personal information can be retained longer than the stated retention period if necessary. However, they should be carefully managed and disposed of as soon as they are no longer needed.

Institutions should ensure that their records management polices and procedures cover all existing copies of records. Any records, regardless of format, that have not been disposed of after meeting their retention requirements could be accessed through a Freedom of Information request.

5.2 Records Disposition System for Operational Records

All operational records must be retained by the responsible government institution for the length of time designated in the Operational Records System(s) applicable to that institution. The regulations and procedures for disposing of operational records differ significantly from the disposal process for administrative records. Administrative records may be disposed of, providing the procedures for their disposal detailed in the ARMS 2006 manual are followed, without the express permission of the Provincial Archivist.

Conversely, the disposal of operational records, as specified in *The Archives Act, 2004,* requires **in all instances** the written permission of the Provincial Archivist. This process also applies to administrative records in the case of government institutions that are unable to meet the requirements necessary to dispose of their administrative records internally (see Section 5.1).

5.2.1 The Disposal Process

The department or agency wishing to dispose of records initiates the disposal process. Disposal requests are submitted to the Saskatchewan Archives Board, using a *Disposal Request Form*. The following information must be included on all disposal requests:

- department/branch name
- transfer number (if applicable)
- medium identification (hard copy or electronic – if electronic include application name and version number)
- location of records and, for medium other than paper, how they can be accessed. (It is the responsibility of the department, etc. to have available the necessary hardware and software to make all electronic records accessible for review)
- titles of files or file groupings, including a brief description of records
- inclusive dates
- schedule designation
- volume of records (how many boxes, cd's etc.)
- name and phone number of a contact person.

A records inventory or SPM Records Centre transfer sheet (containing all of the above information), and covered by a signed *Disposal Request Form* is acceptable. Inventory forms are also available from the Saskatchewan Archives Board.

The *Disposal Request Form* must be signed by a person authorized by the head of the institution to sign off on the disposal of records. Authorization forms are available from the Saskatchewan Archives Board.

When the disposal request is received by the Archives it goes through an initial review process which ensures that the request is complete, that the records are eligible for disposal, that they have been related to the correct schedule and that they have met their retention requirements. If additional information is needed you will be contacted by one of the disposal archivists either in writing or by phone. If, during the review process, it is discovered that all or some of the records are not eligible for disposal you will be advised by letter to retain them.

In a second review process, our appraisal archivists examine lists of records and select those that they would like to physically appraise in order to determine the historical value of records.

After both review processes have been completed you will receive a letter from the Archives. The letter may: authorize destruction of all records included in the disposal request; authorize destruction of some of the records and advise to retain the remaining records for a physical appraisal; or advise to retain all the records for appraisal. If a physical appraisal is conducted, you will receive a second letter describing the result of the appraisal; the result of this appraisal may be that some or all of the records will be transferred to the Archives. Any records not selected for transfer will be authorized for destruction.

5.2.2 Where to Begin

If you need assistance during any portion of the process, please contact our inquiry line at (306) 787-0734 or email recordhelp@archives.gov.sk.ca.

- **Collecting Information:** To begin the disposal process you need at least the following information about your records: medium identification (if records are boxed include box numbers, if records are electronic include where and how they can be accessed), records titles, dates for each record/group of records. This information can be included in inventory listings, file lists, any other file listings, or SPM Records Centre transfer sheets. If the file listings are not complete, it will be necessary to review

the records to fill in the missing data. If this information is not available, it will be necessary to conduct a records inventory.

- **Assigning Schedule Designations and Calculating Disposal Dates:** All records must be related to the appropriate operational records system. Once this has been done it is necessary to verify that the records have met the retention requirement specified in the system. To determine disposal dates it is necessary to determine the fiscal year of last action on the file. For example, if a record has an end date of May 15, 1992, its current fiscal year is 1992-1993. If the record in question has a six year retention period, you begin counting those six years AFTER the current fiscal year, i.e. 1993-94, 1994-95, 1995-96, 1996-97, 1997-98, 1998-99. Therefore the date that this record became eligible for disposal was 31 March 1999.

- **Submitting the Disposal Request:** Send the list of records, with schedule designations, to the Saskatchewan Archives Board at the address given below. If you are using the SPM Records Centre transfer sheets (or inventory sheets from any other storage facility) please ensure that the schedule designation information on these sheets is correct before submitting to the Archives. Often several years have elapsed from the time of placement in semi-active storage to date of disposal request. It must be determined if a new ORS has been approved within that time period and the records must be related to the current system prior to submission to the Archives.

- **Disposal Request Form:** Once you have all the information collected and reviewed, complete a *Disposal Request Form*, and send this, along with the list of records to the Saskatchewan Archives Board at this address:

  > Provincial Archivist
  > Saskatchewan Archives Board
  > University of Regina
  > Regina, Saskatchewan
  > S4S 0A2

  Before sending a disposal request to the Archives, please ensure that all listed records are eligible for disposal.
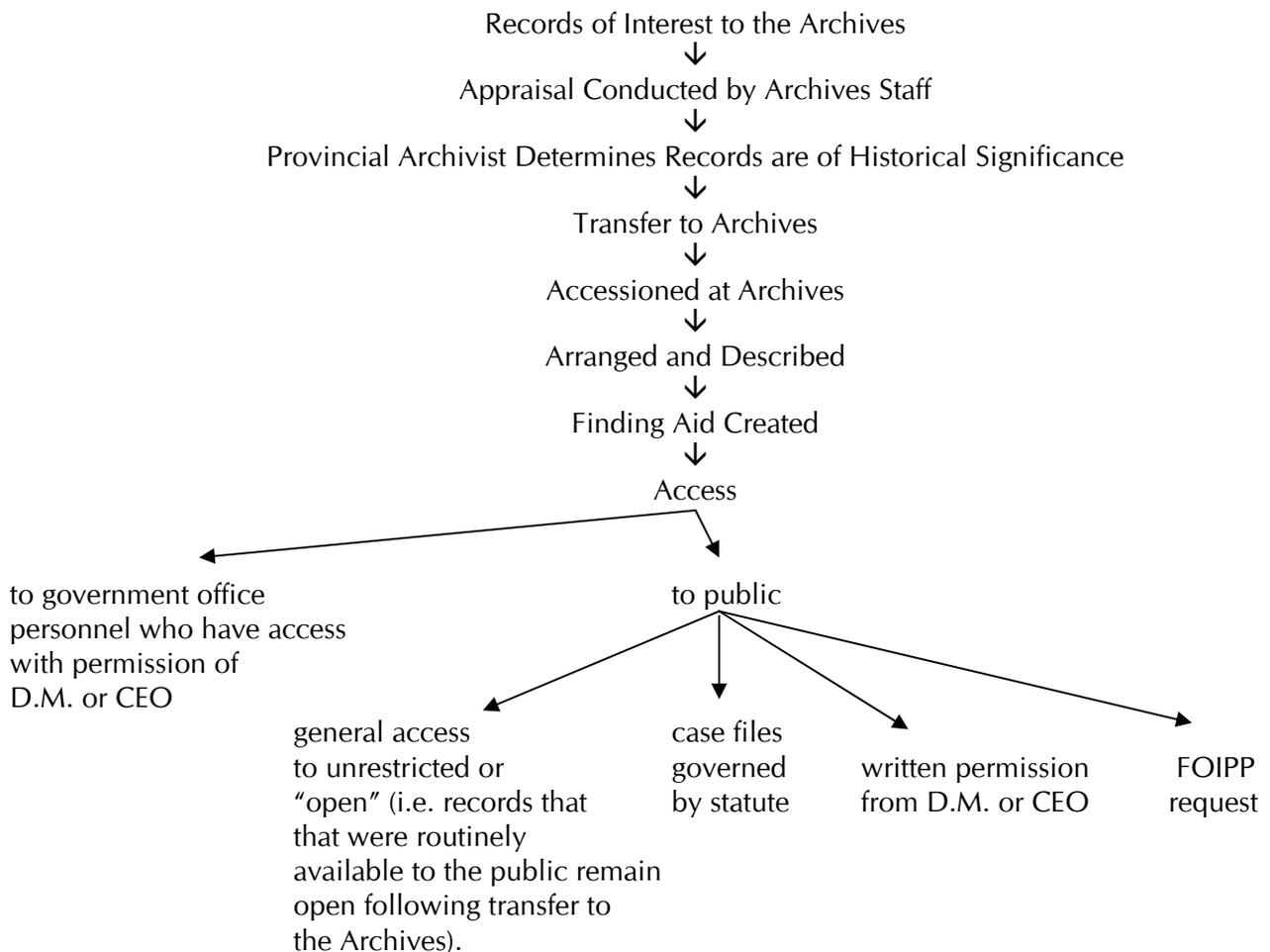
How to contact us

If you require assistance at any time in the disposal process, you can call our inquiry line at 787-0734 or email us at recordhelp@archives.gov.sk.ca.

5.3   Transfer to the Archives

The Saskatchewan Archives Board offers a safe and secure environment for records of historical value. Our primary facility has environmentally-controlled, limited access storage areas. We have a staff of professional archivists, records managers, a legislative compliance and access officer, and support personnel whose job it is to care for the historical records of Saskatchewan. This staff will ensure that records transferred from your department will be preserved, protected from all unauthorized access and made available where appropriate.

Records transferred to the Archives become part of the holdings of the Saskatchewan Archives Board (accessioned to the Archives). The records are then arranged and described according to standard archival principles. Finding aids are provided to researchers prior to accessing the actual records. This allows them to identify records of interest without having to handle the entire collection.

Records of Interest to the Archives
↓
Appraisal Conducted by Archives Staff
↓
Provincial Archivist Determines Records are of Historical Significance
↓
Transfer to Archives
↓
Accessioned at Archives
↓
Arranged and Described
↓
Finding Aid Created
↓
Access

to government office
personnel who have access
with permission of
D.M. or CEO

to public

general access
to unrestricted or
"open" (i.e. records that
that were routinely
available to the public remain
open following transfer to
the Archives).

case files
governed
by statute

written permission
from D.M. or CEO

FOIPP
request

Chapter 6.   Getting Started

The Saskatchewan Archives is able to assist government agencies in both administrative and operational records systems development.

The Archives will provide support in all aspects of ARMS 2006 implementation. Archives staff are available to answer questions and provide advice on disposal policy and procedures. Archives staff will also be available to help with full-scale implementation of ARMS 2006, including records conversions and systems maintenance. Introductory seminars are available to help people become more familiar with ARMS 2006 and its use. Finally, Archives staff will also be available on an on-going basis for consultation and communications regarding all aspects of the system.

Archivists at the Saskatchewan Archives Board are available to assist departments that wish to create or up-date operational records schedules.

For more information on the options available to your institution call (306)787-0734 or email recordhelp@archives.gov.sk.ca.

For more information on the Saskatchewan Archives Board and our services, both to the public and to government, see our website www.saskarchives.com.