

Alberta Records Management Committee (ARMC)

ARMC Circular: 2008-004

Topic: Backups – Scheduling and Disposition

Background

The *Canadian General Standard on Electronic Records* (CAN/CGSB-72.34-2005) defines backups as copies that may constitute any of the following:

- Additional resource and/or duplicate copies of records stored on different storage media and that are stored off-line for retrieval and use in the event of an emergency;
- Tape, diskette, or other machine-readable copy of a program or data file;
- Data or program file that is recorded and stored off-line for retrieval and use in the event of an emergency and/or for archival purposes; and
- Record containing all necessary evidence and information and that is used if the original record is not available.

Backups are considered official records for the following reasons:

- They document common government events and transactions;
- They are intended to be used for recovery purposes in the event of a records-related disaster; and
- They are managed at the departmental level rather than by individual staff persons.

Schedule # 2003/043

The ARMC approved a cross-government Records Retention and Disposition Schedule that addresses the records series relating to backups.

Routine System Backups are defined as routine backup of incremental or complete data sets to a backup device or media, including but not limited to: magnetic tapes, CDs, storage area networks (SANs), or to another system. Backing up information is a process that results in a copy of data for a moment in time from a master system, and retaining it for disaster and/ or business recovery purposes. Backups may be either incremental or full/complete backups.

| Closure Criteria | Retention | | Final Disposition |
|-------------------------|------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| Superseded or Obsolete | On Site: 0 years | Off site: 0 years | Destroy |

Schedule Implementation

Ministries can use **Schedule # 2003/043** to retain and dispose of all backups. Authority to dispose of these records has been delegated to staff who are responsible for performing the backup routines for each Ministry. This authority has been extended to:

- Staff within ministries, agencies, boards and commissions;
- Staff who work for Service Alberta; and
- Contracted or outsourced staff.

Each ministry will need to establish appropriate backup procedures and standards based on their business requirements.

Long-Term Strategy

Retention periods and final dispositions for backups will be included under the Support Service Classification and Schedule project which will replace Administrative Records Disposition Authority (ARDA). **Schedule #2003/043** will be reviewed and incorporated into the Information Technology function. At that time, **Schedule #2003/043** will be superseded.

Further Information

For further details or clarification of the contents of this circular, please contact the ARMC secretary at SA.InformationManagement@gov.ab.ca or (780) 427-3884.

Original Signed by:

Cathryn Landreth, Chair

Date October 21, 2008