



Department of
**Local Government, Sport
and Cultural Industries**



Archives Keeping Plan

State Records Office of WA

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Contents

Definition of Terms	4
1. Introduction.....	5
2. What is the State archives collection?	8
3. Key issues	11
4. Transfer of State archives	12
5. Intellectual Control	14
6. Physical Control	16
7. Physical Storage	18
8. Preservation	19
9. Access	21

Definition of Terms

In this plan, the following terms are defined / abbreviated as follows:

The **Act** *means* the *State Records Act 2000*

The **Collection** *means* the State archives collection as defined in Division 3 of the Act

The **Commission** *means* the State Records Commission as defined in Part 8 of the Act

The **Director** *means* the Director of State Records as defined in Section 70 of the Act

The **SRO** *means* the State Records Office as defined in Section 72 of the Act

A **State organisation** *means* parliamentary departments and government organisations (State and local government) as defined in Section 3 of the Act.

1. Introduction

1.1 Legislative background

This document is presented to the State Records Commission (the Commission) under section 41(3) of the *State Records Act 2000* (the Act). It is a requirement of the Act for the Director of State Records to have an Archives Keeping Plan that is approved by the Commission.

The Commission approved the first Archives Keeping Plan in May 2003 in accordance with section 40(2) of the Act. Revised Plans were approved by the Commission in December 2008, August 2014 and December 2019.

This document constitutes the State Records Office's (the SRO) fifth Archives Keeping Plan. This plan reflects current management practices for the State archives collection (the Collection).

1.2 Purpose of the Archives Keeping Plan

The Archives Keeping Plan documents the framework in place for the keeping of State archives in the Collection.

As well as describing current practices, the Archives Keeping Plan identifies actions to be carried out to ensure improved management of the Collection.

1.3 Out of Scope

The Archives Keeping Plan does not apply to State archives held outside of the Collection i.e. State archives still being held by other government organisations. Those State archives are subject to each organisation's approved record keeping plan.

1.4 Functions of the State Archivist

The office of the Director of State Records (the Director) is established under Part 9 of the Act. The Director and staff comprise the SRO.

The following sections of the Act describe the Director's functions with respect to the management and maintenance of the Collection.

Section 35 of the Act defines what constitutes the Collection.

Section 36 of the Act specifies that the Director has control of State archives in the Collection and requires the Director to keep those records in accordance with the Archives Keeping Plan.

Section 32 specifies when government organisations must transfer State archives to the Collection. State archives must be transferred to the Collection when the archives become 25 years old. Transfer of State archives may not occur when:

- The Director has advised a State organisation that the SRO cannot accept custody of its State archives. This advice is to include directions as to keeping the archives until the SRO is able to accept custody.
- The government organisation is authorised through its recordkeeping plan to retain control of State archives beyond the 25 year transfer date. Records retained as State archives by organisations must be kept in accordance with *SRC Standard 7 – Storage of Archives*.

Section 43 enables the Director to apply to the Commission for permission to destroy a State archive held in the Collection.

Sections 45 and 50 provide a right of access to those records in the Collection that are unrestricted, subject to any written law.

Section 50(3) confirms that government organisations are entitled to reasonable access to records held in the Collection to which they had access prior to their transfer to the Collection. Section 51 enables the Director to attach conditions to access by government organisations and the public, where such access may affect the safe custody and physical condition of a State archive.

Sections 73(1)(c) & (d) define the functions of the Director with respect to public access to unrestricted records that are in the Collection and require the Director to create and maintain a register of all State archives, irrespective of whether the SRO or another government organisation has control of those records.

Section 79(4) confirms that a copy of a State archive certified as a copy by the Director has the same evidential value as the original.

1.5 Operational arrangements

The SRO is part of the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries.

Day-to-day responsibility for maintaining and providing access to the Collection is delegated by the Director to one of the SRO Program Managers.

Services and functions associated with the management, preservation and access to the Collection are undertaken by the SRO's State Archives Management Services (SAMS). At the time this plan was prepared there were 9.6 substantive FTE's assigned to SAMS functions at the SRO.

1.6 Services provided to the SRO

The State Library of WA provides the SRO with building maintenance (including environmental controls) and security services at the Alexander Library Building. The Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries facilitates building maintenance services at the SRO's offsite storage facility.

The provision of the SRO's corporate ICT services is provided by the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries.

1.7 Stakeholders

Stakeholders who have an interest in the proper maintenance of records in the Collection are:

- The Minister for Culture and the Arts
- The State Records Commission
- The Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries
- State organisations as identified by Schedules 1, 2 & 3 of the *State Records Act 2000*
- Organisations representing researcher clients
- Organisations representing the information management profession
- The Western Australian community
- Local, National and International researchers.

2. The State archives collection

2.1 Archives

In general terms, an archive is a record identified for permanent retention to support ongoing informational and evidential needs. The Act defines a State archive as a State record (a parliamentary record or a government record) that is to be retained permanently. State archives are maintained in perpetuity and never to be destroyed.

Through appraisal processes, the SRO uses the following criteria to help determine which government records are to be archived:

- Records that provide evidence of the source of authority, foundation and machinery of government. Included are State records that define the function of government, such as the nature and extent of government jurisdiction, obligations and powers;
- Records that provide concise evidence of the deliberations, decisions and actions of Western Australian government relating to key functions and programs and significant issues faced in governing the State;
- Records that provide evidence of the legal status and fundamental rights and entitlements of individuals and groups essential for ongoing functions of the State;
- Records with a special capacity to illustrate the condition and status of Western Australia and its people, the impact of government activities and the interaction of people with the government;
- Records containing information that is considered essential for the protection and future well-being of Western Australians and their environment;
- Records that have a substantial capacity to enrich the knowledge and understanding of aspects of the State's history, society, culture and people.

2.2 What is the State archives collection?

Section 35 of the Act provides direction as to what the Collection is to consist of:

- State archives that on the commencement of the Act are taken to be in the Collection
- State archives that have been transferred to the Collection under section 32 i.e. in practice, via an agency's Record Keeping Plan processes
- Records that have been transferred to the Collection under another written law
- Records that have been transferred to the Collection with the approval of the Director.

2.3 Historical overview

In historical terms, the nucleus of the Collection is the Colonial Secretary's Office records which were acquired in 1903 by the first Librarian of the then Public Library, Dr James S. Battye. Other records were later collected by Dr Battye during the course of writing his various publications.

With the appointment of the first State Archivist Mollie Lukis in March 1945, a process for registering transfers of State archives commenced that continues to this day. Ms Lukis collected many records that form part of the Collection through active acquisition, particularly in regional areas of the State.

The first legislative provisions relating to government recordkeeping and State archives were added to the *Library Board of Western Australia Act* in 1971. At that stage, the Collection comprised 2,140 linear metres of records.

The Collection rapidly increased in size during the 1980's and 1990's. In 1985, the Collection was moved from premises adjacent to the Victoria Public Library to the newly built Alexander Library Building.

The proclamation of the *State Records Act 2000* in November 2001 introduced improved controls for archives and the keeping of the Collection.

2.4 Collection summary

The Collection currently consists of Colonial, State and Local government records for the State of Western Australia. The Collection documents a wide range of government activity since the formation of the Swan River Colony, including:

- Aboriginal affairs
- Birth, death and marriage registration
- Colonial administration
- Education and schooling
- Health system and hospital management
- Justice system: convict administration as well as court, police and prisoner information
- Land administration
- Local government administration
- Mining and industrial development
- Passenger arrivals and shipping information
- Public works: public architecture and engineering
- Railway infrastructure.

Quantitatively, the Collection currently comprises:

- Date range of the Collection: **1827 – 2022**

- Size of the Collection: **14,924 linear metres**¹
- Number of State archives in the Collection: **1,182,541 items**²;
- Number of government organisations (past and present) archives have been received from: **2,281 agencies**;
- Physical formats in the Collection:
 - Paper (correspondence files, registers, cards, maps/plans, etc.);
 - Photographic prints;
 - Microforms (microfilm, aperture cards, microfiche);
 - Audio tapes;
 - Digital copies (preservation and access copies from SRO's digitisation programs and services);
 - Some archives in the collection are contained on additional specialized materials (e.g. linen, vellum, plastic, 3D architectural models, etc.).

The Collection is located in two buildings within the Perth metropolitan area. Most archives transferred to the Collection prior to 1994 are housed on the 3rd and 4th floors of the Alexander Library Building in central Perth. Many archives transferred to the collection from 1994 onwards are housed in the archive section of the SRO's offsite storage facility.

2.5 Who uses the Collection?

The Collection is used to fulfill a wide range of research interests, including:

- Genealogy (family history)
- Academic research
- Heritage-based research
- Local studies
- Legal research
- Establishing personal rights or for personal evidential purposes
- Ongoing evidential and informational business needs of government organisations.

Statistical analysis shows the Collection is used by the research community and by government organisations in approximately the following ratio:

- Community users: **85%**
- Government organisations: **15%**³

¹ Council of Australasian Archives and Records Authorities, *CAARA Archival Statistics 2023-24*.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

3. Key issues

3.1 Compliance with requirements of the Act

All government organisations are required to transfer State archives in their control and custody to the Collection in accordance with sections 32 of the Act. Subsection 16(6)(b) provides provision for the transfer of State archives to the Collection at a time other than that prescribed by Section 32 (e.g. prior to the archives becoming 25 years old).

Government organisations wishing to retain State archives beyond 25 years require approval from the State Records Commission. *SRC Standard 7 – State Archives Retained by Government Organizations* (2016) provides minimum compliance requirements for organisations wishing to retain archives beyond 25 years.

The SRO has been unable to accept regular transfers of State archives from government organisations since July 2001 due to lack of archival storage capacity. Current estimates show that there is a backlog of approximately 75,000 linear metres of State archives currently held by government organisations awaiting transfer to the Collection.

In addition, the SRO has been unable to accept custody of State archives in digital form from government organisations due to lack of appropriate infrastructure.

The Director has periodically advised organisations of the need for agencies to retain State archives in their control until they can be transferred to the SRO. In 2016 the State Archivist issued *Directions for keeping hardcopy State archives awaiting transfer to the State Records Office* for the purpose of ensuring that State archives are managed appropriately until such time as transfer can take place. This fulfills the State Archivist's legislative obligation required under section 32(4) of the Act.

4. Transfer of State archives

Section 32 of the Act provides the basis upon which organisations must transfer State archives to the Collection via record keeping plan processes. In practical terms, transfers of State archives are conducted using approved Disposal Authorities that identify government records deemed State archives.

As outlined in section 3 of this plan, the SRO has been unable to receive transfers to the Collection since July 2001 owing to lack of archival storage space. Government organisations are required to retain State archives awaiting transfer in accordance with the SRO's *Directions for keeping hardcopy State archives awaiting transfer to the State Records Office*.

4.1 Business practices and processes

The business processes for transfer practices prior to transfers ceasing in 2001 are out of date. Transfer processes will require comprehensive review prior to archive transfers recommencing.

4.2 Vital records

Control records for transfer processes maintained by the SRO are:

- The Consignment Register. This register records the allocation of consignment numbers to State archives prior to their transfer to the Collection. The Consignment Register records the registration date, location within the SRO, shelf metres and final processing dates for individual consignments. This register is maintained in hard copy format. Consignment details are entered into the SRO's archive management system once consignments are transferred to the Collection.
- The SRO's archive management system.
- The SRO's corporate files, documenting correspondence to and from individual organisations about archival transfers.

4.3 Matters to be addressed

4.3.1 Review of transfer processes

Prior to storage facilities/infrastructure being available to support the transfer of State archives to the Collection, SRO will review its transfer procedures to ensure the most efficient processes are in place. Transfer procedures which were in place prior to 2001 were dependent upon manual systems. The SRO has identified the need to more fully automate its business processes to facilitate a more streamlined transfer process.

Actions
Prior to archive transfers recommencing, review transfer procedures with a view to improving the automation of business processes.
Ensure revised transfer documentation is available from the SRO website.

4.4.2 Review of transfer priorities

In the past, transfers of State archives to the Collection were typically initiated by government organisations. This was due mainly to the legislative framework in place prior to the Act (e.g. the earlier *Library Board Act* did not mandate that all organisations have an approved Disposal Authority which resulted in incomplete coverage). Because of this, some organisations transferred large amounts of material to the Collection and others none at all. As such, the Collection is under-represented in some areas of government activity.

There is an estimated backlog of 75,000 linear metres of State archives still in the custody of government organisations awaiting transfer.

The previous Archives Keeping Plan (2019) identified an action to develop a Transfer Prioritisation Strategy. Requirements for transfers have been considered in the development of an Application for Concept Approval (ACA) for an Archives Management Plan for WA Government (called Digital Discovery). Further consideration will need to be given to how the SRO works with other agencies to identify priorities for transfers of State archives to collection.

The Plan as set out in the ACA would identify priorities for transfer to the collection should the required resources be made available at a future time.

At the time of the development of the current plan (2024) this ACA has been approved by the Minister for Culture and the Arts, although no additional resourcing has been made available.

5. Intellectual Control

Intellectual control of the Collection refers to what is traditionally known as “cataloguing” and is used to describe and list records in the Collection.

Until 1988, the Collection was described and listed in hardcopy catalogues called Archive Notes (ANs). These catalogues list archives by their creating agency but often lack important contextual information about the archives.

Since 1988, all new archive transfers have been documented using the series registration system. The series registration system provides rich contextual information about archives as well as content information about archives

The series registration system is the standard national practice for documenting information about archives.

5.1 Business practices and processes

5.1.1 Method of documenting State archives

Since the 1990’s, the SRO (and its predecessors) has been retrospectively converting archive listings from the defunct AN system into the series registration system. As well as consolidating the intellectual control of the Collection into a unified system, this activity has also converted hardcopy listings into electronic listings which have been added to the SRO’s archive management system over preceding years.

At present, the SRO estimates that 96% of the collection is now documented in the series registration system. Activity continues to ensure the entirety of the State archives collection forms part of this system and is electronically searchable.

5.1.2 Computer systems

In 1991, the SRO commenced the computerised documentation of new archive transfers. Systems in place up until 2004 were limited to staff use only and lacked search capabilities.

In 2015, the SRO implemented a new archive management system (Access to Memory, or AtoM) to provide for improved search / archive display capability.

It is noted that AtoM does not deliver all aspects of an archive management system typically used for archives today. The ACA (Digital Discovery) outlined in section 4.4.2 includes in the scope the implementation of a more comprehensive system should the required resources be made available at a future date.

5.1.3 Register of State archives

Section 73(1)(d) of the Act requires the State Archivist to establish and maintain a register of all State archives including those that are not in the State archives collection. The SRO has fulfilled the first part of this requirement with respect to State archives that are part of the Collection. All State archives in the Collection are listed and documented in a combination of the AN catalogues and the archive management system.

The requirement to register State archives that are not in the Collection is outside the scope of the Archives Keeping Plan which relates purely to the Collection.

5.2 Policies and procedures

The SRO's procedures for providing instruction on documenting archives transferred to the Collection have been identified for review.

Actions
Review the archival control model and related procedures in place for intellectual control of the Collection.

5.3 Vital records

The SRO's archive management system (AtoM) forms the main control record for the SRO's cataloguing and archive description processes. In addition, the SRO maintains:

- Archive Note (AN) catalogues, for State archives transferred to the Collection prior to 1988
- defunct sets of agency, series and accession registers previously used to allocate archive registration information. These registers are required for ongoing reference purposes by the SRO.

5.4 Matters to be addressed

5.4.1 Improved descriptive information

Many State archives in the Collection require improved descriptive information to improve their accessibility.

Action
Continue ongoing work to convert Archive Note listings into the SRO's online catalogue to aid online searching of and access to the Collection.
Improve descriptive information for the Collection to aid client access.

6. Physical Control

Physical control of the collection refers to the mechanisms in place to ensure that archives are physically locatable and retrievable at any point in time.

Members of the public can access original archives in the Reading Room in the Battye Library at the Alexander Library Building (Level 3) or through digitisation services.

Government organisations may access original archives in the Collection in the Reading Room in the Battye Library at the Alexander Library Building (Level 3), through digitisation services or (by exception and where approved by the SRO) through a government loan.

6.1 Business practices and processes

6.1.1 Physical arrangement of the Collection

In general terms, archives in the Collection are physically shelved in the order in which they were transferred. This is done through a sequential numbering system known as the consignment number (formerly accession number). Each group of records transferred to the Collection has been allocated a consignment number as part of transfer processes. The way the Collection has been shelved effectively mirrors the order in which archives were transferred.

The consignment number has a two-fold purpose:

- To identify the transfer of a group of records to the Collection at a specific point in time
- To act as an ongoing physical locator for those records.

On the latter point, the current system is limited as different types of records (such as maps or large items) will be stored in different physical locations particular to their storage needs. Intermediary location guides are often needed by SRO staff to locate a given archive.

A detailed location coding system is not currently implemented.

6.1.2 System for retrieving, replacing and tracking archives

The SRO currently operates a partially automated system for retrieving and replacing archives when they have been accessed. When archives are required for client access or other purposes, paper call slips are inserted into the box or shelf from which the archives are taken and copies of the call slip are kept with the archive (to show who the record is issued to) as well as maintained by SRO staff in a central location to track the location of that archive e.g. issued to a researcher in the SRO Search Room or issued to a government agency on a loan basis.

The SRO's archive management system allows for central, electronic tracking of archives being retrieved and issued for public or government use, when client orders are placed through that system.

6.2 Policies and Procedures

The SRO maintains an internal *Policies and Procedures Manual for Loans Team Processes* which provides instruction on archive retrieval and associated protocols.

6.3 Vital Records

Vital records for physical control of the Collection comprise:

- Archive movement/tracking information in the SRO's archive management system
- SRO call slips used for retrieving and replacing archives
- SRO's intermediary location guides for archives.

6.4 Matters to be addressed

6.4.1 Fuller automation of Collection control processes

Further improvements to physical control of the Collection have been identified to ensure:

- Archives not yet entered into the system can still be tracked via the system;
- Fuller automation (e.g. using barcoding) is adopted to improve the efficiency and accuracy of archive movements / tracking.

Actions
Implement physical location coding for the State archives collection.
Implement functionality that allows the archive management system to be able to track the movement of all State archives in the Collection, whether those State archives have been entered into the system or not.
Investigate fuller automation of archive movement processes, such as using barcoding.

7. Physical Storage

[This section has been removed from the public access copy for reasons of collection security].

8. Preservation

Preservation of the Collection refers to the programs and practices in place to ensure that the Collection is accessible to current and future researchers.

Preservation issues are partly addressed via the previous section. This section focuses on direct preservation initiatives the SRO undertakes to provide for the ongoing conservation of archives in the Collection.

8.1 Business practices and processes

8.1.1 SRO preservation program

Up until 2012, an annual preservation program for the Collection was negotiated and implemented by the SRO and the Preservation and Maintenance Branch of the State Library of WA. The Preservation and Maintenance Branch provided the following services to the SRO:

- Micrographics – Advice and technical support on the preparation and microfilming of internal and external records to archival standards; storage of microfilm masters and working negatives.
- Digitisation – Scanning of internal archival records to an agreed specification;
- Conservation – Advice and technical support on the conservation of archival materials, including monitoring of storage environments, conservation treatments and repackaging to preserve archival records.

This service has since been curtailed and the SRO has been unable to operate an ongoing annual preservation program.

In 2018, the SRO commissioned a Preservation Needs Assessment for the Collection. This Assessment provided a series of short-term, medium-term and long-term recommendations for improving preservation of Collection items. Of the Assessment's seven recommendations, two have been implemented so far.

In 2020/21, the SRO undertook a rehousing project to place many sets of archival plans into new folders to assist their preservation.

8.1.2 Copying of archives

The SRO utilises a combination of in-house and third-party services for client-based digitisation requests and project-based digitisation. The SRO currently manages over 32,000 digital copies of State archives (comprising over 2 million individual images)

According to section 39(3) of the Act, “the Archives Keeping Plan may provide for a State archive to be reproduced in another form and for the destruction of a State archive if a

reproduction of it is being kept”. The SRO does not destroy any original material following copying of archives in the Collection.

8.2 Policies and Procedures

SRO staff are provided with instruction on handling and transport procedures for archives.

Public researchers must also agree to abide by certain conditions for handling archives as part of the Researcher Registration process. Staff working in the archives reading room monitor the handling of archives by researchers and provide guidance on protocols.

8.3 Vital Records

Conservation reports are documented in the SRO’s corporate record keeping system.

8.4 Matters to be addressed

8.4.1 Re-commence an ongoing preservation program

Action
Work in collaboration with partner agencies to seek support for an ongoing preservation program.

8.4.2 Prioritise digitisation of at-risk archives

Action
Identify at-risk archives and prioritise their digitisation, including archives in machine readable formats.

8.4.3 Ensure digital copies of State archives are appropriately managed

Action
Implement fit-for-purpose systems that ensure digital copies of State archives are appropriately managed and to mitigate against risk of loss.

9. Access

Under the terms of the Act, the Director is required to facilitate public access to the Collection and to provide “appropriate facilities and services to enable them (the archives) to be effectively used for administrative requirements and for study and research.”⁴

9.1 Business practices and processes

9.1.1 SRO website

The SRO website (www.sro.wa.gov.au) currently provides the main source of information about the Collection and how to access it. The site includes:

- Advice to the community on how to access the Collection
- Collection overviews to frequently used areas of the Collection

The website is hosted on the whole of government wa.gov.au platform, which is maintained by the Office of Digital Government under an MoU with the SRO. The SRO is responsible for maintaining content on the website. Website management is documented in the SRO Record Keeping Plan.

9.1.2 Online access to State archives

The SRO’s online catalogue is accessible via the homepage of the SRO website. The web catalogue lists individual archives in the Collection as well as providing their contextual information. The catalogue also provides access to some sets of archives in the Collection that have been digitised.

Currently, the web catalogue lists approximately 97% of the archives in the Collection and provides various search options to identify specific State archives.

9.1.3 Physical access to State archives

The SRO shares a Reading Room and Research Facilities for clients with the State Library, Aboriginal History Research Services and Family History volunteers on the 3rd floor of the Alexander Library Building. This space is commonly referred to as the Battye Library.

Through these facilities the public and government organisations may access original archival records. Where the SRO has microfilmed archival records, clients are requested to access these copies in place of original material.

Both the Reading Room and microfilm area allows for clients to make free digital copies of State archives using the equipment available. Researchers can also use their own

⁴ Sect. 73(1)(c)(iii) of the Act.

cameras or smart phones to copy archival material (subject to the SRO's conditions of use).

9.1.4 Digital services

The SRO provides all clients with a fee-based digitisation on request service.⁵ Requests to have archives digitised can be made through the SRO online catalogue or via email.

9.1.5 Research services

The SRO provides a limited reference service to clients who are unable to visit the reading room. A brief service delivery statement including SRO contact details is available on the SRO. The SRO does not currently charge for this service, other than for any copying of archives that may be associated with responding to an enquiry.

If the SRO is unable to undertake a research request, clients are directed to a (non-accredited) list of external research agents maintained by the SRO.

9.1.6 Loans to government organisations

Section 50(3) of the Act stipulates that government organisations may obtain access to records that they formerly controlled and which are held in the Collection. Section 51 of the Act enables the State Archivist to attach conditions to a person or an organisation having access to State archives for the purpose of ensuring their safe custody and of protecting their condition.

In 2023, the SRO transitioned its government loans service to a digitisation-first option to reduce preservation risks associated with the physical loan of archives.

In special circumstances, where the organisation has conducted a risk assessment, the SRO may grant a physical loan of a State archive to the organization. A government loans information sheet is in place which sets limits on the type of record an organisation may borrow. For archives which cannot be lent because of preservation risks, government staff are requested to have the archives digitised or view the material in the Reading Room.

Advice regarding government loans is provided on the SRO website.

9.1.7 Restricted access archives

SRC Standard 4: Restricted Access Archives establishes principles for determining the management of restricted access archives.

A comprehensive review of restricted access archive decisions was completed in 2007, with the State Records Commission ratifying all decisions relating to restricted access archives in the Collection.

⁵ This service is currently on hold at time of writing.

The review helped ensure that groups of records that previously had open-ended restrictions placed on them have finite periods of restriction, as per the requirements of the Act. The review also aimed to ensure greater consistency in restricted access decisions as they apply across the Collection. As a result of the review, many archives in the Collection that were previously restricted are now open access archives.

The SRO has documented the revised access status of archives in the Collection and this information is reflected to public clients via its web catalogue.

Reviews of restricted access archives are conducted every five years to ensure access protocols remain appropriate.

9.1.8 Fees and charges

Access to the Collection in the reading room is free of charge. Charges may apply for digitisation services undertaken by the SRO. These charges will be listed on the SRO website.

Fees apply to government organisations who borrow archives from the Collection created by their organisation (or their predecessor organisation). These charges are listed on the SRO website.

9.1.9 Public programs and outreach services

The SRO promotes access to the Collection via a series of annual public programs and participates in public presentations and media opportunities to promote access to the Collection.

9.2 Policies and procedures

Protocols for clients who wish to access the Collection are available on the SRO website. These protocols cover matters including researcher registration, procedures for applying for access to restricted access archives and copying of archives.

9.3 Vital Records

SRO website content and web catalogue form the vital record for access to the Collection.

9.4 Matters to be addressed

9.4.1 Access Strategy

The main conduit through which the SRO facilitates access to the Collection is currently via the Reading Room. There are time and geographical constraints associated with this form of service that limit access to the Collection.

A fundamental review of how the SRO is to deliver its access services is required. A review of how SRO is to deliver its access services into the future would encompass, but would not be limited to:

- Client-preferred access mechanisms
- Consolidation of SRO finding aids and indexes
- The provision of web access to digitised copies of core sets of the Collection
- Integration of digital access services with a Digital Archive
- Consideration of an ongoing outreach and public programs activities to support access to the Collection and to educate SRO clients
- Consideration of the needs of specific groups including Aboriginal and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse peoples
- Sustainable approaches for access and research services.

Action
Develop and implement an Access Strategy that maximizes online access to the State archives collection

9.4.2 Monitoring of restricted access archive decisions

Subsequent to the review of restricted access archives that was conducted in 2007, the State Records Commission is required to review these restricted access decisions on a 5 yearly basis as per the requirement of Sect. 37(5) of the Act. A review of restricted access decisions was conducted in 2021.

Action
Conduct a further review of restricted access archive decisions, for records in the Collection, in 2026.