# MANAGING PUBLIC RECORDS WHEN DECOMMISSIONING BUSINESS SYSTEMS METHODOLOGY

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**Queensland State Archives**

October 2013 / updated April 2017

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# Overview

Most business systems will contain public records that must be captured and kept.

The decommissioning business systems methodology workflow will help you manage records when decommissioning legacy business systems. It provides a transparent and defensible process for assessing the value of records in business systems and determining the best strategy for managing them.

This methodology is **not** intended to become a business-as-usual approach for disposing of records in legacy business systems. It should **only be in place for a limited time.**

The methodology contains **pathways** covering the following disposal/preservation scenarios in which all records:

- have already been migrated to another system

- in the business system are not accessible

- in the business system are accessible and are **not** covered by a current retention and disposal schedule

- in the business system are accessible and covered by a current retention and disposal schedule.

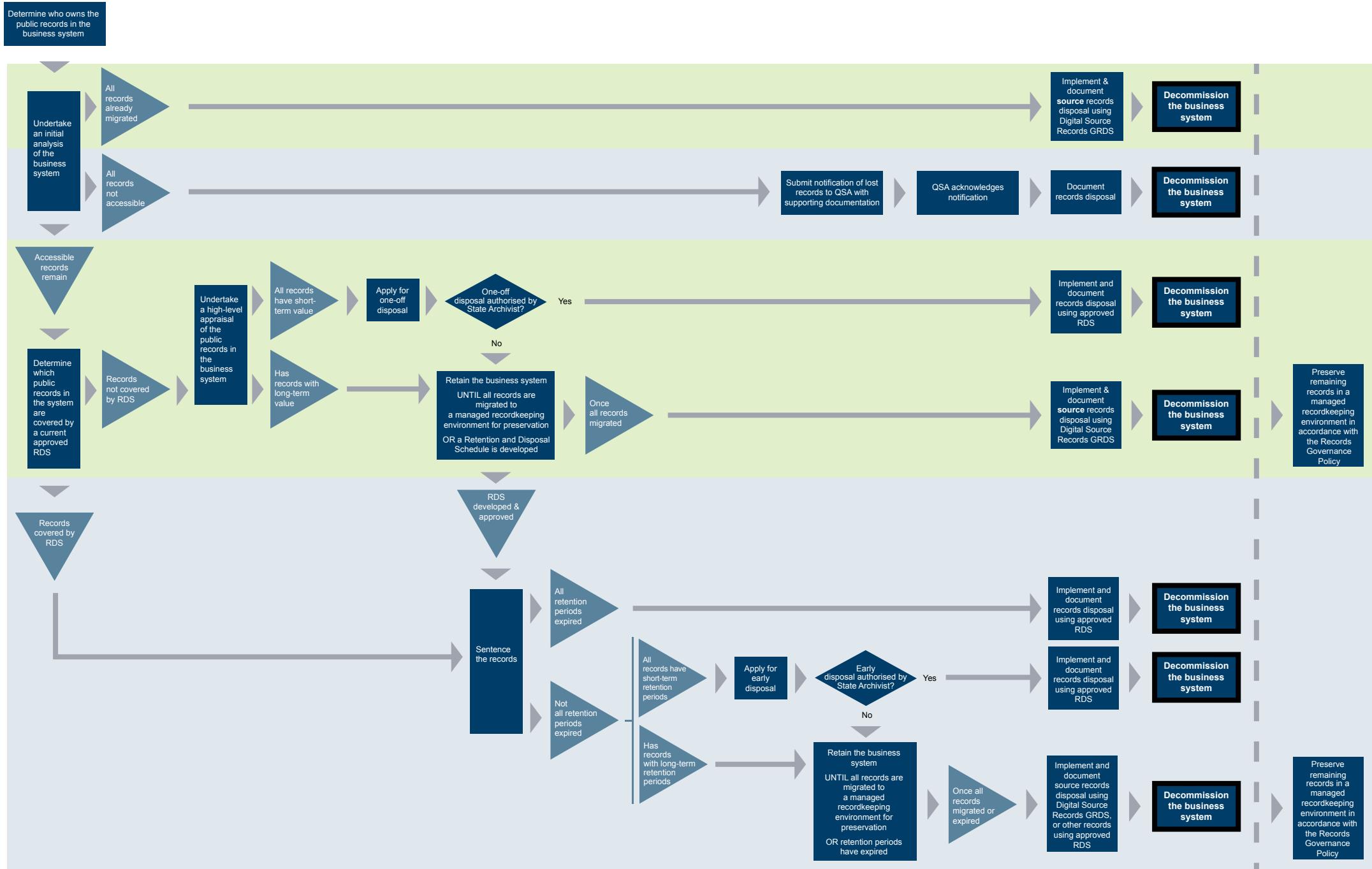These scenarios are not mutually exclusive and you may need to follow more than one path. Use the workflow for each business system under consideration.

Most steps in the workflow have questions to be answered or require actions before moving onto the next step.

Before disposing of data from a legacy business system that you believe **does not contain public records**, contact the Government Recordkeeping team for more information.

# Decommissioning business systems workflow

Determine who owns the public records in the business system

Undertake an initial analysis of the business system

All records already migrated → Implement & document **source** records disposal using Digital Source Records GRDS → **Decommission the business system**

All records not accessible → Submit notification of lost records to QSA with supporting documentation → QSA acknowledges notification → Document records disposal → **Decommission the business system**

Accessible records remain

Determine which public records in the system are covered by a current approved RDS

Records not covered by RDS → Undertake a high-level appraisal of the public records in the business system

All records have short-term value → Apply for one-off disposal → One-off disposal authorised by State Archivist? → Yes → Implement and document records disposal using approved RDS → **Decommission the business system**

No

Has records with long-term value → Retain the business system UNTIL all records are migrated to a managed recordkeeping environment for preservation OR a Retention and Disposal Schedule is developed → Once all records migrated → Implement & document **source** records disposal using Digital Source Records GRDS → **Decommission the business system** → Preserve remaining records in a managed recordkeeping environment in accordance with the Records Governance Policy

Records covered by RDS

RDS developed & approved

Sentence the records

All retention periods expired → Implement and document records disposal using approved RDS → **Decommission the business system**

Not all retention periods expired

All records have short-term retention periods → Apply for early disposal → Early disposal authorised by State Archivist? → Yes → Implement and document records disposal using approved RDS → **Decommission the business system**

No

Has records with long-term retention periods → Retain the business system UNTIL all records are migrated to a managed recordkeeping environment for preservation OR retention periods have expired → Once all records migrated or expired → Implement and document source records disposal using Digital Source Records GRDS, or other records using approved RDS → **Decommission the business system** → Preserve remaining records in a managed recordkeeping environment in accordance with the Records Governance Policy

# Determine who owns the public records in the business system

You will need to ensure that your agency is responsible for these records or determine which agency (or agencies) is responsible for the records in the system before it can be decommissioned.

The responsible agency is usually the one who either created the records, inherited the records as part of a machinery-of-government (MOG) change or is responsible for the function or business activity the records document.

Responsibility for records can be separate to ownership of the system they live in. Records may not be in the custody of the agency responsible for them.

Business systems may also contain records belonging to multiple agencies. For example, a shared service provider owns a business system they use to provide recordkeeping services to multiple agencies.

All agencies responsible for records in the system must be involved in the decommissioning process. They are responsible for deciding what happens to the records. They must also endorse the disposal of records before they can be destroyed.

If you cannot identify the agency responsible for the records, consult with Queensland State Archives before disposing of them.

If your agency holds information assets or records relating to a function or activity of government that has been privatised, you will need to take into account any requirements, rights or provisions outlined in any agreement or contract before carrying out any disposal of jointly owned records.

## Where to from here?

Undertake an initial analysis of the business system

# Undertake an initial analysis of the business system

You will need to do an analysis of the business system to determine which pathway to take in the methodology.

You will need to determine if all records:

- have already been migrated to another business system

- remain in the business system/have not been migrated

- can be accessed and are usable.

**Where to from here?**

- If all records have already **successfully been migrated** to another system, follow the *all records already migrated* pathway.

- If all **records are not accessible**, follow the *all records not accessible* pathway.

- If **accessible records remain** in the business system, determine which records are covered by a retention and disposal schedule.

**Note:** You may need to take multiple pathways if only some records fit into the above pathways.

# Determine which records are covered by a retention and disposal schedule

Analyse the business system to determine whether or not the records contained in the system are covered by a current and approved retention and disposal schedule.

The pathway you need to take next in the methodology will depend on whether or not the records are covered by an existing schedule.

Find out how to determine disposal coverage and sentence records in business systems.

**Where to from here?**

- If records **cannot** be matched to a record class in a current approved retention and disposal schedule then the records **do not have disposal coverage** and they cannot be disposed of yet.

  Follow the *records not covered by a schedule* pathway.

- If records **can** be matched with a record class, then the records **have disposal coverage**.

  Follow the *records covered by a schedule* pathway.

# Scenario 1 – All records already migrated

## 1. Ensure the migration was successful

Find out how to migrate records between systems and what checks you need to perform to ensure it was successful.

**Where to from here**

Once the migration has been checked, implement and document source records disposal

## 2. Implement and document source records disposal

Find out how to implement and document source records disposal

**Where to from here**

Decommission the business system

## 3. Decommission the business system

Follow standard IT processes for decommissioning the business systems.

You can use the *Application Rationalisation Methodology* (covering quality checks, documentation requirements, approvals and other important information) which can be downloaded from the Queensland Government Chief Information Office (QGCIO) website.

**Where to from here**

Preserve remaining records.

## 4. Preserve remaining records

You will need to manage and preserve any records that remain in the system and all migrated records until they can lawfully be disposed of.

Find out how to preserve digital records.

# Scenario 2 – All records not accessible

## 1. Submit a notification of lost records

If all records in the business system **are not accessible**, you will need to submit a notification of lost records.

**Where to from here**

Once you receive acknowledgment of the notification from QSA, you can implement and document the disposal of lost records.

## 2. Implement and document records disposal

Find out how to document the disposal of lost records.

**Where to from here**

Decommission the business system

## 3. Decommission the business system

Follow standard IT processes for decommissioning the business systems.

You can use the *Application Rationalisation Methodology* (covering quality checks, documentation requirements, approvals and other important information) which can be downloaded from the Queensland Government Chief Information Office (QGCIO) website.

# Scenario 3 – Accessible records remain – Records not covered by RDS

## 1. Undertake a high-level appraisal of the public records in the business system

If accessible records remain and are not covered by a retention and disposal schedule, you need to undertake a high-level appraisal of the system and records to determine how long the records are **likely** to be required to be kept in order to meet business, legal, social, historical and other needs.

Records will either have:

- long-term value.

**OR**

- short-term value

Find out how to do a high-level appraisal.

**Where to from here?**

All records have short-term value

All or some records have long-term value

## 1(a). All records have short-term value

Record with short term-value are those that:

- are likely to have only short-term retention periods (less than 5 years)

**OR**

- are nearing the expiry of their likely retention period (less than 5 years remaining).

**Where to from here?**

Apply for one-off disposal authorisation for these records

OR

Follow the has records with long-term value pathway if you choose not to submit an application.

## 1(b). Has records with long-term value

To reach this step, the high-level appraisal established that all or some of the records:

- are likely to be of long-term value

    **OR**

- are likely to be of short-term value, but the application for one-off disposal authorisation has been **refused** or **not applied for**.

You will need to manage and preserve the records until they can lawfully be disposed of.

You will need to **retain the business system** until:

- records are migrated to another system

    OR

- retention periods have expired and records can be destroyed

**Where to from here?**

If all or some records are to be **migrated:**

- ensure all records have been successfully migrated

    THEN

- implement and document source records disposal

If records are to be **retained in the business system,** you will need to:

- develop a retention and disposal schedule
- have it approved by the State Archivist
- continue to follow the *records are covered by a schedule* pathway.

**More information**

Find out how to preserve digital records.

## 2. Apply for one-off disposal authorisation

Find out how to apply for one-off disposal authorisation.

**Where to from here**

If application is **approved,** implement and document records disposal

If application is not **approved,** follow the has records with long-term value pathway

## 3. Implement and document records disposal

Find out how to implement and document records disposal.

**Where to from here?**

Decommission the business system.

## 4. Decommission the business system

Follow standard IT processes for decommissioning the business systems.

You can use the *Application Rationalisation Methodology* (covering quality checks, documentation requirements, approvals and other important information) which can be downloaded from the Queensland Government Chief Information Office (QGCIO) website.

**Where to from here?**

Preserve remaining records (if applicable).

## 5. Preserve remaining records

You will need to manage and preserve any records that remain in the system and all migrated records until they can lawfully be disposed of.

Find out how to preserve digital records.

# Scenario 4 - Accessible records remain – Records covered by RDS

## 1. Sentence the records

If accessible records remain and are covered by a retention and disposal schedule, you need to sentence the records to determine:

- how long they need to be kept

 AND

- if retention periods have expired or not.

**Where to from here?**

If **all** retention periods **have expired:**

- implement and document records disposal

THEN

- decommission the system

If retention periods **have not expired** or only **some have expired:**

- implement and document records disposal for records that can be lawfully destroyed

AND

- follow the **not** all retention periods have expired pathway for records that need to be retained.

## 2. Not all retention periods have expired

You will need to determine if:

- records have **less than five years** remaining before the records would be eligible for disposal

 OR

- all records have **short-term retention periods** (less than 5 years)

 OR

- some or all records have **long-term retention periods** (more than 5 years).

**Where to from here?**

Follow the *all records have short term retention periods* pathway if:

- records are **within 5 years** of their **retention periods expiring**

OR

- all records have **short-term retention periods**

Follow the *has records with long-term retention periods* pathway If:

- some or all records **have long-term retention periods**.

## 2(a). All records have short-term retention periods

Record with short term-value are those that:

- have short-term retention periods (less than 5 years)

OR

- are nearing the expiry of their retention period (less than 5 years remaining).

**Where to from here?**

Apply for early or one-off disposal authorisation for these records.

OR

Follow the has records with long-term value pathway if you choose not to submit an application.

## 2(b). Has records with long-term retention periods

To reach this step, the sentencing process established that all or some of the records have:

- long-term retention periods

 **OR**

- short-term retention periods, but the application for early disposal authorisation has been refused or not applied for.

You will need to manage and preserve the records in the business system until:

- they are migrated to another system

OR

- retention periods have expired and records can be destroyed

**Where to from here?**

If all or some records are to be **migrated,** ensure *records have been successfully migrated*

If records are to be **retained in the business system,** you will need to keep and maintain the system until:

- all records are migrated

OR

- all retention periods have expired and records can be destroyed.

## 3. Apply for early disposal authorisation

Find out how to apply for early disposal authorisation.

**Where to from here**

If application is **approved,** implement and document records disposal

If application is not **approved,** follow the has records with long-term value pathway

## 4. Implement and document records disposal

Find out how to implement and document records disposal

**Where to from here?**

Decommission the business system

## 5. Decommission the business system

Follow standard IT processes for decommissioning the business systems.

You can use the *Application Rationalisation Methodology* (covering quality checks, documentation requirements, approvals and other important information) which can be downloaded from the Queensland Government Chief Information Office (QGCIO) website.

**Where to from here?**

Preserve remaining records (if applicable).

## 6. Preserve remaining records

You will need to [manage](#) and [preserve](#) any records that remain in the system and all migrated records until they can lawfully be disposed of.

Find out [how to preserve digital records](#).