

Appraisal of records

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Need for Appraisal of Records

- Problem created by over growth of records, as human population growth in geometrical progression the same is the case with public records. Public records also growth in geometrical progression.
- Levels of records growth from Secretary to a department down to a clerk.
- Problem of housing records, every third year constructing one National Archives will be required
- Preserve only selected records after appraisal which is most valuable, urgent and precious.

APPRAISAL REQUIREMENTS

The appraisal requirements process is based on determining the value of records based on the following heads:

- Administration
- Legal
- Fiscal
- Evidential
- Informational

At times, the intrinsic value of records depends on other unique factors:-

- Age
- Circumstances regarding their creation, a signature or an attached seal
- A very careful exercise. One has to be very cautious as they are unique

WHEN TO CONDUCT APPRAISAL

Under Section 6(1) b &c, of the Public Records Act, 1993, Departmental Record Officers are responsible for

- (b) periodical review of all public records and weeding out public records of ephemeral value
- (c) appraisal of public records which are more than 25 years old in consultation with the National Archives of India or, as the case may be, the Archives of the Union Territory with a view to retaining public records of permanent value
 - Should commence at a date not far from closing of the files before its transactions fade away from memory
 - Files marked having permanent value should not be subjected to review at this stage.
 - Only resort to 'C' category files from administrative point of view

WHICH RECORDS ARE TO BE APPRAISED and how?

'A' and 'B' categories of records to be appraised in consultation with National Archives of India. 'A' Keep and microfilm 'B' Keep but do not microfilm

Appraisal of Records :- Non current records which are more than twenty five years old from the date of opening are appraised with consultation of National Archives of India as required under section 6 clause C of sub-section 1 of section 6 of the Public Records Act, 1993 and Rule 5 of the Public Records Rules, 1997

Stages of Appraisal :

Appraisal is mainly done in three stages.

1st Stage :- Ephemeral records are weeded out at the end of the year by the creating agency.

2nd Stage :- Review is done after expiry of the specific retention period by the creating agency.

3rd Stage :- Final appraisal is done after completing 25 years

Records Retirement Programme

1st Stage – Ephemeral is that which contains papers of little consequence or research value. Ephemeral record is neither wanted by administrator nor by historian. The important thing about these records that they need not be formally recorded or indexed, their life span is slightly more than a year, it is removed by the section concerned.

2nd Stage- Classification of Records – at the time of recording under class A,B, and C is the second important stage because this classification in to A,B and C categories provides the foundation stone to the appraisal, who subsequently undertake the first review and the second review.

3rd Stage – covers the appraisal of 25 years files.

Appraisal standards

Records of historical importance - Papers of following categories should be specially considered as of value to historians-

-Papers relating to origin of a department or agency of Government and their functions.

-Papers relating to a change of policy and its implementation.

-Papers relating to the more important aspects of scientific or technical research and development.

-Papers containing matters of local interest of which it is unreasonable to expect that evidence will be available locally.

-Papers relating to a well known public or international event which gave rise to interest or controversy on the national plan.

-Papers containing direct reference to trends or developments in political, social, economic or other fields.

Records of Administrative Value

Papers of following categories will normally be those required to be kept indefinitely for administrator's use-

- Papers containing evidence of rights or obligations for or against the government e.g. title to property, claims for compensation etc.
- Papers relating to major policy decisions.
- Papers regarding constitution, functions and working of important committee.
- Papers providing lasting precedents for important procedure e.g. administrative memoranda, historical reports and summaries, legal opinions on important matters etc.

Records of Administrative Value (contd.....)

- Papers concerning rules, regulations, departmental guides or instructions of general applications.
- Papers pertaining to salient features of organisation and staffing of government department and offices.
- Papers relating to important litigations in which the administration was involved

THANK YOU