



**DOCUMENT PARTIALLY ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC (03.03.2016)**

## **GENERAL SECRETARIAT OF THE COUNCIL**

### **STAFF NOTE**

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| <b><u>Department responsible:</u></b><br><b>DG F 2B - Records Management and<br/>Central Archives (Archives)</b><br>Tel. 7647 | <b>54/13</b><br><br><b>23/7/2013</b> |
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**Subject: Document transmission to the Records Management Unit and Central Archives and file disposal**

This Staff Note sets out guidelines for the sound management of all the Council's archive documents.

**It cancels and replaces Staff Note 187/08 of 21 November 2008.**

**It lays down the arrangements:**

- 1. for transmitting documents to the Archives**
- 2. for subsequent transfer to the Archives**
- 3. for disposing of files**

- 1. Arrangements for transmitting documents to the Archives**

*The following are considered archive documents* and must therefore be sent to the Archives: *ST, CM and DS documents, miscellaneous notes and all kinds of correspondence*, whatever their form or storage medium, produced or received by the Council or the European Council, one of its representatives or a member of its staff in the performance of their duties and relating to the activities of the European Union.

#### **1.1. ST and CM documents**

These documents are sent to the Archives by DG A's Document Management/Distribution Unit.

## **1.2. Mail**

- Outgoing mail: a copy of each document is sent to the Archives.
- Incoming mail: DG A's Document Management Unit/Registry sends the originals and their annexes to the Archives for filing as soon as they have been registered, and provides the relevant departments with photocopies.

The originals sent directly to a department or official must be forwarded by the main recipient to the Registry for registration.

## **1.3. Classified documents and letters**

Classified documents and letters (*Très Secret, Secret, Confidentiel* and *Restreint*) are not sent to the Archives. They are handled in accordance with the Council's security rules and are therefore sent to the Classified Information Office (BIC).

Under an agreed procedure, the BIC keeps the Archives regularly informed of the existence of restricted documents.

## **2. Arrangements for subsequent transfer to the Archives**

Work files containing copies of documents held by the DG for work purposes and ephemeral or internal documents may be transferred to the Archives subsequently, but no later than three years after the concerned file has been closed and in accordance with the specific procedure.

(see Annex I)

Electronic documents may also be transferred to the Archives. More information on the specific procedures can be obtained from the contact persons mentioned in point 2 of Annex I.

## **3. Arrangements for disposing of files**

Where a department wishes to dispose of documents, a distinction is made between two types of file or document:

- files relating to the department's specific activities
- documents not relating to the department's specific activities

### 3.1. Files relating to the department's specific activities

For all files relating to a department's specific activities, a check must be made to ensure that the above rules have been complied with and that the documents considered as archive documents (see point 1, first paragraph) are actually in the Archives. If this is the case, and if the department wishes to dispose of archive material, then the following arrangements apply:

- any disposal of archives, whatever their date, form or medium, must be notified to Central Archives for authorisation, using a disposal form;
- the disposal form (see Annex II) must be sent to Central Archives after being signed by the head of the department which produced the documents;
- the Archives will examine the form and, if necessary, the documents in question. If Central Archives accept the request, the form will be returned to the department bearing a disposal stamp. The stamp will constitute an authorisation to destroy the documents. The documents concerned must be destroyed; they may not be disposed of in any other manner. No document may be destroyed by anyone before the stamp has been issued;
- should the disposal request be rejected in full or in part, the documents which are not to be destroyed must be transferred to the Central Archives.

### 3.2. Documents not relating to the department's specific duties

Such documents concern the department's **organisation** and **internal procedures** (staff management, orders for equipment and supplies, incoming/outgoing internal mail collection, etc.), or contain information which is broadly disseminated throughout the GSC (staff notes).

These documents may be **disposed of without prior request** for the Central Archives stamp.

These guidelines will be reviewed once the filing plan project has been established and implemented.

Any queries regarding the implementation of this Staff Note may be sent to Ms Malgorzata Stecko, Head of Unit (tel. 7647), or **DELETED**.

Reijo Kempainen

Annexes

**Procedure for subsequent transfer of working files  
to the Central Archives**

**1. Procedure before transfer**

- Remove classified or private documents and documents already contained in the archives (registered letters, official documents: ST, CM, etc.). In the case of classified material, contact the BIC.
- Number the binders/boxes or structure the electronic indexes.
- Provide an inventory of the contents of each binder/box (as a minimum: the subject and year of each binder/box). For the transfer of electronic files, specify the volume of the electronic content.

**2. Notice of the transfer**

Notice of the transfer should be given to:

**DG**

**Archives contact**

**tel.**

**DELETED**

**3. Completion and signing of the transfer form**

There are two types of transfer: assignment and deposit (see form).

**4. Sending of the material**

Send the material, the inventory and the form to the address given by your Central Archives contact.

**5. Proof of transfer**

A copy of the transfer form signed by your Archives contact will be provided as proof of the transfer.

**Central Archives**  
**TRANSFER FORM**

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To be completed by the transferring department

Directorate: .....

Department: .....

Name of the staff member responsible for the transfer: .....

Address/tel.: .....

Description of the transfer (add a separate page if necessary):  
.....  
.....

Type of transfer (assignment\*, deposit\*\*):.....

Total number of binders/boxes:.....

Date and signature of the Head of Department:.....

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To be completed by the Archives

Delivery date: ..... Shelf metres:.....

Location: .....  
.....

Comments: .....  
.....

Date and signature for the Archives: .....

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| <p>* <b><i>In the case of assignment, the Central Archives department points out that:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- <i>it has the right to decide whether to keep or destroy the material wholly or in part;</i></li><li>- <i>the transferred items may be made publicly available if they come within the rules on public access to the documents of the institutions.</i></li></ul> <p>** <b><i>In the case of deposit, the Central Archives department points out that:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- <i>this being simply a matter of storage, it does not assume any responsibility as regards the keeping or management of the items. Consequently, no searches may be demanded of it;</i></li><li>- <i>it reserves the right to return the items to the department of origin if it no longer has room for them;</i></li><li>- <i>access to the transferred items will be granted only in the presence of a person from Central Archives;</i></li><li>- <i>in the event of a removal, the items will have to be moved by the department of origin itself.</i></li></ul> |
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**Central Archives  
DOCUMENT DISPOSAL FORM**

*Requesting department*

Directorate: .....

Department: .....

Name of the staff member responsible for disposal: .....

Volume for which disposal is requested (shelf metres): .....

Number of pages in this form (including this page): .....

Date of dispatch of the request to the Archives: .....

Signature of the Head of Department: .....

*Archives*

Disposal stamp (dated): .....

Signature of the Head of the Archives: .....

*This form must be sent to the Archives contact for your department:*

**DG**

**Archives contact**

**Tel.**

**DELETED**

## ARCHIVE DOCUMENT DISPOSAL FORM

Department:

| <i>To be completed by the department</i>            |  |   |   |                                    |                 |
|---|--|---|---|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Description</b><br>(document purpose and nature) | <b>Start/end dates</b><br>(oldest and most recent year of documents) | <b>Shelf metres (sm) or Megabyte (MB)</b> | <b>Duration of administrative usefulness (DAU)</b><br>(period in years during which the documents had to be kept in the department for administrative usefulness reasons (relating to the department or of a legal nature)) | <b>Secure disposal</b><br>(yes/no) | <b>Comments</b> |
|   |  |   |   |                                    |                 |

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