



Closure of Your Unit's files in Ares DG ENV/CLIMA



WHAT MEANS CLOSING A FILE?



Closing a file means you finalised a case, contract, procedure, action to which the file is related.

When you close a file it means that you close both an electronic file and official paper file (if such exists). A link is created between electronic and paper files to constitute a complete file.



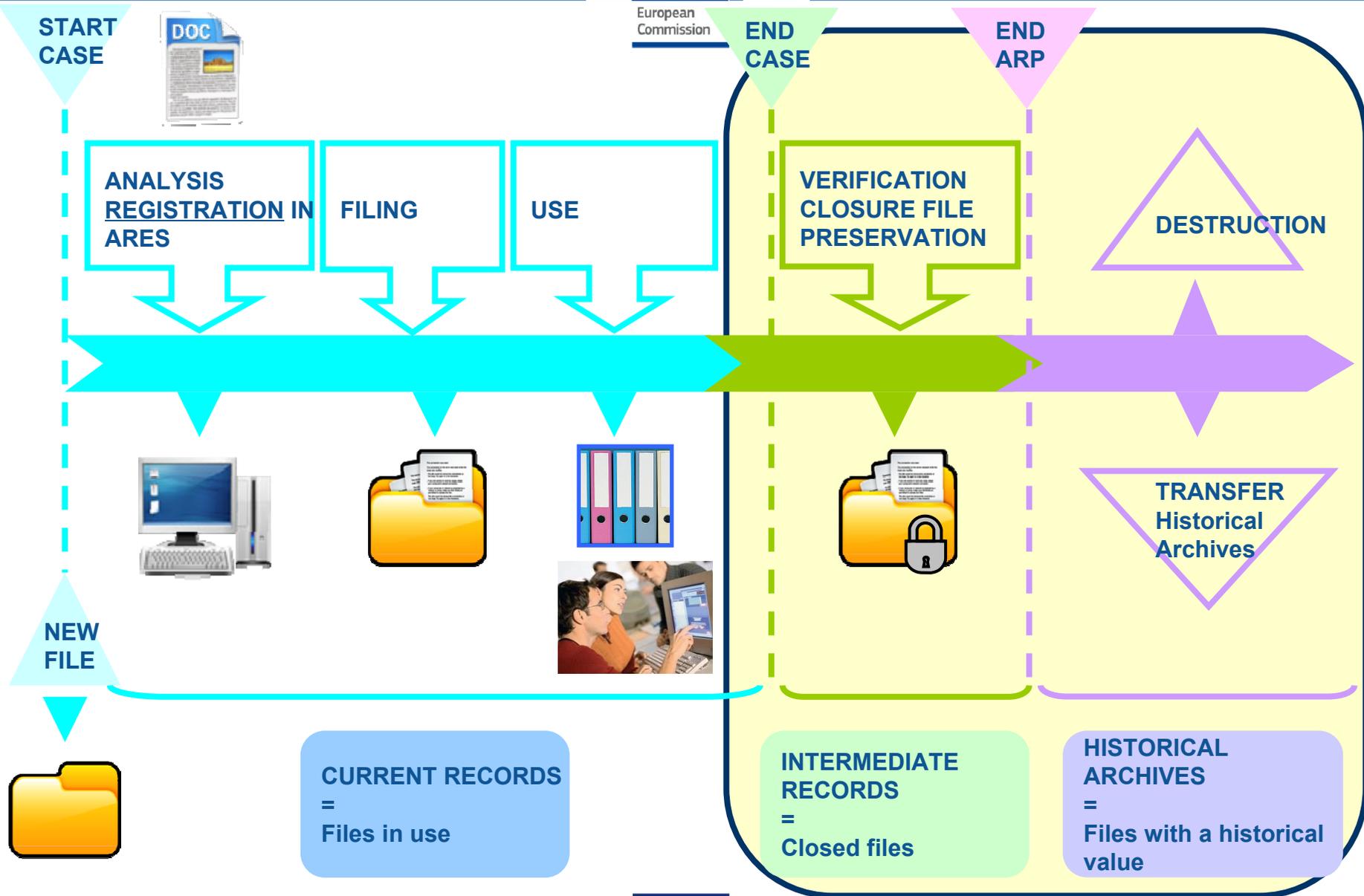
Once the DMO team closed your Ares file, **you can still consult** your documents in Ares,

but:

-no more documents **can be added**

(neither in Ares nor in your official paper file - if such exists).

Life cycle





WHY DO WE NEED TO CLOSE FILES?



Why do we need



to close files?

 **To Fulfil Legal Obligation!**

Example:

You might have open files and give out documents for access to documents requests, which according to the Common Retention List had to be eliminated

(Common Retention List (CRL) - an official administrative document defining the preservation period of official files (SEC(2007)969-970; revised in SEC(2012)713)



Why do we need



to close files?

- ➔ **To Work with On-going Files Only (=on-going Activities)!**
- ➔ **To avoid misfiling! To find files quickly!**
- ➔ **To have understandable, user-friendly, attractive, Unit's list of files.**
- ➔ **Not to overload your Unit's list of files with open but inactive files;**
- ➔ **Not to overload with paper files (if such exist)**
- ➔ **To preserve the official files of the institution**



Responsibilities



Desk Officers inform e-DMC of any new files to be created, **files to be closed** and any other relevant change. They also ensure that their files are complete.

Heads of Unit ensure that their list of files gives a good overview of the work of the unit and that e-DMC is informed by colleagues of all required updates, about **files that can be closed.**

The Lead Unit of the file:

- guarantees the preservation of documents and official files
- preserves files during the ARP (Administrative Retention Period)
- collaborates with the DMO for the first appraisal of the files and their transfer to the HA or their destruction



Responsibilities



E-domec Correspondents (e-DMC) **request** the closure of files in ARES to the DMOs (Document Management Officer). They do so following instructions from their HoU and/or colleagues.



Check-list for to be closed:



Ares Electronic files

- Is your File complete?

If not, in collaboration with colleagues identify which documents should still be in the file, register and file them.

- Any misfiled documents that do not belong to the file?

If yes, please re-file into correct files.

Example: Financial documents misfiled in a non-contract file

-Check if the title is still correct? Does the date of the title corresponds to the content?

Example: the date in the title should probably be changed instead of 20XX , to reflect the actual period covered in that file

-Have you got only electronic file, or also official paper file?



Check-list for to be closed



Paper Official files

Eliminate non valuable documents/materials from the official paper file!

Example of documents to be eliminated:

- Collections of official documents that are published elsewhere (COM, SEC, etc. & also documents produced by the Council, the EP, the EEA...),
- Collections of documents produced by other institutions (OCDE, UN & UN programmes),
- Publications in multiple exemplars, including guidelines, leaflets, etc.
- Manuals, periodicals & other reference material
- Documents that are clear doubles (= registered and UPLOADED into ARES and where we are -- NOT obliged to keep the handwritten signed original for legal value).
- Documents where another Unit is leading, e.g.:
 - Copies of LIFE files found outside the LIFE unit.
- Infringements and complaints other than those kept by the legal unit
- Call for tenders and offers received – originals kept by the finance unit SRD2.
- Administrative records (related to the management of human resources, logistics...)

Electronic or paper?



Electronic

All files from **2010** are considered e-Domec compliant:

- Official file exists in ARES
- preferred format is completely electronic (ARES fully operational)
- paper files are not transferred, unless fall under exceptions

Official files are transferred to the Historical Archives Service in line with the CRL.

Paper

Documents:

- where a handwritten signature on the original is still required for the legal value of it (e.g. contracts, international agreements)
- that cannot be attached to ARES, eg:
 - difficult to be scanned (voluminous, bulky, CDs, USBs)
 - Use a marking or classification (EU RESTRICTED)
- and are not part of another e-domec compliant system (eg. Decide, BASIL, e-greffe)

Make the link from paper to your Ares file (put labels on binder).

If there are sensitive and/or classified documents, the files should be kept in a locked cupboard.)

Official or Working File?



Official file



- Your Unit is the Lead Department
- Has legal value and needs to be preserved;
- Can be used in the context of a control or audit.
- Complete and accurate
- Checked before closure and preserved in Intermediate Archives
- Potentially transferred to the HA

Working file



- No legal value
- Managed by an individual
- May be destroyed at any time
- Destroyed at the closure of the official file
- Never transferred to the Historical Archives



Category from Common Retention List



The Category tells what happens in future with the file after its closure:

- 1) it will be destructed and when***
- 2) it will be sent to the Historical Archives for Permanent Preservation***
- 3) it will be sampled, and only samples will be sent to the Historical Archives***

It is very important that the File Category is correct!!!

What is an Administrative Retention Period (ARP)?



Administrative retention period (ARP):

is period of time during which the DG/Service must preserve a file based on its administrative usefulness and the statutory and legal obligations linked to it. The ARP, established by the common retention list or, where appropriate, by the specific retention list, **is calculated from the date the file is closed** (*Implementing Rules, SEC(2009)1643*).

Each File **has an ARP and Category** that is attached to the file at the very beginning, and it identifies the duration of ARP and what is next to happen with the file. This is written in the Common Retention List (CRL) of the European Commission.

File Schedule, tailored for the DG, is a lighter version of CRL



SAMPLING/ SELECTION



Some files are for sampling and selection, for example, Financial Files

Why? → Activity code of Contract Files: 1.3.5 (as per File Schedule)
Category of Contract Files: 7.1.3 (as per Common Retention List)

Administrative Retention Period (ARP) is 10 years

The Category: **7.1.3.** indicates that files in this Category are subject to **Sampling/Selection** after the Administrative Retention Period (ARP), i.e. 10 years is elapsed.

Policy Officers, responsible for the file, need to help to identify which files, have to be selected for Permanent Preservation and which can be destroyed (if possible at the moment of closure of files).

When the Policy Officer leaves or when the ARP finishes in 10 years, this selection process can be very challenging.



SAMPLING/ SELECTION



Selection:

Retention of a limited number of files based on the selector's subjective criteria. Criteria might include: importance of the originator unit, importance of case, current or future reuse of file, interest research, media impact, diplomatic value.

Sampling:

Retention of a sample of files representative of a greater set of files.

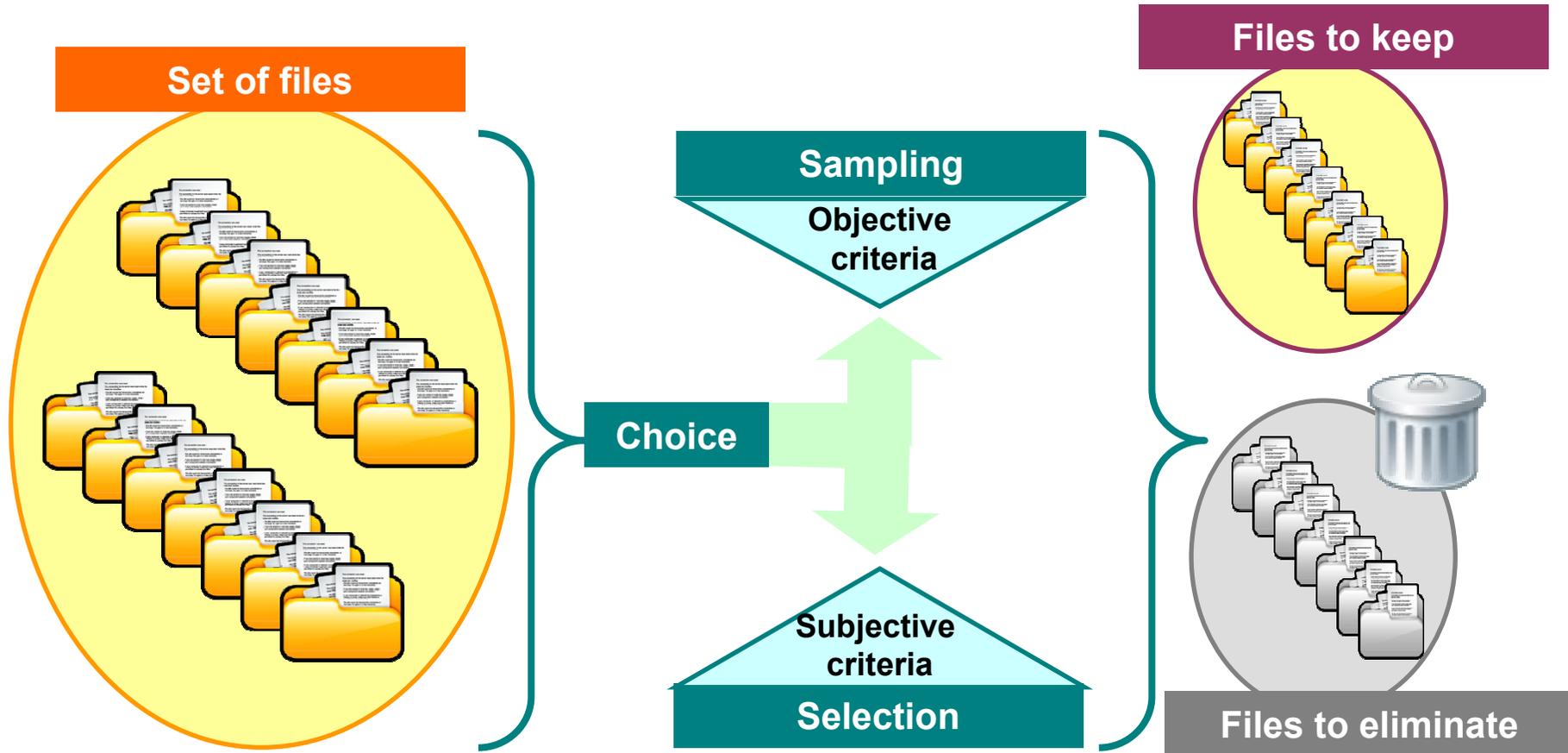
Cases: well adapted to serial files or with standard composition, whose historical value can be ensured by retaining a representative sample of the whole.

Systematic sampling:

choice of each n th files after distributing the files chronologically, topographically, alphabetically, numerically.



SAMPLING/ SELECTION



LABELS for to be closed



Paper Official files

- ➔ For each official paper file you will receive from the DMO team labels to be attached.
- ➔ The label creates the link between Ares electronic file and Official Paper file

➤ 4 types of labels available

Small LEITZ label (4 cm)
to put on the spine of a
binder of 39x190 mm

Large LEITZ label (6 cm)
to put on the spine of a
binder of 61x190 mm

Divider to separate files
from the same folder
(240x105 mm)

Bar code label (50x25
mm)



Storage of closed



paper files

During the Administrative Retention Period (ARP)

Closed paper files are stored in the Unit's Archives or in the Secretariat.

But not ...in the cupboard of colleagues.

