

Initial Issue

11.7.1 USQ Disaster Preparedness (Hard Copy Records) Plan**CONTENTS**

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1 About this plan

1.1 Background

The Disaster Preparedness Plan has been developed in line with the objectives of the USQ Recordkeeping Implementation Project. The plan should be viewed as a key step in the overall management and preservation of the temporary and permanent status records (hard copy), either physically stored in, or under the control of, Records & Archives Services.

‘Disaster planning’, in this context, refers to a set of rehearsed actions which will minimize the effect of a disaster (natural or man-made) on hard copy records held by Records & Archives Services. It is designed to assist in restoring the offices and storage areas and their contents to a usable condition in the minimum possible time. The term ‘disaster’ covers a wide range of events, from minor incidents to full-scale emergencies, e.g. fire, flood, leaking water pipe or mould outbreak.

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to:

- set out the risk reduction measures that Records & Archives Services has adopted to minimise the likelihood and impact of potential disasters;
- inform relevant staff of their responsibilities in relation to the protection and recovery of records (hard copy) in the event of a disaster; and
- ensure that the best use is made of Records & Archives Services resources in disaster preparedness and recovery activities.

1.3 Plan Review

The Corporate Records Manager is responsible for carrying out an annual review of the Disaster Preparedness Plan for hard copy records held by Records & Archives Services.

1.4 Training

The Corporate Records Manager is responsible for ensuring that all Records staff with responsibilities for execution of the plan are made fully aware of those responsibilities and are capable of carrying them out. The Disaster Response Team (refer section 3.2) will meet once every 12 months to review their roles and responsibilities. Records staff will, on an annual basis, review the Check Lists and Action Sheets (separate documents to plan) for potential disasters resulting in fire and water damaged material.

1.5 USQ Cost Centre Plans (hard copy records)

It is envisaged that this plan will be used as a template for other cost centres in developing their own disaster plan.

2. Disaster Prevention (Stage 1)

Prevention refers to actions which minimize the risks posed by potential events, e.g. fire, flood or unauthorized access and which minimize the damage a disaster will cause. The table (below) shows identified risks and threats and preventative measures for reduction or removal of those risks.

2.1 Risk Assessment

The plan is based on an understanding of risks to property, people, assets and records.

1 = Prevention/treatment of these risks attracts the greatest investment of resources

4 = Prevention/treatment of these risks attracts the least amount of resources

Offices/storage areas (B Block) – B112, B144, B115 & B116

Risk/Threat	Risk Assessment	Prevention/treatment Measure
Natural disaster: earthquake, flood, fire	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure all staff understand evacuation procedures • fire alarm system (back-to-base) installed • fire extinguishers installed • staff training, in use of fire extinguisher, provided • fire-proof safes (2 x hr rating) for vital records installed • ongoing microfilming program for aged student files since 1995 • ongoing microfilming program for USQ Archives since 2005 • all storage shelving above ground level • good drainage • all entrances appropriately sealed
Building fault: leaking water pipe	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all records off floor and on shelving
Faulty airconditioning: fluctuations in temperature	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • regular airconditioning maintenance checks
Environmental: mould outbreak, vermin infestation	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all records stored in air-conditioned environment • all areas well maintained by cleaning and Records staff • identified areas fumigated, as required

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Crime: theft, vandalism, arson, unauthorized entry and access	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> all access points secured (out-of-hours) all areas serviced by staff during work hours all vital records held in 4 x drawer safes with individual key for each drawer safe keys secured at COB each day all areas subject to USQ Security surveillance
Human error: Accidental destruction or damage	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> staff training, in use of approved disposal schedules and awareness of vital records, provided

Storage area (O2) – Mezzanine floor

Risk/Threat	Risk Assessment	Prevention/treatment Measure
Natural disaster: earthquake, flood, fire	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> fire hoses and extinguishers installed staff training, in use of fire extinguisher, provided all records located on mezzanine floor
Environmental: mould outbreak, vermin infestation	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> majority aged records held are temporary status and sentenced for destruction prior to problems arising area well maintained by cleaning staff identified areas fumigated, as required
Crime: theft, vandalism, arson, unauthorized entry and access	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> all access points secured (out-of-hours) area serviced by staff during work hours all vital records held in security cage with access restricted to Records staff only security cage key held in B Block area subject to USQ Security surveillance
Human error: Accidental destruction or damage	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> staff training, in use of approved disposal schedules and awareness of vital records, provided

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3. Disaster Preparation (Stage 1)

3.1 Vital Records (hard copy)

Vital records are records, in any format, which contain information essential to the survival of an organisation. If a vital record is lost, damaged, destroyed or otherwise unavailable, the loss is a disaster, affecting critical operations. Vital records should be the main priorities for recovery and salvage efforts when a disaster occurs. This plan relates to hard copy records only. The table (below) identifies the broad categories of vital records, managed by Records & Archives Services, and the order of priority for treatment/recovery of those records.

Risk Impact: 5 = *High*
 1 = *Low*

Priority Order	Vital Records	Status
5	USQ Archives (permanent status holdings)	100 % permanent holdings comprising original bound minutes, historical publications, reviews and reports. Some documents are irreplaceable i.e. only copy - no electronic version available.
4	USQ Corporate files	85% temporary status, residual 15% permanent status. High level corporate activity files supporting senior executive decision-making process.
3	USQ student files (active holdings)	Temporary status
4	Security cage holdings (aged permanent status holdings)	75% permanent status; residual 25% long-term temporary status

Retention Status:

Permanent = of continuing value to the organisation

Temporary = retain for retention period as determined by authorised disposal schedule

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3.2 Disaster Response Team

Role	Responsible Officer/Section	Contact Details
<p>Disaster Coordinator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If significant disaster, convene the Disaster Coordinating Group (refer Appendix A). • If minor disaster, convene the Disaster Response Team. • Coordinate disaster recovery processes in consultation with the Disaster Coordinating Group and Disaster Response Team and in accordance with the approved Disaster Preparedness Plan. 	Corporate Records Manager	4631 1760
<p>Materials & Equipment Coordinator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintain supplies for Disaster Recovery Bin; • liaise with B & F and other cost centres for additional materials and supplies; • ensure coordination and purchase of refreshments for team members; • monitor the safety and well-being of team members. 	Office Manager	4631 1759
<p>Building Coordinator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • coordinate/supervise stabilisation and remedial action for safety and repair purposes; • liaise with internal and external tradesmen. 	Senior Planning Officer (Buildings & Property) Supervisor (Buildings Maintenance)	4631 2687 4631 1654
<p>Occupational Health & Safety Coordinator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure area is evacuated by all staff; • ensure area is secured against unauthorised entry; • ensure area is declared safe by relevant Emergency Services before staff re-enter to commence recovery process. 	Manager, USQ Safe	4631 2194 4631 2520

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<p>Security Coordinator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contact relevant Emergency Services and Disaster Coordinator in event of disaster; • assist with evacuating and securing the site. 	USQ Security	4631 2871
<p>Insurance Assessor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contact insurance broker who will, in turn, appoint an assessor depending on the event and location i.e. Toowoomba, Hervey Bay or Brisbane. 	AON Risk Services	07 3223 7433 07 3223 7400
<p>Photography</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • obtain photographic record of event for purposes of insurance and assisting recovery process. 	USQ Photographer	4631 2472 4631 2026 4631 2684
<p>General assistance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assist, as directed, by Disaster Coordinator and Materials & Equipment Coordinator in accordance with predetermined team role. 	Records Officers (5)	4631 2233 4631 2303

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3.3 Support Network (External)

Role	Organisation	Contact Details
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> specialist conservation advice general advisory assistance 	Queensland State Archives (QSA) Brisbane	(07) 3131 777
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> water and fire damage restoration mould remediation humidity control rental of dehumidifiers and heaters 24-hour on-call service 	Moisture Control Services Aust Pty Ltd Brisbane	(07) 3868 2442 24 – hour National Customer Contact Centre 1800-800 849
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> additional resource assistance 	Toowoomba City Council	4688 6611
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> specialist conservation advice general advisory assistance 	State Library of Queensland Brisbane	(07)3840 7666
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> general advisory assistance 	Queensland Universities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> University of Queensland Queensland University of Technology Griffith University Sunshine Coast University Central Queensland University James Cook University 	Records Managers Ph. (07) 3365 2284 Ph. (07) 3864 1074 Ph. (07) 3735 7806 Ph. (07) 5430 2895 Ph. (07) 4930 9471 Ph. (07) 4781 4146

3.4 Equipment and materials

Equipment and materials for use in disaster salvage are held in the **Disaster Recovery Bin** located in B144 – student file room (near safe). Refer Appendix B.

Note: If the disaster recovery bin is inaccessible e.g. as a consequence of disaster event, materials and supplies should be obtained

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(borrowed) from the University Library, or alternatively, Buildings & Facilities.

4. Disaster Response (Stage 2)

4.1 Disaster response and recovery steps

The initial steps of the disaster response and recovery process are:

During Work Hours

1	On the identification of a disaster event, the Corporate Records Manager (or Office Manager if the CRM is unavailable) should decide whether it is necessary to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evacuate staff and visitors; • notify Emergency Services; • notify Disaster Coordinating Group (refer Appendix A).
2	Corporate Records Manager then notifies all members of the Disaster Response Team (or delegates this duty to the Office Manager)
3	Corporate Records Manager briefs the response team on the nature and extent of the disaster event. The Disaster Response Team will decide on the appropriate response to be undertaken.
4	When appropriate authorizations from the relevant Emergency Services have been received indicating that it is safe to re-enter the affected areas, team members should commence recovery activities.
5	Corporate Records Manager contacts external support network (refer section 3.3), if required.

Outside Work Hours

1	<p>On the identification of a disaster event, USQ Security should decide whether it is necessary to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evacuate persons remaining in the building; • notify Emergency Services; • notify Disaster Coordinating Group (refer Appendix A); • notify Disaster Coordinator (Corporate Records Manager) or, Office Manager if the CRM is unavailable.
2	<p>Corporate Records Manager then notifies all members of the Disaster Response Team (or delegates this duty to the Office Manager).</p> <p>Note 1: Refer to Telephone Tree (Outside Work Hours) for mobile or private telephone numbers.</p> <p>Note 2: Telephone Tree listing provided to all members of Disaster Coordinating Group and Disaster Response Team for off-campus retention.</p>
3	<p>Corporate Records Manager briefs the Disaster Response Team on the nature and extent of the disaster event. The team will decide on the appropriate response to be undertaken.</p>
4	<p>When appropriate authorizations from the relevant Emergency Services have been received indicating that it is safe to re-enter the affected areas, team members should commence recovery activities.</p>
5	<p>Corporate Records Manager contacts external support network (refer section 3.3), if required.</p>

4.2 Technical and specialist advice

Technical advice on salvaging and drying materials is provided in Appendix C. Where necessary, the Corporate Records Manager will seek expert opinion from conservators and other specialists, as per section 3.3 Support Network (External).

4.3 Disaster headquarters

The disaster recovery operation will be managed from Corporate Services offices located on Level 1, B Block. If these offices are affected or the building is evacuated, the recovery will be managed from the International Student File room (Y106), or alternatively, Senior Common Room (Refectory). It may be necessary to obtain (borrow) a whiteboard from another cost centre for the purpose of briefing sessions and to assist the disaster coordination.

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4.4 Media Coverage

If the disaster is attracting media coverage, the Corporate Records Manager should refer all enquiries to USQ Marketing & Public Relations.

5. Disaster Recovery (Stage 3)

5.1 Recovery Tasks

5.1.1 Organising the team

Corporate Records Manager will be responsible for organising and coordinating the Disaster Response Team (refer section 3.2 above) and a 'command centre' with office equipment and telephones.

5.1.2 Recording and evaluating damage

Corporate Records Manager and the Office Manager will document the extent of the damage, categories of damaged records, type of damage, etc. The Disaster Response Team will evaluate the damage with a view to recovery needs.

5.1.3 Recovery needs

The Disaster Response Team will need to decide how to proceed and to identify salvage and resource requirements and additional assistance (USQ internal and external).

5.1.4 Modifying (stabilising) the environment

The main objective at this point is to prevent further damage to offices, storage areas and the records holdings. Required action will be dependent on the nature of the disaster event e.g. water damage, smoke damage, pest infestation or mould outbreak.

Salvage procedures

Prior to commencement of salvage procedures it will be necessary to sort damaged records into four (4) categories, as follows:

Priority	Required Action
A	Immediate treatment necessary by Records staff Note: Vital records (ref. section 3.1 above) must be recovered in accordance with identified priorities.
B	Immediate treatment necessary by specialist providers
C	Essentially stable and can be treated later
D	Unsalvageable, and should be discarded (i.e. no treatment at all), following documentation.

Note: Required actions for each of the four (4) priority categories must be documented, in particular, where records must be moved to another location for safe keeping or remedial action.

Paper-based records

There are a number of stabilising and drying methods that can be used in the recovery phase of disaster management. For general tips on stabilising and drying water damaged paper-based materials refer to technical advice documentation, as per Appendix C. Whichever method is chosen, dried materials should be monitored for potential mould growth.

Non-paper materials

If dealing with non-paper media, e.g. magnetic or optical media (disks, audio, video, CDs) or microfilm reference should be made to Appendix C – Section 1.2.

If in any doubt regarding the appropriate solution the Corporate Records Manager will, in consultation with the Disaster Recovery Team, seek specialist advice.

5.1.6 Locating supplies

Equipment, materials and supplies for use in disaster salvage are held in the disaster recovery bin located in B144 – student file room (near safe). Refer Appendix B.

Note: If the disaster recovery bin is inaccessible e.g. as a consequence of disaster event, materials and supplies should be obtained (borrowed) from the University Library, or alternatively, Buildings & Facilities.

5.1.7 Maintaining morale

To assist in maintaining a high level of response from the Disaster Response Team it is essential to ensure that:

- there are clear lines of communication and that all parties involved are informed of progress;
- attainable milestones are established during the recovery process;
- team members have appropriate refreshments, in addition to, meal and rest breaks;
- recovery team has appropriate equipment, materials and supplies to perform salvage tasks;
- team has opportunities to review progress; and
- celebrate when the recovery is complete.

5.1.8 Returning to normal

Final steps in the completion of the recovery process include:

Water damage

- use of a fungicide to prevent mould growth on floors , walls, etc;
- monitor the drying-out process for a period of time to ensure further damage does not occur; and
- clean and check equipment is still in working order.

Other

- restock disaster recovery bin, as required;
- final report re records destroyed or damaged;
- review disaster preparation and recovery process (with hindsight);
- revise Disaster Preparedness Plan accordingly;
- monitor and identify specialist workshops in disaster response and recovery techniques and procedures e.g. QSA workshops; and
- provide appropriate funding for staff training.

APPENDIX A

RESPONSIBILITIES

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1.3 Responsibilities

Role	Responsible Officer	Contact Details
Authorisation of Disaster Preparedness Plan and dissemination to relevant staff.	Director, Corporate Services	4631 2198
In charge of the overall implementation of risk reduction measures and disaster recovery processes.	Corporate Records Manager	4631 1760
Primary contact regarding records (hard print) in the event of a disaster.	Corporate Records Manager	4631 1760
Back-up team leader in absence of Corporate Records Manager.	Office Manager	4631 1759
Carries out risk reduction and disaster recovery activities for records (hard print), under supervision of Corporate Records Manager.	Office Manager	4631 1759
Carries out risk reduction and disaster recovery activities for records (hard print), under supervision of Office Manager.	Records Officers (B Block) Records Officers (Y Block)	4631 2233 4631 2303

In the event of a significant disaster e.g. building destruction or a death, the Disaster Coordinating Group (table below) will make executive decisions to facilitate the recovery process.

Role	Responsible Officer	Contact Details
Group Coordinator	General Manager	4631 2395
Finance, building and security matters	Group Manager, Finance & Facilities	4631 2183
Human Resource and safety matters	Group Manager, Human Resources & Corporate Services	4631 2580
Executive Officer	Corporate Records Manager	4631 1760

The Corporate Records Manager is responsible for the development and implementation of this plan.

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APPENDIX B

EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS

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Equipment and Materials

Equipment and materials for use in disaster salvage are held in the disaster recovery bin located in B144 – student file room (near safe).

Note: If the disaster recovery bin is inaccessible e.g. as a consequence of disaster event, materials and supplies should be obtained (borrowed) from the University Library, or alternatively, Buildings & Facilities.

The disaster recovery bin contains:

No:	Description	No:	Description
4	plastic aprons	10	sheets blotting paper
1	bucket	2	pkts - chux cloths
1	squeeze mop	4	dust masks
1	extension cord – 5 metres	1	roll – garbage tough bags
1	power board	1	pkt – tags/ties
2	rolls - masking tape		post-it-notes (1 of each size)
2	sponges	1	A4 note pad (ruled)
1	roll - paper towel	4	pencils
2	plastic drop sheets	4	biros
1	utility knife (Stanley)	2	highlighters
2	hand towels	2	pairs scissors
4	pairs rubber gloves	1	A4 Clip Board
4	pairs cotton gloves		
1	copy of disaster plan	1	copy of Checklists
1	copy of telephone tree (Work Hours)	1	copy of Action Sheets

Note 1: Team members must wear gumboots or suitable waterproof footwear.

Note 2: Telephone tree (Outside Hours) with mobile and private telephone numbers issued to team members for off-campus retention.

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APPENDIX C

**RECORDS RECOVERY
INFORMATION**

(WATER DAMAGED MATERIALS)

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1 Records Recovery Information

1. **Appendix C relates to recovery procedures for ‘water damaged materials’ only.**
2. **For ‘fire damaged records’ refer to the relevant Action Sheet held separately to the Disaster Preparedness Plan.**
3. **Records should be recovered in accordance with vital records schedules and priorities set for each functional area. Vital records are listed in section 3 of this plan.**
4. **If records remain wet for more than 48 hours, mould will begin to develop.**

1.1 Paper-based records

There are a number of stabilising and drying methods that can be used in the recovery phase of disaster management. Below are general tips on stabilising and drying water damaged paper-based materials. Whichever method is chosen, dried materials should be monitored for potential mould growth.

Freezing

For stabilising and restoring large quantities of records, or records that are already starting to grow mould, freezing is the most effective method. If there are only small quantities of records then other methods, such as air drying, should be employed.

Freezing is a useful alternative for some records as:

- it stops the growth of mould and mildew (while the object is still frozen).
- it may stop bindings from warping, depending on the method of drying.
- it stabilises water soluble materials such as inks and dyes.
- it gives the organisation time to plan for recovery and restore buildings and equipment ready for the material.

Conservators do not advise the freezing of vellum, photographs, glass plate negatives, electronic media such as diskettes, videos, cassettes or vinyl records.

As soon as the record quantities requiring freezing are decided, companies with appropriate freeze facilities (listed in the counter disaster plan) should be contacted and arrangements made for transport.

Options for freezing are:

- *Blast freeze:* commercial blast freezers are ideal as they drop the temperature quickly and have a large capacity
- *Freeze in refrigerated chamber:* this could be slow but there are benefits to reducing temperature even before freezing point is reached, or
- *Use a home freezer unit to freeze small quantities quickly:* ensure that it reaches a temperature of -10°C and do not open until ready to remove the material (otherwise it will cause a freeze-thaw cycle).

Once the material is frozen and you have the time and resources to defrost and treat it, you need to look at drying options.

Freeze Drying

The frozen items are placed in a vacuum chamber, which allows the water to evaporate without melting. This is of a huge advantage for water sensitive inks as it minimises the risk of them running further. Likewise it is also good for glossy papers as it prevents them from sticking together. But if these situations have begun freeze drying will not reverse it.

Vacuum freeze drying is not recommended for photographic materials unless there is no alternative, as their surfaces may be damaged. Leather and vellum may not survive. Volumes that are vacuum freeze dried should be acclimatised for at least one month before opening to avoid cracking the bindings, and monitored for mould.

Specialist services for freeze-drying are listed in section (TBA) of this plan.

Dry Air Purging or Dehumidifying

Dry air purging can be used if records are not soaking. A building or site is sealed in plastic sheeting and dry air, at least 26°C and 15% relative humidity, is pumped in using desiccant or refrigeration equipment. The water vapour is then absorbed in the dry air. This method is rapid and has the advantage of being in situ, but is only useful when the whole site can be sealed off.

Air drying

Air drying can be attempted if it is within two days of the disaster and if material is not soaked. Otherwise, mould will start to grow, and items that are suitable should be frozen. Air drying may result in some distortion of items and should not be used for items with soluble inks.

Air drying requires a large space with good air circulation and temperatures below 21°C. Circulation may be encouraged by positioning fans and opening windows. If available, dehumidifiers can be used in the drying process to reduce relative humidity (ideally to 25-35%). Screening material such as window screens can provide an excellent compact drying surface which allows for air circulation (although metal mesh will rust in contact with moisture).

Files

- Files should be removed from boxes carefully and laid flat. Bundles can be interleaved and pressed under a light weight or pages turned regularly, ensuring that the original order is maintained for each bundle. Cool air can be directed to the pages, but ensure that it is directed upward rather than directly on the pages. Replace the interleaved sheets when they become wet. Glossy papers should be fully separated and interleaved or frozen.
- For saturated files, metal binders should be replaced with plastic tubing or plastic coated wire and pages fanned with some interleaving.

Volumes

- Closed volumes can be cleaned before drying, by washing off dirt or mud on covers and edges using clean running water and a sponge.
- Books and volumes which can stand upright can be placed on paper towelling with their covers slightly open and their pages lightly fanned. A gentle breeze from a fan can assist the drying process. Do not use heat as it will encourage mould.
- Priority volumes can be dried by placing plastic sheeting on the floor, standing volumes upright with pages fanned (if their spines will support them), and then forming wind tunnels around them from cardboard or plastic sheeting. Cool air from fans can then be directed down the tunnels.
- Interleaving can be used for wet volumes that cannot support their own weight. Loose sheets of paper towel or blotting paper can be placed at 1 centimetre intervals through the volumes. Do not allow interleaving materials to exceed a third of the thickness of the volume or the spine will be damaged (the exception is with coated papers where each page must be interleaved). Replace interleaving materials when wet.
- If adhesives are sticking to the interleaving sheets, a release material such as nylon gauze should be used as a barrier between them.

Pamphlets

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- Pamphlets and loose pages can be hung on lines or improvised drying racks providing there is enough space and assistance.

Maps and Plans

- Maps and plans can be interleaved with blotting paper stacked up to 10 high and pressed dry under glass, perspex or thick board and weighted evenly.

Card Indexes

- Card indexes should be removed from drawers, stack on sides loosely and supported at each end.

Photographic Prints

If treated rapidly, photographic prints may be air dried. Photographs can be frozen if necessary but do not freeze dry as it may result in disfiguring marks on the surface of the photograph.

To air dry:

1. remove photographs from mounts or separate from each other to prevent the emulsion sticking.
2. rinse with cool water if necessary. Do not touch or blot surfaces, and
3. place emulsion side up on blotters or lint free cloths or hang by placing clips on non-image areas, ensuring there is no overlap.
4. If wet, immerse in clean cold water in polyethylene bags. Send to a processing laboratory within 2-3 days for reprocessing and drying (except historic ones).

Photographic negatives

To air dry:

1. remove negatives from envelopes;
2. wash in clean running water; and
3. hang to dry or lay flat with emulsion side up.

Eastman colour film should only be handled by a processing lab. If there are large quantities of negatives they should be frozen and air dried.

If wet, negatives should be sealed in polyethylene bags and placed in plastic garbage cans under cold, clean running water while the negatives are still wet. They should be transferred to a laboratory within three days.

Glass Plate Negatives

Glass plate negatives should **NOT** be immersed in water. They should never be frozen or freeze dried. Air dry them immediately by laying flat onto blotter with the emulsion side up (duller side) or upright in a dish rack.

1.2 Non-paper Materials

If dealing with non-paper media, teams need to obtain assistance from professionals. Some general principles are explained below.

Magnetic Media

If magnetic media (disks, audio, video) is damaged, teams should never try to make copies of it immediately because it might damage the hardware. If exposed to heat, an expert can advise of the chances of preserving the information.

Floppy Disks and Diskettes

If floppy disks are wet, they should be placed upright in cold distilled water until recovery is possible. Do not dry or attempt to freeze them. If full backup copies exist, then damaged media can be destroyed and replaced.

To salvage disks and diskettes:

1. Remove from water immediately
2. Remove from jacket
3. Rinse off dirt with clean distilled water. Do not soak
4. Drip dry vertically in a disk drain or rack.
5. Clean with a soft lintless cloth. Move perpendicular to grooves, not in a circular motion.
6. **DO NOT** use hairdryers.
7. Place cleaned compact disk in clean jackets.
8. Replace if mould or condensation is present or if there are deep scratches.
9. Check playability and readability.

Magnetic Tapes

- **DO NOT** freeze because the moisture in the tapes will cause permanent damage when frozen. Do not use magnetised tools/scissors

- **DO NOT** use hot or warm air to dry as it will cause the tape to adhere.

Treatment of magnetic tapes will depend on the extent of water penetration. The casing usually keeps tapes clean and dry. If full backup copies exist, then damaged media can be destroyed and replaced.

Wet Tape

- Disassemble the case and remove the tape.
- Rinse dirty tapes, still wound on reels in lukewarm water.
- Support vertically on blotting paper to air dry.
- Reassemble and copy

Optical Media (compact disks etc)

If full backup copies exist, then damaged media can be destroyed and replaced.

1. Remove from water immediately
2. Remove from jacket
3. Rinse off dirt with clean distilled water. **DO NOT** soak
4. Drip dry vertically in a disk drain or rack.
5. Clean with a soft lintless cloth. Move perpendicular to grooves, not in a circular motion.
6. **DO NOT** use hairdryers.
7. Place cleaned compact disk in clean jackets.
8. Replace if mould or condensation is present or if there are deep scratches.
9. Check playability and readability.

Microforms

If backup copies exist, damaged media can be destroyed and replaced.

Silver halide microfilm should be kept underwater and not allowed to dry out. It should be sent to a processing laboratory within 72 hours. Vesicular and diazo film should be separated and air dried:

1. Extract water affected records and dry separately.
2. Peg aperture cards up for drying.
3. Unroll microfilms and air dry with the emulsion side up or send to film laboratory.
4. Rewind film and store in dry containers.

If microforms cannot be dried immediately, they should be immersed in clean, cold water for no more than 2 to 3 days and taken to a laboratory. Duplication is recommended where possible.

Note: For ‘fire damaged records’ refer to the relevant Action Sheet held separately to the Disaster Preparedness Plan.

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