



## Record keeping for complaint handlers

Good record keeping promotes accountability and transparency, improves organisational efficiency and supports decision making. All staff are responsible for keeping records in accordance with the Ombudsman's Record Keeping Plan.

### What must be filed and registered in TRIM?

All documents, emails and faxes that provide evidence of decisions and actions relating to the complaint must be placed on the file and registered into TRIM. These include:

- The letter of complaint and supporting material sent by the complainant;
- All outgoing correspondence, including requests for information, preliminary views and final reports;
- Reports, evidence and any other information sent by the agency;
- File notes of conversations with agency staff, the complainant, third parties and internal staff members;
- Drafts referred internally or externally for comment;
- Complaint resolution or investigation plans;
- Running sheets; and
- All internal and external emails pertaining to the case.

Working documents that provide background or reference information may be filed but do not need to be registered into TRIM.

### Drafts of electronic documents

Drafts of electronic documents that are not saved in TRIM, for example, drafts not yet circulated for comment, are subject to Practice Note 10/01 - *The Saving of Draft Electronic Documents* - which states that all drafts (unless of a highly confidential nature) must be saved to a 'Cases' subdirectory on the case officer's Staff Folder on the T drive. This is to allow management to access the drafts of electronic documents when the case officer is not available. Arrangements for highly confidential documents should be discussed with a manager so that they can be accessed by authorised staff in the case officer's absence.

### TRIM and Resolve

Letters that are created in Resolve will automatically be saved in TRIM. Where letters or other documents are not generated from Resolve, case officers must ensure that they are saved in TRIM so that anybody accessing the Resolve complaint record will have access to all the documents. When saving records in TRIM or Resolve the following naming convention should be used:

'COMP – type of correspondence and from whom – complainant – Agency – a brief description of subject matter'

Eg. COMP – Letter received from Department of Transport – Ms Jeanie Smith – DOT – response on licensing issue

Note: When dragging and dropping emails from Outlook into Resolve you must change the subject line of the email according to the above naming convention.

## **Case files**

Case officers must also ensure that a hard copy of all documents is placed on the case file – for example, emails and attachments should be printed out and filed. Other documents on the case file should include:

- The Checklist for High Risk/High Priority Complaints;
- The Screening and Assessment Record; and
- The Archival and Disposal Checklist (when the file is closed).

For more information see the records management policies and procedures under 'Communications, Records & IT' on the Ombudsnet.