United Republic of Tanzania

PRESIDENT'S OFFICE
PUBLIC SERVICE MANAGMENT

Registry Procedures Manual

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UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

President's Office, Public Service Management
Records and Archives Management Division

Registry Procedures Manual

Records Management aims at ensuring that the right information is available to the right person, at the right time, and at the least possible cost.

President's Office, Public Service Management (PO-PSM)
P.O. Box 2483,
Dar es Salaam

Tel: 2118531/4, 2150634, 2153122
Fax: 2150634
E-mail: permsec@estabs.go.tz

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FORWARD TO THE 2001 EDITION OF THE REGISTRY PROCEDURES MANUAL

Today, it is an undenied fact that we are living in an information era where information is regarded as a key resource in all places, from homes to work places. It is estimated that 80% of office employees are information handlers. Thus, efficient and effective management of information underpin all areas of government and facilitate immeasurably to the success.

Documentary evidence provides the framework for accountability, which is the cornerstone of good governance. The Government of Tanzania, which has embarked on reforming its public service, seeks to improve the management of records through the Public Service. Records Management is, therefore, becoming an important instrument of management of change process upon which principles and practices of modern management depend. The success depends on the extent to which information and records are organized, stored and managed throughout their life cycle.

In order to ensure that there was a robust information service that formed the basis of an accountable administration, the Government of Tanzania initiated the Records Management Project in 1997. The Project has a number of successes. One of the tangible successes is production of a Registry Procedures Manual.

This manual has been developed in the wake of mapping current and emerging best practices and the introduction of a "Keyword" System where file headings reflect functions instead of hierarchical system in which file headings reflect themes; thus this manual supercedes the Standard Registry Procedures of 1984.

In conjunction with desk instructions for registry staff, this manual should therefore ensure a consistency of practice and sustainability of system's improvements. As records and information management develops further and systems are further enhanced, the guidance series will be altered to reflect these changes.

With a shared commitment to our common goal of an efficient and accountable government, I look forward to a strong relationship that benefits all citizens of Tanzania.

J...eph A. M. Rugumyamheto

PERMANENT SECRETARY (ESTABLISHMENT)

Section 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 THE NEED FOR SOUND REGISTRY PROCEDURES

No government could survive without written records. Without them, all organised administration would quickly come to a halt. Because records are so important, they must be effectively managed at all stages of their existence from their creation to their eventual disposal. Responsibility for this rests primarily with the Records and Archives Management Division (RAMD)[1], working closely with its clients - the users of the records. The effectiveness of this partnership will depend upon the degree of understanding and co-operation between them.

1.2 THE FUNCTIONS OF REGISTRY

The essential functions of a Registry are to:

- Receive, record and distribute incoming and internally created mail of all kinds (e.g. letters, memoranda, faxes), to attach relevant reference papers and to pass the correspondence to officers;
- Open, index, build up and control the files upon which users depend for information about the conduct of government business;
- Know the location of all officially registered files in their care and be able to produce them quickly, by means of effective indexing, classification and tracing procedures;
- Provide storage, repository and reference services for all officially registered files and other documentation in their care;
- Record and arrange for the efficient and timely despatch of all correspondence produced by the officers they serve;
- Review and dispose of all outdated files or other records in accordance with retention periods as agreed between Records and Archives Management Division (RAMD), the ministry or department concerned and other relevant officials.

[1] This Manual describes the roles, responsibilities and relationships that will emerge following the passage of the National Records and Archives Act.

1.3 Management Responsibilities for Registries

Responsibility for the management of Registries is shared between thePresident's Office-Public Service Management (PSM) and Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs). PO-PO-PSM is responsible for all professional and technical matters relating to the delivery of effective and efficient Registry services. Ministries are responsible for all matters regarding the welfare, discipline and non-specialist training of Registry staff. The separate responsibilities of these two management chains must be closely co-ordinated.

The Public Service Management is responsible for developing Registry policy and for introducing it in consultation with senior management in each of the ministries and departments served. This technical and professional management responsibility in-cludes:

- Ensuring, in consultation with managers responsible for Registry staffing, that all Registry staff are adequately trained in the full range of Registry duties;
- Ensuring, also in consultation with line managers, that all Registries are fully staffed by suitable staff to approved complement levels;
- Giving advice and direction to all Registry staff on their duties; disciplinary matters will be referred to line managers;
- Making regular inspections of Registry services and making reports to local line managements; and
- Providing a source of advice and guidance on all aspects of the management of current records to Registry staff and Registry users.

Ministries are responsible to the Director of Records and Archives Management Division for the following aspects of the management of their individual Registries:

- Co-operating in providing all necessary technical and professional training for Registry staff;
- Monitoring the good discipline and standards of attendance by Registry staff and ensuring that absences are fully covered by suitable substitutes;
- Making provision for the welfare, career development and annual leave arrangements for all Registry staff; and
- Dealing with all non-specialist general administrative matters pertaining to Registries.

The head of the Registry has immediate responsibility for day-to-day control of the Registry. He/she must manage the staff, monitor and control the workflow and Registry systems to ensure an efficient service. He/she reports to the line manager responsible for the Registry on the performance of the Registry and on any problems where support is required . He/ she liaises with DRAM through Director Administration and Personnel (DAP) of the responsible ministry on any technical records management or procedural matters.

1.4 Responsibilities of Registry Staff Towards Users

Registries exist in order to provide a service to the officers who need to use the records. Users are always shown the maximum possible courtesy and co-operation, and efficient Registry staff will take every opportunity to learn the particular needs and requirements of their agency. The Registry staff will react promptly to complaints by users. Suggestions for improvements from users are warmly received and actively encouraged and are implemented wherever possible.

1.5 Responsibilities of Users

Well-run Registries depend upon an active partnership between Registry staff and users. Registry staffs rely upon users to:

- Deal with files promptly and return them to the Registry when they are no longer required;
- Use the Bring-Up system when action on a file needs to be temporarily suspended;
- Keep files free of unnecessary material such as duplicates, drafts etc;
- Include the relevant file and letter reference on all outgoing correspondence;
- Give clear guidance on how they wish their mail to be indexed;
- Provide the Registry with a completed file movement slip whenever they pass a file to another officer or elsewhere other than the Registry; and
- Co-operate fully with all necessary record checks, including censuses and searches conducted by Registry staff.

1.6 The Registry and The Life Cycle of Records

Registries are, for the most part, concerned with files, which are in active use. However, files usually go through a number of phases between their creation and their eventual destruction, or their transfer to the Records Centre or Archives Section of RAMD. The life cycle approach to records management is based on the idea that each file may be regarded as having a 'life', beginning with its creation (or 'birth') and ending with its destruction (or 'death'). The relatively small number of files that are permanently retained in RAMD may be regarded as having achieved a kind of 'immortality'.

Registries are concerned with files in the earlier 'operational' phases of their lives during which the files are used for the purposes for which they were created. It is important however that Registries know not only how and when to pass files on to subsequent stages of their life cycle but that they understand the significance of those stages.

The RAMD manages all phases of the life cycle in order to ensure that Tanzania's information requirements are met efficiently. In addition to its responsibilities for Registries, it manages the Interim Records Store and the Archives Section.

Records Centre provide a central storage and retrieval service for semi-current records. These are records which are no longer needed for day-to-day use, but which must be kept because they are used occasionally or because they have legal and financial value. These records are not available to the public; nor are they available to ministries or departments other than the ones that created them, or to the appropriate successor body in the case of a defunct ministry or department. Records Centre are a vital link between the Registries and the Archives Section. By making regular use of the Tanzania Interim Records Store or their own Ministry's semi-current storage location, Registry staff will be able to provide a valuable service to users. This will also achieve improvements in their own working conditions, as they will keep the Registries clear of files which are not needed for current work. The role of a Records Centre is described in greater detail in section 10.

The Archives Section of RAMD preserves records which are of permanent historical value to the nation. Once these records become 30 years old they are normally open to the public for purposes of research.

Section 2 Incoming Correspondence

2.1 Types of Correspondence

Registry staff must deal promptly and accurately with many different kinds of correspondence. Incoming correspondence may reach the Registry in a number of ways. Some will come through the mail, some by hand, and some by fax. There will also be differences in the way in which items are addressed. Some will be addressed to the ministry or department, some to individuals either by name or by title of office. Other items may be either inadequately or illegibly addressed. Some items will bear security or privacy markings, such as 'Confidential' or 'Personal'. Some mail may contain cheques, money or other valuable items, which will need to be carefully recorded and accounted for in the Registry.

2.2 Opening Mail

All mail received in the Registry, whether from the Post Office, or from other ministries or departments, must be opened as soon as it is received by a designated officer (normally the head of the Registry) in the presence of another officer. This protects the officers involved against accusations in the event of correspondence, or valuable or important enclosures, going astray. If there is only one officer in a Registry, arrangements must be made for an officer from elsewhere to be present when the mail is opened.

How the mail is opened is important. Envelopes are slit across the top. Wherever possible, envelopes are saved for re-use. Care must be taken to ensure the contents of letters are not damaged when the envelopes are slit. During the opening and date-stamping of the mail, all letters should be kept in a box file or other suitable container. Many enclosures are received loose from their covering documents. It is vital to attach such enclosures, but in so doing care must be taken not to damage cheques, certificates or similar items. In any event, all attachments must be noted on the covering document. This is particularly important when the enclosures are valuable or are personal paper.

Certificates, deeds and other legal documents require special care. It is useful, if possible, to place such documents in separate envelopes, noting the contents and the number of the file on the outside. These are recorded in a valuables register (see Section 2.4), stored in a safe place and cross-referenced on the file.

2.3 Incoming Correspondence Register (Fig. 1) and 'Mail Box'

After the mail has been opened and all enclosures accounted for, each letter must be registered in the Incoming Correspondence Register. All columns of the register must always be completed. The details to be entered initially are:

(1) Date the letter was received;

(2) Date on letter;

(3) Reference on letter;

(4) From whom the letter was received; and

(5) Subject of the letter.

Incoming mail is placed in a 'mail box' or folder for preview by a senior officer in the ministry, usually the Principal Secretary or Director of Administration and Personnel. The number of letters sent for preview is marked on the cover of the file.

Where there is more than one preview of mail each day, correspondence delivered after the mail box has been dispatched should be held over and included in the subsequent batch, except for any that are marked 'urgent' which must be delivered immediately. In Registries receiving mail once a day only, it may still be necessary to have a second preview to deal with letters delivered by hand from other ministries or departments or from elsewhere.

When the mail box is returned to the Registry the documents are immediately placed on the appropriate files. If an appropriate file does not already exist, a new file must be opened. The procedures for opening new files are described in Section 4. Before the files are passed to the nominated officers (either direct to the appropriate action officer, or to a senior member of staff for distribution to action officers), a member of the Registry staff will note on the relevant file transit sheet (see Section 6.2) the name of the officer and the date of transit. At this time the following information will be recorded in the Incoming Correspondence Register:

(6) Reference number of the file on which the letter was placed; and

(7) Date the letter was filed and passed to the officer responsible, and initials of the officer's post.

The files must be passed to the relevant officers without delay.

INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE REGISTER

(1) Date Received	(2) Date on Letter	(3) Reference on Letter	(4) From Whom	(5) Subject	(6) File Number	(7) Date Filled and Passed to Action Officer

FIGURE 1

2.4 Mail Containing Valuables

Letters containing, or likely to contain, cheques, money orders or other valuable items must be carefully safeguarded from the time they are received. Mail must always be opened promptly, wherever possible by officers working under direct supervision or in pairs. These pairs should be changed frequently.

A written record of all cheques and money orders received each day must be prepared (in addition to the Incoming Correspondence Register) and signed by the post opener(s) (see Figure 2). The following information is recorded in the Valuables Register by Registry staff:

(1) Date received;

(2) From whom;

(3) To whom;

(4) Whether by registered mail or by despatch, with register number where appropriate;

(5) Amount;

(6) Cheque or money order number;

(7) Signature of receiving officer; and

(8) Signature of Accounts Section officer.

Each sheet of the register must be serially numbered. Cash received is counted and noted in the register as well as on the accompanying document by the post-opener and a supervising officer. Any uncrossed cheques/postal orders are crossed. Erasure and pencil entries must not be made in the register. A wrong entry may only be cancelled by ruling it through and correcting it with a new entry that leaves the original entry legible. The post-opener and the supervising officer must initial all such alterations jointly.

The completed Valuables Register together with the cheques, money orders and other monetary items are taken to the Accounts Section where they are signed for in the final column (8) of the Register by an officer of the Accounts Section.

The Accounts Section is responsible for examining cheques and money orders to ensure that:

- The amount agrees with that on the remittance advice slip or other accompanying document;
- The amounts in words and figures agree;
- They are correctly completed as to date and payee; and
- They are signed (excluding postal and payable orders).

If the purpose for which a remittance was sent cannot be identified, it is included other valuable items. Action will be taken by the Accounts Section to obtain the necessary information.

In cases in which money apparently has been omitted or differs in amount from that stated on documents received by post, a note must be made on the document jointly by the post-opener and the supervising officer. The Accounts Section will need to advise the sender that the item has been omitted or the wrong payment has been received. The remittance may be banked in the meantime.

VALUABLES REGISTER

Sheet No. ____________

(1) Date Received	(2) From Whom	(3) To Whom	(4) Register No. or by	(5) Amount	(6) Cheque or Money Order	(7) Signature of Receiving Officer	(8) Signature of Accounts Section Officer

NOTE: Entries must not be erased or obliterated. Mistakes must be corrected by ruling through.

FIGURE 2

2.5 Faxes and Electronic Mail (E-mail)

An increasing quantity of mail is received by fax. As 'junk5 mail is sometimes sent by fax, care should be taken to ensure that faxes received concern genuine office business. There is also a growing tendency for routine non-urgent correspondence to be sent by fax. The unnecessary use of fax should be discouraged. Faxed material tends to fade if printed on thermal paper. Once it has been established that a fax concerns urgent official business, the fax should be photocopied and the copy placed in the mail box or on the appropriate file as necessary. The fax, as received, should then be placed on a fax file. All incoming faxes on the fax file should be destroyed after six months as a matter of routine. If the original of the document faxed is received at a later date in the Registry, it should be filed on the appropriate file. Both the photocopy of the fax and the original document should be retained on the file. The reason for this is that the photocopy may have had comments written on it by action officers.

In the future, more communications will be received by electronic mail, or e-mail, on computers used by action officers. The use of computers is becoming more widespread and as more computers are networked or linked to the Internet, so e-mail communications will become more common. E-mail, which is sent or received on a government computer, is an official public record just like paper correspondence and must be managed as such.

The first step to managing electronic mail is to ensure that action officers create electronic folders on their e-mail system. Creating separate folders which relate to different subjects, and share the same key words as the paper files, allows for linkages between the paper and electronic records and will promote efficient retrieval of messages. However, e-mail can accumulate rapidly, and it is essential that unimportant messages be removed from the system as soon as possible. Ephemeral messages such as, general information notices, invitations to events, reminders and personal messages can be deleted as soon as they have been read and are no longer required.

The action officer who sends messages as part of his/her functional responsibility should maintain an electronic copy for at least one month after sending the message, and should also print a copy and file it on the appropriate file. For example if the public relations officer issues an e-mail invitation to an awards ceremony a copy of the invitation should be printed and placed on file and the electronic copy should be retained in the appropriate electronic folder for a month after the event occurs. Recipients of this message can delete it once they have noted the particulars in their calendar.

Action officers who receive e-mail will have to determine if the message is directly related to their work and if so to then print a copy and file it on the appropriate file. A good guideline to printing e-mails is whether or not any action is required, or am regular activity is affected by the e-mail, if the answer is yes to either of these questions the message should be printed and filed.

The registry staff will also need to make sure that files do not contain multiple copies of the same e-mail message. Unless any notes have been made on the copies, one copy of each message is sufficient.

The final thing to consider is how to manage electronic attachments that are sent along with e-mail. If these attachments are text documents requiring action it is preferable to print them out and file them, with a copy of the message in the appropriate file. If the documents are simply for reference they should be stored electronically, or sent to the library. Non-text attachments, such as hyperlinks, or detailed graphical images, should be copied to the main drive of the computer and maintained in electronic form for as long as they are required. A copy of the message should be filed and the location of the electronic document noted.

Section 3 Filing Papers

3.1 The Registry File

The registry file is an organised assembly of documents relating to a specific subject, type of transaction or area of business, kept together for use. The registry file has three components:

- A cover to protect the contents and act as a title page and a record of the file's circulation;
- The contents; and
- Some method of securing the whole together.

File covers (also known as jackets or folders) are usually made of rigid manila paper or board, cut larger than the dimensions of the documents to be filed, and folded to enclose the documents and so minimise damage from handling and use.

The covers are often pre-printed with the name of the ministry or agency and the appropriate division or branch of that agency. They include a space for the file title, index headings or keywords, security classification, references to previous, subsequent or related files, and file period (ie the date or year of opening, and closure when known). They also have a grid (or ladder) for recording the file's circulation when in use. See Figure 3 A and 3B for an example of a file cover.

Individual documents within a file must be secured so that they do not become misplaced or lost. The 'Treasury tag' is still the cheapest and easiest system of securing documents within a file. The tag is inserted through a hole punched in the top left-hand corners of the folded file cover and of each document within it, thus minimising the risk of losing information when the hole is punched.

Maintaining the order of documents within the file is a vital requirement of filing. This establishes the context within which decisions and actions were taken, and the sequence of those decisions and actions. Hence, papers should be filed in the same order as the transactions of which they form part. This is not the same as saying that the individual papers are filed in their date order. In practice, papers are normally placed within a file in the order in which they are received in the Registry for filing. For example, an outgoing letter dated 29 May 1998 will be filed before an incoming letter dated 26 May if the outgoing letter is sent out and a copy filed before the incoming letter was received.

3.2 Identifying the Subject of a Paper

Mail is received in the Registry after registration or on return from circulation and is placed on files as soon as possible. Many letters returned from circulation will already have directions for filing written on them.

If no directions on filing have been given by action officers and if the letter does not quote a reference to a file in the Registry, the officer responsible for filing must read the letter carefully to determine its subject. The keyword index is then consulted to select the two keywords which most accurately describe the subject of the letter. The Registry staff must try to find the most appropriate keyword and must never use a broader keyword when a narrower term relates to the same concept. For instance, United Nations Development Programme would be used in preference to United Nations, and they would never be used together.

The keyword index is then checked under each of the keywords selected. If there is already a file with the combination of keywords identified, and if the letter clearly relates to the title of this file, the letter is marked in pencil with the same file reference. If no appropriate file is listed in the index, the number codes associated with the selected keywords will form the basis of a new file reference. The procedures for opening a new file and assigning it a reference number are discussed in Section 4.

3.3 The Split File System

The split file system is the standard method of maintaining papers on registered files. In this system, papers are divided thus:

- Incoming letters, copies of outgoing letters, memoranda, notes of meetings and similar documents are placed on the right-hand side of the file and secured by the treasury tag,
- On the left-hand side of the file is a series of sheets headed 'Minute Sheets', secured on the other end of the treasury tag. The purpose of these sheets is to enable officers and Registry staff to record each document placed on the right-hand side of the file and to bring attention to particular action points, e.g. a particular point to be made in a reply, a request for additional papers or a Bring-Up date.

Instructions or notes on minute sheets should be short and to the point, as shown in the example in Figure 4.

SPECIMEN REGISTRY CONFIDENTIAL FILE COVER

PRESIDENT'S OFFICE **PUBLIC SERVICE MANAGEMENT**	PART	FILE No.
CONFIDENTIAL		
CONNECTED FILES Previous Subsequent	**FILE PERIOD**	
INDEX HEADINGS		

Officer or Section	For Action F/M	Initials	Date	Action taken vide F/M	Officer or Section	For Action F/M	Initials	Date	Action taken vide F/M	Officer or Section	For Action F/M	Initials	Action Date taken vide

FIGURE 3A

SPECIMEN REGISTRY OPEN FILE COVER

PRESIDENT'S OFFICE PUBLIC SERVICE MANAGEMENT	PART	FILE No.
TITLE		
CONNECTED FILES Previous Subsequent	FILE	
PERIOD		

INDEX	HEADINGS												
Officer or Section	For Action F/M	Initials	Date	Action taken vide F/M	Officer or Section	For Action F/M	Initials	Date	Action taken vide F/M	Officer or Section	For Action F/M	Initials	Action Date taken vide

FIGURE 3B

	MINUTE SHEET		
	FILE No. AB/123/456/01		**PAGE 1**
1.	KutokaHazina		28/2/97
2.	Kwenda Hazina		1/3/96
3.	Kutoka Income Tax		12/2/96
4.	Kwenda Income Tax		18/3/96
5.	Kutoka Income Tax		15/3/96
6.	DMOD		
	F5		
	Hili ni ombi la kibali cha kununua...AD(S)		
			21/3/96

FIGURE 4

Documents and the accompanying enclosures must be placed on the right-hand side of files in date order (the most recent on the top). Each paper must then be numbered consecutively in the top right hand corner, with the number being enclosed in a small circle. This is called the folio number: If a document runs to more than one page, the whole document, not the individual pages, is numbered. If the document has several attachments, then these must be given alphabetic suffices, for example:

- Main document -12
- First enclosure -12A
- Second enclosure - 12B.

3.4 Cross-referencing and Removing Papers from Files

If a single letter or other item of correspondence relates to more than one file, the original should be placed on the file for which it has most relevance and photocopies placed on the other files. The original letter should note the file numbers on which additional copies have been placed. Similarly, a note of the location of the original should be made on each copy placed on other files. Alternatively, if a photocopier is not available or copying is considered to be too costly, the original may be placed on the file for which is has most relevance and a note placed on each of the other files to which the letter relates giving the date of the letter, its subject and the file on which it can be found.

If a letter is received which refers to an earlier letter, the folio number of that earlier letter is cross-referenced on the new letter and the new letter is placed on the same file as the as the earlier letter.

Papers may only be removed from files in exceptional circumstances instruction of the head of the Registry or his/her line manager. When papers are removed, a temporary note must be placed on the file at the point from which the paper(s) have been extracted. This will indicate the subject of the paper(s) and where may be found. It must be signed by the member of staff responsible for the removal.

3.5 Filing Checklist

The following questions must be asked regularly:

- Does the document belong on the file selected?
- Does the file number on the document agree with the reference number of the file? (It should, unless it is a copy being used for cross- referencing .)
- Are all pages of a multiple page document present?
- Are all attachments present?

Records staff should not file:

- Spare copies of letters, old drafts, etc, unless there is likelihood that they will be significant in the foreseeable future. Such documents should either be destroyed or, if there is a genuine need to keep them, stored away from the file.
- Ephemeral material such as announcements of parties, events that have no relevance to the work of the ministry
- Published material and bulky reports. Much of the published material received in the Registry has no relevance to the work of the ministry. With the agreement of the line manager this material should be destroyed. Bulky published material or reports, which are relevant, should be marked with a file and folio number and stored separately. The covering letter must also be marked to indicate where the material is stored.

Section 4 Creating a New File

4.1 Opening a New File

When a document comes into the Registry, the Registry staff must decide whether an appropriate file already exists, as described in Section 3.2, by checking the keyword index under each heading that may be relevant. If no appropriate file exists, it will be necessary to create a new file and to give it a number and a title. No new file may be opened before there is correspondence to go on it. Opening files in the expectation of future correspondence leads to waste of effort, waste of valuable file covers and, most damaging of all, confusion in the keyword index. If there is any doubt at all about whether a new file is required, the head of the Registry will ask the relevant user for advice. Users are also encouraged to indicate their need for files.

If a new file is required, the Registry staff will have to think carefully about what it will contain and how it will grow. The important point to remember is that each file should relate to a single subject, a well-defined area of business or a particular type of transaction. Files relating to specific subjects or areas of business should tell their own discrete story. As long as a file tells a story in its own right, and no more, it is immaterial whether the file remains thin or develops into several parts.

If the scope of the file is too narrow and specific, it may only tell part of the story. Too many small files of this sort make it difficult for users to understand what is going on, and they cannot be certain that they have the whole story. Files which are too narrow in scope will also cause filing and retrieval problems as uncertainties arise about the correct file on which documents should be placed or found.

A file which covers too many issues is also hard to use. The user will have to search through a mass of paper to get to the story and the story may well become fragmented by the inter-filing of papers on other subjects. Moreover, the file will grow quickly and new volumes will have to be opened frequently making the problem worse. When a file grows very quickly, or when a file is used for seemingly unrelated papers, this is usually a sign that the file title is too broad and that there is a need to break the file down into more specifically titled files. On the other hand, files accumulate documents at different rates and certain files which cover well defined areas of business May still expand rapidly. It is essential, therefore, that the Registry staff take the time to find the right balance.

Not all papers need to be placed on registered files. The aim is to keep ephemeral papers off files altogether (see Section 3.5) or on files that can be destroyed early. However, it is essential that files destined for early destruction contain only papers that have a short-term life or a short-term potential value. Further information about file disposition is included in Section 10.

4.2 Security Classification of Files

A circular issued by the Permanent Secretary, Public Service Management, contains all details on the security classification of files. This can be supplied on request by PO-PSM. It covers: top secret, secret and confidential files; Cabinet papers; custody of classified documents and their handling; and the destruction and disposal of classified waste. This circular is the authority on the subject and must be consulted.

Separate file covers have been designed for open and classified files. Classified files are clearly marked with the appropriate classification and should contain handling instructions printed or pasted inside the front cover of the file.

4.3 Giving Files Titles

It is important to choose a clear and precise title for each file. The title should be as descriptive as possible to provide adequate details of the file's actual and likely contents. It ought to trigger in the users' minds what the file contains. At the same time it ought to be specific enough that the Registry staff do not use the file to cover different aspects or developments of the original story that really should be the subjects of several files. File titles thus describe the contents of a file and help to limit the scope of the material placed on it.

However, file titles need play no direct part in finding the file. That is the function of the keywords which are chosen to index the file (see Section 4.6). Titles do not even need to include the keywords unless that is useful. Titles must be as concise and as brief as possible, while accurately reflecting the contents of the file.

When adding new papers to a file, care must be taken to ensure that the file title continues to reflect the contents accurately. At the same time, it is unwise to change the title of a file unless absolutely necessary. Users become familiar with titles and changing them leads to confusion. It is better to create new files for new papers and, if necessary, to make cross-references to the files containing earlier related papers.

If there is any doubt whatsoever about the title of a file, an appropriate user should be consulted. Users' views on file titles should always be taken seriously.

Where it does seem justified to change the title of a file, the permission of the head of the Registry, or his/her line manager, must be obtained before any change is made. In exceptional circumstances, a file whose title no longer reflects its contents should be closed and a new file with the correct title opened.

A common practice is to write the title of confidential files on the inside of the front cover.

4.4 Assigning Reference Numbers

The complete reference number for a file will comprise a letter code for the series to which the file belongs, two keyword codes and a sequential file number preceded by '0'. For instance, a file used by the Public Service Management's Policy Development Division dealing with retirement policy for the public service might have the reference 'AB/213/254/01' where:

'AB'	-is the code for the series of files of the Public Service Management relating to Policy Formulation.
'213'	-is the code in the keyword index for the keyword 'policy'
'254'	-is the code for the keyword 'retirement'
'01'	-indicates that the file is the first one in the 213/254 theme.

More information about assigning keyword code numbers is given in Section 4.6.

4.5 Identifying the File Series

The first step in assigning a file number is to determine the appropriate file series. In general, there is a file series for each of a ministry's or department's clearly identifiable principal functions. If the ministry or department has been organised in self-contained sections which support these functions, there will be a file series for each section. For instance, file series based on the functional sections within the Public Service Management include the following:

Policy Development Division	
Policy Formulation	AB
Policy Implementation and Evaluation	AC
Gender	AD
Library	AE
Management Services Division	
Organisational Analysis	BA
Staff Utilisation	BC
Management Systems Development	BD
Establishment Division	
Staff Grade	CA
Middle and Common Cadre	CB
Kamus	CD
Payroll Control Unit	CE

Human Resources Division

Staff Development	DA
Management Training	DB
Technical Co-operation	DC

If, for example, a document for which a file is to be created concerns the Organisational Analysis Section, its prefix will be 'BA. Where it to concern the Establishment Division's Staff Grade Section, its prefix would be 'CA, and so on.

Note that the double letters, AA, 'BB', 'CC' etc. are avoided.

It may be that one section or unit handles several distinct functions which are best supported by several series. Alternatively, two sections served by the same Registry may routinely work together on a common function. In this case it may be most helpful to establish one file series to cover this shared area of work. However, where sections share some files but in general have different files for their own particular functions, two file series will be required. In the example of Public Service Management file series listed above, two closely related but distinctive functions - Policy Formulation and Policy Implementation and Evaluation - have separate series but share some files.

The functions of a ministry or department may sometimes be difficult to relate to organisational units. In such cases, the content and scope of the file series will have to be worked out carefully with the users.

4.6 Assigning Keyword Code Numbers

The second element of the reference number, ie, the two numbers following the series code, is produced by combining the code numbers for the two keywords which best describe the subject of the file. These are selected from the index of keywords kept for a particular Registry. Two versions of the keyword index are maintained, one in alphabetical order and the other in numerical order. The numerical version ensures that each new keyword created is assigned the next number in sequence. The alphabetical index enables registry staff to look up keywords easily when searching for an appropriate keyword or for the number code assigned to a particular keyword.

The number associated with a keyword must never be changed. The index must never be renumbered, and no number may ever be re-used for a different keyword.

Because it is often difficult to decide which of the two keywords used to describe a file is the more important, the rule adopted is to place the code numbers in numerical order so that the lower number is always first. The keyword index (see Section 5.3) will draw together files on the same subject by listing under each keyword all the files that have been assigned that keyword.

In exceptional cases, only one keyword may be required to describe a file. occurs, the same keyword code is repeated in the file reference. However, in p: it is nearly always possible to assign files two keywords. In some cases, Registry staff may decide that three keywords are required-to index a file. This is dealt with in detail in Section 5.3.

4.7 Assigning Sequential Numbers

The last element in the file reference is a sequential number preceded by the d If, for instance, several separate files dealing with staff grade issues (code '273') in the Ministry of Labour and Youth Development (code '160') were raised Establishment Division of Public Service Management, they would be distinguished by adding a number, in sequence, preceded by '0', thus:

AC/160/273/01	Staff Grade: Ministry of Labour and Youth Development Appointments
AC/160/273/02	Staff Grade: Ministry of Labour and Youth Development Promotions
AC/1 60/273/03	Staff Grade: Ministry of Labour and Youth Development: Acting Appointments

The growth of sequential numbers needs to be closely monitored. When they exceed 20 for any given theme pair this will be an indication that the keywords used need to be re-examined and at least one of the keywords replaced by a more specific term.

4.8 Opening New File Parts

If it is found to be necessary to open a new part or 'volume' of an existing file because the current part has become full or because it contains papers which span more than five years, this is indicated by the use of sequential letters of the alphabet, thus:

AC/22/178/01	(first part)
AC/22/178/01A	(second part)
AC/22/178/01B	(third part)

Note that the second part is numbered 'A'. Many documents already filed on the first file part, as well as all the registry's file control forms will already bear the file reference number AC/22/178/01. These cannot be changed. Any previous and subsequent file parts should be written in the relevant boxes on the file cover and file transit sheet (see Section 5).

4.9 ADDING NEW KEYWORDS TO THE KEYWORD INDEX

If the index headings required to describe a file do not exist in the approved keyword index it will be necessary to create new keywords. The keywords in use are controlled centrally throughout the Civil Service so that there is consistency in the use of terms. Any new additions must be approved by the Master Keyword List Manager and in no circumstances may Registries create or number their own keywords without being given permission to do so.

When a new keyword is needed, the Registry will submit a proposal to the Master Keyword List Manager to create a new keyword on a 'Request for a New Keyword' form, as illustrated at Figure 5. On receipt of a completed request form, the Master Keyword List Manager will decide whether or not the proposed keyword is appropriate for addition to that Registry's keyword index and also to the master keyword list. He/she will notify the head of the Registry on a reply form which is printed on the back of the request form. If the proposal is not approved, an alternative word will be given.

When a new keyword is approved, the Master Keyword List Manager will ask the Registry for the next available number on its keyword index before returning the form The Master Keyword List Manager will then indicate the number assigned to the approved keyword in his/her reply. The head of the Registry will ensure that this word is added to the Registry's keyword index immediately.

It is essential that the Master Keyword List Manager responds to such request promptly. Failure to do so will delay the letter being filed.

Heads of Registries are expected to abide by the decisions of the Master Keyword List Manager. If they feel genuinely unable to accept a decision, then they should attempt to resolve the difficulty by speaking to the Master Keyword List Manager. that fails to settle the issue, the matter is referred to the line manager responsible for the Registry.

The Registry files the forms returned by the Master Keyword List Manager and has them available for inspection during routine monitoring visits.

REQUEST FOR A NEW KEYWORD

To: Master Keyword List Manager, [Record Management Team]

From: The Head of Registry

Ministry/Department ______________________________

____

Date: ______________________ 20 ____________

This Registry wishes to add the following new keyword to its index:

____

We require the keyword urgently so that we may register a new file entitled:

____

____

____

We will not add this keyword to our index until we have received your approval.

Signed ______________________________

Head of Registry

FIGURE 5

Section 5 Recording the Existence of a New File

5.1 Establishing Control Over New Files

When a new file is created, it is essential that its existence is comprehensively recorded. This will enable the Registry to manage the file and produce it whenever it is required.

There are a minimum of three control mechanisms that must be applied to every file. If any one of these is omitted, then the Registry will not be able to keep track of the file and this will prevent action officers from carrying out their work efficiently. The three control mechanisms are the file diary, keyword index and the file transit sheet.

5.2 Keyword Index (See Figures 6-7)

First, the file must be indexed. The keyword index is the key to rapid retrieval of files and to the efficiency of the Registry. Great care must be taken in preparing and using the keyword index. It is the basic tool of the Registry, but it can also be consulted by users under close Registry supervision. It must be stored securely by the staff at the end of the day.

The two most important subjects of the file must be identified and the appropriate keywords selected. Occasionally, it may be found that three or even four keywords are required to identify a file fully. In this case the file should be indexed under each of these words, but the file reference will only contain the codes of the two most important keywords. The decision to index a file under additional keywords is taken by the head of the Registry.

A separate index sheet must be created for each approved keyword. The keyword is written clearly in capital letters at the top of an index sheet and the code number for the keyword at the top right hand corner of the sheet. Index sheets are filed in the key-word index book or binder in alphabetical order. Registry staff must never be tempted to tuck sheets in or attach them to other sheets with pins, staples or paper clips. If the keyword index book looks as though it will soon become full, the Registry staff will order another book and divide the existing sheets between the books. The label on the spine of the original book must be changed accordingly.

The officer responsible for filing will now turn to the index sheet relating to the first keyword used to describe the new file. Take, for example, a file on Technical Co-operation with Uganda which is used by the Human Resources Division in the Public Service Management. The index sheet is found for the first keyword used, in this case 'Technical Co-operation'. The second keyword used (in this case 'Uganda') is entered as a cross-reference on the sheet for 'Technical Co-operation' in the first available index heading box. The index sheet will now contain both the keywords used to index the file.

The file number is then entered in the spaces provided against the index heading. The prefix for the file series (in this example DC) is entered on the first line, the keyword codes on the next line (for example, 297/318) and the sequential number (01) on the third line, as follows:

KEYWORD INDEX (FIRST INDEX ENTRY)

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">KEYWORD INDEX HEADING
Technical Co-operation</td><td colspan="2">KEYWORD NUMBER
279</td></tr>
<tr><td>Index Headings</td><td>File Series No.</td><td>Index Headings</td><td>File Series No.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Uganda</td><td>DC</td><td rowspan="3"></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>279/318</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>01</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3"></td><td></td><td rowspan="3"></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3"></td><td></td><td rowspan="3"></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td></tr>
</table>

FIGURE 6

Turning to the sheet in the keyword index book devoted to the second keyword (in this case 'Uganda') the process is repeated. This time the keyword Technical Co-operation' will be entered as a cross-reference, and the file number will be entered again, as follows:

KEYWORD INDEX (SECOND INDEX ENTRY)

KEYWORD INDEX HEADING Uganda		**KEYWORD NUMBER** 318	
Cross Reference	File Series No.	Cross Reference	File Series No.
Technical Co-operation	DC		
	279/318		
	01		

FIGURE 7

The file has now been fully indexed. However, if additional index entries are appropriate, the file reference also may be entered under a third heading. If a third index heading is used, the second and third heading should be entered in the same 'Index Headings' box on the relevant sheets.

If all the boxes on an index sheet have been filled up, a new sheet is opened under the same index heading and filed immediately behind the existing sheet for the same heading.

When a file is closed, this is indicated on the index sheet by writing 'CLOSED' and the date of closure next to the file's reference number, taking care not to obscure any of the reference number by writing over it. When all the files noted on the index have been closed, the sheet is transferred to a keyword index book covering files, or to a tagged file kept for this purpose. The index sheets for closed file; be stored in alphabetical order. In due course, when this book or file is full, the will be removed, tied up and transferred to the Records Centre.

5.3 File Diary (See Figure 8)

Next, details of the new file must be entered in the file diary. A sequential n (the next available number) is given to each file opened, and the date of opening of the file, its number and its full title are also recorded. The file diary also provides a useful cross-reference to previous files with numbers from earlier registry systems (see Figure 8, final column).

The file diary enables Registry staff to monitor the number of files that have been opened during any given period and their titles. At the end of each year, the file diary sheets are placed on a registered file and a new sheet series begun. The head Registry will submit an annual report to the Director of RAMD on the number of files opened during the year.

FILE DIARY				
Sequential Number	Date Opened	File Number	Title	Previous File Number

FIGURE 8

5.4 File Transit Sheet (See Figure 9)

The third step in recording the file's existence is to prepare a file transit sheet. These sheets show the location at all times of all files opened by the Registry. File movements must be recorded promptly to enable the Registry to provide an efficient and reliable service.

The file transit sheets are arranged alpha-numerically in exactly the same way as the files are stored in the cabinets, and are kept together in a file transit book or binder. The following list shows a list of file numbers in alpha-numeric order:

AB 20/46/01	AC 23/100/01
AB 101/256/01	AC 29/100/01
AB 201/256/02	AC 29/256/01
AC 1/187/01	AC 246/253/01
AC 1/187/02	BA 1/142/01
AC 1/187/03	BA 123/198/01
AC 3/102/01	BA 285/307/01

A new file transit sheet is created for the new file and the appropriate boxes completed, for instance:

FIGURE 9: FILE TRANSIT SHEET

CLASSIFICATION		**FILE NUMBER** DC 279/318/01			
FILE TITLE Lake Victoria Project					
INDEX HEADINGS Technical Co-operation		Uganda			
PREVIOUS FILE NUMBER			**SUBSEQUENT FILE NUMBER**		
SENT TO	**DATE**	**SENT TO**	**DATE**	**SENT TO**	**DATE**
PS	13/01/00				
Director	15/01/00				
Registry	16/01/00				

If a file existed previously on the same subject but had a different number, that number is inserted in the 'Previous File Number' box.

If the file is classified, the word 'confidential' (or the appropriate security grading) is written in the box headed 'Classification' at the top left-hand corner of the transit sheet.

If a new volume of an existing file is opened, this too must be fully recorded on a new file transit sheet, as well as in the file diary and keyword index, in exactly the same way as for a new file.

When a file is closed this must be indicated on the transit sheet. When the file is destroyed or transferred to the Records Centre or the Archives Section of RAMD this fact is noted on the sheet, and the sheet is transferred to a separate transit book, or a tagged file containing sheets for files that are no longer held in the Registry. The transit sheets for closed files should also be arranged alpha-numerically. In due course when this book or file is full, the sheets will be removed, tied up and transferred to the Records Centre. These sheets are kept indefinitely as they provide a record of the disposition of the file.

Section 6 Controlling File Movement

6.1 Recording File Movement

Files are issued to action officers in at least three circumstances:

- A document is received in the Registry, is recorded and filed, and the file is passed to the officer,
- A file is to be 'brought up' (see Section 7.2) to the officer,
- The officer requests the file in person or by telephone.

In order to be effective, the Registry must know the location of every file for which it is responsible. Thus, each time a file moves, this fact must be recorded in the Registry. File movements are monitored in a number of ways: on file transit sheets that are filed in the file transit book (see Section 5.4), on transit ladders that appear on file covers, by means of file movement slips and through regular file censuses.

6.2 Using the File Transit Sheet

Each time a file is issued to a user, for whatever reason and for however short a period, this fact must be noted by Registry staff in the 'Sent to[9] and 'Date' boxes on the relevant transit sheet. When the file is returned to the Registry, this must be recorded.

6.3 File Movement Slips (See Figure 10)

Although users are encouraged to return files to the Registry when they have finished using them, there are times when they will need to pass files directly to another officer. If this happens, the officer who wishes to pass the file to another officer must complete a file movement slip and send it immediately to the Registry. The failure to do so could cause real embarrassment to the officer and the Registry staff if the file cannot be found. The head of the Registry will therefore ensure that action officers always have an adequate stock of file movement slips.

FILE MOVEMENT SLIP

Please complete this form and send it to the Registry whenever you pass a file to another office. This will enable the Registry to ensure its records are accurate.

File Number: ____________________

File Title: ____________________

____

____

Passed to: ____________________

Date: ____________________

Signature: ____________________

FIGURE 10

As soon as a file movement slip is received in the Registry, the information it contains must be recorded on the relevant transit sheet. When this has been done the file movement slip is kept on a file for six months and then destroyed.

6.4 File Transit Ladders

Each file movement must be recorded on the transit ladder on the front of the file cover. This records the same information that appears on the file transit sheet. In this way, a record will be created of all officers who have handled any particular file.

6.5 File Census (See Figure 11)

Although files ought never to move between officers or out of the Registry without their movement being recorded, it must be accepted that this may sometimes happen. In order to confirm the location of files that are not in the Registry's custody, it will be necessary to carry out a regular census of every file. If no discrepancies are found the frequency of the census may be reduced.

The Registry staff must visit every action officer at regular intervals, at least once a month, and list on a file census form all the files held by that officer. The person carrying out the census signs the bottom of each census form used, and the form is also initialed by the relevant action officer. Upon return to the Registry, the information on the file census form must be checked against that in the transit sheets to ensure that the up-to-date location of each file is correctly recorded. If there is any discrepancy, the file transit sheet must be amended and the discrepancy reported to the head of the Registry.

Tracing missing files is dealt with in Section 6.9.

6.6 Recording the Return of Files to Registry Custody

The return of a file to Registry custody is a 'file movement' and must always be fully recorded on the file's transit ladder and on the transit sheet.

6.7 Office Attendant

Office attendants are instructed to clear trays in the Registry and in the users' offices at regular intervals. To assist the work of the office attendants, file users should maintain in their offices clearly marked trays for incoming and outgoing files.

6.8 Requests for Files

All requests for files from the Registry are directed to the head of the Registry, who is responsible for ensuring that file movements are fully recorded before files leave the Registry. In the case of a request for a file that is in use elsewhere, the Registry staff will locate the file and ask the person requiring the file for instructions.

6.9 Tracing Missing Files

If a file is missing, the Registry must proceed as follows:

- The head of the Registry must contact the officer to whom the file was last recorded on the file's transit sheet and ask him/her to trace it.
- If this fails or is impracticable, the head of the Registry must circulate a note to all officers in the department/ministry asking them to check whether they have the file.
- If the file still cannot be found, a search must be initiated by an officer with specific authority to ensure the search is effective. The search must be repeated several times if necessary.

FILE CENSUS FORM

DATE ____________________

File Number	File Title	Location/Officer

SIGNED ____________________ INITIATED ____________________

FIGURE 11

- As soon as the Registry staff learn that a file is missing they must write the words 'missing file' on the relevant transit sheet. This will ensure that a further action is co-ordinated by the supervisor and that any further movement of the file is tracked. A list of missing files must be maintains periodic searches carried out and a record made of areas searched.

If it is necessary to continue action on a topic covered by a missing file, a temporary file may be opened but only if this is absolutely necessary. A temporary file is opened in the same way as a normal file. It should be given the same number as the missing file, and its existence should be recorded in the normal way. If available, printed temporary file covers should be used. If unavailable, a standard file cover should b used but must be boldly marked with the word TEMPORARY'. All relevant record sheets should similarly be marked TEMPORARY'. (See Section 5 for instruction on recording the existence of a new file.) No temporary file should be opened with out the authority of the head of Registry's line manager.

When the original file is found, all papers on the temporary file must be transferred to the original file (in proper date sequence) and must be renumbered in folio order. The front cover of the temporary file must be endorsed with the date the original was found. The printed area and transit ladder of the temporary file should then be cut from the file cover and placed just before the first folio on the original file. The temporary file's transit sheet and all index sheets must similarly be endorsed with the date that the original was found and then struck through but retained in the same place in the respective books. The list of lost files must be amended.

Section 7 Handling Files Returned to the Registry

7.1 Returning Files to the Registry

Users must return files to the Registry as soon as they have finished with them. The Registry staff must check to see whether any returned file contains mail to be dispatched. If so, the file copy must be filed immediately, any loose papers having first been firmly attached to the treasury tag. The letters for despatch are then removed, recorded and dealt with. The fact that the file has been returned to the Registry must be noted on the file's transit sheet. It should already have been noted on the transit ladder.

Next, the minute sheet must be checked. If 'bring-up' action (BU) is required this must be recorded in the bring-up diary (see Section 7.2). If the file is to be passed to another officer, department or ministry, this must be noted on the transit sheet and the file dispatched.

If there are no outstanding instructions for action, then the file must be put away immediately. No file, other than those due to be 'brought-up' for the next day (see below) must be left out in the Registry at the end of the day.

7.2 Bring-up Diary (See Figures 12 -13)

The bring-up system enables an officer to request the Registry to re-issue a file on the day that he/she needs it. File users should be encouraged to take advantage of this facility when action needs to be temporarily suspended. This happens, for example, when more research is required, replies to correspondence are awaited or follow up action is needed at a later date. The bring-up system eliminates the need for users to hold on to files for long periods if they are not working on them. The system must be reliable if users are to trust it.

The bring-up system is one of the prime indicators of the efficiency of a Registry and of the trust and reliance placed on it by users. Its successful and efficient use prevents many of the problems encountered by Registry staff, such as prolonged retention of files by users and the consequent difficulties in locating files or the need to spend excessive amounts of time carrying out censuses.

Users will indicate the need for, and details of, any 'bring-up' ('BU') on the file minute sheet. The Registry staff will record this request in the bring-up diary under the appropriate date. The bring-up diary may be in the form of a pre-printed diary, with a space for each day, or in the form of a separate BU diary sheet for each week or month depending on the frequency the bring-up system is used by action officers (see Figure 12).

Each afternoon, immediately before the closure of the Registry, one of the Registry staff must look at the bring-up entries for the next day, take each file due to be brought up out of its cabinet and mark up the transit ladder and the transit sheet for the file's despatch to the relevant officer the next day.

If a file due for BU is not in the Registry, then the registry staff must locate it, using the transit sheet. A form (Figure 13) should be sent or taken to the officer who requires the file, to report where the file is and to seek further instructions. The fact that the form has been sent must be recorded against the relevant entry in the BU diary.

Bring-up records (dairy and forms) should be disposed of when they are of no further use, usually after the compilation of annual statistics.

BRING-UP DIARY

MONTH ______________________

DATE ________________________

Date of Bring-up	File Number	File Title	Required by

FIGURE 12

REQUEST FOR INSTRUCTIONS ON 'BRING-UP ACTION

1) TO ____

FILE NUMBER ________________________________

SUBJECT ____________________________________

____

The file above, due to be brought forward to you today, is out to:

____

Please say whether you desire any action to be taken by ticking the appropriate box below.

Signed: ____________________ Date: ______________
Registry

2) REGISTRY

No action is necessary	☐
Please obtain file	☐
BU on ________________	☐

Signed: ____________________ Date: ______________

FIGURE 13

Section 8 Handling Outgoing Mail

8.1 Preparing Letters for Despatch

Every letter leaving the Registry must quote the full address and file and letter reference of the originator, as well as the reference(s) of any other correspondence quoted in the text of the letter. Security or privacy markings are typed in a prominent position at the top and bottom of each sheet.

Once a letter has been signed by an action officer it must be returned to the Registry for despatch. The Registry staff will enter its details in the Outgoing Correspondence Register and in the Despatch Book that the office attendant takes on his rounds.

8.2 Outgoing Correspondence Register (See Figure 14)

The Registry staff are responsible for maintaining a record of what is despatched. Information covering letters sent by post or delivered by messengers can be recorded in the same register. The following details about letters leaving the office must be entered:

(1) Date letter received for despatch.

(2) Date dispatched.

(3) To whom sent.

(4) Reference number of the letter.

(5) Subject of the letter.

(6) Whether the letter is to be sent by the Post Office or despatch, and the register number if appropriate.

8.3 Office Attendant's Despatch Book (See Figure 15)

This records correspondence which is to be taken by messenger and shows that it he been safely delivered. The following details must be recorded:

(1) Date of letter.

(2) Date of dispatch

(3) To whom sent.

(4) Reference number her of the letter.

(5) Name and signature of receiving officer, and date.

8.4 Delivery of Mail

The Registry passes letters ready for despatch to the office attendant, together with the Despatch Book. When delivering the letters, the office attendant must obtain the name and initials of the persons to whom the letters are delivered and the date of delivery. This information is entered in the last column of the Despatch Book.

Pre-printed books of forms, issued by the Tanzania Posts and Telecommunications Corporation, are used to record registered mail/registered postal packets.

8.5 Copies of Outgoing Letters

The Registry will maintain a copy of all outgoing letters (called 'flimsies'). These should be filed in chronological order according to the date of the letter. Flimsies are a useful record of recent correspondence but should not be kept permanently. A suggested retention period is one year.

OUTGOING CORRESPONDENCE REGISTER					
(1) Date Received for Despatch	(2) Date dis-patched	(3) To Whom Sent	(4) Letter Reference	(5) Subject	(6) For Post Office/Despatch Reg. No.

FIGURE 14

DESPATCH BOOK				
(1) Date of Letter	(2) Date of Dispatch	(3) To Whom Sent	(4) Reference No. of Letter	(5) Signature of Receiving Officer and Date

FIGURE 15

Section 9 Storing Files

9.1 Storage Methods

There are three basic ways of storing files. These are the lateral, vertical and stacking methods. Lateral filing is usually done in four-drawer filing cabinets with the files held in position on their narrow edge, often within a 'hanging folder'. Vertical filing, where files are held upright with their 'spines' facing outward, is done in cupboards (which may or may not be enclosed) or on racking/shelves. The stacking method stores files flat, one on top of the other, with the 'spine' of the file facing out.

There are advantages and disadvantages to all three methods. Lateral filing in cabinets, using hanging folders, is the least economical but provides easy access. Storage on open shelves is economical, but is unsuitable for confidential materials. The stacking method is the cheapest but may cause difficulties of retrieval unless the stacks are small. Files stored vertically on open shelves may slip down unless the shelves have moveable dividers that can support the files and keep them upright. If racking is used, it will be essential to dust the shelves and the files regularly.

9.2 Storing Current Files

The entrance to the Registry must be strictly controlled, and cabinets containing confidential records must be kept locked. The outer door to the Registry must always be locked when no member of the Registry staff is present, and ground floor windows should have security grills or bars. There should be a secure place where keys can be stored so that members of staff do not take them home.

9.3 Storing Closed Files

Closed files and parts of files that are no longer required for day-to-day business must be stored in the Interim Records Store or elsewhere in cheaper secure storage away from registries. Arrangements for closing and 'retiring' files and for using the Interim Records Store are discussed in Section 10.

Section 10A Handling Closed Files

10.1 Closing Files

In order to avoid the accumulation of inactive records in the registry, closed files need to be removed. Closed files are sent to a semi-current storage location, either at the RAMD Interim Records Store or within the Ministry itself, where the records can be maintained until they are ready for final disposition. The procedures for closing, transferring and retrieving files should be consistent whether the records are maintained by the Interim Records Store or at a semi-current storage location in the Ministry. In this manual, the term Records Centre is used to refer to both types of semi-active storage locations.

The Registry staff must ensure that files are closed as soon as they either become three centimetres thick or five years old, whichever happens sooner. This is necessary because:

- Files that are thicker than three centimetres are hard to manage and the contents may become damaged
- Papers more than five years old are rarely required for reference and should not be regarded as current records.

Registry staff must ensure that no further papers are added to the files after they are closed.

The method of closing a file is to write the word 'CLOSED' diagonally in bold letters across the front cover, together with the date. The last (most recent) minute sheet on the left-hand side of the file must also be cancelled in the same fashion. The file transit sheet must be marked to show that the file has been closed, the date when this was done and details of its transfer to the Records Centre.

If it is necessary for action to be continued on a topic covered in a file that has been closed, a new file part must be raised (see Section 4.8). The existence of the new part must be noted on the transit sheet for the closed part. All the usual control records (file diary, keyword index, transit sheet) must be completed for the new part.

10.2 Custody of Closed Files

Although no new action may be taken on a closed file, and no new papers added, closed files should be kept available in the Registry for a period of time so that users may refer to them. This period of time is specified in retention schedules (see Section 10.3). If users request these files, the file movement should be recorded on the relevant closed transit sheet in exactly the way it would have been were the file still current. If the Registry holds the current part of a closed file, that should be passed to the action officer with the closed part, once the transit records have been completed.

10.3 Using Retention Schedules

The Government creates such large quantities of records each year that they cannot all be preserved permanently. The records must be kept for as long as they have legal or administrative value. A small proportion of records are kept permanently because of their historical value and research utility and are transferred to the National Archives Records must be destroyed as soon as they cease to have any value. However, if records are not required for the conduct of current business, but have a continuing value, they should be transferred to the Records Centre.

The Director RAMD makes decisions, in consultation with the relevant officials, about when closed files should be destroyed or transferred to semi-current storage or to the Archives. Retention schedules are the means by which these instructions are communicated. See Figure 16 for a specimen retention schedule.

There are two classes of schedules. These are general schedules, covering records relating to common agency functions such as finance and accounting or motor vehicle maintenance, and specific schedules relating exclusively to the records of individual ministries and departments. Registries will be issued with the specific schedule relating to their own ministry or department as well as with copies of relevant general schedules.

In most cases the schedules will indicate that the closed files should be transferred to semi-current storage after a period of time has elapsed. Records, which are due for destruction in five years or less, should not be transferred to semi-current storage. The Records Centre staff will notify the Registry when records are due for destruction and will forward a Records Centre Destruction Form. (See Figure 17).

Registry staff should indicate on the relevant transit sheets that the files have been destroyed.

If there are any queries about how the retention schedules are applied, the staff at the Interim Records Store will be glad to advise. Registry staff can either visit the Interim Records Store at the Records and Archives Management Division.

10.4 Transferring Files to Semi-active Storage

When records are due for transfer the Registry staff must obtain the appropriate empty boxes and copies of the Records Centre Transfer Forms (see Figure 18).

The files to be transferred must be arranged in the order in which they were originally created. This will involve sorting them into series or groups of similar records which were created and maintained as units (see the definition of series in Appendix A). Within each series the records must be arranged in the order of their original reference numbers.

The relevant file transit sheets must be marked to indicate that the files have been transferred to the Records Centre.

In preparing the documents for packing, care should be taken to remove from the files all loose, extraneous or ephemeral material (documents with short term value) such as greeting cards, advertisements, extra copies of documents. The files should be dusted and metal pins and clips removed if this will not cause papers to become detached from the file. If a file is broken, it should be tied together with tape or twine. Bulky lever-arch files and ring binders which will not fit comfortably into the boxes should be tied up with twine and labeled.

The records must be placed in boxes vertically with the spine upwards. They must be packed firmly, but the box must not be overloaded. This makes them much easier to retrieve later. A Records Centre box will hold about eight three-centimetre files. If possible, the boxes should contain files closed at the same time. If any of the records do not fit into the boxes, they should be tied into bundles no deeper than 30 centimetres

The files in each box must be listed on a Records Centre Transfer Form with all available information included. Each box must be listed on a separate form (with continuation sheets as necessary), and three copies of the form should be made. The three copies of the form should be placed on top of the files in the box to which they refer and the boxes should be transferred to the Records Centre.

The Records Centre staff will check the Records Centre forms and add the action category, date, location, and the box number. If there are any queries the Registry will be contacted. Otherwise one copy of the list will be returned to the Registry.

The Registry must maintain a Records Centre Transfer file. The forms returned from the semi-active storage location should be added to the file in box number order. This will provide the information for retrieving files in the future.

10.5 Retrieving Files from the Records Centre

Files that have been closed and deposited in the Records Centre may only be retrieved by authorised Registry staff. Requests for confidential files will only be accepted from heads of unit. Files on loan from the Records Centre must be returned within one month unless an extension to that period has been granted.

When a user requests a file which is held in the Records Centre, the Registry staff must consult the Records Centre Transfer file to determine the title, reference number, box number and consignment number of the file required. Files can be requested in person, by phone, or by mail. If the request is by mail staff should then complete two copies of the Records Centre Request Form (see Figure 19). Both copies of the form must be sent or taken to the Records Centre and the file collected. It will be necessary to sign for its receipt. As soon as the file is no longer required it must be returned to the Records Centre.

Section **10B** Specimen Retention Schedule

10.1 Personnel Records

Personnel files relate to the management of Public Servants, in most part they contain records of actions and decisions pursuant to regulations issued by the Public Service Commission, the agency charged with the administration of the Public Service Act, and to related regulations, orders and legislation. This schedule covers all personnel files of Public Service employees exclusive of copies of investigative files. Records needed in litigation or appeal cases may be held beyond the required period.

ITEM NO.	DESCRIPTION OF RECORDS	TRANSFER TO RECORDS CENTRE	REVIEW
1.	Personnel files of pensionable officers	Transfer to Records Centre 2 years after termination of employment	Review 75 years after birth of employee or 65 years after date of earliest document in the file if date of birth can not be ascertained, and every 5 years thereafter. No personnel file may be destroyed until 10 years after date of cessation of payment of pensionable benefits

FIGURE 16

RECORDS CENTRE DESTRUCTION FORM

Registry Code Number: ______________________

To: The Head of the Registry

Ministry/Department ______________________________________

____

From: Officer in Charge, Records Centre

Date: __________________________________ 20 __________________

The files listed have been reviewed to determine whether or not they have permanent value as archives. These files will be destroyed on ____________ (date) unless you advise us you still require them.

I hereby authorise the destruction of the following boxes of files if it is found that they do not have archival value (delete if destruction is not authorised):

Please retain the following boxes of files which are still required for official business.

New review date ____

Signed ____________________ Position _________________________

Ministry ____

FIGURE 17

RECORDS CENTRE TRANSFER FORM

Ministry or Department	Division of Section		Officer or Registry (OPEN) PF				Cons. Number
	Address and Phone Number			File Date			
Location	Box **No.**	File Reference **No.**	File Title/Records Description	From	To	Action **Category**	Action **Date**

Name and Title ______________________ Date ______________________

FIGURE 18

RECORDS CENTRE REQUEST FORM			Order No.
Requested By:		Telephone:	Date:
Address:			
Reference			
Ministry/Department	Consignment Number	Box Number	Location No.
Description of Record/Information Required			
Requested by Visit		Phone	Post
dispatched by Visitor		Van	Phone Response
Date of dispatched:	Date Returned:		

FIGURE 19

Section 11 Maintaining the System

11.1 Recovering Files

When a file transit ladder is full or when a file cover has been badly damaged, it may be necessary to provide a new cover. When this is done, the front page of the old file cover (with the transit ladder) must not be destroyed or thrown away but will be kept just before the first folio on the file.

11.2 Monitoring Registry Performance

Registry performance needs to be evaluated on an ongoing basis to ensure that the Registry is meeting its responsibilities and assisting in the fulfillment of the organisation's objectives.

Initially, restructured registries will be reviewed to ensure that the restructuring process was successful and to allow for any adjustments to the system that might be necessary. The restructured Registry will be expected to meet the agreed targets relating to the key performance indicators listed below:

- File retrieval time;
- File accuracy;
- Incidence of lost or missing files;
- Retrieval accuracy;
- Accuracy of file contents to title;
- Physical state of the registry;
- Level of confidence in the system;
- Time taken to deal with pending items;
- Effectiveness of controlling file movement; and
- Adequacy of training.

The performance indicators will provide a concrete method of determining whether or not the restructuring of the registry met its objectives. If there is significant difficulty in meeting the targets, the system should be reassessed to identify problem areas. Over time the frequency of these initial reviews will decrease.

Heads of Registries will initiate regular surveys of users' views of the services provided by the Registry and take immediate action to improve the service when problems are reported. In the medium term future it is intended to introduce service-level agreements as means of monitoring both registry performance and user participation.

The head will submit regular reports regarding the performance of the Registry to the line manager responsible for it. These reports should include details of:

- The number of files opened;
- New index terms created;
- The number of letters received;
- The length of time it takes to clear circulation folders;
- The service provided to action officers in terms of the best and the worst times it took for them to receive files from the time a letter was received; and
- Any problems encountered in running the Registry.

11.3 Symptoms of a Registry No Longer Working Well

The Registry and its procedures need attention when:

- Mail folders take too long to circulate;
- Papers are put on the wrong files;
- There is lack of user confidence because papers are not readily available;
- Users keep files and documents in their own rooms, thus making information unavailable;
- Users send files to the Registry only when they need space in their rooms;
- The Registry has a filing or indexing backlog or cuts corners and therefore the service suffers;
- Files become so thick that papers are damaged;
- The Registry staff get discouraged, hide files or falsify records;
- There is a backlog of inactive papers in the Registry which should have been transferred to storage or to the Records Centre; and
- The Registry becomes untidy.

11.4 Overhauling the Registry or its Procedures

There are several reasons why the Registry or its procedures may need overhauling

- Activities have increased and expansion is therefore required
- New functions have been assigned to the department or ministry
- Functions have been withdrawn from the department or ministry
- There is a reorganisation of the area served by the Registry
- The present system is ineffective through neglect or faulty design.

Where a head of Registry or his/her line manager feels that a Registry is in need of attention he/she should consult the RAMD to request a review.

Appendix A Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

Action date: The date when records are due to be removed from a records centre and either destroyed, sent to an archival institution or reviewed for future action.

Action officer. An official engaged in the administration of an agency or in the implementation of its functions and activities.

Administrative records: Records relating to those general administrative activities common to all organisations, such as maintenance of resources, care of the physical plant or other routine office matters.

Appraisal: The process of determining the value of records for further use, for whatever purpose, and the length of time for which that value will continue. Also known as evaluation, review or selection.

Archival Repository: building or part of a building in which archives preserved and made available for consultation.

Archives: records of enduring value selected for permanent preservation.

Baseline Survey: In records management is the initial evaluation of an organisation to determine the status of its existing records management system, including accuracy of filing, user confidence and retrieval times.

Bring-Up Diary: Diary which records the dates when specific files need to be given to an action officer for further action.

Boxes: This manual refers to the Archives and Records Management Division, standard issue boxes.

Case papers/files: Papers or files relating to a specific person, organisation or place and forming part of a large series. Also known as particular instance files.

Classification: The process of identifying and arranging records in categories according to their subject in a logically structured classification system.

Classified records: records that are restricted in their circulation and access because they bear a security marking (eg. 'Confidential', 'Secret', 'Top Secret').

Continuation file: A new file opened when the old file on the subject is more than five years old, or three centimetres thick.

Control documentation: Recorded information that monitors and governs the creation maintenance, use and disposal of records.

Current records: Records regularly used for the conduct of the current business an organisation or individual. Also known as active records.

Decongestion: The process of identifying records that are no longer required for the day to day administrative business of any organisation.

Despatch Book: A register used to indicate when correspondence was despatched, received.

Disposal: The actions taken with regard to records as a consequence of their appraisal and the expiration if their retention periods.

Disposal date: The date on which actions specified in a disposal schedule should be initiated.

Disposal schedule: The control document recording appraisal decisions and prescribing disposal action. Also known as disposal list, disposition schedule, records schedule, retention schedule, retention and disposal (or disposition) schedule or transfer schedule.

Document: A unit of recorded information.

Electronic mail (e-mail): A means of sending and receiving messages using computer networks. The message or document can be viewed on a computer screen and printed out. E-mail can consist of a message and attachments, which are separate electronic documents.

Ephemera: Documents of transitory use and value (eg advertisements, calling cards, notices, brochures and tickets),

File (1): An organised physical assembly (usually within a folder) of documents grouped together because they relate to the some subject, activity or transaction. *Note:* A file is usually the basic unit within a record series

File (2): A logical assembly of data stored within a computer system, *Note:* In word-processing systems it is intellectual representation of a physical document

File census: A periodic listing of all files held in the various office of an organisation. Also known as daily marking.

File covers: The physical folder within which documents are placed to create a file.

File diary: A complete listing of all files created within a certain registry.

File movement slip: The information note filled out by action officers and sent to the registry when they transfer a file in their custody to another officer.

File transit sheet: *A* sheet which is used to record all the movements of a specified file.

Folio number: The sequential number assigned to every document within a file.

General disposal schedule: *A* disposal schedule that applies to categories of administrative records throughout an organisation.

Incoming correspondence register: *A register* used to record information about all incoming correspondence.

Keyword: *A* term or combination of terms taken from the tide or text of a document or file characterising its content and establishing an access point for its retrieval.

Keyword list: *A controlled* vocabulary that limits the choice of keywords when classifying or indexing files. A list of words arranged alphabetical or numerical order.

Life-cycle: Refers to the life of records from their creation to their destruction or permanent retention.

Non-current records: Records no longer needed for the conduct of current business. Also known as inactive records.

Objective: The statement of a specific goal in support of an organisation's aims, which it is intended to achieve within a specified period of time.

Operational records: Records that are created for the purpose of carrying out the core functions of an organisation. Also known as functional records.

Outgoing correspondence register: *A* register used to record all outgoing correspondence.

Part: One of a number of physical units to which a file has been subdivided chronologically as it has increased in size. Also known as a volume or part file.

Performance measure: *An* indicator of effectiveness based on a standard definition of a process and the units for its measurement. Also known as a performance indicator or target.

Personnel Files: *A* series case files relating to the staff employed by an organisation.

Preservation: The processes and operations involved in the physical protection of records and archives against damage.

Preview: The process of sending *all* incoming correspondence to the Permanent Secretary or Director of Administration and Personnel prior to filing.

Public records: Records created or received and maintained in any public agency.

Records and Archives Management Division (RAMD): The organisation charged with ensuring that public offices in Tanzania follow good record keeping practices.

Records centre: A building designed or adapted for the storage, maintenance and communication of semi-current records pending their disposal.

Records Management Section: The administrative unit of Public Service Management responsible for the management of the records of the Government of Tanzania.

Records: Recorded information regardless of form or medium, created, received and maintained by an agency, an individual, or private or public organisation, in pursuance of its legal obligations or in the transaction of business.

Records management: That area of administrative management concerned with achieving economy and efficiency in the creation, maintenance, use and disposal of the records of an organisation throughout their entire life cycle and in making the information that they contain available in support of the business of that organisation.

Records survey: The process of gathering basic information regarding the quantity, physical form and type, location, physical condition, storage facilities, rate of accumulation, uses and similar data a bout the records of an organisation.

Register. A document, usually a volume, in which sequential of data is made

Registration: The process of recording standard information about a document so that it is captured in a records management system.

Registry: The administrative unit for the receipt, control and maintenance of current records.

Retention period: The length of time that records should be retained in an office or records centre before they are transferred to an archival institution or otherwise disposed of.

Semi-current records: Records required only infrequently in the conduct of current business. Also known as semi-active records.

Series: The level of arrangement of the files and other records of an organisation or individual that brings together those relating to the same function or activity or having a common form or some other relationship arising from their creation, receipt or use. Also known as a file series or records series.

Tracking: *The* process of documenting the movements and use of records so that their whereabouts are known.

Treasury tag: A physical device used to secure documents to the file cover.

Valuables Register: Register used to record all significant attachments, such as cheques, deeds or legal documents.

Weeding: The removal of individual documents lacking continuing value from a file. Also known as stripping.

Records management aims to ensure that the right information is available to the right person, at the right time, at the least possible cost.

This manual has been developed in the wake of mapping current and emerging best practices and the introduction of a "Keyword" system where file headings reflect functions instead of hierarchical system in which file headings reflect themes.