



TOTAL POLICING



[MPS Home](#) > [News Archive](#) > Following the paper trail 26.01.15

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How do you easily manage your documents and records? From Monday, 26 January, the Met's records management policy for storing and disposing documents, records and files will change.

As a result of the [Ellison review](#) and following extensive consultation and officer and staff feedback, we've reviewed the way we manage our information and our recording processes so they're consistent, comprehensive, make your job easier and protect the Met.

We've created a new toolkit so it's a lot shorter, simpler and easier to quickly check and understand what operational or administrative records and files you need to keep, how long for and where to store them.

"We know it's difficult to find the time to check your records, but we want to make sure we have a robust system for keeping our exhibits, evidence and sensitive information safe and secure," says Assistant Commissioner Professionalism, Martin Hewitt. "We're not introducing the new toolkit because of an increasing problem; but recent reviews have shown the importance of us being able to meet our responsibility to ensure the quality and accuracy of our work."

What should you do differently?

All officers and staff should use the new policy toolkit to review their team and office's operational or administrative records and files to make sure they're accurate, up-to-date, and stored correctly.

Here's a quick summary of the new toolkit and what you should be doing:

- Check types of documents and how long you should keep them using the [Records Management policy toolkit](#).
- Review and either keep or dispose paper records after their set retention period has passed.
- Record disposals on the new corporate Information Asset Register - contact the Records Management team on ext. [REDACTED] for details of your local register.
- Only keep or store paper records that relate to policing process - printed emails, minutes, plans can be kept as electronic copies on the shared (S) drive.
- Dispose of paper records if the original or primary record is saved as an electronic copy on the shared (S) drive or corporate computer system e.g. emails, minutes, plans - see the Digital Policing intranet for details on [managing electronic information](#).
- Dispose of all personal paperwork or paper records that don't relate to the policing process.
- Record the retention period, location, content and movement of all local files on your borough or team's local computer-based register - contact the Records Management team on ext. 50993 for details of your local register.
- Send paper records to our external storage facility for long-term cases or that need to be kept for more than two years - contact the [Records Management mailbox](#) to arrange.

"There are legitimate reasons for getting rid of out-of-date material and it's good practice to dispose of documents and computer records on a regular basis," says AC Hewitt. "In fact, we have a legal duty to do it for some records. It's critical for meeting our Met values and standards, and continuing to build trust and confidence with the Met and the public. And this simplified toolkit will help you to do it."

What happens next?

Since October last year we've been carrying out a pilot in Croydon for Operation FileSafe. This is a Met-wide operation designed to improve our records management and bring all boroughs and departments into line with current legislation and our new policy.

Croydon officers and staff have sorted out their local archive, gone through records held in deep storage and started to search through every Met building on their borough to find and check files. Primarily, they've been looking for records to do with the Stephen Lawrence case and the Macpherson inquiry into the investigation; as well as anything to do with undercover work in general.

As a result, they've cleared a lot of the 800 crates they had in our external facility and saved in unnecessary storage costs in Croydon alone, as well as saving considerable time searching for records. The Operation FileSafe team will be getting in contact with the rest of the Met's boroughs and specialist departments over the next year to help you review and organise your records and make sure we're all following the new policy and current legislation.

More information

View the new [Records Management policy toolkit](#).

If information is sensitive or you're not sure if you can dispose it, please contact the Records Management team on ext. [REDACTED] or [email](#).

Look out for the new February / March edition of [The Job](#) - from w/c 2 February - for a more in-depth look at Operation FileSafe and Croydon's pilot.