

## ROLES OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

### GUIDELINES FOR STATE AGENCY RECORDS OFFICERS TO USE WHEN CREATING AND SUBMITTING UNIQUE SCHEDULES

#### **Attorney General Representative:**

The primary responsibility of this Committee member is to ensure that records series are correctly categorized as OPR (Official Public Records) or OFM (office files and memoranda). This representative determines if the document falls within the statutory definition of OPR according to RCW 40.14.010 and that all OPR's have the minimum retention of six years unless otherwise determined by the Committee. If less than a six-year retention is requested, the agency must show that it is both unnecessary and uneconomical. For example, federal guidelines that require a shorter retention period would provide a reasonable explanation. (See RCW 40.14.060 (1))

The AG representative also determines if certain series need to be retained for litigation or other related purposes. This could result in a longer retention period. If an agency thinks this could be an issue, it should consult with their Assistant Attorney General prior to submitting the unique schedule for review and approval. A copy of the Assistant Attorney General's approval provided to the Committee would be helpful. The AG representative may also consider whether the excessive retention of records constitutes a liability rather than an asset to the state. He/she also considers whether records are specifically required by law to be kept for a certain period of time. It is helpful if citations to, or copies of applicable laws that impact or support the proposed retention period are provided to the committee. This may include legal citations to CFR's (Code of Federal Regulations), RCW's (Revised Code of Washington), WAC's (Washington Administrative Code) or other applicable laws.

#### **State Auditor's Representative:**

This Committee member reviews series on the basis of the possible role the record would play in an audit, ensuring adequate retentions for the most accessible and complete copies. This includes ensuring the records are kept long enough to provide an adequate audit trail to support financial transactions and to show compliance with applicable laws and regulations. Primary records of concern may include, but are not limited to, documents related to cash receipts, accounts receivables, disbursements, contracts, grants, agreements, payroll activity, travel, assets, and information systems.

#### **Office of Financial Management Representative:**

Cost efficiency in records storage issues is the area of concern and responsibility of this Committee member. This includes ensuring the fewest copies of records are retained and are kept at the least expensive location. This representative considers the cost benefit to the state of retaining records and how they are kept. This may include an evaluation of the requested retention based on the frequency

of access after one or two years, as well as the volume or annual growth rate. This representative also evaluates retention based on storage efficiency, such as whether or not the records center is used and/or conversion to an alternative media such as imaging.

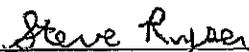
**State Archivist:**

An archival appraisal team is represented on the Committee by the State Archivist. It is the responsibility of the team to review and identify individual records series with respect to its place in the history of the State. Record series that are designated archival will become the property of the Division of Archives and Records Management at the end of the agency's total retention period.

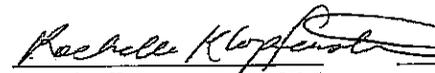
**Other issues the Committee considers when reviewing unique schedules:**

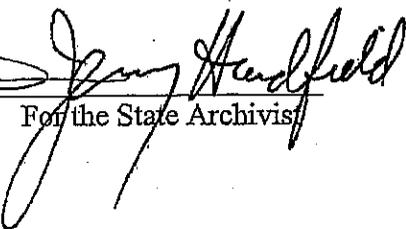
- Is there a series in the General Schedule that can be used?
- Is this a primary or secondary copy of the record? If it is a secondary copy, is the primary copy scheduled elsewhere?
- Is the record series in electronic format, hard copy or both? The description should make this clear. Sometimes electronic copies are kept for a different period than hard copies. The Committee should understand the retention that is being proposed for each. When the records are imaged and the agency wants to destroy the originals, the Committee will ask if the electronic imaging system has been approved as required by RCW 40.14.060. The form providing approval should be on file with the Record's Management Office.
- Is the cutoff workable and easily ascertainable? A good rule of thumb when considering cutoffs is whether or not someone new to the agency would understand how to implement the cutoff.
- Is the description of the record series adequate to understand what records are covered? Acronyms should be spelled out or explained in a separate memo by the Records Officer. Since records committee members have limited knowledge of the agencies, they need to be educated by the Records Officers so they can understand the context for the record and the proposed retention.
- Any items on the unique schedules submitted for review, in addition to new and modified series, are subject to review. Since the Committee members sign the page, it implies that all the record series on that page have been reviewed by the Committee.

**The above guidelines have been approved by the State Records Committee on June 7, 2006**

  
For the State Auditor

  
For the Attorney General

  
For the Director of OFM

  
For the State Archivist