



## Records Management Tip Sheet - Scanning Considerations

The following elements should be considered and integrated into your scanning/digitization project or program to conform to best practices for digitized records.

### 1. Standards:

Standards on electronic records as documentary evidence include:

- Microfilm and Electronic Images as Documentary Evidence (CAN/CGSB-72.11-93)1
- Electronic Records as Documentary Evidence (CAN/CGSB-72.34-2005)
- ISO 13008:2012: Information and documentation -- Digital records conversion and migration process.

### 2. Records Retention:

Remember that the retention period of scanned records is the same as their paper counterparts.

### 3. Formats and Scanning Densities:

Determine the file format(s) your office will use for the scanned documents. You should select a file format that you can reasonably predict will be supported until the end of the records retention period. It is recommended that scanners be set at a minimum of 300 dpi and that scanned paper records be saved as PDF or PDF/A files.

### 4. Quality Control:

Implement quality control checks to ensure that the scanning process is reliable and that the electronic version is the authoritative record. Ideally, each scanned record should be inspected to ensure that the image is complete, clear and usable. If necessary scanned records should be compared to the original paper document to ensure accuracy. Further, the number of original paper documents must be compared to the number of scanned records to ensure that every document was scanned.

### 5. Process Documentation:

Best practice in managing electronic records includes written documentation of the process used to scan records. Such documentation offers important support in satisfying provincial and federal legal requirements of admissibility and weight for electronic records.

### 6. Managing Scanned Records:

#### 6a. Networked Drive or Storage Location:

If storing records on a network drive, establish a file plan/structure for the drive/directory. Save individual documents to folders. Include the in the folder title the year the records were either created or received.

#### 6b. Databases and Document/Content Management Systems:

If saving to a database or content management system, configure the database or system so that records with the same retention are mapped. Also, include identifying retention information in the metadata of the record.



**6c. Modifying Scanned Records:**

Ensure that a scanned record is not altered or modified once it has been finalized. Scanned records should be “read only” to ensure that there is no improper alteration or modification.

**6d. Authoritative Version / Naming Conventions:**

Determine how your office will designate the authoritative record and distinguish it from all other drafts or versions. Version control is useful in proving which record is the authoritative record. Naming conventions can be configured to help ensure that every document is clearly titled with a version number.

**7. Migration and Preservation Strategies**

Take steps against media, hardware and software obsolescence and degradation of digital media. Select hardware, software and file formats that offer the best possibility for ensuring that digital materials will remain easily accessible over time. It is recommended that records be kept in PDF format using Adobe Acrobat or another format which is stable and likely to be supported into the future.

**8. Disaster Preparedness and Backups**

Scanned records should be backed up to ensure that, regardless of any damage they may sustain for any reason, they remain accessible and readable for their full retention period.