

Policy Number	D.11
Policy Name	Correspondence
Version	002
Approved by the Board	June 2023
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1. Policy

- 1.1. GBWA understands the need to manage all correspondence, keeping that which may be required into the future. The rise to predominance of electronic communication mandates electronic message management systems comparable to existing hard copy filing systems.
- 1.2. Employees and volunteers of GBWA acquire no rights in any material, electronic or otherwise, created by in the course of their employment, or accessed on GBWA equipment.
- 1.3. The Policy needs to meet multiple objectives
 - 1.1.1. that important correspondence including emails remain accessible for operational purposes;
 - 1.1.2. that legal document retention requirements are met;
 - 1.1.3. that *Privacy Act* obligations to delete certain personal information is complied with. that email retention does not materially degrade IT system performance.

2. People

- 2.1. The Operations Manager is responsible to
 - 2.1.1. Ensure staff and volunteers are aware of this policy
 - 2.1.2. Any breaches of this policy coming to the attention of the Board are dealt with appropriately
- 2.2. All staff are to ensure their usage of correspondence conforms with this policy.

3. Procedure

- 3.1. To help employees determine what information sent or received should be retained and for how long, this policy identifies the broad categories of correspondence processed by GBWA systems and sets out the factors to be considered in setting practice guidelines to be adopted in each case.
- 3.2. The first step is to consider whether there is a particular legal obligation to retain the email for a minimum period of time. The email can then be classified as
 - Material of permanent significance (perpetual)
 - Administrative correspondence (7 years)
 - Fiscal correspondence (7 years)
 - General correspondence (1 year)

- Ephemeral correspondence (retain until read and acted upon, then destroy)

The email should then be retained for the longer of the minimum legal period and the period set down in GBWA's internal classification.

3.3. Classification of Correspondence

3.3.1. Material of permanent significance to be kept indefinitely includes

- any material required to be retained in accordance with legal obligations

(see further explanation below under the heading, 'Legal Requirements');

- items of historical significance to the organisation;
- emails creating or recording permanent legal relationships; and
- items recording significant policies or precedents.

3.3.2. Administrative Correspondence to be kept for **seven (7)** years includes

- confidential management information,
- employee-related information, and
- project-related correspondence.

3.3.3. Fiscal Correspondence to be kept **seven (7)** years to include

- all information related to revenue and expense for the organisation.

3.3.4. General Correspondence to be kept for one (1) year to include

- all information that relates to customer interaction and
- the operational decisions of the organisation.
- The individual employee is responsible for email retention of General Correspondence where this is likely to be of continuing usefulness.
- General correspondence may include such things as Instant Messenger Correspondence, which may be saved with the logging function of Instant Messenger, or copied into a file and saved. Instant Messenger conversations that are Administrative or Fiscal in nature should be copied into an email message and sent to the appropriate email retention address.

3.3.5. Ephemeral Correspondence is by far the largest category and includes personal emails, emails dealing with the work of the day, and emails containing information outdated by events. Staff may destroy this after reading and acting on the material.

3.4. Legal requirements

3.4.1. ACNC requires GBWA to keep for seven (7) years any written records that correctly records its operations, so as to enable any recognised assessment activity to be carried out. Ie emails regarding disclosure of conflict of interest, emails discussing the solvency of GBWA.

3.5. Destruction of evidence

- 3.5.1. In Western Australia under The Criminal Code s 132, it is an offence to willfully destroy or render illegible any document that is or may be required in evidence in a judicial proceeding, with the intent to prevent it from being used in evidence.
- 3.6. Correspondence involving intellectual property
 - 3.6.1. Any correspondence that involves the creation of any significant intellectual property rights shall be retained at the discretion of the Operations Manager
- 3.7. Correspondence relating to litigation (or anticipated legal proceedings)
 - 3.7.1. When legal proceedings are in process (or reasonably to be anticipated), particular considerations apply to document retention. This would include correspondence relating to any threatened or likely legal action against GBWA, relating to any alleged or likely misconduct by GBWA, its staff or volunteers. It is the responsibility of the State Commissioner to inform staff should these considerations be applicable and to circulate to staff any relevant changes in policy and procedures.
- 3.8. *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth)
 - 3.8.1. GBWA will meet its obligations under this Act and in accordance with the GBA Privacy Policy and the GBWA Privacy Policy.
- 3.9. Storage
 - 3.9.1. It shall be the responsibility of the Operations Manager to maintain backup discs or cloud back-up, and archiving GBWA correspondence, including email messages. The email server should be backed up at least daily.
 - 3.9.2. Backup disc's should be rotated and taken off site.

4 Papers

Date of approval by the Board _____

Signature of State Commissioner _____

The Girls' Brigade Western Australia