

Northern Territory Archives Service

Executive Council Records

In 1978 the Commonwealth passed the Northern Territory (Self Government) Act 1978 establishing the Northern Territory as a distinct political entity under the Crown, with limited state-like powers, effective on 1 July 1978. The Act gave the Northern Territory self-government, extending local autonomy to the Legislative Assembly of the Northern Territory, and providing power to the Administrator to grant or deny assent to proposed laws. Following this, the first Ministry of the new Northern Territory Government was appointed and the Legislative Assembly was given authority and responsibility for the finances of the government of the Northern Territory.

Executive Council

The Executive Council consisting of Ministers of the Northern Territory Government is responsible for providing advice to the Administrator of the Northern Territory in relation to matters in respect of which the Ministers have executive authority. Acting on advice from the Executive Council, the Administrator appoints statutory office holders, makes regulations, proclaims parks and reserves, and authorises administrative arrangements orders. Papers presented to the Executive Council are subject to prior endorsement by the Cabinet.

The records of the Executive Council are held in the strictest confidence until they are released 30 years after their creation.

Access to Executive Council Records

On 1 January each year the records of the Northern Territory Government's Executive Council, are released for public access, having reached 30 years since their creation.

The Northern Territory Archives Service is responsible for managing, preserving and providing access to Territory Archives. Archives Advices nos.1-6 relating to access may be downloaded as PDF documents from our website at: <https://dtc.nt.gov.au/arts-and-museums/northern-territory-archives-service/government-recordkeeping/archives-management-standards>

In accordance with the Information Act (sections 141 and 142), government agencies transfer permanent value records of their business and activity to the archives service for inclusion in the Territory Archives. An access agreement is negotiated by the responsible agency and the archives service when the records are transferred. Public access to government archives is restricted for a minimum of 30 years, unless it is in the public interest for the records to be restricted for longer.

The Cabinet Office in the Department of the Chief Minister provides secretariat services to Cabinet and the Executive Council, and is the agency responsible for the records of Cabinet and Executive Council. An access agreement negotiated between the Northern Territory Archives Service and the Department of the Chief Minister provides for an annual opening of Cabinet submissions and decisions and of the Executive Council meeting papers, on 1 January each year after the records become 30 years old (some items may be restricted for longer periods where sensitive information has been identified).

Executive Council Records

The Executive Council meeting papers (NTRS 3351) include an agenda for each meeting followed by business papers with the related attachments. The decision or action is usually noted on the business paper.

The table below lists the records of Cabinet, and other significant related series, open for public access. Records restricted for more than 30 years are not listed below.

Main series

Series	Title	Description	Series Date Range
NTRS 3351	Executive Council meeting papers	<p>Agenda and business papers with related attachments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volumes 1-12 are open from 1 January 2009 • Volumes 13-17 are open from 1 January 2010 • Volumes 24-25, 27-35 are open from 1 January 2011 • Volumes 36-39, 41-44, 46-48, are open from 1 January 2012 • Volumes 49-61A are open from 1 January 2013 • Volumes 62-73 are open from 1 January 2014 • Volumes 74-81 are open from 1 January 2015 • Volumes 83-86, 88-91 are open from 1 January 2016 • Volumes 92, 94-96 are open from 1 January 2017 	1969-1986
NTRS 3352	Index to Executive Council meeting papers	An index created by the Cabinet Office to assist with accessing the meeting papers. The index lists business papers submitted to each meeting.	1977-1986

Related Series

Series	Title	Description	Series Date Range
NTRS 2575	Cabinet submissions and decisions	<p>Cabinet submissions, decisions, and associated papers including budget information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volumes 5-17, Meeting number 28 on the 7 December 1977 to Meeting number 64 on the 22 December 1978, are open from 1 January 2009 • Volumes 18-32, 35-43 Meeting number 65 on the 2 January 1979 to Meeting number 90 on the 5 December 1979, are open from 1 January 2010 • Volumes 44-64, Meeting number 91 on the 19 December 1979 to Meeting number 121 on 23 December 1980, are open from 1 January 2011 • Volumes 65, 68A, 68C-70, 71B-79, 81A-90, Meeting number 122 on 14 January 1981 to Meeting number 154 on 21 December 1981 are open from 1 January 2012 	1971-2007

Related Series

Series	Title	Description	Series Date Range
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volumes 92-93B, 95-103, 105-115B, 116B-117, Meeting number 156 on 2 February 1982 to Meeting number 182 on 14 December 1982 are open from 1 January 2013 • Volumes 118B, 199B-123, 125A, 125B, 126B-127A, 129A-129B, 131A, 131C-132B, 133B-135B, 136D, 138-139A, Meeting number 183 on 18 January 1983 to Meeting number 205 on 8 November 1983 are open from 1 January 2014 • Volumes 141B, 146-147, 150A, 151A-152, 153B, 156-158A, 159,161A, 162, 165A, Meeting number 207 on 17 January 1984 to Meeting number 235 on 14 December 1984 are open from 1 January 2015 • Volumes 168A-168B, 171-173, 176, 177, 178B-180, 184A-187, 193, 197-198, 202, Meeting number 238 on 14 January 1985 to Meeting number 288 on 17 December 1985 are open from 1 January 2016 • Volumes 207A, 208, 211-213B, 214, 216-219, 222, 223B, 224B-224C, 227, 228B, 230A-230B, 233-234A, 235, 237A, 238A-238B, Meeting number 289 on 23 January 1986 to Meeting number 330 on 16 December 1986 are open from 1 January 2017 	
NTRS 3353	Index to Cabinet submissions and decisions	Annual indexes, created by the Cabinet Office to assist with accessing the volumes. The index provides details of the meeting number, meeting date, decision number, and title of submission	1977-1986
NTRS 3354	Photographic copyprints relating to members of the Northern Territory Cabinet	Photographic copyprints taken from original photographs of the Northern Territory Cabinet.	ca 1978- ca 1986
NTRS 3750	Redacted copies of Cabinet decisions	This series consists of copies of restricted cabinet decisions which have sensitive information redacted to allow public access.	1984-1986

Further information

These series can be accessed by appointment in the Reading Room of the Northern Territory Archives Service, Darwin, open from 9.00am-4.30pm, Tuesday-Friday.

Contacts

Northern Territory Archives Service Darwin
Northern Territory Archives Centre Kelsey Crescent MILLNER GPO Box 874 DARWIN NT 0801
Telephone (08) 8924 7677 Fax (08) 8924 7660
Website address: https://artsandmuseums.nt.gov.au/northern-territory-archives-service E-mail: ntac@nt.gov.au