

Explanatory Notes for Dataset Transfer Form (DRO)

Introduction

Completion of this form, and the associated form that has been sent to the Data Owner, is the first step in the transfer and accessioning procedure for a dataset selected by The National Archives for permanent preservation by NDAD. The information provided in this form is intended to cover the legal aspects of the transfer, whereas the form sent to the Data Owner covers some of the more technical aspects of the process.

1 Dataset Description

Most of the questions in this section will have been at least partially pre-completed by NDAD staff using the information supplied by TNA when they notified NDAD that the dataset had been selected for preservation. The Department should feel free to amend any part of this section if it is incorrect or inaccurate.

- 1-1 Dataset title** The name/title of the dataset - this will usually be the name by which the dataset is known within the Department.
- 1-2 Appraisal details** Indicate the basis on which the datasets in this series are being transferred to NDAD (as annual snapshots, complete data for each annual survey, one-off transfer of an isolated survey etc). Please also explain why this dataset has been selected for transfer (eg any appraisal criteria which have been applied).
- 1-3 Accession details** Provide a description which identifies this particular accession from other datasets in the same series (eg "1999 snapshot", "1993 survey", "1990 crime statistics" etc).
- 1-4 Dataset Description/Purpose** Add any relevant additional information, for example whether the dataset is based on a survey, in which case provide, if possible, the size and the response rate of the survey.
- 1-5 Date of creation of dataset** Input the date(s) on which the files or tables containing the data were created. If the data is from a defunct system, please indicate the date when data was last added to the system, and/or when data on the system was last modified.
- 1-6 Dates of dataset contents** These dates refer to the contents of this particular accession. For instance, in the case of an annual survey of a company's previous year's finances, if the 1998 survey collects data on the 1996/1997 financial year, then the start date would be 4 April 1996 and the end date 31 March 1997.

2 Legislation/Access

- 2-1** List any legislation which covers the dataset. This should include any legislation which may affect access to the data, and circumstances where data has been collected under a statutory requirement. Do not include the Public Records Act, Data Protection Acts or Freedom of Information Act in this section.
- 2-2** Any restrictions on access to the data that are imposed by the legislation cited in 2-1 should be noted here.
- 2-3** Indicate whether the dataset is subject to the Data Protection Acts and supply any additional information, eg anything known about subject access to the dataset.
- 2-4:**
2-10 Sections 2-4 : 2-10 can be used to alert NDAD of any concerns within the Department regarding access to sensitive data. Under the Freedom of Information Act the default thirty-year access rule for public records will no longer apply. The dataset will be considered as **open to the public**, unless an FOI exemption is identified. If such an exemption is applicable, then various options are available for closing data:
1. Closure of an entire dataset.
 2. Closure of one or more tables within a dataset.
 3. Closure of selected fields within a dataset.
 4. Aggregation of data to a higher level.
 5. Any combination of the above.

In option (3) for example, information which could identify individuals will be removed from the version of the dataset which is available to the public. In option (4), the data can be averaged or aggregated in some way (by date or by geographic area, for instance) to provide a useful research resource which nonetheless preserves individual or commercial confidentiality.

If the transferring Department is of the view that some form of closure or redaction of the data is necessary, it should be noted that this work will be carried out by NDAD **after** the data has been transferred. Data should therefore be provided in its "raw" form so that any data that is to be closed or aggregated can be permanently preserved. A version of the data containing aggregated fields or excluding the closed fields will be made available for research. If you are not certain at this stage whether confidential data, needs to be protected by closure or aggregation, either list the fields that contain confidential data or give some indication of the type of data involved eg names, addresses, telephone numbers. Following transfer of the data, NDAD will report back to you with confirmation of the details and field names involved.

- 2-4** In this section indicate (Y/N) if you or anyone in the Department are aware of a need for closure or redaction of fields or tables in the dataset.
- 2-5** If answer to 2-4 is yes, in this section state the applicable exemptions under the FOI Act. This includes exemptions under the Environmental Information regulations, as appropriate. Where a dataset falls within more than one FOI exemption, each instance should be stated. Please provide full details of the exemption(s) as listed in Part II of the Act. With some of the more complex exemptions, just listing the section number may not be sufficient; s27 for example contains numerous subsections. You may need to list the section number and any subsections, for example s27 (1) (a) as appropriate. The Department for Constitutional Affairs (DCA) has produced guidance on procedures and exemptions relating to FOI (see www.dca.gov.uk/foi/guidance/ for further information).

- 2-6** If you have stated applicable FOI exemptions in 2-5, state your justification for closure of the dataset. If closure is required for a qualified exemption then the reasons why the public interest is in maintaining the exemption should be stated.
- 2-7** List the tables and fields in the dataset which you require to be closed.
- 2-8** State the closure period being applied for. Departments should note that however many exemptions are cited, only the longest closure period is required.
- The DRO must ensure that datasets are closed for the minimum period consistent with the exempt information identified in them. For example, a closure period designed to protect an individual from disclosure of sensitive personal information during his or her lifetime must be determined by the age of the individual at the date of the end of the record concerned.
- Written guidance on closure periods will be forthcoming from TNA.
- 2-9** State the date due for release or re-review of this closed dataset.
- 2-10** See above for aggregation of data.
- 2-11:** Please give details of the copyright owners of the data and of any supporting documentation. It is particularly important to identify any copyright owners whose copyright is not Crown Copyright. Note that copyrighted information can be released under the Freedom of Information Act.
- 2-12**

3 Documentation and Further Descriptive Information

- 3-1** Please indicate whether you are aware of any documents that could provide information relating to the background and context of the dataset. We would ask that, where possible, such documentation be transferred with the dataset to form part of the archive.
- If such documentation cannot be transferred to NDAD on a permanent basis, please give some indication of its availability, as NDAD may be able to arrange either the deposit of photocopies or a temporary loan for scanning.