



Guidelines on dispersal of collections in government agency libraries

Government agency libraries frequently hold collections of long-term significance for Australian heritage and research.

These guidelines are intended for all Commonwealth, state and territory government agencies, as a guide to what to do in situations where agency libraries plan to dispose of material. The guidelines provide for the orderly disposal of library collections when the parent organisation has decided not to retain them. Such circumstances may arise where a government library is closed, merged with another library, moved to another location, or where a library is reduced in size or scope.

Contact details for the National Library of Australia and state and territory government libraries see www.nla.gov.au/libraries

It is recognised that when two or more libraries merge because of a departmental reorganisation the ongoing library may have first claim to any material appropriate to the subject coverage and personnel of the new department.

The guidelines are not intended to deal with material which should be transferred to the National Archives of Australia or to state or territory public records repositories.

Not everything held in a library is of ongoing importance, and libraries regularly dispose of unwanted material. The purpose of the guidelines is to ensure that important heritage and research material acquired with public resources is retained in an appropriate publicly-accessible library collection.

It is the responsibility of the disposing institution to check if the material to be offered is already held by the institution to which it is to be offered (alternatively: whether the material is in the scope of the institution to which it is to be offered). It remains the right of any institution to which material is offered to assess that material and to reject any or all of the material. The receiving institution may also seek a financial contribution if it decides to accept the material, to cover the costs of taking in the material.

The following categories of publications are likely to include material of ongoing value:

1. Publications of your organisation

[examples: annual reports, research and consultants' reports, promotional material]

All state and territory libraries seek comprehensive coverage of their own state government



publications and strong coverage of Commonwealth titles. The National Library of Australia seeks comprehensive coverage of Commonwealth government publications.

Contact [state government publications]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State or territory library
Contact [Commonwealth publications]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Library of Australia • State or territory library

2. Journals

2.1 Australian journals

State and territory libraries and the National Library aim to acquire between them full sets of Australian serials. It is also likely that these will be important for research.

For titles unlikely to be widely held:

Contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State or territory library • National Library of Australia • All academic libraries in your state or territory
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2.2 Overseas journals

Some journals will be of long-term research value. For titles not widely held, check <http://librariesaustralia.nla.gov.au>.

Contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Libraries with holdings gaps • Other publicly-funded libraries in the relevant subject area • National Library of Australia • All academic libraries in your state or territory
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3. Monographs

3.1 Australian monographs

Consult your state or territory library to identify potentially rare, unique or valuable monographs and non-book materials. State and territory libraries can also assist in identification of potential recipients.



Contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• State or territory library• National Library of Australia
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3.2 Overseas monographs

Monographs in areas of research strength are likely to be of interest to other libraries in the relevant subject area.

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Contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• State or territory library• Special libraries with related research interests• All academic libraries in your state or territory
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Adopted 1999. Amended 2009

