

SRAC Publication Scheme

1. What is the publication scheme?

1.1 The Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 gives a general right of access to all types of recorded information held by public authorities, sets out exemptions from that right and places a number of obligations on public authorities. Any person who makes a request to a public authority for information is entitled to receive that information, subject to exemptions.

1.2 The Scottish Records Advisory Council, in the interests of the public, and mindful of the need for openness and transparency, has prepared this publication scheme to meet its obligations under Section 23 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002. Under the Act we are required to specify

- the classes of information we publish or intend to publish
- how information is published and
- whether the information is available free of charge
- or on payment of a fee.

The purpose of our publication scheme is to let you know what information is readily available from us. By readily available we mean that the information can be obtained on our section of the National Archives of Scotland website (www.nas.gov.uk) and from us on request.

2. What is the Scottish Records Advisory Council (SRAC)

2.1 The Scottish Records Advisory Council was constituted under section 7 (1) of the Public Records (Scotland) Act, 1937, to advise the Secretary of State (and now the Scottish Ministers), the Lord President and Lord Justice General on matters relating to the public records of Scotland, and in particular to the custody, preservation, indexing and cataloguing of those records. The Council provides a formal channel for raising concerns about public records and services and facilities provided for public access to these, and acts to preserve Scotland's written heritage. Its remit was extended in 2002 to include the application of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act to information in records held by the Keeper of the Records of Scotland.

2.2 There are 12 members in the Council. Membership represents legal, educational and local government sectors as well as owners of private archives and professional archivists. One of the members is appointed as Chairman. In addition, the Keeper of the Records of Scotland, the Deputy Keeper, the Registrar General for Scotland, and two members of the Society of Archivists in Scotland also attend Council meetings in an advisory capacity. The latter are present to reflect the opinions of the archive profession in Scotland. The secretariat is provided by the National Archives of Scotland (NAS). Members will initially be appointed for up to three years, renewable at the discretion of Scottish Ministers. Members receive no remuneration for their service.

2.3 Originally the duties of the Council related largely to the work of the Scottish Record Office (now the National Archives of Scotland), in particular the public registers and court records. The Council later extended its remit to the monitoring of Scottish Office and now Scottish Executive decisions over records closed for longer than the normal 30 year period. The role of the Keeper of the Records of Scotland has

expanded greatly in recent years, and the Council has similarly extended its brief to cover all public records in Scotland. This includes the records of local authorities, NHS Trusts and higher education institutions. The Council also considers the relationship between the NAS and owners of important private collections. Since its inception the Council has been at the forefront of all the important issues affecting the national records.

2.4 The Council meets twice a year to discuss issues of current relevance to Scottish archives and to review record-keeping practice in Scotland. The Council have made proposals to the former Secretary of State for Scotland and more recently to the Deputy First Minister and Minister for Justice for new archive legislation and discussions on data protection legislation and the training of archivists in Scotland. The Council has also provided valuable comment on consultation papers '*An Open Scotland: Freedom of Information*' the subsequent '*Freedom of Information: Consultation on Draft Legislation*' and '*Appointments to Public Bodies in Scotland*' and to the Scottish Executive's National Cultural Strategy document. The council submits an annual report to Scottish Ministers which is published in the National Archives of Scotland Annual Report.

3. Who is responsible for the Publication Scheme?

3.1 The responsibility for our publication scheme is taken by Professor Hector MacQueen, Chair of the SRAC. Any queries about the scheme should be directed to the Secretary of the SRAC, Dr Alison Rosie, National Archives of Scotland, HM General Register House, Edinburgh, EH1 3YY or by e-mail to alison.rosie@nas.gov.uk or telephone: 0131 535 1403.

4. What is exempt?

4.1 From 1 January 2005, the general entitlement to information under section 1 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 will enable any member of the public to make a request for information that is not in this Scheme.

The SRAC's aim is to be as open as possible. However, information may be withheld from any of the classes of information listed below where we consider that the disclosure may fall within one of the exemptions contained in the Act. For example, we may withhold information if its disclosure would breach the law of confidentiality or seriously prejudice the commercial interests of any person or organisation. We will also withhold information which is personal data under the Data Protection Act 1998.

In these cases, we will withhold the information and indicate why the information is being withheld. Even where an exemption exists, it may nevertheless be possible to provide copies with the exempted information edited out.

If you wish to complain about information which is being withheld from you, please read the 'complaints' section below at paragraph 9 below.

5. Archiving Policy

5.1 All SRAC files are created under the National Archives of Scotland's records management system and those selected for permanent preservation are retained in record series NAS SRO20 ([word](#)) ([PDF](#))

6. Copyright

6.1 The material in this publication scheme is covered by Crown Copyright. However, information obtained from the scheme can be copied or reproduced without formal permission provided it is copied or reproduced accurately, is not used in a misleading context and provided that the source of the material is identified and the copyright status acknowledged.

7. How do I access information?

7.1 On-line: Most information listed in our publication scheme is available on the section dedicated to the SRAC on the website of the National Archives of Scotland: www.nas.gov.uk

By e-mail: If the information you request is not available on the above website but is listed in our publication scheme, we will send it to you by e-mail wherever practicable.

By post: Most information is also available on paper. Please address your request to Dr Alison Rosie, Secretary, Scottish Records Advisory Council, National Archives of Scotland, H M General Register House, Edinburgh, EH1 3YY.

8. How much will it cost?

8.1 Information on the website is free of charge. For those without access to the website, a single copy can be requested free of charge. Requests for multiple copies may attract a charge (photocopy charges will be 10p per page). If charges are to be made you will be told at the time of your request and these would be payable in advance.

9. How do I make a complaint?

9.1 If you are not satisfied with the way we have handled your request or you wish to make a comment about our publication scheme, you should contact us directly. Any complaints should be sent to Dr Alison Rosie, Secretary, Scottish Records Advisory Council, National Archives of Scotland, H M General Register House, Edinburgh, EH1 3YY. E-mail: alison.rosie@nas.gov.uk or telephone: 0131 535 1403.

9.2 If we are unable to resolve any complaint, you can complain to the Scottish Information Commissioner. From 1 January 2005, when general right of access comes into force, there will be a formal appeal mechanism when information is withheld. Further details on this will be available on the [Commissioner's website](#) before this date.

10. Feedback

10.1 As part of our statutory duty we are required to review our publication scheme periodically. The SRAC welcomes feedback on how we can develop our scheme further. If you want to make any comments about the publication scheme or if you

require any assistance please contact: Dr Alison Rosie, Secretary, Scottish Records Advisory Council, National Archives of Scotland, H M General Register House, Edinburgh, EH1 3YY. E-mail: alison.rosie@nas.gov.uk or telephone: 0131 535 1403.

For example: -

- What did you like and dislike about this Publication Scheme?
- What else would you like to see in this Publication Scheme?
- Did you find the information you wanted easily and were the members of staff helpful?
- Do you have any suggestions on how to make SRAC more open and transparent in the provision of information?

11. Contacts

Scottish Records Advisory Council HM General Register House, Edinburgh, EH1 3YY. Tel: 0131 535 1403, E-mail: alison.rosie@nas.gov.uk, Website: <http://www.nas.gov.uk>

Freedom of Information Unit, Scottish Executive, GA North, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ. Tel: 0131 244 5210, E-mail: foi@scotland.gsi.gov.uk, Website: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk>

Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner, Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, Fife, KY16 9DS. Tel: 01334 464610
E-mail: enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info,
Website: <http://www.itspublicknowledge.info>

12. Classes of information.

12.1 Role, functions and membership of the SRAC

<i>Description</i>	Details of the functions of the SRAC will be available on the National Archives of Scotland website together with a current list of members of the Council.
<i>Availability</i>	On website or upon request in person, by post or e-mail
<i>Cost</i>	Free

12.2 Minutes of meetings:

<i>Description</i>	Copies of minutes of meetings
<i>Availability</i>	On website or upon request in person, by post or e-mail
<i>Cost</i>	Free

<i>Description</i>	Copies of minutes of meetings of Sub-group on Retention and Disposal
<i>Availability</i>	On website or upon request in person, by post or e-mail
<i>Cost</i>	Free

12.3 Annual Reports

<i>Description</i>	<u>Published in the Annual Report of the Keeper of the Records of Scotland</u>
<i>Availability</i>	Reports from 1999 can all be down-loaded from the National Archives of Scotland website. Upon request in person, by post or e-mail
<i>Cost</i>	Free

12.4 File lists

A list of the files relating to the Council that are in the hands of the Secretary can be obtained on application to the Secretary. Earlier files which have been selected for permanent preservation [[NAS ref. SRO20](#)] will be available to the public in accordance with the normal provisions for access to public records at the National Archives of Scotland. The catalogue to this series can be consulted on the NAS' on-line catalogue at <http://www.nas.gov.uk>. A paper copy of this catalogue can be obtained upon request in person, by post or e-mail.