

Operational Selection Policy 58

Environment Agency 1996-2012

November 2012

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Authority

The National Archives' Acquisition Policy statement announced the Archives' intention of developing, in consultation with departments, Operational Selection Policies across government. These Policies would apply the collection themes described in the policy to the records of individual departments and agencies.

Operational Selection Policies are intended to be working tools for those involved in the selection of public records. This policy may, therefore, be reviewed and revised in the light of comments received from the users of the records or from archive professionals, the department's experience of using the policy, or as a result of newly discovered information. There is no formal cycle of review and revision will be determined according to the nature of the comments received.

This policy is a presentation version of an appraisal report. Appraisal reports have been developed to implement The National Archives' Appraisal Policy, published in August 2004. They are designed to provide structured information about the responsibilities, work and records of an organisation so that appraisers can identify records of potential historical value. They provide a transparent record of decisions on the selection of records in whatever format for permanent preservation. Selection decisions are based on the requirement both to document the work of the organization and to provide information about specific topics of potential long-term research interest.

If you have any comments on this policy, please email information.management@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

or write to:

Information Management and Practice Department
The National Archives
Kew
Richmond
Surrey
TW9 4DU

The National Archives

Appraisal Report:

Environment Agency

Paper and Electronic Records

1996-2012

Contents

Executive summary.....	4
Section 1: Background information	5
Section 2: Material transferred to The National Archives in the past	8
Section 3: Analysis of records produced.....	9
Section 4: Proposals for the selection of records.....	24
Section 5: Additional information and follow-up	24

Executive summary

This report provides structured information about the responsibilities, work and records of the Environment Agency ('the Agency') so that records of potential historical value can be identified. It will be used as a transparent record of decisions on the selection of records in all formats, including digital records and datasets.

The report will inform the Agency's Retention Schedule and existing Records Management procedures. It will also provide evidence of records management and retention scheduling for FOI section 46 assessment purposes.

The Agency will select records which document how it is governed (board and committee records), and key policy records (paper and digital) where it is Her Majesty's Government lead (or where it is acting on the behalf of its parent department).

The Agency creates and stores records covering some major incidents, both national and local, which may have led to a change in its approach to managing the environment. Select records which document these changes, as well as those significant investigations where the Agency was the lead.

The Agency is involved in a range of European projects, which are funded under the EU Framework programmes. Appraise and consider unpublished research for permanent preservation.

The Agency is responsible for a major national asset, the Thames Barrier, and for the planning of future flood mitigation requirements for the Thames estuary. Those records which document the Agency's inspection at the commissioning and decommissioning of the asset or similar infrastructure will be considered for selection.

Audio-visual material that is produced to raise the profile of an environmental issue, or show how the organisation worked to change attitudes towards the environment, will be selected for transfer to the British Film Institute (analogue) and The National Archives (digital).

The Agency's website is crawled as part of the [UK Government web archive](#).

The Agency maintains a number of geographic systems to support its collection and analysis of environmental data. Systems will be selected on a case by case basis. Selection will be determined based on discussions between the Agency and The National Archives.

Records not considered for permanent presentation at The National Archives, but which contain issues of local historical value, are offered to county and local record offices throughout England and Wales on a case by case basis.

Section 1: Background information

1.1 Name of Agency/NDPB/Department/Division

Environment Agency (EA, or the Agency)

1.2 Type of agency

Executive Agency	Non-Departmental Public Body	Trading Fund	Next Steps Agency	Non-Ministerial bodies	Libraries, Museums, Galleries	Research Councils
	Yes					

1.3 Annual budget (if an agency)

£1.3 billion. Approximately 60% from Government and National Assembly for Wales, the rest is generated through charges and regulatory licensing

From April 2013, a new single environment body for Wales will be in place and budgetary arrangements will change accordingly.

1.4 Number of employees (if an agency)

Approximately 11,500 for operational year 2010-2011

1.5 Background, functions and activities

The Environment Agency was created in April 1996 as a Non-Departmental Public Body following the amalgamation of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Pollution (HMIP), National Rivers Authority (NRA) and Waste Regulatory functions of local authorities. It was set up under the [Environment Act 1995](#).

Statutory Duties:

- conservation
- fisheries
- flood defence
- IPPC and Industry Regulation
- land quality
- planning
- radioactive substances
- waste
- water quality
- water resources

Significant Legislation:

- Environment Act 1995
- Environment Protection Act 1990
- [Water Resources Act 1991](#)
- [Water Act 1989](#)
- [Water Industry Act 1991](#)
- [Fisheries Act 1981](#)
- [Land Drainage Act 1991](#), [Land Drainage Act 1994](#)
- [Control of Pollution Act 1974](#)
- [Pollution Prevention and Control Act 1999](#)
- [Radioactive Substances Act 1993](#)
- [Waste and Emissions Trading Act 2003](#)

Organisational Structure:

Head Office, seven Regions and 19 Areas. The structure is divided into the following Directorates:

- Chief Executive's Office
- Evidence
- Environment and business
- Flood and coastal risk management
- Finance
- National operations
- Resources

Processes - Core:

- Communicating successfully with others
- Permitting and compliance
- Enforcement
- Monitoring
- Incident management
- Manage fixed assets
- Flood risk management

Processes - Management and support

- Corporate governance
- Estates and facilities
- Finance
- Manage fixed assets
- Internal environmental management
- IT and IT Support Services
- Lead and direct the organisation
- Legal services
- Manage and comply with Health and Safety responsibilities
- Manage and develop the Environment Agencies' people
- Manage data and information
- Manage improvement and change
- Measure and improve performance
- Plan Environment Agency activities and resources

- Procurement
- Science

1.6 Hybrid Records

The Agency's records are stored in a variety of systems, including digital shared drives, an EDRMS for Permit records, and non-registered paper files.

There are also a significant number of databases and datasets. Data which is selected for permanent preservation should be published on the Agency's website and captured through the UK Government web archive.

Un-registered paper files are stored across the organisation. The Agency will need to manage and review these records according to established retention schedules, and this report (as required).

1.7 Name of the parent or sponsoring department (if an agency) If none, Minister who lays an annual report before Parliament

Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)
Welsh Government (WG)

1.8 Relationship with parent department (if an agency)

DEFRA has the lead sponsorship responsibility for the Agency as a whole, and also for its day to day operations in England.

WG has sponsorship responsibility for day to day operations in Wales.

From April 2013, there will be a new single environment body for Wales and all responsibilities and records within Wales will transfer to the new body. DEFRA will then be the sole sponsor for the Agency which will only cover England.

1.9 Relationship with other organisations (agencies/NDPBs/departments/other statutory bodies)

DEFRA sets overall policy on the environment and sustainable development within which the Environment Agency undertakes its work. DEFRA in particular:

- makes appointments to the Board (with the exception of one member appointed by the WG) and appoints its Chairman
- sets objectives for the Agency's functions and its contribution to sustainable development
- approves its budget and payment of Government grant for its activities in England and approves its regulatory and charging regimes

Welsh Government (WG) is the devolved Government for Wales. It has an environment strategy and provides funding and sets policy for Wales. WG appoints one member to the Board. (See note in 1.8)

Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) is responsible for the government's energy policy and its climate change mitigation policy. The Agency works with DECC primarily on emissions trading, renewable energy and carbon capture and storage.

Natural England's (NE) purpose is to protect and improve England's natural environment and encourage people to enjoy and get involved in their surroundings. The Agency contributes to Natural England's biodiversity, landscape and access objectives.

Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) works to enhance the natural environment in Wales and the Agency contributes to its aims around biodiversity, landscape and encouraging access. From April 2013, CCW will form part of the new single environment body for Wales.

Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) is Scotland's environmental regulator. Its main role is to protect and improve the environment in Scotland. The Agency works with and liaises with SEPA over environmental issues and practices.

Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) mission is to prevent death, injury and ill health in Great Britain's workplaces. The Agency and HSE work jointly to investigate major incidents at industrial sites, and ensure that lessons are learnt under the Control of Major Hazard Regulations 1999.

Local Authorities: The Agency works in partnership with Local Authorities to bring about environmental improvements to the benefit of local communities. In particular, areas of liaison cover:

- flood defence and reducing flood risks
- waste disposal, fly-tipping, contaminated land
- recreation and creating opportunities for people to enjoy the countryside

Section 2: Material transferred to The National Archives in the past

The Agency has to date transferred the following records to The National Archives:

- Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Pollution (HMIP) - AT99
- Bathing Waters Dataset (to NDAD) - RD1
- National River Authority Board Papers - RD3
- Environment Agency Board papers - RD4
- Environment Agency Advisory Committee - RD5

Other related series that are held at The National Archives include:

- Alkali Inspectorate - BT328
- Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR) records - AT
- Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) - MAF
- Chemicals Regulations Directorate (part of Health and Safety Executive) - SE

Presentations under section 3.6 the Public Records Acts 1958 and 1967:

- Records not considered for permanent presentation at The National Archives, but which contain issues of local historical value. These are predominantly regional and advisory committee records of predecessor agencies that were inherited by the Agency. These are not to be selected for preservation and transfer to The National Archives or other places of deposit. Instead, these records are offered to county and local record offices through The National Archives on a case by case basis

Section 3: Analysis of records produced

3.1 Committee structure within the agency or parent department, including statutory committees directing the work of the organisation

There is a statutory requirement for the Environment Agency to have a Board of Directors and four central committees. There are also three Regional Committees which play an important role in shaping the direction of the organisation. The records from these committees should be selected for permanent preservation under [OSP 35 Board and Committee Records](#).

Table 3. 1 - Key committees

Name of committee	Terms of reference	Select? Yes/ No	Reasons for selection/non-selection, including comments on quality of information
Board	<p>Legally, the Board constitutes the Agency and is directly responsible to Ministers for all aspects of its organisation and performance. It is through Ministers that the Agency is accountable to Parliament. Ministers expect the Board to ensure that the Agency fulfils its statutory duties and operates with propriety, regularity, economy, efficiency and effectiveness</p> <p>The Board consists of 15 Members including the Chairman and Chief Executive. The Board Member for Wales is appointed by the National Assembly for Wales</p> <p>All the remainder (including the Chairman) are appointed by the Minister for the Environment, except for the Chief Executive who is appointed by the Board with the approval of the Minister</p>	Yes	Series contains strategic information and shows how the organisation is governed
Audit committee	Directs matters in these areas on behalf of the Board	No	Any decisions of note will be included in Board papers
Flood Defence Finance committee	Facilitates the financing of the Agency's Flood Defence functions	No	Any decisions of note will be included in Flood Defence committee papers
Pensions committee	Directs matters in these areas on behalf of the Board	No	Any decisions of note will be included in Board papers
Remuneration committee	Responsible, on behalf of the Board, for establishing performance targets for the Chief Executive and other senior staff. Assesses performance and recommends levels of remuneration for those staff	No	Any decisions of note will be included in Board papers
Environment Protection Advisory committees (EPACs)	<p>EPACs advise about</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the operational performance of its functions in each of its English Regions and in Wales • issues of concern within each Region or Wales • the implications for the English Regions and Wales of national policy proposals <p>EPAC Chairs are appointed by the Secretary of</p>	Yes	<p>Series shows how the Agency's strategy is applied locally, and provides information on regional priorities</p> <p>This committee has been abolished under the Public Bodies Act and will officially close in December 2012</p>

	State for the Environment. Other members of EPACs are appointed under statutory membership schemes designed to achieve representation from a wide range of stakeholders		
Flood Defence committees (FDCs)	<p>FDCs are the executive committees through which the Agency discharges its flood defence and land drainage functions in each English Region and in Wales. They are responsible for recommending to the Board the amount of money which local authorities will contribute to flood defence works in the English Regions and in Wales</p> <p>They also prepare annual programmes of flood defence maintenance and improvement works, determining the necessary funding and obtaining Ministerial approval, and they are responsible for providing and operating flood warning systems</p> <p>FDC Chairmen are appointed by the Minister of Agriculture Fisheries and Food, now DEFRA. Other members of FDCs are appointed by the constituent Councils in each Region or locality, or by the Agency</p>	Yes	<p>Series shows how the Agency strategy is applied locally, and provides information on regional priorities</p> <p>This committee was renamed Regional Flood and Coastal committee in 2012</p>
Fisheries Ecology and Recreation Advisory committees (FERACs)	<p>FERACs advise about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • performance of the Agency locally with regard to fisheries, ecology, recreation or navigation matters • issues of concern in relation to fisheries, ecology, recreation or navigation • local implications of national policy proposals for fisheries, ecology, recreation or navigation <p>FERAC Chairs are appointed by the Minister of Agriculture Fisheries and Food, now DEFRA. Other members of FERACs are appointed under statutory membership schemes designed to achieve representation from a wide range of stakeholders in fisheries, ecology, recreation and navigation matters</p>	Yes	<p>Series shows how EA strategy is applied locally, and provides information on regional priorities</p> <p>This committee has been abolished under the Public Bodies Act and will officially close in December 2012</p>

3.2 Areas of policy work undertaken in the Agency

The Agency has been responsible for the implementation and enforcement of over 40 European Union (EU) Environment Directives, and has a significant regulatory role in ensuring that standards and conditions are met.

As a scientific and technical adviser to the UK Government, the Agency is consulted on future legislation and considers the operational and practical implications of EU proposals. This includes joint working with DEFRA to influence the overall direction of EU policy affecting the environment.

Influencing Government on policies and legislation is an important role, and also implementing and regulating legislation under statutory powers. Key policy areas include:

- Flood risk management
- Conservation

- Fisheries
- Water resources
- Water quality
- Pollution
- Navigation
- Recreation
- Waste
- Land quality
- Air quality
- Industry regulation

Table - Policy work in the Environment Agency

Type of policy	Yes/ No	Notes - examples	Appraisal comments
All primary legislative policy is made in parent department	Yes	The Agency contribute through DEFRA in the development of primary legislation relevant to their role and activities	To be selected from DEFRA records
Environment Agency plays major consultative role in the development of primary legislation directly associated with its role	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive 2001/42/EC • Pollution Prevention and Control Act 1999 • Waste and Emissions Trading Act 2003 	Sample/check with DEFRA
Environment Agency represents parent department at international conferences or on European/International bodies	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IMPEL - International Network of Environmental Law Enforcers • INECE - International Network for Environmental Compliance and Enforcement 	Select under OSP 44
Environment Agency develops secondary legislation	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groundwater Regulations SI 1998/2746 • Pollution Prevention and Control (England and Wales) Regulations SI 2000/1973 • Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations SI 2003/3242 	Select under s 3.2.2 of the Acquisition and Disposition Strategy
Environment Agency issues advice and guidance	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Water Framework Directive and Planning: Initial Advice to Planning Authorities in England and Wales • Radioactive Substances Charges Scheme 2008/09 	High-level information is captured through UK Government web archive Unpublished supporting documentation to be considered for selection
Environment Agency develops nation-wide strategy documents (below White Paper status but above operational level)	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water Resources strategy 2001 • National Trout and Grayling Fisheries Strategy 2003 • Soil a precious resource, our strategy for protecting, managing and restoring soil 2007 	High-level information is captured through UK Government web archive Unpublished supporting documentation to be considered for selection

3.3 Operational work undertaken by the agency

The operational work of the Agency is extremely varied. However, mainly it covers the regulation of activities that pose a threat or risk to the environment or human health, and the monitoring of the state of the environment.

Table 3.3 - Operational work of the agency and records created

1. Operational activity	2. Detail of activity	3. Information recorded in case work files	4. Is the information captured through or replicated in a database? Yes or No and enter details under 3.4	5. Is the information captured through or replicated in publications including the Annual Report? Give details	6. Selection Yes/No	7. Reasons for selection/ non-selection
Licensing and permits	Rod Licences	<p>Typical information: type of licence/ permit, individual/partnership/ company name, address, telephone numbers, registered company details, ages, bank account details, email address</p> <p>Information relevant to specific permits: relevant environmental offences, post convictions plans, consultations, technical ability, types of wastes and activity monitoring, inspection details, prosecution and appeal details, monitoring inspection details, type of facility, best available techniques information, site location map, groundwater investigation, environmental reports, water craft details, craft events dates</p>	Yes - specific national data applications	Reported to DEFRA in some instances. Mainly kept in Agency systems	No	<p>Licensing and permitting records will not be selected for permanent preservation. However, high profile cases that lead to prosecution should be considered for selection on a case by case basis</p> <p>In addition - under the Transparency Initiative, the Environment Agency should also consider the publication of data on its website, which could be captured by the UK Government web archive</p>

Waste management Licence					
Environmental Permit					
Pollution Prevention Control Permit					
Integrated Pollution Control Authorisation					
Water abstraction licence					
Greenhouse gas emissions trading scheme					
Water craft registration and Licensing					
Farm assessment and regulatory management					
Notice about waste exemption activity					
Registering premises that produce or store hazardous waste					
Live fish movement registration					
Radioactive substances registration and authorisation					
Flood Defence consents					

	Waste carriers registration					
	Water quality discharge consents					
	Groundwater authorisation					
	Transfrontier shipment of waste					
	Land drainage waste					
	Registration scheme for producer responsible for packaging					
Monitoring	Bathing waters	Data from monitoring samples taken from	Yes - specific	High level data is	Yes -	The Water Information

Performance of waste disposal authorities					
Drinking water protected areas					
Boreholes Wells and Springs groundwater levels and monitoring					
National monitoring network					
Pesticides and trace organic monitoring					
Beta/Gamma contaminates monitoring					
Transitional and coastal waters monitoring programme					
Detail River network					
Net catch monitoring					
Inventory of waters that support Shellfisheries					
Ecological data					
National Fish population					
Groundwater vulnerable Zones					
Nitrate vulnerable zones					
National sampling					

	StarLIMS v9.4					
	National flood forecasting monitoring					
Investigations and incidents	National Incident recording system	Name of individual/company/partnership, address, telephone number, email address, type of incident, third party details, date and time incident reported, visit reports, letters, assessment forms, inspection reports, historical flood events, flood zones, maps, thresholds	Yes - specific national databases	High level information is captured in published reports or passed to DEFRA	Yes - selective	This data should be considered for permanent preservation, but there will be significant sensitivity issues which would prohibit publication on the website for a considerable length of time
	Major hazards information system					
	National flood and coastal defence					
	Flooding and pollution incidents					
Environmental Planning	River basin management planning	Public consultation, individuals'/ companies'/local authorities'/other authorities' names, addresses, email addresses, report and review data on river flows and ecological impacts, maps, modelling, river names, tidal cycle inflows to estuarine and tidal volumes, water body flows, downstream users, maps, herbicide details, aerial photographs, multi-spectral imagery, coastal habitats, landscape studies	Yes - specific national databases	High level information is captured in published reports or passed to DEFRA	Yes - selective	Certain databases may be considered for selection
	Catchment management plans					
	AMP4 Water resources environment programme					
	Notification of use of herbicides and aerial spraying of pesticides in or near water					
	Shoreline management plans					
	Collation of ground data for remote sensing studies					
	Biodiversity action plans					

	Development planning system to log and track planning consultations					
	Catchment flood plans					
	Flood mgt plans					
Providing guidance, information and support	Register of Reservoirs	Individuals'/companies'/partnerships' names and addresses, telephone number, fax, mobile, email, site location maps, site emergency plans, inspections, enforcement information, commissioning works, improving safety, permit/licence/authorisations, storm tide records, modelling information, match fish data, fish stock levels, Fish counter data, hydrometric data, water body codes, LIDAR data, aerial photographs	Yes - Public registers, Specific national databases, Environment Agency websites	High level information is captured in published reports or passed to DEFRA	Yes - selective	Key implementation records where the Environment Agency is Her Majesty's Government lead should be selected for permanent preservation Publications should be sent to the British Library under the Legal Deposits Act
	Flood line					
	What's in my backyard					
	Astronomical tidal data					
	Angling match database					
	Fish counter data					
	Effluent summary flow data					
	Lake Typology					
LIDAR - Light Detection And Ranging						
Asset management	Monitoring fleet plant and equipment	Location of navigational aids, inspection dates, repair details, testing data, operational instructions, projects, security, monitoring details, fleet details	Spreadsheets on national drives, local drives	No	No (apart from special cases)	May be interested in inspection records of major assets, when they are commissioned and decommissioned for example the Thames barrier
	PANAR - Port Aids to Navigation Availability Reporting					
	Thames barrier maintenance					
Commissioning	Science Research (R and D)	Research data, project reports/briefs, prototypes	Local drives	Most research projects lead to published report	No	OSP 36 - unpublished reports to be reviewed for possible selection
	Development of process innovation (as core function)					

3.4 Electronic records and formats

In 2009 The National Archives assessed and reported on the Agency under the Information Management Assessment programme.

Following the assessment, the Agency took actions to improve their information management, focusing on both paper and electronic records. This included developing a Records management action plan, which involves tasks for the Management teams and Record management leads.

Actions resulting from the Plan include:

- communications and training plan that focuses on the key risks identified from the Records management monitoring and survey of information risk (included the use of protective marking, the importance of digital continuity, and making sure records are stored and managed appropriately)
- National action plan bought into by management teams, supported and implemented via the network of records management leads. Quarterly measures will be collected and reported to management teams
- Development of Information risk assessment so teams can assess risks and implement mitigation. These must be completed by team leaders and actioned by their Records management lead

The Agency recognises that their electronic systems (and supporting documentation/processes) need to be properly managed and stored, and have ongoing actions and tasks in place to support this. As part of this, they are applying their retention schedules to information held in their electronic systems, including Sharepoint. Systems and formats which will require long term preservation will need to be maintained and preserved as appropriate.

The Agency will liaise with The National Archives to ensure that records managed within electronic systems that are selected for permanent preservation are maintained according to accepted standards and The National Archives requirements for the transfer of digital records.

3.4.1 Electronic formats

The Agency manages its electronic records within the following locations:

Shared Drives Digital records on shared Area, Regional or National drives

Electronic Document and Records Management (EDRM) System EDRM for Permitting records (for example, Waste Licensing, Water Quality, Water resources) including born-digital and scanned incoming records. This will not be expanded to include other functions

SharePoint There are currently two installations of SharePoint:

- Electronic Project Management software (EPM) is based on SharePoint 2003 and available to staff in both the IT and Flood Coastal Risk Management departments

- SharePoint 2007 is available to a limited number of staff (c.500). This started as a pilot and was moved into production with no changes to the set-up of the system

In terms of the two Sharepoint installations, the Agency is managing the information captured in line with established retention schedules

Digital data held in IT applications. This includes data held in bespoke systems, built in-house or on our behalf, and also in 'off-the-shelf' applications managed and used by IT

3.4.2 Datasets

The Agency have created or inherited a significant number of nationally important datasets. Key data applications are stored centrally in a quality controlled environment allowing for reporting and extraction to the external website, stakeholders and for internal processes.

There are over 2,000 data applications covering all the activities carried out by the Agency. The following table is arranged by main business areas which own data applications potentially of historical value (detailed datasets are included in the Information Asset Register). Those selected will have measures put in place to retain internally, and data from some will be or are already published externally.

Unless the raw data is published in another format, under the terms of the Transparency agenda, government departments should publish as much data as possible on their websites for capture by the UK Government web archive, and retain and support the selected data until this can be achieved.

Table - Datasets

Business Area	Type of Datasets and information contained	Appraisal Decision	Reason for selection
Asset Management	Flood Defence Assets	Not selected	Operational need to retain some data for long term - records of value will be captured and selected elsewhere
Data Modelling, Mapping and Information	Geographic Information Systems containing data derived from Agency systems	Selective	See 3.4.3
Data Modelling, Mapping and Information	Monitoring and Modelling (specifically Detailed River Network)	Selective	See 3.4.3
Incident Management	Flood Incidents (warnings and forecasting)	Not selected	Records of value will be captured and selected elsewhere
Incident Management	Flood risk mapping data	Permanent	GIS Polygon Flood extent and peak levels
Incident management	National Incidents	Permanent	Reported pollution incidents, including those of interest to environmental historians and limited information on

			suspected offenders, such as prosecutions
Land, Water and Biodiversity	Conservation and ecology data (from biological surveys)	Permanent	Historical Record (environmental data needed for operational, research and future historical uses)
Land, Water and Biodiversity	Groundwater and contaminated land data	Permanent	Record of contaminated land - high value for researchers and Her Majesty's Government
Land, Water and Biodiversity	Fish monitoring data	Permanent	Historical record (environmental data needed for operational, research and future historical uses)
Land, Water and Biodiversity	Groundwater monitoring (site data)	Permanent	Historical record (environmental data needed for operational, research and future historical uses) - high value for researchers and Her Majesty's Government
Land, Water and Biodiversity	Hydrometric data	Permanent	Historical record (environmental data needed for operational, research and future historical uses) - Met Office third party data processors for EA. Intensity of rainfall recorded, not just amount
Land, Water and Biodiversity	Water monitoring data	Permanent	Historical Record (environmental data needed for operational, research and future historical uses)
Regulation	Abstraction and impounding licensing data	Permanent	Some licences to be retained for many years. Data possibly useful to future environmental historians
Regulation	Discharge consents and compliance data	6 years – review	Review when permit withdrawn
Regulation	Non-compliance with permits	Not selected	Operational value
Regulation	Sources and releases data (Pollution Inventory)	Permanent	Pollution incidents are a particular area of interest for The National Archives. Pollution Inventory contains data on releases to environment by industry
Regulation	Waste monitoring data	Not selected	Operational value
Research and Monitoring	Chemicals assessment	Permanent	Database contains data on chemical substances, volumes of manufacture, summary information. Used as evidence for decision-making

3.4.3 Images

Corporate The Agency has a central image library of over 1000 images available to all staff to use for all corporate communications. Images are from either external sources or created during EA business. These are corporate images for use in communications and publications. As their use indicates that they will already be available to the public via either the website or in publications, these images should not be selected for permanent preservation.

Operational Many images are also created during operational work and stored with site or scheme files. These should be reviewed for possible permanent preservation, at either a

suitable repository, or offered to county and local record offices when there is no further business requirement.

3.4.4 Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

The Agency uses GIS for many of their work activities and the management of GIS data is a priority. The management and development of the organisation's GIS data is coordinated by a group called Mapping Network.

The main GIS are based on ESRI products and are populated with different data layers, depending on the purpose and audience:

- ArcGIS - desktop tool
- Easimap - a simple GIS browser available on the intranet for all staff with no specialised software required, for viewing data and exporting maps
- Map Explorer - software tool stored locally which can be taken out of the office. Used for viewing data and making simple maps (does not require a network connection)
- PASF - specialist tool for viewing data and exporting maps and reports used in our Regional and Area offices
- What's in your backyard (WIYBY) - our internet GIS, accessible to the public

One exception is the MapInfo software used by Flood and Coastal Risk Management in the National Flood and Coastal Defence Database (NFCDD).

The GIS data originates from a variety of sources including external sources such as Ordnance Survey and created from internal records and modelling process. The inclusion of external sources means that this will need to be investigated before any decision on appraisal is taken. The Agency should consult with The National Archives on selection of individual GIS data.

3.4.5 Website(s)

The Agency uses two websites, an external website with a '.gov.uk' domain and an internal intranet called Easinet for use only to staff.

External website The website is used to communicate with the public and for regulatory purposes. Many of the organisation's permitting activities are initiated through the website. Also the website is used extensively as a part of requirements under FOI and EIR, for making environmental information accessible to the public. One of the key portals for this is What's in your back yard (WIYBY).

The Agency's website is crawled as part of the UK Government web archive.

Intranet This website is used for internal use to communicate news, information, events and to promote and highlight anything that the wider staff community needs to be aware of.

The National Archives does not currently select government intranets and any key corporate information should be selected from the original corporate record system.

3.4.6 Email systems

The Agency uses Microsoft Exchange and Outlook. Users have a limited 100MB Outlook mailbox and when this limit is reached, emails are transferred to e-Store, an email archiving solution. All emails are auto-deleted after six months regardless of whether they are held in Outlook or e-Store.

Internal email retention policy states that email records are not to be stored in the email system, but instead moved into an appropriate record keeping system, for example, hard copy file, EDRM or electronically on networked shared drives.

3.5 Publications produced by the organisation

The Agency produces approximately 100 publications each year including some scientific papers and laboratory technical handbooks. One copy of all external publications is sent to the British Library.

Periodically videos have been produced by the Agency to communicate its work to the public or to raise the profile of an environmental issue. These show how the organisation worked to change attitudes towards the environment. These are in VHS format.

These are appraised and selected for permanent preservation and transferred to the British Film Institute. Digital video and images can be transferred to The National Archives.

3.6 Scientific records

Science research is carried out or commissioned by the Evidence Directorate. The Directorate is organised around three sections which cover strategy and reporting, research and innovation and evidence services. Almost all scientific research is collected through projects, and is needed to provide an evidence base to support the development of strategy and operations. Scientific records exist in many systems and storage facilities.

Information produced by Science projects have a retention period of five years after project closure. Records are then reviewed so that projects which are high profile or contentious may be kept longer. Generally projects will produce a report with the results and findings. These are published and a copyright copy sent to the British Library for permanent preservation.

The Agency is also involved in a range of European projects, which are funded under the EU Framework programmes. Retention period for EU-funded projects is ten years post-closure.

Under OSP 36 unpublished research will be appraised and considered for permanent preservation. Where the research is connected to a change of policy or function, selection for The National Archives will be considered.

3.7 Significant issues and assets for the period of appraisal

The Agency creates and stores records covering some major incidents, both national and local, which may have led to a change in our approach to managing our environment. These include:

- Buncefield
- Napoli
- flood events
- foot and mouth
- climate change

The Agency is also responsible for a major national asset, the Thames Barrier, and for the planning of future flood mitigation requirements for the Thames estuary. Some of the records of the asset will be of historical value, and are essential operationally for the lifetime of the asset. Those records which document the Agency's inspection at the commissioning and decommissioning of the asset or similar infrastructure will be considered for selection.

3.8 Sensitivity review (access)

The majority of the Agency's records are open for access and are not classified. There are a percentage of protectively marked records which contain sensitive information and access is limited. Types of sensitivity include:

- personal information about individuals the Agency regulates
- prosecution case files
- procurement contracts
- nuclear records (national security)

3.9 Internal administration records

All internal administrative records, including those records which document the management of the Chief Executive Office, the Press Office, Human Resources, Freedom of Information, Data Protection, Information Communication and Technology and Finance are captured within the Agency's internal systems.

The receipt and payment of money is tracked through IBIS, an internal system.

Section 4: Proposals for the selection of records

The key aspect of The National Archives' acquisition and disposition policies that are relevant to the records of the Environment Agency is as follows:

- 3.2.2 The impact of the state on the physical environment and the documentation of the physical environment by government.

In accordance with this selection theme, The Agency will select records which document how it is governed (board and committee records), and key policy records (paper and digital) where it Her Majesty's Government lead (or where it is acting on the behalf of its parent department).

The Agency creates and stores records covering some major incidents, both national and local, which may have led to a change in its approach to managing the environment. Records which document these changes will be selected, as well as those investigations where the Agency was the lead.

Other selection decisions are documented in the Executive Summary, which documents the main selection decisions within the report.

Section 5: Additional information and follow-up

5.1 Additional Checks

Operational Selection Policies (OSPs)

OSP 30 Government and people: interaction of the state with the citizen

OSP 35 Board and committee records

OSP 44 Records of UK government involvement in the development and implementation of European Community secondary legislation

OSP 17 Preservation of the built environment 1970-1999

Board and Committee papers

Board and committee papers are hybrid records. Earlier records are in paper format, but from about 2007 these may be digital.

Location of files

Files are located in storage facilities and on appropriate systems as identified in the report.

5.2 Implications of this report for the selection of records held in related departments/agencies

The Agency will consult with relevant government bodies on a case by case basis in terms of the implementation of this report - for example, when dealing with the records of Buncefield the Agency will liaise with HSE.

5.3 Implications of the report for the review and selection of paper records relating to the functions covered here

The Agency has noted that its paper records are managed and stored in various locations. It is therefore important that the Agency's Central Records Management unit co-ordinate the implementation of the report and its retention policies and schedule.

5.4 Follow-up

The Agency and The National Archives will review this Appraisal Report two years from the date of its approval, or if the Agency undergoes a major machinery of government change which affects its function and activities.