

## WACC POLICY

# RECORD STORAGE AND RETENTION

*Issued by the General Secretary*

2021

## Definition

1. A record is, for the purpose of this policy, defined as any document or other item in physical or electronic form which contains information that:
  - Is, or is likely to be, of value or interest to WACC, and
  - Is worth preserving for more than a brief period.
2. Records include, but are not limited to, reports, minutes of meetings, copies of correspondence, memoranda, completed forms, photographs, videos, and recordings.
3. Draft documents, library holdings, and books or other reference materials retained by staff members are not considered records.

## Background

4. The number of records being produced by and received by WACC has increased significantly with increased use of electronic means of communication. The purpose of this policy is to indicate how the organisation will manage the large number of records that come under its control.
5. WACC needs to retain various records in order to meet legal and contractual obligations, to support its ongoing operations, and for historical reference. The length of time that these records need to be kept will vary. In part, this policy indicates where records are to be stored, who is responsible for determining how long the records need to be retained, and the procedures for discarding records.

## Management

6. As chief executive of the organisation, the General Secretary has overall responsibility for all aspects of WACC activities, including the storage and retention of records.
7. For the purpose of managing record storage and retention, Record Controllers, with responsibilities as indicated in this policy, have been designated
  - Financial records: The Finance Manager
  - Other business-related records: The General Secretary
  - All Programme records: The Director of Programmes

- Media records: The Communications Officer
  - Administrative records: The Manager of Administration
8. Where a record appears to be under the management of more than one Record Controller, there is joint responsibility.

## Record Storage

9. Since WACC's capacity for storage of records, both physical and electronic, is limited, the retention of all documents that come under WACC's control is impractical. Decisions must, therefore, be taken as to what is to be kept and what is to be discarded.
10. The responsibility for making an initial determination as to whether any item produced by or received by WACC is to be considered a record rests with the producer or recipient of the item. In case of doubt, reference should be made to the appropriate Record Controller (see 7).
11. Any item that is not determined to be a record must be discarded as soon as it is no longer necessary or expedient to retain it.
12. Records must be stored in such a way that they may be readily accessed if and when they are required. In general, records are not to be stored individually but are to be retained, instead, in an appropriate file with related records.
13. A primary record (the original item received by WACC, except as noted below), unless otherwise required to meet internal confidentiality requirements (see 34), must be stored in a location that is accessible to all staff, ie in one of the general file systems (see 18).
14. Where multiple copies of an item are received by different members of staff, an agreement needs to be made between them as to which copy is the primary record. In the case of records received by e-mail, the copy received by the person to whom the e-mail is addressed, as opposed to copied, or the first listed addressee if it is addressed to a number of staff members, will normally be the primary record.
15. When a physical record has been received by WACC, an electronic copy may be created to become the primary record, provided there is no legal reason why the original record needs to be kept.
16. A duplicate record should only be stored in the general file systems when an additional copy is required to make a file complete. A duplicate record produced for the use of a staff member for some purpose should be retained by that staff member, and discarded when it is no longer required.
17. Records may be either 'active' or 'inactive.' Active records are those that relate to WACC's current operations, or that otherwise may need to be accessed either frequently or urgently. Inactive records are further subdivided into those that have a finite life and those that need to be retained indefinitely.

## Active Records

18. Filing systems for both physical and electronic active records have been established:
  - Physical records are held in filing cabinets. Drawers in the cabinets have been allocated and are labelled to show their contents (see Appendix 1).
  - A file structure is in place on the server to store electronic records (see Appendix 2).
  - Files that deal with ongoing matters should, unless they are expected to accumulate only a very few records, be limited to records relating to a particular time period (typically one year) and should be labelled to reflect this.
  - Additional files should only be created when there is no file in existence into which particular records may logically be placed, or when an existing file becomes sufficiently large that:
    - Finding a particular record in that file becomes impractical, or
    - In the case of physical records, the file becomes unmanageable.
  - Additional files must be located and labelled in a way that retains the logic of the existing file system.
19. Accuracy in placing records into the correct file is essential.
20. Only active primary records may be stored in the filing systems, except that an electronic draft of a document may be placed on the system to facilitate sharing and editing.
21. Electronic drafts must include the word 'DRAFT' in their name, usually at the end. Physical drafts must be clearly marked as such, usually with the word 'DRAFT' at the top of the first page.
22. Records should not normally be removed from physical files. Anyone needing to work with a record should remove the complete file in which it is kept from the file system. Files must be returned to their place in the system at the earliest opportunity.
23. Should it be necessary to remove a physical file from the file system for a protracted period, the staff member holding the file must place a note in the system indicating that they have the file.

## Inactive Records

24. Files containing only records that are no longer active, but which need to be retained, are to be declared inactive. Such files are to be removed from the filing system and placed in storage.
25. Files containing only records which are no longer active and do not need to be retained are to be discarded.

26. The discard date for a file is the latest date on which any record in that file can be discarded.
27. Inactive physical files are to be stored in boxes in the basement storage area. The files placed in each box must have the same or similar discard dates. Each storage box must be labelled with its contents and the latest discard date of any file in the box.
28. Should it be necessary to remove a physical file from storage, the staff member holding the file must place a note in the location where it was stored indicating that they have the file.
29. Inactive electronic files are to be transferred to the storage area on the server, maintaining the same folder structure. Such files must have the discard date indicated in their name. Alternatively, inactive electronic files, particularly those which need to be retained indefinitely, may be transferred to a 'hard' storage medium (CD, DVD, etc).
30. Electronic files from the storage area may be transferred to a hard storage medium from time-to-time.
31. Hard storage media containing inactive files must be labelled with the contents and the discard date, if any, and must be stored in the designated location<sup>1</sup>.

## **Confidentiality**

32. In general, WACC records, other than those that are produced specifically for distribution, are not available to the public and, therefore, although generally available to all staff, should be considered confidential.
33. WACC's records are owned by WACC. Staff leaving WACC must leave all records, must not take copies of records, and have no right of access to such records. Any exception to this requires the explicit approval of both the appropriate Record Controller and the General Secretary.
34. Any record that must be kept confidential internally, for example the documents in a personnel file or documents relating to any legal proceeding in which WACC is involved, must be kept in a secure location. Such locations will be identified by the Manager of Administration, as required (see Appendix 3).

## **Media Records**

35. Whenever possible, media records should be stored in electronic form.
36. The responsibility for the storage of media records, which have particular challenges with respect to accessibility and ensuring usability, rests with the Communications Officer.

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<sup>1</sup> The location of the designated area will be determined when required. At the present time there are no electronic files that have been transferred to a hard storage medium.

37. Each media record must have associated with it information regarding the nature of its contents (including identification, when possible and appropriate, of anyone portrayed in the record and the location portrayed), the date on which it was created, reproduction rights, and credits that are to be given.

## Discarding Records

38. The responsibility for determining if a record needs to be retained indefinitely or the date for discarding a record that is or has been an active record rests with the appropriate Record Controller.
39. The method for discarding records, usually as a part of a file, will be determined by the Manager of Administration in consultation with the appropriate Record Controller. Physical records must not be discarded as a part of normal refuse without the approval of the Manager of Administration.
40. Criteria to be used in determining the way in which discarding is to be carried out include the form of the record, the confidentiality of the contents, and the possibility of recycling.

## Appendix 1: Active Physical Record Locations

Active physical records are stored in filing cabinets located on the mezzanine floor.

### **CABINET 1**

- |     |                        |
|-----|------------------------|
| 1.1 | Unused                 |
| 1.2 | Unused                 |
| 1.3 | Director of Programmes |
| 1.4 | Director of Programmes |

### **CABINET 2**

- |     |   |
|-----|---|
| 2.1 | Programme Files (MTA):<br>Recognising Communication Rights<br>Building Communication Rights<br>Christian Fundamentalism and the Media |
| 2.2 | Programme Files (JM):<br>HIV/AIDS Communication<br>Communication and Poverty<br>Ecumenism and Interfaith Dialogue                     |
| 2.3 | WACC Administration (TM)  |
| 2.4 | Programme General Resources   |

### **CABINET 3**

- |     |         |
|-----|---------|
| 3.1 | Funding |
| 3.2 | Funding |

### **CABINET 4**

## WACC Record Storage and Retention

- 4.1 DIP 2005 Contract Completed Projects
- 4.2 DIP 2005 Contract Completed Projects
- 4.3 Current project applications
- 4.4 2008 Round 1 project applications

### **CABINET 5**

- 5.1 DIP 2005 Contract Completed Projects
- 5.2 CLT Current Files
- 5.3 CLT older files
- 5.4 CLT older files

### **CABINET 6**

- 6.1 GMMP
- 6.2 GMMP
- 6.3 Women's Programme
- 6.4 Women's Programme

### **CABINET 8**

- 8.1 Programme Files Congress
- 8.2 Programme Files 2007 Projects
- 8.3 Programme Files - Current and Previous Project Applications
- 8.4 New Programme Files (PL)

### **CABINET 9**

- 9.1 Regional Liaison
- 9.2 Regional Liaison
- 9.3 Regional Liaison

### **CABINET 10**

- 10.1 Funding Congress
- 10.2 Funding
- 10.3 Funding
- 10.4 Funding

### **CABINET 11**

- 11.1 Projects 2006 and earlier Africa, Asia
- 11.2 Projects 2006 and earlier Asia, Caribbean
- 11.3 Projects 2006 and earlier Europe, Latin America
- 11.4 Projects 2006 and earlier Middle East, Pacific

## Appendix 2: Electronic Record File Structure

Data is stored on the WACC server on a number of 'virtual' drives. All staff have 'read' access on all drives; however, 'write' access is restricted on some drives, generally those that are used for specific areas of WACC's work.

In order to access a drive, a user requires permission, which should be obtained from the person shown as 'responsible' for the drive, but may also be obtained from the Manger of Administration (the System Administrator).

Usual Drive Letter	Drive Name
O	Finance
P	Programme
Q	Funding
R	Communications
S	Special
T	Temporary
V	Visuals
W	WACC Administration

## Appendix 3: Confidential Record Locations

Confidential records are held by the General Secretary.