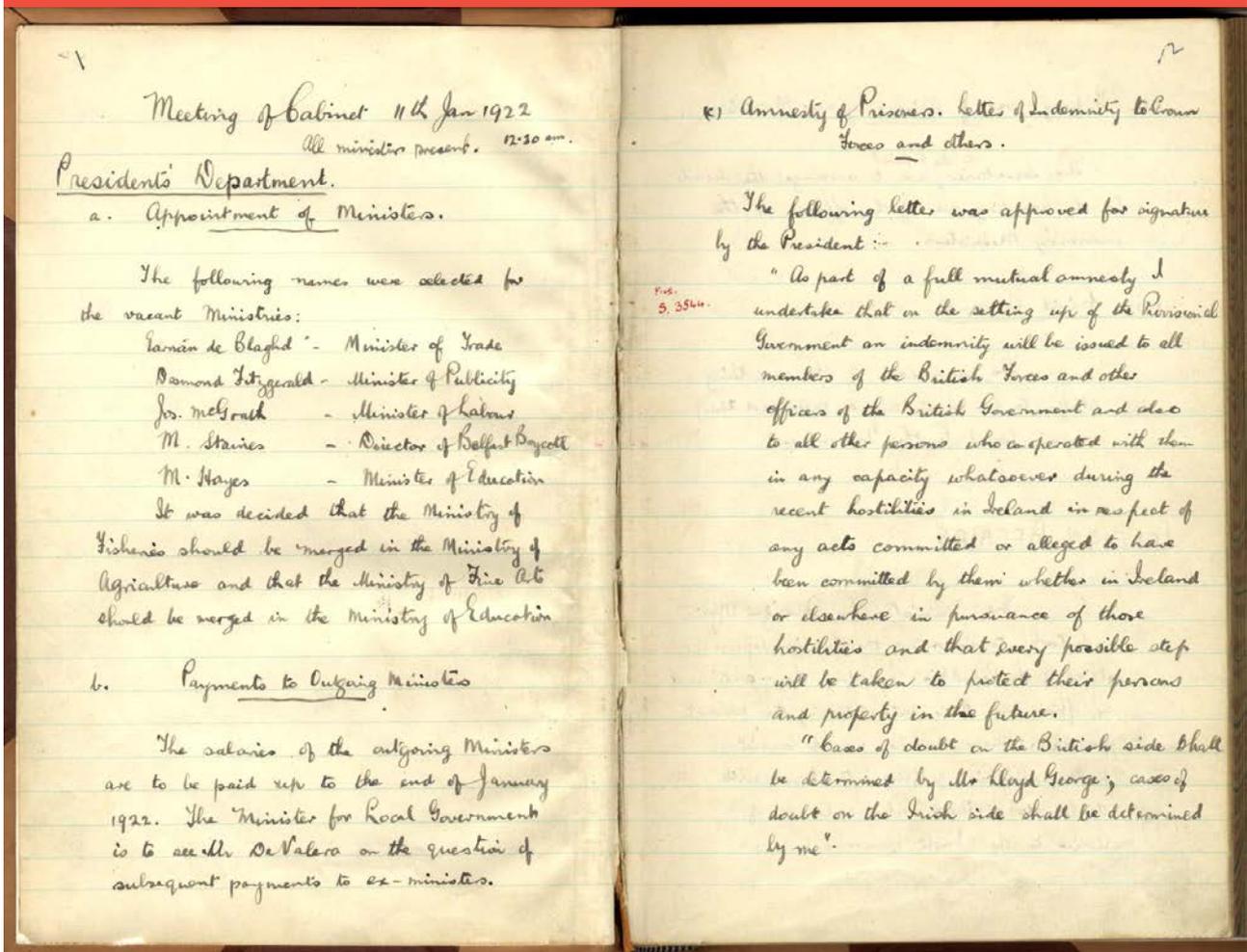




Archives Framework 2018 – 2020



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Introduction

The purpose of this document is to set out the policy framework for the development and management of the National Archives holdings. The framework will ensure:

- A coordinated and standardised approach in the management of archives during 2018–2020
- Ongoing commitment to the preservation of archives

The National Archives Strategic Plan 2018–2022 outlines the priorities for the development of archives as follows:

- To progress and complete the Archive Repository Project
- To improve the visibility of archival and public services
- To develop and progress the civil service-wide records management plan including the development of capability in the National Archives to manage electronic records

These priorities – identified in the annual business plans – are to be implemented. The framework will be formally reviewed during the next strategic planning process.

Under the National Archives Act, 1986, the functions of the National Archives are:

- Acquiring records of archival value from government departments, offices of State, the courts and scheduled bodies
- Acquiring archives from private individuals, institutions and organisations
- Ensuring the preservation of archives
- Facilitating access to archives
- Developing and promoting access to finding aids and archives through online systems
- Developing educational and outreach services to promote the greater use of archives
- Providing advice and guidance to government departments and on records management

Overview of archives held in the National Archives

The holdings of the National Archives include material from the 13th–21st centuries, comprising over 50 million documents. The holdings include records of:

- Departments of State
- Scheduled bodies under the Act
- Commissions or committees of inquiry established by government, a minister or the Attorney General

- Private archives (including family and estate, business, solicitors and hospital records)

Roles and responsibilities

The functions of the National Archives are carried out by the following three divisions:

1. Archives & Government Services

Archive management

- Organise on an annual basis the acquisition of departmental records which are 30 years old
- Prepare finding aids/catalogues to facilitate public access to archives
- Appraise records to select those for transfer to the National Archives
- Prepare and deliver transfer training to departments and bodies

Current records

- Advise government departments on records management
- Undertake surveys and appraisal of records held by bodies
- Draft and submit recommendations with regard to disposal certificates

2. Collection Care & Public Services

Archive repository and digitisation management

- Manage and maintain archive repositories
- Maintain accurate location data to facilitate production of records to the public
- Manage production of records to and from the Reading Room
- Provide copies of archival records to the public
- Create digital surrogates of original documents

Conservation

- Conservation of archival holdings
- Conservation and preparation of records for publication, exhibition and digitisation

Public Services

- Provide services to the public
- Answer enquiries from the public
- Provide a professional genealogy advisory service
- Provide authentication service for copies of records required for legal purposes
- Maintain and develop the National Archives website at www.nationalarchives.ie
- Manage and develop social media such as the office Twitter account @NARIreland

3. Corporate Services

- ICT services
- Finance services

Infrastructures

Physical infrastructures

The National Archives is based in Dublin and has premises in Bishop Street and the Four Courts. Current holdings equate to 300,000 standard archive boxes.

The Bishop Street building comprises:

Eight floors with a total floor area of almost 6,000m², of which more than half is used for archives storage

- Staff offices
- Public Reading Room

The Four Courts building comprises:

- Three floors of archives storage with a total floor area of 2,800m²
- Workroom for staff

There is no public access to this premises.

In addition to these sites, the National Archives uses commercial off-site storage. Currently there are 15,000 boxes of records stored off-site.

As part of the preparatory works associated with the Archive Repository Project, 90,000 boxes of archival records will be moved off-site from the current warehouse. These will remain off-site until the project is completed.

Digital infrastructures

Adlib Archive

- Database system to manage the accessioning and listing of archives

Production system

- Database system to manage control of archival holdings
- Manage production of records from archive repositories to the public and staff

Digital image store

- Digital images are stored in designated image drives
- A pilot Dspace system is in place and will be rolled out in 2019

National Archives web presence

The National Archives has a comprehensive web presence at www.nationalarchives.ie.

From this point, there is access to a wide range of digitised archives series on dedicated websites such as the Decade of Centenaries and the genealogy portal. These include the 1901 and 1911 censuses, soldiers' wills, Tithe Applotment Books and other resources.

Functions

ACQUISITION

Under the National Archives Act, 1986, records are acquired by transfer, purchase, donation, bequest or loan.

The main acquisition criteria include:

- Statutory obligation under the National Archives Act, 1986
- Relevance to the Acquisitions Policy
- Records of national significance which complement the holdings of the National Archives
- Deposit by private individuals or institutions

Loans

The National Archives loans items from its archival holdings subject to the National Archives Act, 1986 (see Loans Policy, 2018).

Deaccessioning

The National Archives Act, 1986, makes provisions for the disposal of archives in its custody.

PRESERVATION

Archives storage

The National Archives has a disaster recovery plan which sets out the actions to be implemented should a major event occur eg flood, fire etc.

A digitisation and associated digital preservation policy will be developed to manage all digital material.

ACCESS

Accessing archives

The majority of archives are available for consultation in the public Reading Room in Bishop Street.

Digital surrogates of a number of archives series including the 1901 and 1911 censuses, Tithe Applotment Books and soldiers' wills are available online and can be accessed through the main National Archives website.

National Archives website

The National Archives website provides information on the institution's archival holdings, services available and research information. Full details of all services provided are available on the website at www.nationalarchives.ie.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Copyright

The National Archives is subject to Copyright and Related Acts, 2000 (see Copyright Policy).

Data Protection

The National Archives complies with the Data Protection Act and makes an annual declaration regarding its use of collection systems as a data creator. The National Archives holds records which may be subject to data protection considerations.

Freedom of Information

The National Archives is a body under the Freedom of Information Act, 2014. However, the Act's provisions do not supersede provisions of the National Archives Act, 1986, with respect to the provision of public access to records. FoI requests are channelled to the National Archives via our parent department.



An Chartlann Náisiúnta
National Archives

The National Archives,
Bishop Street, Dublin
D08 DF85, Ireland.

Phone: + 353 (0)1 407 2300
Lo Call: + 353 1890 252424
Fax: + 353 (0)1 407 2333
Email: query@nationalarchives.ie