

# Digital Preservation Strategy

Archives New Zealand Te Rua Mahara o te Kāwanatanga  
National Library of New Zealand Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa

Joint Operations Group – Policy  
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## 1. Introduction

Archives New Zealand Te Rua Mahara o te Kāwanatanga and the National Library of New Zealand Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa have identified the preservation of digital content as an area of common concern. New methods of management and care are required to best serve the preservation of digital content under their stewardship.

Current guidance from government, reflected in the Department of Internal Affairs Statement of Intent (2011-14)<sup>1</sup>, clearly promotes efficiency and collaboration as mechanisms to better serve the New Zealand public. This document defines both Archives New Zealand's and National Library of New Zealand's intent of creating a strong partnership to preserve the nation's digital content.

This high-level declaration acknowledges Archives New Zealand's and the National Library of New Zealand's responsibilities to digital public archives and documentary heritage objects. It encompasses a statement of principles about the treatment of digital items held by the two organisations and embeds those principles within institutional, national and international contexts.

The Digital Preservation Strategy for the digital documentary heritage and public archives of New Zealand affirms both organisations' commitment to ensure that the digital content in their care is managed and preserved in a way that reflects its status as an asset and taonga of New Zealand.

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<sup>1</sup> Internal Affairs, *Statement of Intent tauāki whakamaunga atu*, 2011-14, <http://www.dia.govt.nz/SOI/2011/index.htm>.

## 2. The Need for this Strategy

Archives New Zealand and the National Library of New Zealand are tasked with collecting, acquiring and preserving digital content. In the case of Archives, content is classed as public archives. For the Library, it is documentary heritage. Content has traditionally been carried on physical formats from which the information being conveyed can easily be consumed by the reader. The utilisation of digital technology is resulting in documentary heritage and public archives being created in digital environments. It is of concern that the ability to access and understand content created, carried and presented in digital form is dependant upon technologies that are evolving rapidly. This concern centres on:

1. The inability to read data from storage mediums due to their fragility and constant evolution.
2. The loss of meaningful access to digital content due to an inability to render that content into a human-understandable form.
3. The dissolution of meaning and significance of the content through the loss of context.

There is international consensus that these concerns must be addressed in a considered and active manner. Archives New Zealand and the National Library of New Zealand have agreed that there are fundamental principles and processes that should be shared as they undertake the management and preservation of their digital content. This strategy is the joint statement of high-level principles that both organisations will follow. A policy manual will detail the processes and more detailed principles that will inform preservation work.

### 3. Mandate

Among the functions of the Chief Archivist, in achieving the purposes of the Public Records Act 2005, are, in relation to public archives:

- To control and administer public archives; and
- To ensure the preservation of public archives; and
- To facilitate public access to, and promote the use of, public archives.<sup>2</sup>

The purpose of the Library, as defined in the National Library of New Zealand (Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa Act) 2003, is to enrich the cultural and economic life of New Zealand and its interchange with other nations, as appropriate, by:

- Collecting, preserving, and protecting documents, particularly those relating to New Zealand, and make them accessible for all the people of New Zealand, in a manner consistent with their status as documentary heritage and taonga;
- Supplementing and furthering the work of other libraries in New Zealand; and
- Working collaboratively with other institutions having similar purposes, including those forming part of the international library community.<sup>3</sup>

The purposes of the Alexander Turnbull Library are:

- To preserve, protect, develop, and make accessible for all the people of New Zealand the collections of that library in perpetuity and in a manner consistent with their status as documentary heritage and taonga; and
- To develop research collections and the services of the Alexander Turnbull Library, particularly in the fields of New Zealand and Pacific studies and rare books; and
- To develop and maintain a comprehensive collection of documents relating to New Zealand and the people of New Zealand.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Public Records Act 2005, <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2005/0040/latest/DLM345529.html>, p.15.

<sup>3</sup> National Library of New Zealand (Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa) Act 2003, <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2003/0019/latest/DLM191962.html>, p.7.

<sup>4</sup> National Library of New Zealand (Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa) Act 2003, p.11f.

## 4. Purpose of the Strategy

Archives New Zealand and the National Library of New Zealand have made a commitment to act in a consistent manner with relation to the preservation of digital content. The purpose of the Digital Preservation Strategy is therefore to:

- Express their joint vision for the future of the digital content that they hold.
- Define the common responsibilities of both organisations towards that digital content.
- State the principles within which both organisations will discharge these responsibilities.

In performing these, the Strategy will:

- Create a common understanding of digital preservation across and within the two organisations.
- Express tenets from which both organisations can formalise actions to ensure the sustainability of the digital content that they hold.
- Be an external statement of the current understanding and vision of digital preservation as expressed by both organisations.

## 5. Scope of the Strategy

### 5.1. Types of content

Archives New Zealand and the National Library collect and create different classes of digital content.

#### 5.1.1. Within scope

The Strategy deals specifically with digital content that is classed as documentary heritage or public archives, is part of the collections of the Library or holdings of Archives and is managed and preserved over the long term as an asset of New Zealand.

#### 5.1.2. Out of scope

Both organisations have responsibility for other content types:

1. Information used for managing and offering access to content.
2. Internal organisational content (records) created by staff during the course of their business.

It is recognised that these classes of material have value associated with them, but are fundamentally different from documentary heritage or public archives. Both organisations will create policies, where they do not exist, for the management of digital content that falls outwith the scope of this Strategy.

### 5.2. Digital Documentary Heritage and Digital Public Archives

The National Library of New Zealand (Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa) Act 2003<sup>5</sup>, defines what a document is within the context of the National Library. A document can be in any form including writing on any material and information recorded or stored by any means. The National Library is mandated to collect, preserve and protect documents, particularly those that relate to New Zealand.

The Public Records Act 2005<sup>6</sup> defines what a public archive is within the context of Archives New Zealand. A public archive is a record created or received by a public office in the conduct of its affairs, which is under the control of the Chief Archivist.

A record means information, whether in its original form or otherwise, in written form on any material; or on film, negative, tape, or other medium so as to be capable of being reproduced; or by means of any recording device or process, computer, or other electronic device or process.

Archives New Zealand and the National Library of New Zealand recognise that digital documents and digital public archives are created in two principal ways:

- As digital content created entirely within the digital environment;
- Through the digitisation of analogue content.

For the joint Digital Preservation Strategy, this distinction has no bearing on how the content will be treated, assuming the content in question has been deemed to have long-term value and worthy of long-term preservation.

This Strategy will also not impinge upon nor influence the scope of the Collections Policy of the Library or the Appraisal Policy of Archives.

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<sup>5</sup> National Library of New Zealand (Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa) Act 2003, <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2003/0019/latest/DLM191962.html>.

<sup>6</sup> Public Records Act 2005, <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2005/0040/latest/DLM345529.html>.

## 6. Vision

Archives New Zealand Te Rua Mahara o te Kāwanatanga (Archives) and the National Library of New Zealand Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa (the Library) will preserve and manage digital content to ensure that it can be accessed now and into the future. Both organisations will adhere to this common vision and these shared principles.

### 6.1. Digital Preservation Principles

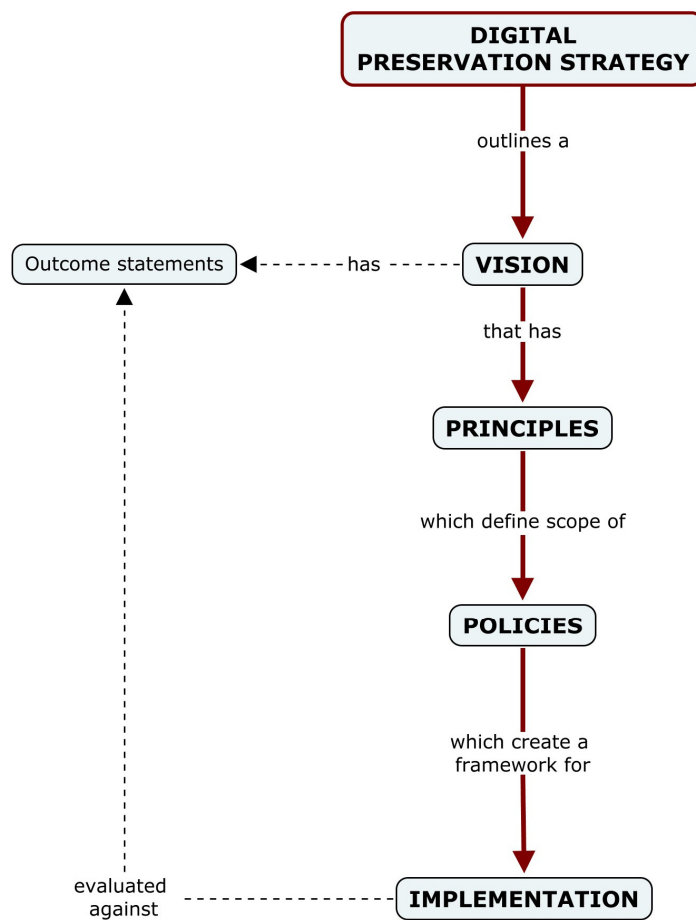
1. Archives and the Library will preserve digital content for the benefit of New Zealanders.
2. Archives and the Library recognise that preserving digital content is intrinsically linked with enabling access to it.
3. Archives and the Library understand that preserving digital content demands active, constant management.
4. Archives and the Library are committed to the full range of preservation requirements over time, including the maintenance of a suitable legal and economic environment for digital preservation.
5. Archives and the Library will use international standards and best practice to meet their preservation responsibilities and in turn will inform the development of these standards and practices.
6. Archives and the Library will not allow technology to constrain acquisition decisions. They do recognise however, that there are, and will be digital content that is easier to preserve due to the form that it is created in. Where possible it will seek to have content deposited in these preferred forms, while retaining the integrity of the content.
7. Preservation actions will always result in new versions of the content and will not directly affect the original item.
8. Archives and the Library understand that functionality can play a role in the comprehension of content.
9. The integrity of digital content (as defined by each organisation) will be retained through all preservation actions.
10. The authenticity (as defined by each organisation) of the content that is being preserved will be guarded and assured through all preservation actions.
11. Preservation actions will be transparent and auditable.
12. Digital content will be separated from their physical carrying media and brought into the digital preservation environment (this media may be preserved separately where appropriate).



## 7. From Strategy to Action

The Strategy is the joint vision for the preservation of digital content as expressed by Archives New Zealand and the National Library of New Zealand. To fulfil this vision, both organisations will develop a suite of policy documents to create a practical framework within which the long-term preservation of digital content can take place.

**Diagram 1: From Strategy to Action**



### **7.1.1. Measures of success**

It is critical to determine success measures for various stages in the preservation process. Detailed measures will be examined within policy documents and will take note of the relevant external audit and certification criteria. At the highest levels, the measures are:

- Digital content is available for the people of New Zealand and the world beyond to consult.
- There is no loss of digital content once it has been accepted into the care of Archives New Zealand or the National Library of New Zealand.

### **7.1.2. Update and review**

This Strategy will be reviewed and updated every two years to reflect technological advancements and movements in the knowledge space that underpins the work. The review will be managed by the Preservation, Research and Consultancy unit in the National Library of New Zealand and the Digital Continuity team at Archives New Zealand.

## **8. Roles and Responsibilities**

Ensuring the preservation of digital documentary heritage materials is the responsibility of the National Librarian.

Ensuring the preservation of digital public archives is the responsibility of the Chief Archivist.

The day-to-day business of preservation is the work of a network of individuals spread across all functions of both organisations. However, the Preservation and Research Consultancy unit in the Library and Digital Continuity section in Archives will be the leaders of this work.

Where appropriate during the management and preservation of digital content, Archives New Zealand and the National Library of New Zealand will consult with all internal and external stakeholders (including content creators, business owners, subject matter experts and preservation experts).

## **9. Audit and Certification**

Archives New Zealand and the National Library of New Zealand will seek to gain and retain recognised certification of any digital preservation programme that is implemented, where such audit mechanisms are available.

They will do this through external validation, rather than self-audit procedures to ensure transparency and engender trust in the solution.

## 10. Relationship to other Strategies and Policies

The Digital Preservation Strategy has links with a number of other strategies and policies. These can be split into internal and external relationships.

### **Internal – National Library of New Zealand**

#### *Collections Policy*<sup>7</sup>

The scope of the Digital Preservation Strategy is in part defined by the Collections Policy.

#### *Access Policy*<sup>8</sup>

The Digital Preservation Strategy ensures that digital collection items will be available to be consulted in the future.

#### *Preservation Policy*<sup>9</sup>

Where undertaken, the preservation of physical media carrying digital content is within the remit of the Preservation Policy. Although digital preservation has the ability of being able to work on copies rather than originals, the basic principles outlined in the Preservation Policy are equally as applicable to this Strategy.

#### *Te Kaupapa Mahi Tahī*<sup>10</sup>

This plan for partnership will influence and inform how Taonga Māori are preserved in the digital environment.

#### *Digitisation Strategy 2010-2015*<sup>11</sup>

The Digitisation Strategy states that digitised materials will be preserved by the National Library. Such content therefore falls under the scope of this Strategy.

### **Internal – Archives New Zealand**

#### *Appraisal Policy*<sup>12</sup>

The scope of the Digital Preservation Strategy is in part defined by the Appraisal Policy.

### **External**

#### *Digital Continuity Action Plan*<sup>13</sup>

Archives New Zealand is leading the implementation of the government-wide Digital Continuity Action Plan. This document articulates the desire of the New Zealand government to create an environment in which digital information is valued and managed accordingly. As stakeholders in the preservation of government information Archives New Zealand and the National Library of New Zealand will play crucial roles in its implementation.

#### *New Zealand Government Open Access and Licensing (NZGOAL) framework*<sup>14</sup>

This framework guides agencies through the release of copyright and non-copyright materials for reuse. The key relation to the Digital Preservation Strategy is the concept of open access and the form in which materials should be delivered to users. The NZGOAL framework recommends that content should be offered in open, non-proprietary formats.

#### *Directions and Priorities for Government ICT*<sup>15</sup>

Set in 2010, these directions emphasise shared solutions and collaboration across government. The new work by Archives New Zealand and the National Library of

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.natlib.govt.nz/about-us/policies-strategy/our-policy-about-collections>.

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.natlib.govt.nz/about-us/policies-strategy/our-policy-about-access>.

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.natlib.govt.nz/about-us/policies-strategy/our-policy-about-preservation>.

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.natlib.govt.nz/about-us/policies-strategy/tkmt>.

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.natlib.govt.nz/catalogues/library-documents/national-library-digitisation-strategy>.

<sup>12</sup> [http://archives.govt.nz/sites/default/files/appraisal\\_policy\\_0.pdf](http://archives.govt.nz/sites/default/files/appraisal_policy_0.pdf).

<sup>13</sup> <http://archives.govt.nz/advice/digital-continuity-programme/digital-continuity-action-plan>.

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.e.govt.nz/policy/nzgoal>.

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.dia.govt.nz/Directions-and-Priorities-for-Government-ICT>.

New Zealand is a positive step towards these goals. The shared preservation infrastructure will support moves to improve public access and content reuse. It will also further strengthen the reputations of both organisations as authoritative sources of content.

## 11. Definitions

### 11.1. What is digital preservation?

Digital preservation is the collective term for actions that will ensure access to digital content in the future. The method of preservation is defined by a philosophical and practical understanding of the digital content.

Successful digital preservation demands that:

- Solutions for preserving digital materials must be cost-effective and can be resourced as business-as-usual;
- Practices to preserve digital materials are:
  - embedded throughout the organisation;
  - understood by all relevant staff.
- Technical actions are carried out by experts in consultation with all relevant stakeholders with a full understanding and acceptance of any effects on the digital content.
- Early intervention is undertaken, including advocating the use of appropriate standards by content creators.