



*The* NATIONAL  
**ARCHIVES**  
*of* SCOTLAND

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## FRAMEWORK DOCUMENT 2001

## Foreword By the Deputy First Minister and Minister for Justice



The public records of Scotland represent one of the most varied collections of archives in the British Isles, ranging from medieval parchments to modern electronic records, from the formal records of government and the law courts to personal letters and diaries. These collective records explain Scotland's unique history and have a key role to play in preserving and enhancing our sense of identity. The records have the important administrative purpose of ensuring that government has evidence of its own past activities on which it can base its decisions for the future; and in that context are now being enhanced by the records of the new Scottish Parliament. They also have a significant role in relation to communities' awareness of their local history, and to cultural heritage, democratic accountability and freedom of information.

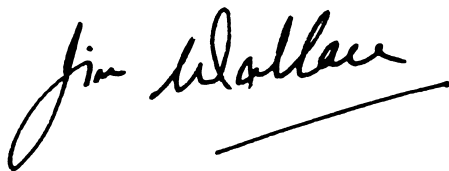
The National Archives of Scotland, formerly the Scottish Record Office, became an Executive Agency in 1993. Its overall purpose has been and remains to select, preserve and make available the national archives of Scotland to the highest standards; to promote the growth and maintenance of proper archive provision throughout the country; and to lead the development of archival practice in Scotland.

Since becoming an Executive Agency in 1993, I am pleased to report that the National Archives of Scotland has placed renewed emphasis on developing its customer services. A measure of the Agency's commitment to widening access to public records has been its key role in developing the Scottish Archive Network project. This innovative project, which links more than 40 archives across the country providing on-line access to information and documents relating to the history of Scotland, went live on St Andrew's Day last year and has proved extremely successful from the outset. A further initiative being undertaken by the Agency, which will have the effect of providing increased efficiency in the cataloguing and retrieval of records, is the purchase of a new on-line catalogue.

Our recent commitment to fund the upgrading of HM General Register House will ensure that the first purpose-built record repository in the British Isles will continue to serve its intended purpose for many years to come.

The National Archives of Scotland is at present faced with a range of substantial challenges, most noticeably in relation to the storage of electronic records, the provision of access to archival information on-line and the advent of Freedom of Information legislation. The Scottish Freedom of Information Bill in particular, scheduled for the 2001-2002 session, should place increased emphasis on the importance of good archival provision and practice. I look to the Agency to build on its achievements in the years ahead and in particular to respond positively to the challenges of advances in technology and to the great benefits which it can deliver to its users by remote electronic access to its facilities.

I am delighted to record my appreciation for the day to day work undertaken by the Keeper and the staff of the National Archives of Scotland and wish them every success for the future.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim Wallace". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal stroke.

JIM WALLACE QC MSP

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## STATUS, AIM AND FUNCTIONS

### *Status*

1.1 The National Archives of Scotland (NAS) (formerly the Scottish Record Office) was established on 1 April 1993 as an Executive Agency. The sponsoring department is the Executive Secretariat. The NAS is headed by the Keeper of the Records of Scotland, who is responsible to the Scottish Ministers for its management, performance and future development, within the terms of the Framework Document. The Keeper is also responsible to the Lord President for the efficient management of the court and other legal records in Scotland.

### *Aim*

1.2 The aim and mission statement of the NAS is to select, preserve, and make available the national archives of Scotland in whatever medium, to the highest standards; to promote the growth and maintenance of proper archive provision throughout the country; and to lead the development of archival practice in Scotland.

1.3 The principal users of the NAS are the Scottish Executive, the courts and other Government Departments. The NAS also provides services to local government; academic and research institutes; and private companies, organisations and individuals.

### *Functions*

1.4 The principal functions of the NAS are:

- to select public records regarded as worthy of permanent preservation; acquire other historical records of national importance, or which otherwise merit preservation; divert, devolve or transfer records to other appropriate repositories; and make suitable arrangements for the disposal of other material;
- to preserve to archival standards all records selected for permanent preservation in the NAS;
- to promote public access to the information in the records; and provide it through direct consultation through electronic means, the use of copies, and by producing catalogues, exhibitions and publications;
- to provide advice and support to owners and custodians of records held outwith the NAS, especially local authorities; and disseminate information on and facilitate access to such records;
- to take the lead in the development of archival practice in Scotland; and
- to deploy the resources available to the NAS in the most effective and efficient manner.

1.5 Annex A sets out the current legislation which provides a statutory basis for many of the functions of the NAS.

### *Operating Principles*

1.6 The NAS aims to discharge its functions by:

- selecting and preserving the records of Scotland to the highest professional standards;
- acting with other institutions engaged in record preservation in Scotland so as to promote effective co-operation, the dissemination of best professional practice and the optimum use of resources;
- seeking to ensure that the Scottish Ministers and the public receive the best service possible;
- maintaining standards in managing in line with best public and private sector practice;
- encouraging continuous development of staff to ensure and maintain professional competence; retaining and recruiting high quality staff; and promoting good career paths and anchors;
- promoting good employee relations and maintaining high levels of health and safety in all work activities; and
- setting its charges in accordance with Treasury guidance on the calculation of full costs.

1.7 The NAS operates in accordance with the principles of the Citizen's Charter.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

### *Role of the Scottish Ministers*

2.1 The Scottish Ministers are responsible for setting the policy framework and allocating the resources within which the NAS operates.

2.2 The Scottish Ministers exercise these responsibilities in the light of advice from the Head of Executive Secretariat, and others they consider appropriate, by:

- allocating resources;
- approving the Framework Document and any revisions to it;
- approving the NAS Corporate Plan; and
- setting targets and monitoring the NAS's performance.

2.3 The appointment of the Keeper is approved by the First Minister, usually following open competition.

### *Role of the Lord President of the Court of Session*

2.4 The role of the Lord President is to approve the appointment of the Keeper; to approve arrangements for the management of the legal records of Scotland; to determine, with the Keeper's advice, the charges made for legal searches and for photocopying the records; and to receive the Annual Report.

### *Role of the Keeper of the Records of Scotland*

2.5 The Keeper is answerable to the Scottish Ministers for the operation of the NAS, (except in the case of financial matters where responsibility rests with the NAS Accountable Officer), its day to day management, and its future development, and has the right of direct access to the Scottish Ministers. The principal duties of the Keeper include:

- ensuring that NAS carries out its professional functions to the highest standards, and in line with current legislation, and providing leadership for the archive profession in Scotland;
- taking responsibility for ensuring that NAS acts in accordance with the terms of this Framework document, while keeping it under review and advising the Scottish Ministers of any desirable changes;
- preparing an annual Corporate Plan, including proposing performance targets;

- achieving the performance targets set by the Scottish Ministers. These targets will be set out in the Corporate Plan and will be based on the key performance measures outlined in Annex B;
- receiving and considering the views of the Scottish Records Advisory Council (SRAC) as representing the public and users of the services provided by the NAS. The SRAC is a statutory body appointed by Scottish Ministers;
- taking responsibility for negotiating Service Level Agreements (SLA) with Divisions of the Scottish Executive and other departments, where necessary;
- determining NAS's organisation and management structures;
- submitting an Annual Report on the activities of the NAS to the Scottish Ministers and the Lord President of the Court of Session;
- taking responsibility for the NAS's delegated personnel management, pay and grading in conjunction with the Scottish Executive Directorate of Personnel and Pay.

### *Role of the Head of Executive Secretariat*

2.6 The Head of Executive Secretariat, in respect of the NAS, is responsible for:

- advising the Scottish Ministers in exercise of their responsibilities as in 2.2 above; and
- in liaison with Scottish Executive Finance, approving major capital expenditure plans which exceed the NAS's delegated limits.

2.7 The Head of Executive Secretariat may delegate to Constitution and Parliamentary Secretariat the lead in the exercise of his responsibilities in paragraph 2.6 above.

## ACCOUNTABILITY

### *Scottish Ministers*

3.1 The Scottish Ministers will continue to answer to Parliament for the functions of the NAS and there will continue to be full Ministerial accountability to Parliament.

3.2 The Scottish Ministers will reply to MSPs correspondence relating to policy issues and the Keeper will reply on operational matters. The Keeper will provide Ministers with any information necessary to answer Parliamentary Questions or deal with any other matters for which he is responsible. The Scottish Ministers may ask the Keeper to provide a response to a Written Parliamentary Question about operational matters for which the Keeper has responsibility and the Minister will incorporate that response as the substance of his/her reply to the question. Replies to Parliamentary Questions will be published in the Official Report of the Scottish Parliament.

### *Accountable Officer Arrangements*

3.3 The Permanent Secretary of the Scottish Executive is the Principal Accountable Officer and is the Accountable Officer for the Vote on which indirect elements of the NAS's administrative costs, in respect of services provided centrally, are borne. He is responsible for appointing the NAS's Accountable Officer.

3.4 The NAS Accountable Officer is the Deputy Keeper, and as defined in Section 15 (7) and (8) of the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000, is accountable for the proper, efficient and effective use of resources provided to the NAS, in pursuit of the agreed Corporate Plan objectives and targets. The NAS Accountable Officer is further responsible for :

- ensuring, so far as they relate to the discharge by the NAS of its financial responsibilities, that the requirements of the Scottish Public Finance Manual and any other financial guidance that Scottish Executive Finance deems applicable are met, that the NAS observes any general guidance issued by Scottish Executive Finance, and that any recommendations of the Audit Committee or other Committees of the Scottish Parliament that are accepted by Scottish Ministers are put into effect; and
- NAS's expenditure and receipts, and for its overall financial performance; efficiency and cost-effectiveness; and submitting an annual statement of accounts to the Scottish Ministers and to the Comptroller and Auditor General.

3.5 The NAS Accountable Officer and the Principal Accountable Officer are both liable to be summoned to appear before the Audit Committee on the discharge of the responsibilities allocated to them in this Framework Document. It will continue to be for the Scottish Ministers to decide who should represent them at other Parliamentary Committee hearings.

*Scottish Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration*

3.6 The activities of the NAS are subject to investigation by the Scottish Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration (the 'Ombudsman').

## RESOURCE PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

### *Financial Provision*

4.1 The expenditure of the NAS is financed from a discrete Departmental Budget approved by the Scottish Parliament.

### *Financial Delegations*

4.2 The financial delegations to the Keeper are set out in Annex C. The Keeper will review these limits regularly and propose amendments where these would assist the NAS in discharging its functions.

4.3 The Keeper will be responsible for ensuring that relevant financial procedures are followed and may delegate functions in writing within the limits agreed with Scottish Executive Finance.

### *Corporate Plan*

4.4 The Corporate Plan will set out the main objectives, tasks and priorities of the NAS, assess the external factors which influence its strategy and put forward its planned strategy, output and resource requirements for the period, including an examination of alternative options. The Corporate Plan will be updated annually to serve as a programme for the day to day management of the NAS. An edited version of the Corporate Plan, omitting commercially sensitive information, will be available.

4.5 Once agreed by the Scottish Ministers the Corporate Plan will form the basis for judging the performance of the NAS.

4.6 The Scottish Ministers will set targets each year for the NAS's key performance measures (Annex B) and these will be announced by Written Parliamentary answer. Should policy or circumstances change significantly in the course of the year, the Scottish Ministers or the Keeper may propose revisions to the Corporate Plan, including changes to targets and financial resources. Any revisions will be subject to approval by the Scottish Ministers after consultation with the Keeper.

### *Assets*

4.7 The NAS's fixed assets are owned by the Scottish Ministers and comprise HM General Register House and Thomas Thomson House in Edinburgh. The NAS also leases West Register House from the local authority. The Keeper is accountable to the Scottish Ministers for making efficient use of all assets, and he will propose any variations required as part of the corporate planning process.

### *Internal Audit*

4.8 The Keeper will ensure that a system of internal audit, in accordance with the standards and guidelines laid down in the Government Internal Audit manual, is provided in a way that best demonstrates value for money. The Scottish Executive Audit Unit will have right of access to the NAS, after consultation with the Keeper, to give independent assurance to the Deputy Keeper, in discharging his responsibilities as the Departmental Accountable Officer.

### *External Audit*

4.9 The NAS will be subject to external audit by the Auditor General for Scotland.

### *Annual Accounts*

4.10 The Departmental Accountable Officer will sign and present the NAS Annual Accounts to the Scottish Ministers. The Annual Accounts will review the NAS's performance over the previous year against the financial targets and performance measures set by the Minister, and its response to unforeseen circumstances. The accounts will be prepared on an accruals basis. The Annual Accounts will be placed in 'SPICe' where possible before the summer recess.

4.11 The NAS will operate financial and management accounting systems to enable management to review performance regularly against budgets and targets.

### *Risk Management*

4.12 The Keeper will ensure that a formal assessment of business risks is undertaken and is periodically reviewed.

### *Customer-Contractor Arrangements with The Scottish Executive*

4.13 Annual service level agreements (SLA) will be negotiated where necessary between the NAS and those elements of the Scottish Executive which provide services to the NAS.

### *Contracts with Users other than Government Departments and Local Authorities*

4.14 Within its overall aims, the NAS will give priority to the preservation of court, legal, government and local authority records but the detailed balance of work, governmental and non-governmental, shall be a matter for the Keeper.

4.15 Within this framework and by agreement with the Scottish Executive, the NAS may deliver services to users in accordance with Treasury fees and charges guidance on selling services to the wider market.

4.16 Before accepting commercial work the Keeper must be satisfied that:

- it will not prevent the NAS meeting agreed commitments to Government Departments, the courts and local authorities;
- it will not conflict with the statutory obligations of the Scottish Executive or its Ministers or fetter the Scottish Ministers' discretion;
- neither the work itself nor the way in which it is published or exploited will represent an abuse of the NAS's responsibilities for the safekeeping and permanent preservation of the nation's documentary heritage and for public access to the archives.

4.17 Subject to the other paragraphs in this section the Scottish Executive recognises that the NAS is entitled to adhere to normal professional standards of commercial confidentiality in relation to work which it undertakes for a private sector customer.

4.18 The NAS may sub-contract commercial work provided this does not increase the financial liabilities of the Scottish Executive.

## PERSONNEL

### *Staffing*

5.1 The Keeper will ensure that NAS staff work within a flexible management structure and have the skills necessary to meet users' needs.

### *Status of Staff and Conditions of Service*

5.2 The Keeper and NAS staff are Civil Servants within the Scottish Executive and are employed on the same general terms and conditions of service as staff of the Scottish Executive core departments. They are also covered by the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme unless they decide otherwise.

5.3 The Keeper may review the terms and conditions of service and working arrangements of all NAS staff in the interests of the efficient and effective management of the NAS. Variations to suit the NAS's particular circumstances may be introduced after consultation with staff and with the NAS Whitley Council and, where appropriate, Scottish Executive Finance and the Principal Establishment Officer of the Scottish Executive. The Keeper is responsible for staff relations within the NAS and is committed to effective communication with all its staff and their representatives.

### *Personnel Management*

5.4 Although the Keeper takes advice from the Scottish Executive Directorate of Personnel and Pay, he is responsible for the personnel management and pay and grading (other than pensions) of all NAS staff with the exception of his own post. This includes flexibility in recruiting staff, the ability to make promotions, responsibility for limited efficiency, inefficiency and disciplinary procedures and responsibility for pay, grading, equal opportunities and health and safety matters. The NAS has opted meantime to link with the Scottish Executive review of pay and grading undertaken during 1997, but the Keeper retains the option either to take on responsibility for delegated pay functions within the framework determined by Scottish Executive Finance to enter into other arrangements at some point in the future.

5.5 The NAS aims to offer its staff worthwhile and satisfying career opportunities and is committed to fostering career development.

## SUPPORT SERVICES

### *Range of Responsibilities*

6.1 The NAS will be responsible for corporate planning, financial management and personnel as described in sections 4 and 5. The NAS will also be responsible for security services; property management and accommodation; public relations; information technology and computing support. The NAS will continue to draw on the Scottish Executive and other organisations for the provision of other support services (for example personnel, finance, etc) and the nature and level of these services will be agreed in writing or by SLA as appropriate, and will be kept under review.

## REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT

### *Amendment and Review of Framework Document*

7.1 This Framework Document will be reviewed in 2006. Changes to the Framework Document may however be proposed earlier in the light of experience or changed circumstances.

7.2 The Executive Secretariat and Scottish Executive Finance will be consulted on any proposed changes before submission to the Scottish Ministers for approval.

### *Publication of Framework Document*

7.3 Copies of this Framework Document, and of any subsequent changes, will be placed in the library of The Scottish Parliament.

### *Enquiries*

7.4 All enquiries on the Framework Document should be addressed in the first instance to:-

Keeper of the Records of Scotland  
National Archives of Scotland  
HM General Register House  
2 Princes Street  
EDINBURGH  
EH1 3YY

Tel: 0131 535 1314

Fax: 0131 535 1360

**LEGISLATION WHICH PROVIDES A STATUTORY BASIS  
FOR MANY OF THE FUNCTIONS OF THE NAS**

Public Records (Scotland) Act 1937

Public Registers and Records (Scotland) Act 1948

Local Government etc (Scotland) Act 1994

Scotland Act 1998

## NAS PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The performance measures and targets to be set for the National Archives of Scotland each year will be based on the following indicators:

### *Financial*

- Balance of costs of administration and of direct service provision

### *Output*

- Number of items conserved per year
- Number of publications produced or revised
- Number of productions to customers per member of staff
- Number of catalogue entries available for public on-line searching

### *Quality*

- Speed of production of materials for customers
- Speed of processing of extracts and quick copies for legal customers
- Speed of reply to correspondence

**FINANCIAL DELEGATIONS FROM SCOTTISH MINISTERS  
AS AT JUNE 2000**

1. Within agreed overall provision, and subject to the guidance in “Government Accounting”, NAS has delegated authority as set out below.
2. In respect of NAS budgets the Keeper of the Records has authority, within the limits set out, to:
  1. *Commit expenditure and authorise payments:* Unlimited apart from the items below.
  2. *Accept receipts:* Subject to the limits specified in Schedule 1 of the Budget Act, or subject to the total limit on retained income specified in the Budget documents.
  3. *Incur contingent liabilities in respect of indemnities given for records on loan to NAS:* Unlimited but subject to the annual reporting arrangements laid down in paragraph 26.3 of Government Accounting.
  4. *Let contracts:* Unlimited apart from the items below.
  5. *Commission consultants:* For individual contracts let by competitive procedures, up to a limit of £10,000 including VAT, and any follow-on work that might be expected.
  6. *Commission contractors:* For individual contracts let by single tender procedure, up to a limit of £100,000 including VAT, and any follow-up work that might be expected.
  7. *Authorise losses and special payments:*
    1. Unlimited for:
      - cash losses in categories A(i), (ii), (iii), (iv) a and b, and (vii) of paragraph 36.2.6 of “Government Accounting”,
      - losses of accountable stores,
      - fruitless payments/constructive losses.

2. Up to a limit of £10,000 for:

- cash losses in categories A(iv)c, (v) and (vi) of paragraph 36.2.6 of “Government Accounting”,
- claims waived or abandoned,
- special or ex-gratia payments,
- gifts and awards.

8. *Authorise capital expenditure:*

Up to a limit of:

- £250,000 on computer projects,
- £3,000,000 on building or works projects,
- £25,000 on the purchase of papers in any one year.

9. *Authorise:*

- procurement subject to compliance with the Scottish Executive Procurement Guidance.
- payment of invoices.