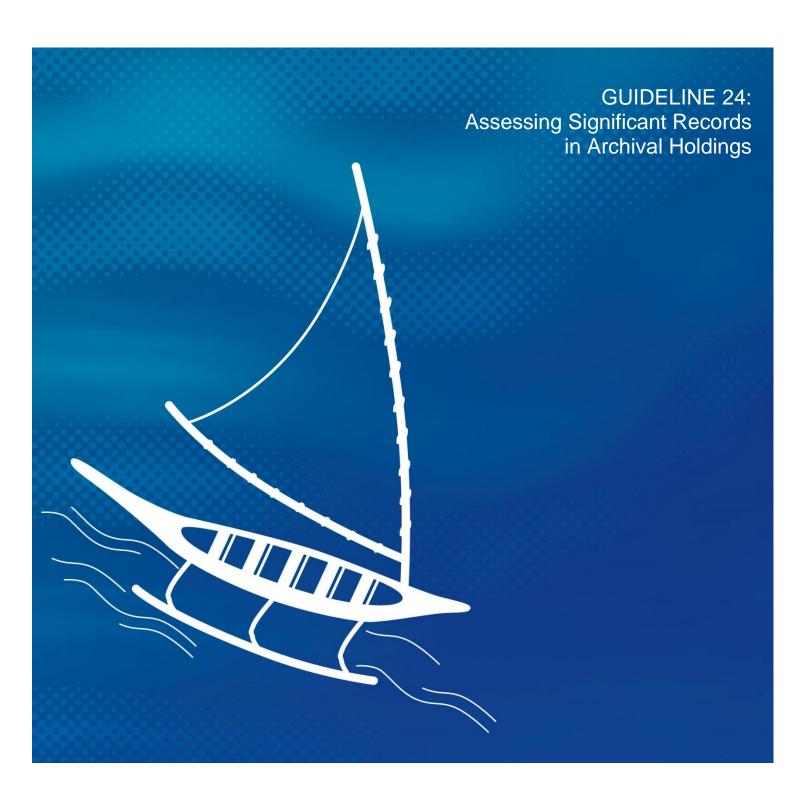
# Recordkeeping for Good Governance Toolkit





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The original version of this guideline was prepared by the Pacific Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (PARBICA) for use by countries around the Pacific.

We hope that you will use and adapt this guideline to suit your own organisation's needs and arrangements. In your use of this guideline, PARBICA only asks for attribution and for you to please let us know how you have used it – this helps us to measure the impact of the Toolkit.

If you have any questions about, or feedback on, these guidelines, please contact PARBICA at <a href="mailto:parbica.treasurer@naa.gov.au">parbica.treasurer@naa.gov.au</a> or via any of the contacts on the website: <a href="http://www.parbica.org">http://www.parbica.org</a>.

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#### Introduction

The Pacific Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (PARBICA) has developed this guideline on *Assessing Significant Records in Archival Holdings* as part of the Recordkeeping for Good Governance Toolkit. It was drafted in consultation with the Pacific Island Reference Group made up of representatives from the following countries:

- Australia
- · Federated States of Micronesia
- Fiji
- New Zealand
- Papua New Guinea
- Samoa
- Solomon Islands
- Tuvalu
- Vanuatu.

#### About this guideline

For disaster preparedness, it is important to ensure that safeguards are in place to protect your organisation's vital or significant records or collections. Vital records include those essential to your organisation's business functions (see *Guideline 23: Identifying Vital Business Records in Government Departments*). Significant records are those which are important because of their cultural, historical, social or political significance.

This guideline on assessing which records may be significant is divided into three parts. The first part briefly outlines the assessment which may be undertaken in an archive with a legally mandated collecting responsibility for government records. These include assessing significance through appraisal, disposal scheduling or a principles-based approach.

The second part provides a practical methodology for conducting a significance assessment for other archives, or to complement other significance assessment activities in an archive with a legally mandated collecting responsibility.

This part is based on the concepts and methodology outlined in *Significance 2.0: a guide to assessing the significance of collections*, written by Roslyn Russell and Kylie Winkworth, and published by the Collections Council of Australia in 2009. Our thanks to the authors and the Australian Department of Communication and the Arts for permission to reproduce the concepts in this publication. The entire publication can be accessed online: <a href="https://www.arts.gov.au/what-we-do/museums-libraries-and-galleries/significance-20">https://www.arts.gov.au/what-we-do/museums-libraries-and-galleries/significance-20</a>

Part 3 discusses how you can use your significance assessment in disaster planning.

# Who is this guideline for?

The aim of this guideline is to help you identify significant records or collections in order to factor these significant records and collections into your organisation's disaster planning. This guideline is designed for use by archivists, records managers or anyone responsible for documentary heritage collections.

Archives and organisations have different collecting responsibilities and approaches, so significance assessment may take different forms. The purpose of this guideline is not to provide a 'one-size-fits-all' approach but instead present some options to consider when

implementing a significance assessment regime for your organisation. This guideline can be used by archives with legally mandated collecting responsibilities as well as those archives with a less-prescribed acquisitions policy.

#### What is significance?

**Significance** refers to the values and meanings that your records and collections have for people, communities or your nation. These values can include those that have historic, social, spiritual, artistic, scientific, political or cultural meaning. Expressing these values adds meaning to a collection or record and tells the story as to why they are significant.

Significance assessment is a vital tool in collection management as it:

- allows good decision-making about conservation and management, including disaster preparedness
- helps focus limited resources on the most significant records and collections
- is the basis for research and curatorial functions
- increases the accessibility of collections by sharing knowledge
- fosters collaboration across collections.

Assessing significance of your records and collections allows you to direct resources to the most significant items, and manage their conservation in a way that protects them into the future.

While this guideline is developed in the context of disaster planning, there are other applications of significance assessment. Knowing which collection items are the most significant can help you promote your collections, encourage further research and partnerships, assist in collection management and enable advocacy in relation to national, regional and international significance registers such as the UNESCO Memory of the World.

# Assessing the significance of government records

Archives with a mandate to collect government records are likely to be assessing the significance of records as they enter the collection or even when the records are being created by government departments or ministries. This may happen through appraisal and disposal scheduling. Taking a principles-based approach to assessing the significance of government records can be useful in informing the appraisal and disposal processes.

#### **Disposal**

Government archives often work with departments to determine the disposal of a record - what should happen to a record when it reaches the end of its active life, usually either destruction or retention by the archives after a certain period of time. A disposal schedule identifies classes or types of records and assigns retention periods and disposal actions to these classes. Through a disposal schedule, archives can assess in advance which records are likely to be significant and make sure they are retained.

See Guideline 7: Disposal Schedule for Common Administrative Functions.

#### **Appraisal**

Appraisal is a process for deciding which records to create and keep, and how long records need to be kept. Appraisal decisions are based on reviewing the value of the records and of the functions and activities that resulted in the creation of records. Appraisal decisions also take into account the value the records may have to the community as a whole.

There are different methods of appraisal in archives and these methods are generally linked to disposal practices. One form of appraisal is to consider the functions and activities about which the records are created and using this information to create a disposal schedule.

**Guideline 10: Starting an Appraisal Programme** provides a guide for conducting a 'one-off' appraisal. This type of appraisal generally occurs when a record or collection of records reaches the end of their active life but is not subject to a disposal schedule.

# **Principles-based approach**

Another approach to assessing significance may involve assigning principles as to how collection acquisition decisions are made. These principles may be applied in either the appraisal or disposal processes to records entering the archives, or to further identify particularly significant items once the records are in the archive.

Often, these principles are made publicly available to assist public understanding of what the archives collects and for what purpose.

In establishing principles, the following questions may be useful:

- · What is our role?
- What do we keep? e.g., information of national significance
- Who is our information of value to? e.g., researchers, community groups
- How do we weigh up the future usefulness of a record against the cost of preserving and providing access to it?
- What are our collecting priorities? e.g., records relating to government programs, financial decisions, policy development

- How do we define what is significant?
- What other considerations do we need to take into account? e.g., integrity of the record, cost of preservation.

As part of its policies, the National Archives of Australia has a principles-based approach, and its selection principles and significance definition are in the example below.

# **Example - National Archives of Australia**

Our selection principles are:

#### 1. Government authority, action and accountability

To keep information that provides evidence of the authority for the establishment and structure of the Australian Government and its agencies, and evidence of the deliberations, decisions and actions taken by the Australian Government and its agencies relating to key policies, functions and programs and significant issues faced in governing Australia.

#### 2. Identity, interaction and rights and entitlements

To keep information that for individuals and communities: reflects identity and the condition and status of Australia and its people; provides evidence of ongoing rights and entitlements; or shows the impact of Australian Government activities on individuals and communities as well as their interaction with government. We select information with the greatest capacity to illustrate the impact of major government actions and decisions on individuals and communities.

#### 3. Knowledge and community memory

To keep information that has substantial capacity to enrich knowledge and understanding of Australia's history, society, culture and people. We select information with the highest significance and value to communities and society.

#### Defining 'significance'

Significance refers to the value or importance of the information. We assess the significance of functions, programs, issues and associated decisions and actions as to how critical, important or memorable they are, or were, in relation to the administration of the Australian Government. We also consider their actual or potential impact on Australian and world affairs. We select to preserve necessary evidence of Australia Government activity and other purposes including meeting research and community needs.

Taken from National Archives of Australia (2015) What we keep: Principles for selecting the Australian Government's national archives, <a href="http://www.naa.gov.au/information-management/selecting-national-archives/">http://www.naa.gov.au/information-management/selecting-national-archives/</a>

# Assessing Significance: the Significance 2.0 methodology

The Significance 2.0 methodology is useful in assessing significance for archives that do not have a legal mandate to collect government records or those archives which collect other items or records in addition to government records.

Records, and their meaning, are dynamic in nature. Archives collecting government records may also wish to assess the relative significance of particular records in their collection over others. In some cases this may be done through a valuation process or a methodology such as Significance 2.0, with particularly iconic records or collections being placed on a register.

The significance assessment process can be used to enhance appraisal processes and contribute to research projects. In an archival context, records may enter the collection through appraisal, but a further assessment may be used to gauge their changing importance or significance. For example, records relating to policies of a particular government may increase in historical significance due to a change in world affairs.

**Assessing significance** through a Significance 2.0 approach is the process of researching, documenting and analysing the meanings and values of records in your collection. By looking at the history of a record, its provenance and context, it is possible to explain the importance of the record. This is documented in a **Statement of Significance**.

Assessing significance involves five main steps:

- 1. analysing a record or collection
- 2. researching its history, provenance and context
- 3. comparison with similar items
- 4. understanding its values by reference to criteria
- 5. summarising its meanings and values in a statement of significance.

When you are assessing significance, it should be noted that certain records or collections may hold different values and meanings for different groups of people. This is why it is important to make the process of assessing significance transparent and collaborative, to ensure many different viewpoints are reflected in your significance assessment.

#### Fig. 1: Significance assessment in action

# Significance, or what makes it important?

Drawing on the research, refer to the criteria and summarise the values and meanings in a statement of significance.

#### What comes next?

Identify policies, strategies and recommendations to conserve and communicate significance.

Russell, Roslyn & Winkworth, Kylie, (2009) **Significance 2.0 – a guide to assessing the significance of collections**, Collections Council of Australia <a href="https://www.arts.gov.au/sites/g/files/net1761/f/significance-2.0.pdf">https://www.arts.gov.au/sites/g/files/net1761/f/significance-2.0.pdf</a>, p 12

# Research and analysis

Research and analyse the item or collection. Research includes provenance, context and consultation. Compare with similar items or collections.

#### Monitor and review

actions in light of the values and meanings in the statement of significance and new information.

### **Taking action**

Undertake management and implementation.

#### The when, why and who of assessing significance

When should you undertake a significance assessment?

A significance assessment can take place at any stage of a record or collection's life. Key times may include when a record enters a collection, when research is being undertaken on a particular record or collection or when an exhibition is being developed. If you are developing a disaster plan for your organisation, you may undertake a significance assessment to understand your collection's protection and salvage priorities.

Why should you conduct a significance assessment?

Significance assessments may be used in a number of collection management tasks to:

- accept or refuse an acquisition
- catalogue or document a collection or item, ensuring that crucial information is recorded at the time the record comes into the collection
- guide conservation priorities and decisions on treatment
- identify the most significant records or collections as a priority for rescue or recovery action in a disaster planning context
- · develop an exhibition
- make collections accessible online, sharing the meaning of records in a way that aids their use and promotes access and enjoyment
- nominate records and collections for registers, such as UNESCO's Memory of the World Register for documentary heritage, and build appreciation of the record's or collection's significance.

Who should undertake a significance assessment?

The best significance assessment is a collaborative process drawing on the knowledge of many people. While one person may lead the process, they can call on the advice of those who have knowledge of or interest in the collection or record. Involving others is an opportunity for your organisation to build links with a community of scholars or experts who can contribute expertise in certain subject areas, encourage use of your collection and develop a network of people who can advocate on behalf of your organisation and collection.

A fundamental question that should always be asked at the beginning of a significance assessment is 'to whom is the record or collection significant?' For example, if a record has social or political significance to a specific community, this community should be consulted and given the opportunity to explain why the record or collection is important to them.

As a result of consulting widely on the significance of your record or collection, there may be conflicting views on significance and sometimes these are strongly contested. If this is the case, it is important to remember that there is no right or wrong. There is often a complexity to significance judgements and your Statement of Significance can include these differing viewpoints and their rationales.

# Criteria for assessing significance

**Significance 2.0** recommends using two sets of criteria in assessing significance – four primary criteria, and four comparative criteria, which act as modifiers of the primary criteria.

The four primary criteria are:

- historic
- artistic or aesthetic
- · scientific or research potential
- social or spiritual.

The four comparative criteria evaluate the degree of significance:

- provenance
- rarity or representativeness
- condition or completeness
- interpretive capacity.

Having criteria to assess the significance of your records or collections will help in your analysis and allow you to articulate why your record or collection is significant. However, not all criteria will apply to every item. For example, a record may have significant social meaning for a group of people, but may not have any scientific or aesthetic value. This will particularly be the case for archives that deal with government records. The comparative criteria will help you work out the degree of significance of the record.

#### The Statement of Significance

Part of the process of assessing significance includes writing a Statement of Significance. This document summarises the values, meaning and importance of a collection or record. It is a way of making an argument and sharing knowledge about how and why a collection or record is important.

To prepare a Statement of Significance, you need to summarise the information and research assembled during the assessment process, compare this research with other items, and consider the relevant criteria.

In formulating your Statement of Significance, a standard assessment process and criteria are used. This is to ensure that any assessments you make are as factual as possible and substantiated by research, evidence and analysis.

## What to consider in assessing significance

Two essential concepts to consider during the process of assessing significance are provenance and context.

#### **Provenance**

Provenance is best described as the 'life story' of an item or collection, from its creation through the history of its various owners and uses.

Depending on the nature of your organisation's collection, provenance can be straightforward. For example, if your organisation is a government archive, the provenance of your records may be that they were created and used by a particular department, and held in their custody before being transferred to the archive.

Otherwise, what constitutes useful provenance will depend on the nature of the record or collection. Personal papers may have historical research or donation/deposit agreements to support their provenance. Provenance almost always relies on excellent recordkeeping!

#### Context

Understanding the context surrounding your record or collection is vital to assessing its significance. Context refers to the way the item or collection is situated within wider historical, social or political movements, patterns or themes.

Context is particularly relevant to government archives when considering the significance of items or collections. For example, a policy document or correspondence from a politician may take on special significance if it relates to a noteworthy moment in the memory of a

nation. In this way, archivists are constantly considering context in collection management decisions, particularly in relation to how useful the records will be in researching these significant moments or events.

Where a collection or record has limited provenance, context can sometimes fill the gap in knowledge and assist in making a significance determination. Examining the wider context of an item can help in understanding its development, use and history, and therefore contribute to its meaning and significance.

#### The significance assessment method

The table below explains the step-by-step process of assessing significance for both individual items and collections as a whole.

Method for assessing single records	Method for assessing collections
This method is best used when you are assessing a single record. It may be that this single record has special importance to your collection or is being nominated to a register.	It is often impractical to assess single records as a result of limited resourcing; many organisations instead prefer to assess a collection as a whole or part of a collection.
Step 1: Collate	Step 1: Collate
Pull together all of the information about the record, including its history, when it came into your collection, any notes about it, reference material, details on related collections.	Collate records and information about the history and development of the collection, which may include publications about the collection, acquisition notes, published histories, official records.
Step 2: Research	Step 2a: Research
Research the history and provenance of the record such as when it was created, who by, notes about ownership and use, general history research.	Research the history of the collection. This may include details of how the collection was developed and by whom, and any documentation relating to how the collection reflects on collecting practices.  Step 2b: Review  Review the scope and themes of the collection
	and how the collection relates to key themes.
Step 3: Consult	Step 3: Consult
Consult with donors, past owners and those with an interest in or knowledge of the record. During the consultation process, remember to ask questions about the provenance and context of the record, its creation, use and meaning, and document answers for future reference. Keep notes to assist in preparing the Statement of Significance.	Consult with people who are knowledgeable about the collection, such as donors, experts, staff and community groups. Talk to people to whom the collection is important about why it has value. An option may be to hold an event and encourage people to talk about the collection, its history, value and meaning. Keep notes to prepare the Statement of Significance.
Step 4: Explore	Step 4: Explore
Examine the context of the record and think about how it related to wider historical themes and development. Consider its purpose and use within the context of its time and place.	Look at the context of the collection in terms of its history, development and identity within the broader community. Consider whether historical patterns have influenced the collection and whether it is associated with a place and time.

Method for assessing single items	Method for assessing collections
Step 5: Analyse In this step, you examine and describe the record by noting its appearance, condition, materials, design and repair.	Step 5: Analyse  Examine and describe the condition of the collection, especially noting if there are items which require attention.
Step 6: Compare  Check the record against similar items or records to see if it is comparable. Look at the websites of other archives to see if they hold similar records, and check reference books and knowledgeable colleagues.	Step 6: Compare  Compare the collection against similar collections to ascertain how the collection is different or similar to comparable collections. Identify the strengths and characteristics of the collection.
Step 7: Identify	Step 7: Identify
Identify relationships between places, people and the record which may include the location of its creation, environment or related records from the same owner or organisation.	Identify relationships between places, people and the collection which may include the location of the collection, environment or related collections in other organisations.
Step 8: Assess	Step 8: Assess
Once you have gathered your supporting information, you can begin assessing significance against the primary criteria: historic, artistic or aesthetic, scientific or research potential, and social or spiritual.	Once you have gathered your supporting information, you can begin assessing significance against the primary criteria: historic, artistic or aesthetic, scientific or research potential, and social or spiritual.
You can then determine the degree of significance by assessment against the comparative criteria: provenance, rarity or representativeness, condition or completeness, and interpretive capacity.  (Refer below "The assessment stage" for	You can then determine the degree of significance by assessment against the comparative criteria: provenance, rarity or representativeness, condition or completeness, and interpretive capacity.  (Refer below "The assessment stage" for further
further information on this step).  Step 9: Write	information on this step).  Step 9: Write
<ul> <li>Write your Statement of Significance by:</li> <li>summarising the record's values and meaning against the criteria in Step 8</li> <li>referring to notes made at each step above</li> <li>explaining how and why the record is significant</li> <li>signing and date the assessment</li> <li>listing references and sources for research.</li> <li>acknowledging contributors to the significance assessment process.</li> <li>(Refer below "Writing the Statement of Significance" for information on this step).</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Write your Statement of Significance by:</li> <li>summarising the collection's value and meaning against the criteria in Step 8</li> <li>referring to notes made at each step above</li> <li>explaining how and why the collection is significant</li> <li>signing and dating the assessment</li> <li>listing references and sources for research</li> <li>acknowledging contributors to the significance assessment process.</li> <li>(Refer below "Writing the Statement of Significance" for information on this step).</li> </ul>

Method for assessing single items	Method for assessing collections
Step 10: Action	Step 10: Action
In this final step, you list all of the recommendations and actions arising from the significance assessment. These could include further research to be done, and conservation needed. These action items will also inform your disaster planning (refer Part 3 for further information).	In this final step, you list all of the recommendations and actions arising from the significance assessment. These could include further research to be done, and conservation needed. These action items will also inform your disaster planning (refer Part 3 for further information).

#### Fig. 2: Recapping the steps in the significance assessment process

1. Collate a file



- 2a. Research history and (for items) provenance
- 2b. Review scope and themes arising from research (from collections)



3. Consult knowledgeable people – to whom is the item/collection significant?



4. Explore the context of the item/collection – consider patterns, development, function, geography, environment



5. Analyse and describe the item/collection – consider nature, materials, design, manufacture, changes



6. Compare with other examples



7. Identify related places and items/collections - what else is part of the picture?



8. Assess significance against the primary and comparative criteria



9. Write a succinct statement of significance – consider all information gathered; explain how and why the item/collection is significant and what it means: discuss with others



10. Action – what to do next? – list recommendations, policies and tasks arising

#### The assessment stage

Steps 1-7 of the significance assessment process can best be described as the information gathering phase. This is where you pull together and collate information on your records or collection in order to make your assessment.

Stage 8 – or the assessment stage – of the process is where you consider all information and evidence you have gathered on your record or collection and assess it against the primary and comparative criteria. This is the stage in which all of your research comes together and you can analyse how and why the record or collection is significant in order to write your Statement of Significance.

Not all criteria will apply to every record, so you will initially assess your item or collection against the four primary criteria to see if it meets one or more. Some questions to guide you in analysis against the **primary** criteria:

Criteria	Questions
Historical significance	<ul> <li>Is your record or collection associated with an important historical figure, event or place? If so, why is it important?</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Does it tell us something about a historical period or movement?</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Does it help us to understand the history of a particular time, place, person or event?</li> </ul>
Artistic or aesthetic significance	<ul> <li>Is the record or collection a good example of a particular artistic style or movement?</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Is it representative of the work of a particular artist?</li> </ul>
	<ul><li>Is it original or innovative?</li></ul>
	Does it represent a significant person, place or event?
Scientific or research significance	<ul> <li>Does the record or collection have research potential? If so, how?</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Do you know of any researchers who may be interested in studying the record or collection?</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Do you think there may be future research interest in the record or collection?</li> </ul>
Social or spiritual significance	<ul> <li>Does the record or collection hold particular significance to a community or group of people? If so, how is it important?</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Does the record or collection have meaning through the beliefs, customs, traditions or practices it holds for a particular group of people or community? If so, how have you consulted with the community or group of people and recorded this meaning?</li> </ul>

#### Comparative criteria:

Once you have applied the primary criteria to the record or collection and found that one or more apply, you can then work through the comparative criteria. A record or collection must meet at least one of the primary criteria in order to be considered significant. For example, most government records selected to be in an archive will have historical significance.

The comparative criteria are used when you need to work out the *degree* of significance, and these criteria work alongside the primary criteria to increase or decrease the significance of the record or collection. An example of this may be that a record has

historical significance, but there are many records of this nature around and it is not in good physical condition, therefore the degree of significance of this record is lessened.

Below are some sample questions to guide you in assessing your record or collection against the **comparative** criteria:

Criteria	Questions
Provenance	<ul> <li>Is the provenance around the record or collection well-documented and sound?</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Do you know who created or used the item or collection?</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Is there strong evidence of the chain of ownership?</li> </ul>
Rarity or	Is the record or collection unique, rare or endangered?
representativeness	<ul> <li>Does it have unusual qualities or uses that make it different from similar records?</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Is the record or collection particularly well-documented?</li> </ul>
Condition or completeness	Is the record or collection in good physical condition?
	Is it complete?
	<ul> <li>Is it in its original condition?</li> </ul>
Interpretive capacity	<ul> <li>How is the record or collection relevant to your organisation's purpose, collecting policies and programs?</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Does it fit thematically with other record or collections, or have a special place in your holdings?</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Does the record or collection assist in interpreting place, history or context?</li> </ul>

The questions provided under the primary and comparative criteria are meant for guidance only and are not exhaustive. You may have other questions which are relevant to your collections and cultural context.

# Writing the Statement of Significance

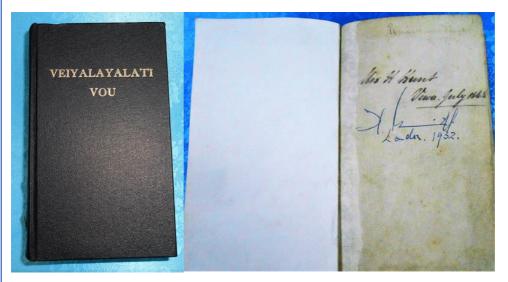
Once you've worked through stages 1-8 and have applied the primary and comparative criteria, you will be in a position to write your Statement of Significance.

Referring back to the information you have collated, such as reference material, results of consultation and so forth, you can make notes against each stage of the process. This will ensure that all material and information you have collected will inform your drafting of the statement. Your notes under each step will also provide evidence for the conclusions drawn in your Statement of Significance.

You can also use the assessment criteria to provide a framework or structure for your Statement of Significance. Your responses against the criteria can explain how and why the record or collection is significant.

There is no expected length for a Statement of Significance – it can be from a few sentences to a page, depending on the record or collection. It is usually written in prose style. A handy technique that may assist you in drafting the Statement is to list all of the points you want to make first before writing your Statement.

# **Example - Statement of Significance**



#### Single Item Statement of Significance: Viwa New Testament, National Archives of Fiji

This New Testament, translated from the original Greek into iTaukei (the official term for Fijians and their language since 2010) by Methodist missionary Reverend John Hunt with the assistance of indigenous scholars, and printed on the island of Viwa in 1847, is of historical significance for Fiji, and for the history of Methodist missionary endeavour and linguistic developments in the Pacific.

Reverend John Hunt was a pioneer Wesleyan missionary, often described as 'the Apostle of Fiji', who served there from 1838 until his death in 1848 at the age of 36. Since Reverend Hunt's first translation in 1847, numerous changes and revisions have been made, and much of the original text has been lost. A compilation of the original text has been undertaken by Pacific church historian Dr Andrew Thornley and Tauga Vulaono. Dr Thornley has written:

John Hunt's New Testament must be seen as the root of the tree from which all other revisions spring. Without knowledge of Hunt's translation, our understanding of the Fijian language of the New Testament is incomplete. The root and branches together make up a significant tradition in the development of a Fijian literate culture and contribute to a fuller appreciation of Scripture.

The New Testament is also likely to have social and spiritual significance for Fiji's Christian community for its association with a renowned pioneer missionary and the establishment of Methodism in the Fijian islands.

It is thought that the New Testament, considered to be the only surviving copy of the first edition of 300 printed on Viwa by the Methodist Mission Press, was owned originally by Mrs Hunt. It then passed into the hands of the Governor of Fiji, Sir Everard Imthurn (1904-1910), whose faded signature appears at the top of the flyleaf. It was purchased in 1932 from a London bookshop by a former Judge from Suva, Sir Morris Scott, and deposited in the National Archives of Fiji in 1972.

This New Testament is an example of a 'survivor', a representative item at one time that has now become rare. It is in good condition, and has high interpretive capacity.

#### References

Peni Mudunavonu, 'From cannibalism to Christianity', *The Fiji Times Online*, 2 May 2016. 'More about John Hunt pioneer Fiji missionary', Unity World Blogs, <a href="https://unitingworld.org.au/blogs/more-about-john-hunt-pioneer-fiji-missionary">https://unitingworld.org.au/blogs/more-about-john-hunt-pioneer-fiji-missionary</a>, accessed 1 October 2017.

# Significance assessment and disaster planning

Once you have researched and written your Statement of Significance, the next stage is how you and your organisation act on it or intend to use it. As mentioned earlier in this guideline, organisations undertake a significance assessment for many reasons so there may be different recommendations, action and policies to come out of this process.

Your significance assessment will assist in your disaster preparedness planning by informing your collection management decisions about your most significant records or collections. This can include ensuring that significant records or collections are:

- stored appropriately (including appropriate environmental protection) so as to mitigate the risk of damage from disasters or emergencies
- housed, and their whereabouts documented, so they are easily located in the event of a disaster
- prioritised for rescue and salvage action as part of a disaster recovery
- known to disaster team members to allow for early response.

For example, you may wish to use your significance assessment to assist in developing a list of 'iconic items'. These are the collection items that you would save first in the event of a disaster, or would be your highest priority in terms of salvage and recovery actions. For government archives, these items may include your nation's 'birth' documents, original constitution and/or other such politically significant records.

#### Additional resources

National Archives of Australia 2015, *What we keep: Principles for selecting the Australian Government's national archives*, <a href="http://www.naa.gov.au/information-management/selecting-national-archives/">http://www.naa.gov.au/information-management/selecting-national-archives/</a>

Russell, R & Winkworth, K 2009, Significance 2.0 – a guide to assessing the significance of collections, Collections Council of Australia, https://www.arts.gov.au/sites/g/files/net1761/f/significance-2.0.pdf

Russell, R & Winkworth, K 2001, Significance – a guide to assessing the significance of cultural heritage objects and collections, Heritage Collections Council, http://www.significanceinternational.com/Portals/0/Documents/(significance)2001.pdf

Jones, S 2007, *Sharing our stories: Guidelines for heritage interpretation,* National Trust of Australia & Museums Australia, Western Australia, <a href="http://www.nationaltrust.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/20110208SharingourStories.pdf">http://www.nationaltrust.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/20110208SharingourStories.pdf</a>

Young, L 2008, Significance assessment: How important is the material in your collection?, Presentation at the UNESCO Australian Memory of the World: Third International Conference, February 2008,

http://www.unesco.org/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/mow/mow\_3rd\_international\_conference\_linda\_young\_en.pdf