



# The Canadian Council of Archives

**T**he Canadian Council of Archives, under the direction of its Board of Directors, has three main committees that perform individual but equally important roles to help advance the organization's goals. The Standards Committee believes that all records should be maintained by recognizable institutions — like businesses, municipalities and historical societies — to increase the likelihood of the archival material's preservation and availability to researchers.

Standards play an important role in many areas of society and Canadians rely on them for safety and quality, for better efficiency — and generally so that components from a variety of producers and manufacturers will fit and work together. Standards play a crucial role in the archival industry, too, because they help enhance organizational efficiency, define proven preservation methods and simplify the retrieval process. Standards, which can be hard rules, codes, structures and even precise technical specifications — or recommended practices, conventions and general guidelines — allow stakeholders to learn from one another so they can share best practices.

## The Standards Committee Mandate

- Manage the standards development, approval and maintenance process
- Promote participation in the development of standards among the stakeholders
- Clarify the technicalities and value of various standards to promote their application
- Monitor and assess the effectiveness of standards while in practice
- Advise the Canadian Council of Archives of priorities related to standards
- Recommend new standards for endorsement and further review
- Establish and coordinate technical task groups as needed
- Liaise with the Canadian Council of Archives' technical committees to approve plans and budgets
- Maintain a register of archival standards

The Canadian Council of Archives Standards Committee doesn't manage a structure, per se, but it does coordinate a process among various groups and individuals to ensure guidelines established by the International Standards Organization are followed as closely as possible. It develops and promotes methods and practices that can be applied to private, public and academic holdings and this concerted approach ultimately simplifies the efforts of researchers.

In addition to its core mandate, the Standards Committee also looks at best methods for determining what constitutes a valuable archival document and what does not; how to establish levels of accessibility to specific items; and how to deal with privacy issues based on codes of ethics and donor wishes. The committee maintains lists and links on its website to standards-based documentation, standards bodies, as well as training and professional development resources. Also published are reports and discussion papers on issues like the technical aspects of preserving electronic records, information regarding the duties of an archivist, how to preserve archives from the moment they are acquired and optimal storage and handling conditions. The committee also maintains a rich and searchable database of archival-based standards information.

The committee is comprised of experts from provincial archives, university historical departments, the Library and Archives Canada and the Bureau of Canadian Archivists. Members are appointed by the Canadian Council of Archives and the Chair organizes meetings, as needed, to deal with ongoing development and to assess new opportunities. Technical working groups are also established, as needed, to develop the actual standards. ●

130 rue Albert Street,  
Suite / bureau 501  
Ottawa ON K1P 5G4  
Tel / Tél.: (613) 565-1222  
Toll-free / Sans frais: 1-866-254-1403  
Fax / Téléc.: (613) 565-5445  
Email / Courriel: [cca@archivescanada.ca](mailto:cca@archivescanada.ca)  
[www.cdncouncilarchives.ca](http://www.cdncouncilarchives.ca)

