



AIATSIS
Australian Institute of Aboriginal
and Torres Strait Islander Studies

Audiovisual Archive Collection Management Policy Manual

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1.0 Introduction

This manual brings together a number of policy documents central to the management and care of the AIATSIS Audiovisual Archive's collections. It incorporates policies guiding the acquisition, registration and preservation of new materials; the preservation, documentation and deselection of materials; access to the collections; and staff conduct. It supersedes the documents *Collection Development Policy for Audio-visual Materials, Works of Art and Artefacts 2000-2003*, *Policy for the Use of AIATSIS Audio-Visual Materials in Electronic Format on CD-ROM Products or Web Sites* and *Access Conditions for A/V Materials*.

The policies set out in this manual first came into effect on 1 July 2005. Content is revised annually by the Collections Manager and the Director of the Audiovisual Archive. It was last updated on 17 March 2009. All updates should be forwarded to the Collections Manager for initial appraisal.

This manual is publicly available. It is posted on the AIATSIS website and printed copies can be obtained directly from the AIATSIS Audiovisual Archive.

1.1 An overview of the collections

The AIATSIS Audiovisual Archive houses the world's largest and most comprehensive collection of audiovisual material documenting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander societies and histories. Its vaults contain approximately 45,000 hours of recorded sound, 620,000 photographic images, over 8000 video titles and 6 ¼ million feet of motion picture film. The Archive also holds nearly 1000 artefacts and original artworks. The overwhelming majority of the material is unique and irreplaceable. Australian Indigenous societies, the oldest surviving cultures on earth, have traditionally transmitted knowledge through oral and visual means, and AIATSIS is the only Commonwealth institution charged with the custodianship of collections which attempt to document those traditions. Importantly, AIATSIS is also the only Commonwealth cultural institution governed by Indigenous people. The AIATSIS Audiovisual Archive collections and their management are significant on an international level.

The majority of the items held in the Audiovisual Archive represent the primary results of field research, or unique items which have been donated or deposited by individuals, families or organisations for preservation and access. The Audiovisual Archive does not seek to duplicate the collections of other institutions such as libraries, galleries, museums or other archives. Whilst the Audiovisual Archive continues to maintain a collection of art, craft and material culture items acquired over the years, such items are not considered a collecting priority. The Archive's strength lies in the unique and irreplaceable nature of its audiovisual collections, and the immediate and emotional link they provide between past, present and future generations.

1.1.1 The Recorded Sound Collection

The Recorded Sound Collection comprises, in order of prevalence:

- field recordings, both analogue and digital, documenting all aspects of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander societies including languages, ceremonies, music, oral history, cultural narratives, site descriptions, research seminars and important events;
- a small collection of published recordings, including master copies of all AIATSIS published recordings;
- copies of significant historical recordings held in overseas or interstate institutions with predominantly Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander content; and
- selected broadcast materials, including transcription discs.

1.1.2 The Film and Video Collection

The Film and Video Collection comprises, in order of prevalence:

- published film and video titles, including prints of historical ethnographic films and other documentaries;
- amateur films documenting all aspects of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander societies including languages, ceremonies, music, oral history, cultural narratives, site descriptions, research seminars and important events;
- deposits from Aboriginal media organisations;
- film production materials lodged for preservation;
- original films made by the AIAS Film Unit; and
- archival material from television sources.

1.1.3 The Photographic Collection

The Photographic Collection comprises, in order of prevalence:

- original black and white negatives and colour transparencies taken by grantees, staff photographers, research fellows and other individuals or organisations documenting all aspects of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander societies;
- copy negatives and duplicate transparencies from original material donated or lent to AIATSIS;
- original prints and other fragile material such as glass plates and lantern slides; and
- images that were either “born digital” or are copies of collection material digitised for preservation and access purposes.

1.1.4 The Works of Art and Artefact Collection

The Works of Art and Artefact Collection comprises, in order of prevalence:

- original artwork and limited edition prints purchased by AIATSIS;
- material culture items, bark paintings and ceremonial objects transferred to AIATSIS from the Department of Aboriginal Affairs in 1989;
- art and artefacts donated by grantees, staff members, research fellows and other individuals or organisations, many of which relate directly to audiovisual materials held in the AIATSIS Audiovisual Archive; and
- materials which might otherwise be described as craftworks.

1.2 A history of the collections

The acquisition of photographic and recorded sound materials began with the inception of the AIAS in 1964. The Film and Video collection was initiated later by the AIATSIS Film Unit. The Photographic, Recorded Sound and Film and Video collections were maintained separately until the formation of the AIAS Resource Centre in 1977. It was at this time that the systematic organisation and cataloguing of the materials commenced.

The AIAS Resource Centre later became known as the AIAS Library, in which audiovisual materials were referred to collectively as ‘non-print’. In 1996 the audiovisual materials were removed from the Library and managed as a discrete collection by the AIATSIS Digital Archive Production Team (ADAPT), which later became known as Archives and Production and subsequently, the Audiovisual Archive.

Artworks and artefacts were not actively collected by AIATSIS until 1999. Prior to this, artworks and material culture items were acquired on an ad hoc basis, usually as the result of field research undertaken by

grantees and research fellows. The collection was only partly catalogued and remained largely inaccessible until it was transferred into the Archives and Production Program, now the Audiovisual Archive, in 1999.

In 2001 AIATSIS received temporary funding to address the issues raised by the move to digital media. The Audiovisual Archive used this funding to develop technological standards and practices for digital archiving of audio and photographic materials and to employ several additional staff to begin the enormous process of migrating existing analogue holdings to prescribed digital formats. Please refer to the document *Technical Standards and File Formats: Guidelines for Digitisation and Submission of Material in a Digital Form* for a thorough treatment of AIATSIS' technical standards for digitisation of photographic and audio material. As a result of additional funding provided by the Department of Education, Science and Training (now the Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research) from 2005/2006 onwards, the AIATSIS Audiovisual Archive has been able to expand its digitisation program and has now developed the technical capacity for copying film and video material to digital formats. The Archive's ability to continue digitising—and hence preserving—its holdings, is dependent on ongoing funding from the Department.

1.3 The collections and the community

The AIATSIS Audiovisual Archive serves a wide community, the majority of whom are Indigenous. Its clients include:

- researchers, including family history and native title researchers;
- publishers, including broadcasters;
- other cultural institutions; and
- the general public, locally and internationally.

When AIATSIS was first established (as the AIAS) in 1964, the majority of its clients were non-Indigenous academic researchers. The number of Indigenous clients rose steadily throughout the 1970s, '80s and '90s. Since 2005, approximately 50% of client requests received by the Audiovisual Archive have been from Indigenous people.

The collections continue to represent a valuable resource for research and public knowledge. The Archive recognises that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are its key stakeholders, and owners of much of the intellectual property contained in the collections.

2.0 Vision

The Audiovisual Archive shares AIATSIS' vision as an institution, which is:

To provide leadership and excellence in promoting, facilitating and undertaking high quality research, publishing, and ethical handling of collections and establishing best practice in Australian Indigenous Studies and cultural heritage management.
(AIATSIS Corporate Plan 2008-2010, p. 3).

To fulfil this vision, the Audiovisual Archive seeks to:

...develop, maintain and preserve well-documented archives and collections, and to maximise access to these, particularly by Indigenous peoples, in keeping with appropriate cultural and ethical practices.
(AIATSIS Corporate Plan 2008-2010, p. 5).

3.0 The Audiovisual Archive within the Structure of AIATSIS

3.1 Governance

AIATSIS is an independent Commonwealth statutory authority, established by an Act of parliament in 1964. This Act was revised in 1989. It is controlled by a council of nine members. Four council members are elected by the AIATSIS membership, a body of individuals with a demonstrated interest in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies. The remaining five council members are appointed by the Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research.

The Audiovisual Archive is one of six programs within AIATSIS, the other programs being Executive, Research, Aboriginal Studies Press, Corporate Services and the Library. The Director of the Audiovisual Archive program reports to the Deputy Principal. The Deputy Principal reports to the Principal, or Chief Executive Officer of AIATSIS. The Principal reports to the AIATSIS Council.

The Principal, Deputy Principal and Program Directors are given authority to act as financial delegates to Council, according to conditions and limitations set out in Schedule 1 of the *Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Act 1989*.

3.2 Management of the Audiovisual Archive

The Audiovisual Archive Program is managed by a Director, who is assisted by five Unit Managers who oversee Audiovisual Access, Collections Management, Still Image Archiving Services, Moving Image Archiving Services, and Audio Archiving Services respectively. Two engineers with extensive experience in audiovisual archiving assist with the maintenance of the Archive's specialist equipment. The Manager of Moving Image Archiving Services manages the Archive's digital infrastructure.

3.2.1 Collections Management Unit

The Collections Management Unit organises and documents collection materials to increase their value and accessibility into the future. It is responsible for acquisitions, registration, accessioning, research, documentation, cataloguing, rights management, inventories, deselection and preventive conservation.

3.2.2 Audiovisual Access Unit

The Audiovisual Access Unit is responsible for providing access to materials in the collections in accordance with appropriate legal, cultural and ethical practices. The Unit responds to direct enquiries, as well as implementing proactive access projects. Clients include family history researchers, Indigenous community organisations, academic researchers, publishers, broadcasters, other collecting institutions, AIATSIS employees and the general public. The unit is also partially responsible for investigating and clarifying intellectual property rights governing access to—and use of—existing collection materials.

3.2.3 Still Image Archiving Services

The Still Image Archiving Services Unit is responsible for the preservation, storage and duplication of photographs, and maintenance of the relevant equipment. The Unit also provides technical services to the rest of AIATSIS and creates new material for the collections by photographing important people and events relevant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies. The Still Image Archiving Services Unit

investigates and purchases photographic equipment to meet the needs of the Archive, which are constantly evolving due to the emergence of new audiovisual formats and technologies.

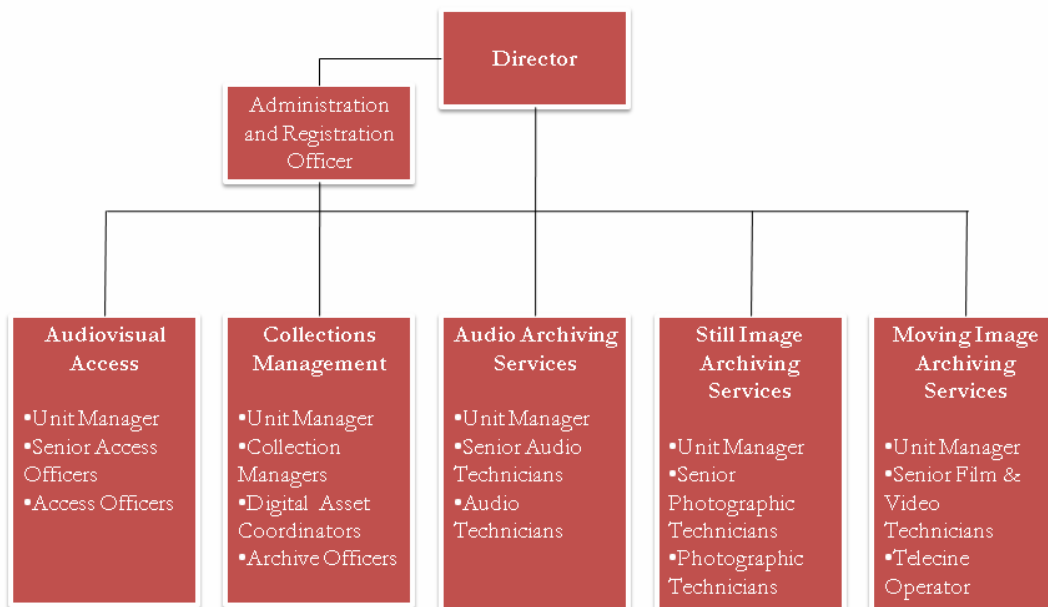
3.2.4 Moving Image Archiving Services

The Moving Image Archiving Services Unit is responsible for the migration, storage and duplication of film and video material, and the maintenance of relevant equipment. The Unit also provides technical services to the rest of AIATSIS and creates new material for the collections by videoing important people and events relevant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies. The Moving Image Archiving Services Unit investigates and purchases film and video equipment to meet the needs of the Archive, which are constantly evolving due to the emergence of new audiovisual formats and technologies.

3.2.5 Audio Archiving Services

The Audio Archiving Services Unit is responsible for the preservation, storage and duplication of audio recordings. The Unit also provides technical services to the rest of AIATSIS and creates new material for the collections by recording oral history interviews and important events relevant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies. The Audio Archiving Services Unit investigates and purchases audio equipment to meet the needs of the Archives, which are constantly evolving due to the emergence of new audiovisual formats and technologies.

3.2.7 Audiovisual Archive Structure



3.3 Legal and ethical framework

The *Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Act 1989* sets out the functions, powers and administrative management of AIATSIS. It charges AIATSIS with the responsibility of establishing and maintaining “a cultural resource collection consisting of materials relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies”. Section 41 of the Act governs the way in which AIATSIS can provide access to its collections, beyond the requirements of its individual deposit agreements and federal legislation embodied in other Acts, including the *Copyright Act 1968* and the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (see section 8.1 of this policy manual for a more detailed discussion of access considerations).

As a Commonwealth statutory authority, AIATSIS is also bound by the provisions of the *Public Service Act 1999*, the *Crimes Act 1914*, the *Privacy Act 1988*, the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997*, the *Workplace Relations Act 1996*, the *Occupational Health and Safety (Commonwealth Employment) Act 1991* and the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988*.

AIATSIS Audiovisual Archive staff have developed a *Code of Ethics* (see section 9.0) which recognises the special responsibilities of a professional audiovisual archive charged with the custodianship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural materials.

4.0 Registration Policy

All material offered to AIATSIS is registered before being assessed for suitability for inclusion in the collection (see section 5.0 of this manual). Audiovisual material, artworks and artefacts offered to AIATSIS by donation, deposit, bequest, or deed of grant, are registered upon arrival and given a registration number.

An *Offer of Audiovisual Material – Registration Form* will be completed for audiovisual material and a letter of receipt sent to the donor, advising them that their material is being assessed.

Donors will be advised if their material has been accepted into the permanent collection and the following forms will be provided:

- *Authority to Dispose of Audiovisual Materials; and*
- *Deposit of Materials Agreement or Deed of Gift; or*
- *AIATSIS Grantee Research Materials and Results Form*

Materials which are not accepted into the collection will be returned to the donor.

Registration is not considered complete until all the necessary forms have been completed or the material has been returned to the donor. AIATSIS may decide to overturn an acquisition decision at any stage of the registration process. Such a decision may result from excessively restrictive terms regarding access to the material, inadequate information regarding the provenance of the material, or non-completion of forms by the donor or depositor.

Registered materials which are deemed suitable and for which all forms have been completed, are accessioned into the collection.

Information on the registration of artwork and artefacts is available on request from the Collections Manager.

4.1 Storage and preservation of registered materials

When new materials are registered, their condition is assessed and they are repackaged into archivally stable containers or sleeves. They are stored either in the Registration Bay in a climate-controlled vault or in a quarantined area. Materials which present a potential risk to other collection items, such as those harbouring mould spores or insects, or film affected by vinegar syndrome (A-D level 2 and above), are stored in the Quarantine Room or Vinegar Store.

When materials are accessioned into the collection, they are relocated into a suitable permanent location within a climate-controlled vault. Film material which is actively degrading due to vinegar syndrome (A-D level 2 and above) is kept in isolated storage until it is transferred to a digital preservation format. Once copying is completed the original film is removed from the collection in accordance with standard disposal procedures.

4.2 Assessment of registered materials

Registered materials are assessed by senior Collections Management staff according to criteria specified in Section 5.0. A written appraisal is provided to the Collections Manager, Audiovisual Archive, who decides whether material will be accepted or rejected. Some offers are accepted in part.

5.0 Acquisitions Policy

5.1 Methods of acquisition

The AIATSIS Audiovisual Archive may acquire collection materials by:

- donation, including gifts received through the Cultural Gifts Program, whereby ownership of material is transferred to AIATSIS;
- deposit, whereby material is permanently housed at AIATSIS under special arrangement;
- bequest, whereby ownership of material is transferred to AIATSIS upon the death of a donor;
- purchase, whereby ownership of material is transferred to AIATSIS via a monetary transaction;
- deed of grant, whereby materials obtained or created in the field by an AIATSIS-funded researcher are transferred to AIATSIS upon acquittal of a grant; and
- creation of original material, whereby AIATSIS staff create original audiovisual material in the course of their duties.

The majority of materials held by the AIATSIS Audiovisual Archive are lodged by AIATSIS grantees as a mandatory requirement of their deed of grant. All materials offered to AIATSIS, including materials received under deed of grant or through the Cultural Gifts Program, are assessed according to criteria set out in Sections 5.2-5.5 of this policy. AIATSIS is under no obligation to accept material offered to it. AIATSIS grantees are required to use archival audiovisual formats and media recommended by the AIATSIS Audiovisual Archive. These formats are described below in sections 5.3.1–5.3.4.

Material accepted by the Audiovisual Archive as suitable for donation under the [Cultural Gifts Program](#), along with all valuations and supporting documentation, must be delivered to AIATSIS at least two months prior to the submission date scheduled by the *Committee on Taxation Incentives for the Arts*. Failure to meet that deadline will result in the donation not being put forward to the Committee until the following scheduled meeting. The *Committee on Taxation Incentives for the Arts* meets three times a year (usually February, May and October). The cost of the valuations is met by the donor and is tax deductible.

5.2 Significance

The AIATSIS Audiovisual Archive will continue to develop a comprehensive collection of significant audiovisual material documenting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander societies and history. The Archive may also accept donated art, craft and material culture objects where they are deemed significant and thought to complement other material held in the AIATSIS collections.

Items deemed significant, include those which:

- assist in making a lasting contribution to worldwide knowledge and understanding of Australian Indigenous cultures, past and present;
- reflect the current subject emphases of AIATSIS-sponsored research;
- are valued by an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community for social, economic, cultural, spiritual or political reasons;
- are not well represented in collections outside AIATSIS; or
- have a demonstrable link to the history of AIATSIS.

An item that is considered significant will not automatically be accepted into the collection. AIATSIS does not seek to replicate the collections of other archives, libraries, museums or galleries. For this reason, the AIATSIS Audiovisual Archive primarily collects unpublished audiovisual materials. Published and duplicate materials are only collected when their acquisition would facilitate access by Australian Indigenous communities, or they are sufficiently rare to warrant preservation beyond that which is offered by the custodian of the original.

5.3 Categories of material accepted

The AIATSIS Audiovisual Archive collects the following types of materials, which it deems acceptable according to sections 5.2 and 5.4 of this manual:

- analogue and digital audio recordings;
- analogue photographs (film, prints and transparencies) and high resolution digital image files;
- moving images, including film, analogue video and digital video;
- art, craft and material culture items that complement audiovisual material held in the collection; and
- research materials, such as rock art tracings, drawings and other such items not collected by the AIATSIS Library.

Sections 5.3.1–5.3.3 list preferred media and formats for audiovisual donations. Many obsolete formats are not listed but may be accepted if criteria outlined in sections 5.1–5.4 are met. Cellulose Nitrate film cannot be lodged in the AIATSIS vaults due to its combustible nature. However, if the content is assessed as being of high value it will be accessioned, copied and the originals either returned to the donor, or housed with other AIATSIS materials at the National Film and Sound Archive nitrate storage facility (subject to approval).

The AIATSIS Audiovisual Archive does not have the capability to preserve multimedia items or documentation created on speciality software. These kinds of materials—which include CD-ROMs, interactive transcripts and dictionaries—are accepted from time to time for reference purposes only, not for long-term preservation.

5.3.1 Preferred photographic media and formats

Most traditional colour slide and black and white film, from 35mm to large format, will be considered as suitable media for archiving purposes. Glass plate negatives are also accepted. Normally, AIATSIS will only consider reproductions for inclusion in the collection where the original film has either deteriorated significantly or cannot be located. In some cases limited edition prints or other reproductions of archival quality will also be accepted.

AIATSIS will only accept digital files that meet the standards listed in the document *Technical Standards & Guidelines for Digitisation*. A minimum chip size of 5 megapixels is recommended for digital cameras. Files should be stored in “camera raw” or best quality, best resolution TIFF. When returning digital images to AIATSIS, a copy of the camera’s interface software should also be submitted. Images that have undergone enhancement or manipulation via software such as *Photoshop* are not acceptable for archiving purposes and will only be considered for the collection where: a) such manipulation is integral to the presentation of research findings (e.g. enhanced images of rock engravings where the raw image provides insufficient detail); b) the original raw image is also provided. AIATSIS currently does not have the capability to process content created on mobile phones.

All camera rolls or files should be labelled in a clear, logical sequence. See section 5.5 for guidelines on arranging digital material for donation.

5.3.2 Preferred audio media and formats

AIATSIS accepts recordings on standard analogue cassette, digital audio tape, digital disc and solid state audio. Better known brands of carrier are recommended, such as Sony, Phillips, BASF, TDK, Prodisc or Verbatim.

AIATSIS will only accept digital files that meet the standards listed in the document *Technical Standards & Guidelines for Digitisation*. The following file formats are acceptable: BWF, WAV and AIFF. Recordings should be made at the highest sample rate and bit depth possible, preferably 24bit, 48kHz or greater. Standard minidisc and other compressed formats should be avoided. Long play options should also be avoided.

Cassettes and DATs should be no longer than 60 minutes. Metal or chrome cassettes and noise reduction systems such as Dolby should be avoided. Analogue cassette recorders with a standard tape speed of 1 7/8" (4.75cm/sec) are recommended.

Carriers or files should be labelled in a clear, logical sequence and recordings should be identified as either stereo or mono. See section 5.5 for guidelines on arranging digital material for donation.

5.3.3 Preferred video media and formats

AIATSIS is able to accept a vast range of video formats, but prefers to receive material on Digital Betacam, SP Betacam, HD Cam and Mini DV. Better known brands of tape are recommended, such as Sony, Phillips, BASF, TDK or Fuji. Long play options should be avoided.

We expect to receive more video material created on hard-drive recorders in the coming years. Such recorders allow for the use of a wide variety of aspect ratios, frame sizes, file types, compression types and codecs. As such, we recommend that potential donors contact the Archive's Moving Image Archiving Services Unit, to ascertain the best settings for their particular recorder and long-term preservation. Digital video can be submitted in an uncompressed format, or as complete Final Cut projects. AIATSIS currently does not have the capability to process content created on mobile phones.

All carriers or files should be labelled in a clear, logical sequence. See section 5.5 for guidelines on arranging digital material for donation.

5.4 Supplementary selection criteria

Significant materials will also be evaluated against the following criteria:

- availability of substantial supporting documentation in hard copy, PDF, RTF, TXT or XML;
- verification of provenance;
- confirmation of clear legal title;
- physical condition;
- Certificate of Authenticity, for artworks produced after 1998;
- availability of suitable storage and display conditions;
- availability of suitable playback equipment; and

- terms of donation or deposit¹.

5.5 Arrangement of digital material for donation

When lodging material in digital form, donors are asked to ensure that:

- carriers, such as CDs, are clearly labelled and arranged, preferably in chronological order;
- files are clearly named using appropriate file naming conventions and arranged, preferably in chronological order;
- documentation is provided in PDF, RTF, TXT or XML, explaining the naming and arrangement of files (please provide details of the file type or format used);
- only material intended for donation is submitted;
- audio, moving image, photographic and other file types are provided on separate carriers (or folders, in the case of portable hard-drives); and
- individual audio and video files are restricted to a length which can be listened to or viewed in a single sitting, preferably less than two hours.

¹ Material may be returned to the depositor if conditional terms of deposit greatly restrict accessibility of the material, particularly where those conditions prohibit access by the relevant Indigenous individuals or community.

6.0 Documentation Policy

Original documentation supplied by donors and third parties will be preserved as per section 7.5 of this manual.

All accessioned material is described in catalogue records and other forms of documentation to increase its value and accessibility. The types of documentation created by staff are outlined below. Documentation is also preserved as per section 7.5 of this manual.

Information pertaining to the documentation of works of art and artefacts is available on application from the Collections Manager or the Director of the Audiovisual Archive.

6.1 Registration documentation

All audiovisual materials received by the Audiovisual Archive are recorded on a registration database, which includes the following information:

- donor's name;
- date received;
- description of material, including its content and condition;
- format and quantity of material;
- storage location;
- grant number, if applicable;
- documentation received;
- staff assessment and recommendation;
- delegate's decision;
- collection names assigned to accessioned material;
- forms received;
- reason for rejection;
- details of return of rejected material, including date and means of return; and
- a transaction log, detailing interactions with donors and action taken by staff.

Paper documentation associated with registration, including all correspondence, the *Authority to Dispose of Audiovisual Materials* and the *Offer of Audiovisual Material – Registration Form*, is stored alphabetically by donor's name.

6.2 Conditions of access

Paper documentation detailing conditions of access, such as the *Deposit of Materials Agreement*, *Deed of Gift* or the *ALATSIS Grantee Research Materials and Results Form*, are filed alphabetically by collector's name. PDF copies are also kept. Due to the complex nature of many of the forms, conditions of access are categorised as either 'open access', 'conditions apply' or 'restricted' for the purpose of cataloguing. These terms are defined below. Further information must be obtained directly from the form.

Published recordings (audio, film and video) are held for reference use only and are not copied or allocated conditions of access. Instead, a note is made on the catalogue to indicate who the publisher is, who the

distributor is, and that AIATSIS holds viewing/listening copies only. Requests for copies of published materials that are still in copyright should be addressed to the publisher, or a copy purchased from the authorised distributor.

6.2.1 Open access

Material can be listened to, viewed and copied.

Please note that AIATSIS will not supply materials for *publication*, including open access materials, without the consent of the appropriate Indigenous individual, family, community, or communities (see section 8.3).

6.2.2 Conditions apply

Material can be listened to, or viewed on the AIATSIS premises, but clearance must be obtained before copies will be created.

6.2.3 Restricted

Clearance must be obtained before material can be listened to, viewed or copied. Restricted material is classified as:

- restricted - ceremonial;
- restricted - gender specific;
- restricted - personal material;
- restricted - work in progress; or
- a combination of the above.

6.2.4 Other conditions of access

If a collection is generally open but contains some restricted material, the catalogue record will indicate that it is 'open access' and the access field will be duplicated and the wording 'some restricted material' and the category of restriction added.

If a collector is not aware that some material may be sensitive and they have lodged the material under 'open access', the restricted wording will be used with an explanatory note in the staff documentation field.

If material is open for one or more Indigenous clients only, the catalogue record should indicate that it is 'conditions apply' or 'restricted' but the staff documentation field should say 'open to relevant Indigenous people'.

If there is a temporary restriction on material, or appropriate conditions of access have not been established, the catalogue record should indicate that the material is 'restricted - work in progress'. The date of expiry of temporary restrictions will be noted on the catalogue where possible.

6.3 Audio documentation

6.3.1 Collection cards

All accessioned audio materials are allocated a collection name and this name is initially recorded on a collection card. The collection card also contains registration information. Best practice indicates that a hard copy register be maintained, as a safety measure in the event of electronic data failure.

6.3.2 Preservation register

Audio materials which have been archived, that is, copied to preservation media, are recorded in the preservation register. The preservation register records:

- the collection (accession) name;
- the original field recording number, provided by the collector;
- the quality of the original recording;
- the speed or format of the original recording;
- the duration of the recording;
- technical comments;
- the newly allocated archive number (of the preservation and access copies); and
- the name of the technician responsible.

The preservation register is stored in both electronic form and hard copy.

6.3.3 Collection-level catalogue records

A collection-level catalogue record represents a group of related recordings collected by a single person or collaborative group. Collection-level catalogue records are created for all accessioned audio materials. These records appear on the AIATSIS on-line catalogue, *Mura*, and are accessible to the general public via the web. Collection-level catalogue records are created in accordance with the document *Sound Collection Cataloguing Guidelines*.

6.3.4 Audition sheets

An audition sheet is a text summary of the contents and quality of a recording, with pertinent timing points noted in minutes and seconds. It is not a full transcript. Audition sheets are created in accordance with the document *Auditioning Guidelines for Sound Recordings*.

6.3.5 Audio finding aids

Audio finding aids bring together information that is held in diverse locations, including audition sheets, depositor notes, public and non-public catalogue records, preservation registers and deposit or donation forms, into a central source of information for clients. They describe the content and accessibility of sound collections, as well as the context in which they were created.

There are two types of audio finding aids. Full descriptive finding aids featuring timing points are created for collections that have been auditioned. List-level finding aids are created for collections that have not been auditioned. Client versions of audio finding aids for archived collections are available as PDF documents and can be accessed via the AIATSIS on-line catalogue, *Mura*. They can also be accessed via a search page on the AIATSIS Web site or via web search engines, such as Google.

6.4 Photographic documentation

6.4.1 Collection Cards

All accessioned photographic material is allocated a collection name, so that a group of related items lodged by an individual or organisation may be catalogued as a single entity. Collection names are created at the time of accessioning and are recorded on photographic collection cards. These cards also record the corresponding accession numbers, collector's name, access details and the date accessioned.

6.4.2 *Photograph accession register*

Best practice indicates that a hard copy register be maintained as a safety measure in the event of electronic data failure. Therefore details for all accessioned photographic collections are recorded in a register. Details include a description of the format and content of the materials lodged, date and place taken, the accession numbers assigned to the collection and the date accessioned.

6.4.3 *Collection-level catalogue records*

A collection-level catalogue record represents a group of photographs lodged by a single person or collaborative group. Collection-level catalogue records are created for all accessioned photographic materials. These records appear on the AIATSIS on-line catalogue, *Mura*, and are accessible to the general public via the World Wide Web. Collection-level catalogue records are created in accordance with the document *Photographic Collection Cataloguing Guidelines*.

6.4.4 *Item-level catalogue records*

Following the digitisation of a photographic collection, low resolution versions of the individual images are loaded into the *Perfect Pictures* database. Once the accompanying caption information has been entered, detailing the date and place taken and a description of the content, the images are then accessible to clients using computer terminals located in the AIATSIS Library and Audiovisual Archive Access Unit.

Further, following input, a caption list is then generated and attached to the corresponding collection-level record using the *electronic access* field in the *Mura* on-line catalogue. This enables internal and external clients to access descriptions of individual images within a collection. Copies of these caption lists are also held in the Audiovisual Access Unit.

These descriptions are also made available on the *Mura* catalogue as item-level records accessible by Access Unit staff undertaking listings or reports for AIATSIS clients.

6.5 Film and video documentation

6.5.1 *Video accession register*

Accessioned video material is entered onto an accession register, which lists the date of accessioning, the acquisition source, the title, the format, the newly allocated accession number, and notes.

6.5.2 *Film accession register*

Accessioned film material is first entered onto an accession list, which records the title and the newly allocated accession number. Further information pertaining to individual film components is recorded on film data sheets, which are organised alphabetically by title and maintained by the Senior Film and Video Technician. The following information is recorded about each film component:

- archival type (preservation, duplicate, master or other);
- can size;
- component number;
- colour and sound attributes;
- technical information (e.g. type of print);
- length (in feet);
- core size;
- conservation needs;
- notes; and
- AD testing results.

6.5.3 Collection cards

Unpublished moving image material is allocated a collection name, so that a group of related items lodged by an individual or organisation may be catalogued as a single entity. Collection names are not allocated to published titles. Collection names are created at the time of accessioning and are recorded on film/video collection cards. These cards also record the corresponding accession numbers, collector's name, number of items, formats, field recording numbers and date and place of recording (or a range of dates and places).

6.5.4 Film/video catalogue records

A catalogue record represents a single published title and all its components, or, a group of unpublished recordings deposited as a collection by a single person or collaborative group. Catalogue records are created for all accessioned film/video materials. These records appear on the AIATSIS on-line catalogue, *Mura*, and are accessible to the general public via the World Wide Web. Film/video catalogue records are created in accordance with the document *Film and Video Cataloguing Guidelines*.

6.5.5 Audition sheets

An audition sheet is a text summary of the contents and quality of a video or release print film, with pertinent timing points noted in minutes and seconds. The information from the audition sheet is used to update the item's catalogue record and as an access tool. It is not a full transcript. Audition sheets are created in accordance with the document *Auditioning Guidelines for Films and Videos*

7.0 Preservation Policy

Audiovisual Archives, including the AIATSIS Audiovisual Archive, preserve their collections with the intention of ensuring their permanent accessibility. Preservation is a ceaseless task underpinned by constant migration, safe storage and diligent collection management.

Technological obsolescence has always been a threat to the preservation of audiovisual media. Today, we are witnessing the obsolescence of many popular analogue audiovisual technologies, notably VHS video, audio cassette, audio reel-to-reel tape, and traditional still photography. Digitisation, seen by many as the ‘final solution’ to preservation, has in fact presented the biggest challenge ever faced by the international audiovisual archiving community. Digital carriers and software have extremely short lives, demanding ever-widening versatility and adaptability to ensure the preservation of digital objects. Regular migration of digital objects is required. Digitisation is an ongoing part of the Archive’s work; it can no longer be considered a one-off project. It is the *only* method of preserving most audiovisual materials, particularly audio and video.

In keeping with internationally accepted best practice, AIATSIS requests that collectors lodge their *original* materials for inclusion in the collection. This is in recognition that future technologies may enable enhanced retrieval of information from the original carrier, particularly in the case of analogue materials. We also recognise that original carriers, both analogue and digital, are valuable artefacts in their own right and may convey more information than their derivative copies, which only embody the audiovisual content of the original.

AIATSIS recognises that an item's storage and handling history can significantly impact on its longevity. Prior to lodgement with the AIATSIS Audiovisual Archive, materials are often stored in sub-standard conditions which significantly escalate their rate of deterioration. Every effort will be made to allay or slow down an item’s deterioration, but such effects cannot be reversed.

7.1 Preservation of audio material

AIATSIS follows guidelines set out in the International Association of Sound and Audiovisual Archives (IASA) Technical Committee’s *Guidelines on the Production and Preservation of Digital Audio Objects* (IASA-TC04). Master preservation copies of audio materials are stored as 24 bit, 48kHz (or 96 kHz) BWF files on an interim SAN, and the access copies as MP3 files. These materials are being progressively moved onto Digitool, AIATSIS’s Digital Asset Management System.

Existing 10.5” analogue preservation reels are stored off-site in climate-controlled vaults at the National Library of Australia. All other audio carriers, including original recordings, are stored on-site in a climate-controlled vault at 16 °C ±2° and 35% relative humidity ±5%. A full inventory was completed in 2008.

7.2 Preservation of photographic material

Original colour transparencies are sleeved in polypropylene filing pages and suspended in specially designed compactus storage units. Black and white negatives are sleeved in polypropylene pages and binders which are arranged on shelves. Original photographic prints from which digital copies are made are sleeved in either Mylar (for rare prints) or polyethylene enclosures and stored in polypropylene archive boxes which are arranged on shelves. Glass plate negatives are stored in acid-free envelopes, housed in archival boxes.

Each plate is separated by a polystyrene divider. Digital files are stored on the AIATSIS Digital Asset Management System.

All original material is housed in a climate-controlled environment. The film material vault housing negatives and transparencies is maintained at $5^{\circ} \pm 3^{\circ}$ and 35% relative humidity. Photographic prints, early glass plate negatives and portable digital carriers are housed in a vault maintained at $16^{\circ} \pm 2^{\circ}$ and 35% relative humidity. The Institute also has an arrangement with the National Film and Sound Archive to use its purpose-built nitrate film storage facility at Mitchell, for housing approximately 5,000 highly combustible nitrate film negatives in the collection.

New and existing photographic film holdings are monitored regularly for signs of deterioration, including vinegar syndrome and dye fade. Cellulose acetate film is tested for vinegar syndrome (deacetylation) using acid detection strips. Results of these tests are recorded on the AIATSIS catalogue, but are not visible to the public. Film stock which exhibits levels of vinegar syndrome is isolated in a special cold vault at $5^{\circ} \pm 3^{\circ}$ and 35% relative humidity, and scheduled for digital copying at preservation specifications.

Copies of photographic materials are made for both preservation and public access purposes. AIATSIS digitises all accessioned material to preservation specifications that meet international best practice standards. Viewing copies are then made available via low resolution digital files on the *AIATSIS Pictures Access Database* which is accessible in the AIATSIS Library and Audiovisual Archive Access Unit. Hard copy 'proof sheets' are also available for viewing in the Audiovisual Archive Access Unit.

7.3 Preservation of motion picture film and video material

Original film material is housed in inert plastic cans in a climate controlled vault maintained at $5^{\circ}\text{C} \pm 3^{\circ}$ and 35% relative humidity $\pm 5\%$. All videos, including original materials and video copies of films, are stored at $16^{\circ}\text{C} \pm 2^{\circ}$ and 35% relative humidity $\pm 5\%$. Currently, master preservation copies of moving image materials are made on Digital Betacam, and access copies are stored on an interim SAN as Windows Media Player files.

New and existing film holdings are monitored regularly for signs of deterioration, including vinegar syndrome and dye fade. Cellulose acetate film is tested for vinegar syndrome (deacetylation) using acid detection strips. A full inventory is currently underway. Film stock which exhibits high levels of vinegar syndrome is isolated to prevent contamination of other materials². Results of conservation tests are recorded on the AIATSIS catalogue, but are not visible to the public.

7.4 Preservation of works of art and artefacts

Preventive conservation is central to the preservation of all materials held by the AIATSIS Audiovisual Archive. The Works of Art and Artefact Collection is stored in purpose-built shelving, cabinets and acid-free boxes, in a climate-controlled vault at $21^{\circ}\text{C} \pm 3^{\circ}$ and 53% relative humidity $\pm 5\%$. Exhibition spaces are environmentally controlled and display pieces are continuously monitored and rotated as necessary.

² All cellulose acetate film is affected by vinegar syndrome but the speed of decomposition is slow and predictable when optimum storage conditions are observed, as at AIATSIS. Despite of the occurrence of vinegar syndrome, film remains the best archival medium for long-term storage of moving image material.

Movement and installation of collection items must be approved by the Director of the Audiovisual Archive and supervised at all times by the Curator, Works of Art and Artefacts, or other Audiovisual Archive staff who have undergone training in the movement, handling and instalment of artwork.

Ongoing research of the Works of Art and Artefact Collection is central to its care, including the documentation of materials and techniques used to make artefacts. The condition of materials is regularly assessed and specialist conservators are contracted where necessary.

7.5 Preservation of documentation

Electronic documentation received since December 2004 is stored with the original material to which it relates. Preservation copies of electronic documentation are saved separately as PDF files (text searchable where possible). AIATSIS does not guarantee that specialty documentation—such as that created by transcription software—will be maintained in a fully functional state. AIATSIS receives a large amount of documentation created in a vast array of proprietary formats, which cannot reasonably be supported into the future. Original documentation files will be stored in their original format with their original file names and will be made available to collectors on request. PDF preservation copies of electronic documentation will be maintained into the future and migrated to new non-proprietary formats, which may be adopted as standard in the future. Preservation copies of electronic documentation are named as per conventions set out in the document *Storage and file naming conventions for electronic documentation*.

Paper-based documentation is stored on site in a climate controlled vault at 21 °C ±3° and 53% relative humidity ±5%. A relatively small amount of audio documentation was copied to microfilm in the past and is stored off-site at the National Library of Australia. Much of the documentation copied to microfilm has been superseded. All forms of documentation are scheduled for scanning to 400 dpi black and white PDF. PDF preservation copies of documentation are named as per conventions set out in the document *Storage and file naming conventions for electronic documentation*.

7.6 Criteria for Digitisation

All materials held by the AIATSIS Audiovisual Archive are scheduled for digitisation. Because of the varying age, condition, format and rarity of collection materials, it has been necessary to create a digitisation schedule for each media, which lists those materials most in need of migration to new preservation media. To ensure the longevity of the collections, the Audiovisual Archive will not digitise non-prioritised material, unless the material is in high demand from a number of parties and a fee is paid to contribute to the costs of resourcing. Copies of the digitisation priority schedules are available on application.

Materials have been assessed for inclusion on the digitisation priority schedule based on a variety of criteria. The AIATSIS Audiovisual Archive uses preservation evaluation software, such as [FACET](#) (The Field Audio Collection Evaluation Tool) and [AVDb](#) (Audio and Moving Image Survey Tool) as supplementary tools to ascertain the probable lifespan of collection materials.

7.6.1 Audio digitisation schedules

Two audio digitisation schedules are maintained. The first lists materials for which no preservation copies have been created. The second lists materials for which analogue preservation copies have been created on obsolescent media. Items are ranked according to the condition of the material, the rarity of the content, the need for documentation and the level of demand.

7.6.2 Photographic digitisation schedule

All photographic collection material offered to the Audiovisual Archives is scheduled for digital copying to preservation specifications upon completion of the accessioning process. Copying priority is based upon an assessment of the material from both a preservation and access perspective. A six point scale is applied where collections are assessed against such factors as the stability and condition of the photographic medium and the rarity or potential value of the images to the Institute's key stakeholders.

7.6.3 Film digitisation schedule

The purchase of a Telecine machine has heralded a new program of converting film and its accompanying components (eg. out-takes) to digital video masters onsite. To ensure smooth integration of the new equipment, the first stage was spent working on collections which required minimal preparation. Material is now ranked according to its age and condition (particularly material affected by vinegar syndrome) and the uniqueness of the content.

7.6.4 Video digitisation schedule

The highest priority materials for digitisation are videos that have been created on obsolete media: U-matic and J-format tapes (the latter are deteriorating rapidly, becoming sticky and shedding emulsion when played). Items are then ranked accordingly based on such considerations as the condition and age of the recording and the uniqueness of the content.

8.0 Access Policy

8.1 Legal and ethical considerations

Access to the AIATSIS Audiovisual Archive collections is primarily governed by:

- the *Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Act 1989*;
- the *Copyright Act 1968*;
- the *Privacy Act 1988*;
- individual agreements with owners or their delegates; and
- the *AIATSIS Audiovisual Archive Code of Ethics*.

Of particular relevance to the management of the Audiovisual Archive collections, Part 10, Section 41 of the *Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Act 1989*, clearly states that certain information is not to be disclosed:

1. Where information or other matter has been lodged with the Institute under conditions of restricted access, the Institute or the Council shall not disclose that information or other matter except in accordance with those conditions.
2. The Institute or the Council shall not disclose information or other matter held by it (including information or other matter covered by subsection (1)) if that disclosure would be inconsistent with the views or sensitivities of relevant Aboriginal persons or Torres Strait Islanders.

The AIATSIS Act recognises the right of Indigenous communities to decide how their knowledge is used. Such provisions are generally not provided for by the *Copyright Act 1968*. Under Australian copyright law, the creator of an audiovisual object, or the creator's funding body, is the sole owner of that object. Copyright does not protect ideas, concepts, styles, techniques or information which is not recorded in a material form. Nor does it protect people or their images. Part 10, Section 41(2) of the *Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Act 1989* seeks to protect the moral rights of Indigenous Australians. It prohibits the dissemination of secret/sacred or personal material and encourages consultation at all levels. However, Part 10, Section 41(1), while designed to protect secret/sacred and personal material from inappropriate dissemination, has allowed copyright owners, many of whom are non-Indigenous, to place restrictions on material for other reasons, such as pending publication. Such restrictions are contrary to AIATSIS' mission. Materials restricted for reasons other than their secret/sacred or personal content are no longer accepted into the collection (see section 5.4).

The period of copyright protection of audiovisual material varies according to the type of material, the year of creation and whether or not the item is published. Individual agreements with copyright owners and the provisions of the *Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Act 1989* are perpetual.

When providing access to its collections, AIATSIS Audiovisual Access staff first refer to existing agreements with individual copyright owners. If no such agreement is in place, copyright law must be observed, but access will only be provided in accordance with the *Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Act 1989* and the *AIATSIS Audiovisual Archive Code of Ethics*. Every effort will be made to ensure that material restricted for reasons other than its secret/sacred or personal content is available to members of the originating community. If possible, conditions of access will be renegotiated or exemptions obtained from copyright owners on a case by case basis.

8.2 Materials received without a signed donation form or deposit agreement

8.2.1 Grantee materials

The Audiovisual Archive continues to honour existing deposit agreements signed by grantees. If no such agreement exists, copies of the material will be made available to relevant Indigenous people. Other clients may access the material at the discretion of the Director, Audiovisual Archive, or delegate.

8.2.2 Non-grantee material

Where no donation or deposit agreement has been signed and the donor or depositor does not respond to written requests for a form to be completed and returned, access to the material will be at the discretion of the Director, Audiovisual Archive, or delegate.

8.3 Secret/sacred and personal material

If the content of requested material has been identified as secret/sacred retrospectively and the conditions placed on the material by the copyright owner do not reflect the restricted nature of the content, or if copyright has expired, the material will only be made available for listening, viewing or copying following consultation with the appropriate Indigenous community or nominated individual/s (see section 8.6 below).

8.4 Access to the Works of Art and Artefact Collection

Access to the Works of Art and Artefact Collection must be approved by the Director, Audiovisual Archive and only in accordance with criteria specified in the document *Works of Art and Artefact Collection Policy*.

8.5 Publication, including Web-based use

In addition to copyright law and individual agreements with copyright owners, the AIATSIS Audiovisual Archive will only supply material for publication following consultation with the appropriate Indigenous community or nominated individual/s (see section 8.6 below). Publication encompasses all forms of transmission whereby material is made widely available, including print and electronic publication, broadcast, telecast, public exhibition and web dissemination. Publication may be through sale or non-profit distribution. Prior to the consultation process, a draft version of the publication must be submitted to AIATSIS. A copy of a published item containing material from the AIATSIS Audiovisual Archive must be forwarded to the AIATSIS Audiovisual Access Unit upon publication.

Where the copyright owner is an Indigenous individual and is culturally affiliated with the material, further consultation will not be enforced, although it is recommended.

8.6 Consultation

Where it is possible to ascertain a clear link between an audiovisual item and an Indigenous individual, community, family or cultural group, a consultation process with the relevant parties must be undertaken by the client before any audiovisual material is published. The aim of this process is to gain the informed consent for the client to use the material in the manner which they have stipulated on the *Indemnity form*. This process may be quite formal and involve a series of community meetings resulting in the signing of a formal agreement, or it may be as informal as gaining a letter of endorsement for the project from the relevant parties. A verbal endorsement is not sufficient.

A determination of who the relevant parties are will be made in good faith by AIATSIS using a variety of sources including the collection documentation, advice from the collector and/or researchers who have worked in the area, and local Indigenous organisations. Where it is not possible to make a clear link between an audiovisual item and an Indigenous individual, community, family, or cultural group, approval for publication will be given based on the content of the item and the context in which it will be used in the publication.

8.7 Copyright Permissions and Indemnity Form

Before issuing copies of material, clients must obtain the necessary permissions from copyright owners. Copyright permissions must be obtained in writing with the signature of the relevant copyright owner. If materials are to be published, community consultation is also required, as per sections 8.5 - 8.6.

An indemnity form must be signed by every client before any copies of audiovisual materials are supplied. The Indemnity form serves to prevent misuse of materials.

8.8 Return of Materials to Indigenous Communities (ROMTIC)

AIATSIS recognises the importance of providing copies of audiovisual material to the communities from which they originated. However, we are unable to provide free copies of large amounts of archival material to every client due to limited financial and human resources. In an attempt to address this, Indigenous individuals may obtain copies of up to 20 items that relate specifically to their language group or their family, free of charge. This applies to digital audio recordings, digital scans of photographic items and digital video. Above this cap, normal access processing costs apply. Clients may decide to stay below the 20 item quota to avoid paying any fees.

Some materials are not available through ROMTIC, specifically audio, film and video materials which have not been copied to a preservation medium.

9.0 Deaccessioning Policy

Deaccessioning is the process of removing an item from the permanent collection of an archive, museum, gallery or library. It incorporates the processes of deselection, in which items are identified for disposal, and disposal, in which items are physically removed. By removing unsuitable items from its collection, an institution is able to acquire new items or upgrade the care given to existing collection items.

A thorough process of evaluation is undertaken before any item is removed from the collections of the AIATSIS Audiovisual Archive. Criteria for deselection are outlined in sections 9.1–9.2 of this policy; methods of disposal are described in section 9.3.

9.1 Deselection of items acquired in accordance with the Acquisitions Policy

Items acquired in accordance with the *Acquisitions Policy* (section 5.0) will not be considered for removal from the collection unless written permission has been obtained from the copyright owner, *and*:

- the item is duplicated elsewhere in the collection;
- the item has deteriorated to such an extent that retention of content or copying is not practicable;
- the item is a copy which has been replaced by a superior copy; or
- the item has become a danger to the safety of both staff and other materials in the collection due to chemical decomposition and off-gassing, in which case every effort will be made to preserve the content by migration onto a stable format.

Depositors are now required to sign a disposal authority before material is accessioned into the permanent collection (see section 4.0).

9.2 Deselection of items acquired by other means

AIATSIS holds a large number of items that were acquired outside the scope of an acquisition or collection development policy, including some material with no Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander content. Some of these items may be considered for removal from the collection to ensure the safety and longevity of more suitable objects. Such items will only be removed from the collection if:

- the item was acquired illegally or unethically;
- the item is not deemed significant according to any of the criteria outlined in section 5.2 of the *Acquisitions Policy*;
- the item is not authentic;
- the item is duplicated elsewhere in the collection;
- the item has deteriorated to such an extent that retention of content or copying is not practicable;
- the item is a copy which has been replaced by superior copies;
- the item has become a danger to the safety of both staff and other materials in the collection due to chemical decomposition and off-gassing, in which case every effort will be made to preserve the content by migration onto a stable format; or
- the item is subject to stringent access restrictions which contradict the wishes of the Indigenous owner(s).

Original, unpublished items which are not duplicates and are in a usable condition will not be deaccessioned without the approval of:

- The Collections Manager, Audiovisual Archive;
- The Director, Audiovisual Archive; *and*
- The Deputy Principal.

The procedure for deaccessioning such items is that the Collection Manager, Audiovisual Archive will complete a submission to delegate via the Director, Audiovisual Archive stating the reasons for deselecting the collection item(s). Upon receipt of the approval signed by both the Director, Audiovisual Archive and the Deputy Principal, the material will be disposed of in accordance with section 9.3 below and the submission, along with related correspondence, will be placed on Central File (Audiovisual Archives – Deaccessioned Collections).

9.3 Methods of disposal

Deselected material must be disposed of in an ethical manner. An open dialogue between AIATSIS, the copyright owner(s) and the relevant Indigenous owner(s) must be established prior to the disposal of original unpublished materials which are in a usable condition. Where an *Authority to Dispose of Audiovisual Materials* has been completed, AIATSIS will abide by the instructions nominated by the depositor.

The AIATSIS Audiovisual Archive will dispose of deselected items in the following ways, listed from most desirable (return) to least desirable (destruction):

- transfer to the original depositor (N.B. AIATSIS cannot legally return material to donors who received tax benefits as a result of their donation);
- repatriation to the appropriate Indigenous group, established through a process of consultation (N.B. repatriation will not be considered for commercially acquired artworks);
- transfer to a regional Indigenous keeping place;
- sale to a public institution;
- sale to a private buyer; or
- destruction (N.B. only duplicate material or material which is severely deteriorated will be destroyed as a first option, where transfer or sale are not practicable).

Material will not be disposed of within 3 months of its deselection, unless it has become a danger to the safety of both staff and other materials in the collection.

Conditions which applied at the time an object was acquired may legally prevent AIATSIS from disposing of it. The legality of disposal will be ascertained on a case-by-case basis.

Funds generated from the disposal of items will be deposited into the Audiovisual Archive budget and may only be used to purchase new items in accordance with the *Acquisitions Policy* or to upgrade the preservation or conservation of objects already in the permanent collection.

AIATSIS staff and Council members, and their family members, and other individuals formally associated with the Institute, may not purchase or otherwise acquire a deaccessioned object or collection, nor may they benefit personally in any way from the deaccessioning of an object or collection.

10.0 Code of Ethics

10.1 Frame of reference

This Code of Ethics was developed by AIATSIS Audiovisual Archive staff to publicise their commitment to professional conduct within the field of audiovisual archiving and the management of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural materials. The code explores concepts not covered in detail by pre-existing codes of conduct and policy documents, namely the *Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Service Charter* and the *Public Service Act 1999*.

This code has been prepared with reference to the UNESCO document *Audiovisual Archiving: Philosophy and Principles*, the International Council of Archives' *Code of Ethics*, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Library and Information Resource Network's *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Protocols for Libraries, Archives and Information Services*, Museums Australia's *Code of Ethics 1999* and the *Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Act 1989*.

The AIATSIS Audiovisual Archive Code of Ethics was examined and endorsed by the AIATSIS Council in August, 2005.

10.2 Statement of intent

The AIATSIS Audiovisual Archive Code of Ethics is a statement of professional conduct and values, which seeks to clarify mandatory standards of practice within the AIATSIS Audiovisual Archive and to inspire public confidence in AIATSIS as a world-class collecting institution. All AIATSIS Audiovisual Archive staff are required to read the code and commit to its observance in writing.

10.3 Code provisions

10.3.1 Care of the collections

- a) All original material in the care of the Audiovisual Archive, including temporary holdings, will be protected against manipulation, falsification, censorship or destruction.
- b) All material in the care of the Audiovisual Archive, including temporary holdings, will be stored in conditions conducive to their preservation.
- c) The intellectual content of the collections will be managed in accordance with appropriate cultural and ethical practices.
- d) Preservation copies will be faithful replications of the content from the original carrier.
- e) Where original material is incomplete, distorted or damaged, preservation copies may be modified only where such treatment will not affect the integrity of the content as it was intended by its creators.
- f) Copies which are not accurate replications of the content of the original will be clearly identified as such.
- g) Original carriers will be retained for their functioning lifespan.
- h) Original carriers which convey significant documentary evidence supplementary to their audiovisual content will be retained beyond their operational lifespan, provided that their retention does not place other collection items at risk.

- i) Material will only be de-selected or disposed of in accordance with the *Deaccessioning Policy*. Registered materials which are not accepted into the collection will be returned to the originating depositor.

10.3.2 *Access to the collections*

- a) The rights of the legal copyright owner will be respected. The Audiovisual Archive also recognises the rights of Indigenous communities and individuals, who are the owners of most of the knowledge contained in the collection. Every attempt will be made to provide access to the collection in accordance with the wishes of the copyright owner(s) and Indigenous owner(s).
- b) Copies of material will only be provided for publication purposes if the requestor has consulted with the relevant Indigenous community or individual(s) and has received written permission to proceed, even in such cases where the copyright owner has approved publication.
- c) Interactions with clients will be courteous at all times. Information provided to clients will be accurate and procedures transparent. Every effort will be made to keep clients abreast of developments affecting their access to the collection.
- d) The privacy of all clients will be respected, including that of the legal copyright owner.
- e) The AIATSIS Audiovisual Archive will not charge for listening or viewing an item on site, or for minor research on behalf of a client. Fees will be charged for copying or for major research in order to recoup costs.
- f) All clients requesting copies of archival material must sign an indemnity form stating their intended use and prohibiting any other use, manipulation of sounds or images, or uses which may cause pain or embarrassment, or offend the sensitivities of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- g) The Audiovisual Archive encourages the widest possible access to its collections, but recognises the right of Indigenous communities to decide how their knowledge is communicated.
- h) Material which has been identified as secret/sacred will not be made available without the consent of the relevant Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people.
- i) The Audiovisual Archive will actively seek to improve accessibility of its collections through documentation; promoting its collections; and proactively and reactively repatriating copies to originating communities.
- j) Public communication of collection materials by the Audiovisual Archive will be developed in consultation with Indigenous owner(s) and with permission from the copyright owner(s). Pressure from expedient parties to change the content or style of such presentations, will be resisted.
- k) Collection materials which are publicly communicated will be accompanied by an acknowledgement of authorship and cultural ownership.
- l) Collection materials which are publicly communicated will be accompanied by an accurate and culturally appropriate description, in keeping with the views and sensitivities of the relevant Indigenous owner(s) obtained through a process of consultation.
- m) Although it may not be possible to provide access to collection materials due to cultural or other restrictions, the Audiovisual Archive recognises the public's right to ask for access and an honest explanation as to why such access is, or is not, possible.
- n) Access to duplicate material from another archive will be dependent on the conditions specified by the originating archive.

10.3.3 *Personal conduct*

- a) Staff will freely share their knowledge and experience in the interests of acquiring, preserving, documenting or facilitating appropriate access to audiovisual, artistic and material culture items documenting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and history.

- b) Staff will pursue professional excellence through involvement in archival and technical professional associations and continual enhancement of knowledge and skills relevant to audiovisual archiving.
- c) Staff will not use their position to unfairly benefit financially or otherwise.
- d) Staff will treat all colleagues and clients with respect.
- e) Staff will honour confidences and refrain from communicating confidential information ascertained during the course of their duties.
- f) Staff will undergo Indigenous cultural awareness training.
- g) When accepting public engagements as a speaker or author and identifying themselves as an AIATSIS employee, staff will submit their papers to the Director, Audiovisual Archive for approval. Papers presented in a personal capacity will be clearly identified as such.
- h) Staff will not acquire material from other archives without the consent of the originating archive.
- i) Staff will not remove collection items from AIATSIS, except where such removal is approved by the Director, Audiovisual Archive for purposes such as preservation or loan to another institution. Removal of an item from the AIATSIS premises will be recorded in writing and the item will under no circumstances be removed from the catalogue.
- j) Staff will adhere to the provisions of this code, the *APS Code of Conduct*, the *Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Service Charter* and all relevant legislation, whilst both on the AIATSIS premises and off-site.