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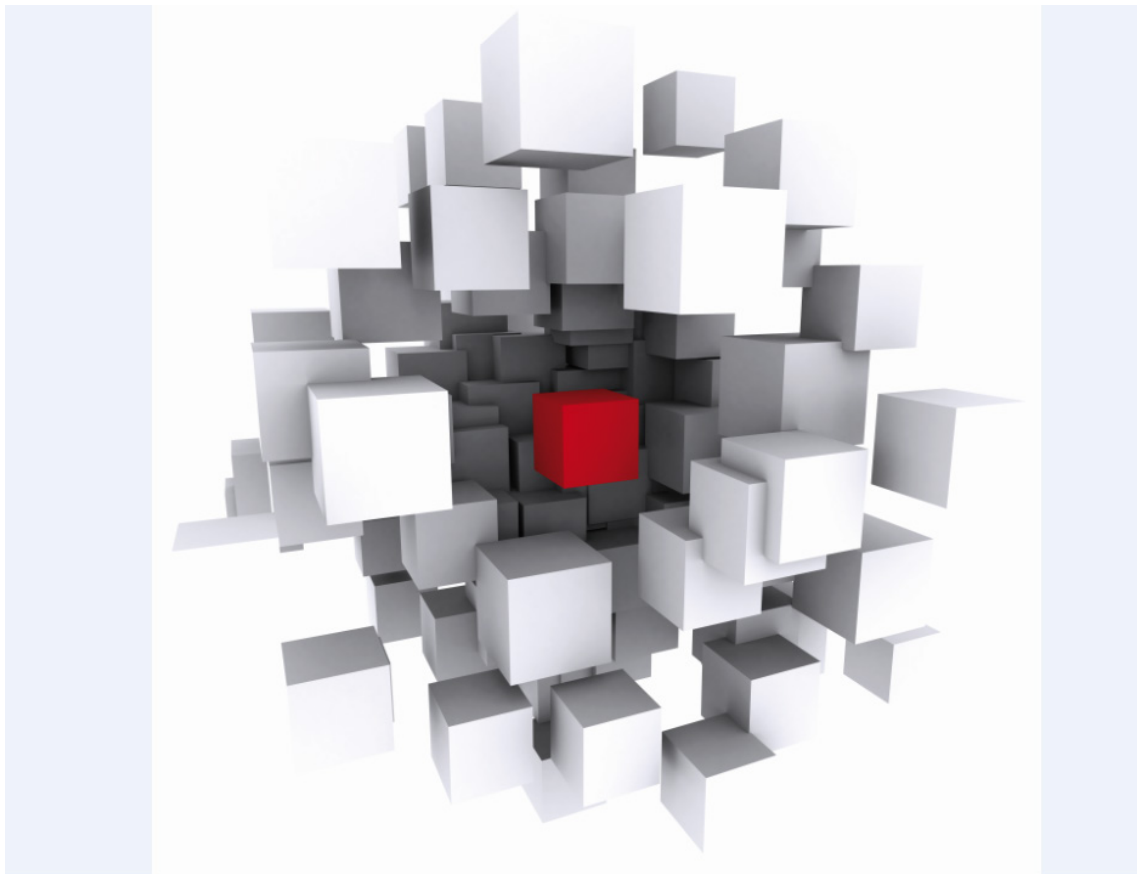
Swiss Federal Archives SFA
Information Preservation Division (IPD)

Archival Custody and Solutions Services (ACS)

Digital Archiving

Swiss Federal Archives

Digital Archiving Policy



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1 Introduction

1.1 Digital Archiving

The Swiss Federal Archives (SFA) is the Confederation's service and competence centre for sustainable information management. It preserves records of archival value concerning constitutional state operations. It takes responsibility for an appropriate and secure safe-keeping thereof as well as the description and dissemination of the archive records. The SFA documents the formation and development of the constitutional state and renders state activities comprehensible and traceable. It thus contributes substantially to the state's rule of law and democracy (good governance). According to its mandate function and responsibilities, the SFA serves two groups of stakeholders:

- For the parliament, the Federal Council, and records managing agencies obligated to archive, especially within the federal administration: services regarding the archiving of documents.
- For the public and document-submitting agencies: Guaranteed access and the right to consult the archive records.

Administrative documents and data are increasingly created in digital form. By the end of 2020, the Federal Chancellery and the Federal Departments will have established a process to conduct their business transactions on a completely electronic basis. In addition, a large part of administrative, scientific, and economic data are kept in databases. The SFA is keeping pace with these developments, having developed solutions for the digital archiving of documents in 2009. All digitally produced records will be accepted only in digital form by the SFA.

1.2 Aim and purpose

The Digital Archiving Policy aims at the following:

- The Policy summarizes the SFA's basic principles regarding digital archiving and provides the basis for the SFA's internal and external communication.
- The Policy renders comprehensible and traceable how the SFA deals with digital archiving and which solutions it applies.
- The Policy renders transparent the basic principles and directives which the SFA maintains regarding digital archiving.

The Policy addresses the following target groups:

- The SFA's stakeholders within the federal administration
- The interested public as well as expert circles in the digital archiving community
- SFA employees

2 General framework

2.1 Legal principles

Based on the Federal Act on Archiving (ArchA, SR 152.1) of June 26, 1998, the SFA archives all documents that are «of legal or administrative importance or which contain valuable information» (BGA Art. 3, par. 3). It «makes a contribution towards legal certainty as well as to the continuous and efficient management of administrative activities» (ArchA Art. 2, par. 2). According to the definition of the ArchA, documents are «all recorded information, irrespective of the medium, that is received or produced in the fulfilment of the public duties of the Confederation, as well as all finding aids and supplementary data that are required in order to understand and use this information». (ArchA Art. 3, par. 1)

Further legal principles concerning the regulation of digital archiving will be addressed directly within the respective chapters of this Policy.

2.2 Requirements for digital archiving

2.2.1 Requirements for digital archiving

For digital archiving, digital documents must meet the following requirements:

- originality
- authenticity
- integrity
- usability (locability, retrievability, representability, interpretability)

2.2.2 Definitions

- originality:
The digital documents submitted to the SFA are considered the original in the context of digital archiving. They remain unmodified when archived in the digital repository. The original documents are conserved even if preservation actions should become necessary. Migrated documents can always be traced back to the original source by the documented migration path.

The SFA defines the authenticity, integrity and usability of a document according to the ISO 15489-1 standard and guarantees them as follows:

- Authenticity:
Authentic documents can be proven to be a) what they purport to be, b) indeed created or sent by the person purported to have created or sent them, c) in fact created or sent at the time purported.
- Integrity:
The integrity of a document refers to its features regarding a complete and unaltered renderability of its content. (A digital document's appearance, structure and form can be altered by certain preservation actions.)
- Usability:
Documents are usable if they can be located, retrieved, presented and interpreted.

2.2.3 Levels of digital archiving

In order to meet the requirements of originality, authenticity, integrity and usability, the SFA takes two levels into account. Firstly, it preserves the digital document's substance, i.e. «bit-stream» preservation of the data (storing). Secondly, by archival description and by ways of preserving the material in appropriate formats, the SFA ensures that the digital documents and their contexts stay presentable and interpretable.

2.3 The archiving process

2.3.1 Standardisation of the archiving process

The SFA archives all documents via a well-defined, standardised archiving process. Thanks to this controlled process, the quality of the archive records is guaranteed over the long-term, and the course of archiving procedures is transparent, comprehensible and traceable.

2.3.2 Extent of the archiving process

The terms «archiving» and «archiving process» stand for the complete process, from pre-archiving advisory services to the dissemination of the archive records. This includes all actions and processes necessary to keep digital and analogue documents safe and accessible for the long-term. (The equivalent to the reference model OAIS [Open Archival Information System, ISO-Standard 147121:2003] is written in *italics*.)

- Pre-archiving advisory services regarding records and process management and digital archiving
- Appraisal
- Transfer (*Ingest*)
- Safe-keeping:
 - Data management (*Data Management*)
 - Repository management (*Archival Storage Management*)
 - Preservation implementation (*Preservation Planning*)
- Dissemination (*Access*)

2.3.3 Responsibilities within the archiving process

The following are the agents and their respective responsibilities within the archiving process:

Document-producing /
submitting agency

- Offer to submit digital documents to the SFA
- Cooperation with the prospective or offer-oriented appraisal of documents
- Preparation of digital document submissions according to SFA requirements and regulations

SFA

- Pre-archiving advisory services for document-producing agencies
- Appraisal, acquisition and management of the digital documents in the archives
- Dissemination of the digital documents in accordance within the effective legal framework: Providing access to the archive records in usable form

Document-producing /
-submitting agency / the
public

- Compliance with the regulations when using and analysing digital documents provided by the SFA

3 Strategies, Models, Standards

3.1 Archiving Strategies

3.1.1 The migration principle

The SFA's archiving strategy is based on the migration principle. According to this principle, digital documents are kept in formats which are adjusted to changing conditions of the environment whenever needed. Thus it is guaranteed that the documents will stay usable even under altered conditions, and that the document information is preserved. Digital documents are converted into a new, archivable format whenever it is necessary. The SFA emphasises loss-free conversions. All conversions – and concurrent alterations in the archive records, if applicable – are documented and can be reconstructed in any case. The SFA does not adhere to the strategy of archiving through emulation, by which the environment (i.e. software and hardware) is adjusted to the digital objects while the digital documents stay unmodified; nor does it follow the principle of technology conservation, which means that the original hardware and software are archived along with the documents.

3.1.2 Application-independent archiving

The SFA pursues the strategy of decoupling data from specific IT environments (applications, database systems, operating systems, hardware). Only digital documents are archived in the digital repository. Applications of any kind (executable binary data) are not archived. However, documentations of the applications (e.g. databases) that are the sources of digital documents may be archived whenever it is necessary to render administration activities verified and justified (VBGA Art. 3) or to use the data (e.g. with data models, handbooks or images of input / output masks that were relevant for administrative functions of the application).

3.1.3 No storage of the original data carrier

The digital archive is designed to preserve documents respectively their content and the relation between the information. To achieve this, it is neither necessary nor sensible to preserve the original data carriers. Digital documents are therefore archived without consideration of the original data carriers. The data are transferred onto the SFA storage infrastructure for archiving. Once this process has been successfully completed, the data can be erased from the original data carrier. Upon completion of the transfer, the data carriers used for transport will be destroyed or returned.

3.2 Models and archiving standards

3.2.1 The OAIS model

Digital archiving within the SFA is based on the OAIS reference model (Open Archival Information System, ISO standard 147121:2003). The SFA considers OAIS a generic reference model within the framework of digital archiving. It is used as a directive for implementing a model suitable to the situation and the specific requirements of the SFA.

3.2.2 The package element

An essential element of the OAIS model is the grouping of all information to be archived into packages. The model specifies three types of packages:

- SIP (Submission Information Package): to submit the digital documents to the archive
- AIP (Archival Information Package): to store the digital documents within the archive
- DIP (Dissemination Information Package): to disseminate the digital documents

The digital documents are transferred to and stored and disseminated in the SFA as information packages. These always consist of primary data and metadata. Primary data are the information produced directly by the document-producing agency during their core (administration) activities, whereas metadata are «information about the primary data», i.e. information that describe the primary data in more detail.

The «grouping» of primary data and metadata into a single data package enhances the information content in this data package considerably, since the documents are now carrying their descriptive context with them. Thus, comprehending and interpreting the documents remains possible even without any information from an archival information system.

3.2.3 SFA principles of description

The SFA's principles of description (the arrangement and description within the Archive's tectonics of the documents acquired by the federal archives) are based on the ISAD(G) standard (International Standard Archival Description (General)). The SFA field definitions are aligned to the elements of description of the ISAD(G). The ISAD(G) levels of arrangement of the unit of description are implemented consistently. The metadata of the information packages stored in the digital repository are in accordance with the requirements of the principles of description, as well.

3.2.4 Specification of the submission object

The SFA publishes the specification of the submission object (the SIP). This specification contains all requirements for the realisation (design, structure, content and file formats) of an SIP to submit digital documents to the SFA. It thereby outlines the requirements for producers of standard GEVER solutions as well.

3.3 IT principles

3.3.1 Digital archiving applications and infrastructure

The digital archiving systems and applications developed and implemented by the SFA can be handled easily and efficiently. The solution contains the applications as well as the infrastructure taking the specific requirements for digital archiving and SFA processes into account.

3.3.2 Automatisation

The archiving processes of digital documents are automatised whenever this is sensible and feasible. The automatisisation aims to ensure perpetual, error-free, economical archiving operations.

3.3.3 Modularity

Whenever possible, the SFA builds its IT solutions for digital archiving in a modular manner. This approach has the following advantages:

- Fail-safety: In case of a breakdown, only singular modules are affected instead of the entire system.
- Replaceability: Modules can be enhanced or replaced without having to rebuild the whole system.
- Complexity reduction: The system becomes more manageable.

3.3.4 Further development of the IT solution

In order to protect current investments as much as possible, existing digital archiving infrastructures should be able to be integrated into a comprehensive concept whenever the IT solution is further developed. For the implementation and the development of digital archiving, the SFA applies IT technologies which already have a certain maturity and prevalence. Depending on the area of activities, the SFA will also act as an innovator or an early adapter during the further development of the digital archiving IT solution.

4 Digital archive records

4.1 Digital documents

4.1.1 Definition of digital documents

Digital documents are documents which were produced or received by means of information and communication technologies; which are available in digital form; and which transport content and information within a defined amount of digital data. Digital documents exist in various forms, ranging from simple text documents to pictures and audio recordings to very complex databases.

4.1.2 «Born-digital» and digitised

The SFA's requirements for digital archiving apply to all documents acquired by the digital archive, whether the documents were originally produced in digital form («born-digital») or whether they were originally produced in analogue form and subsequently digitised. Documents might be digitised prior to archiving by the document-producing agency or by the SFA, either for preservation purposes, for measures to ensure the usability of the document, or because of their scientific importance. Documents created digitally will be transferred to and kept in the archive in digital form. Documents that were created in analogue form and then digitised, must comply with the SFA requirements for digital archive records if they are to be transferred to the digital archive and archived there.

4.2 Document categories

4.2.1 Document sources

The SFA currently archives digital documents of three different categories:

- Digital documents from records and process management systems (GEVER)
- Digital documents from relational databases
- Other digital documents (primarily file systems, e.g. photo collections)

The SFA provides the submitting agency with requirements for the acquisition of all three categories.

4.2.2 Further development for new document categories

The SFA monitors technological and organisational developments in the federal administration and takes account of new requirements suggested by the submitting agencies. It strives to develop demand-oriented solutions for categories of digital documents which are not yet covered.

4.3 File formats

4.3.1 Archivable file formats

Digital documents are archived in a limited number of well-specified, standardised, published (by the SFA) file formats. These formats are specified unambiguously, especially suited for the preservation of digital documents, and expressly approved by the SFA. These file formats, in which the digital documents are preserved for the long-term, are called «archivable file formats». The SFA determines these formats in the course of a controlled process and publishes accepted formats as binding requirements.

4.3.2 Inspection of file formats during acquisition

In order to ensure that the requirements for digital document preservation are met, it is essential that the documents are submitted to the archive in archivable file formats. During the digital archive acquisition process, the SFA checks whether the digital documents were submitted in the defined archivable file formats. The SFA will send submissions containing documents in non-archivable formats back to the submitting agency for revision.

4.3.3 Revision and introduction of new archivable file formats

The SFA reassesses on a regular basis whether the file formats currently defined as archivable are still suited for archiving and preservation. File formats are replaced if necessary. Before a specific file format becomes obsolete, the SFA determines a suitable replacement for that format. As part of the preservation process, the SFA will transform archive records which are already stored in the digital repository in the old format into the new format. The SFA is responsible for planning, implementing and communicating to document-submitting agencies the introduction of new archivable file formats or the removal of old archivable file formats.

4.3.4 Conversion into archivable file formats – preparation of digital submissions

The preparation of digital documents is the document-submitting agency's responsibility (regulations on the obligation of submission and on the submission of documents to the Federal Archives, Art. 6.2 [under revision]), with the conversion into archivable file formats being a considerable part of the task. The SFA supports the document-submitting agencies in regards to conversion as part of its pre-archiving advisory services.

4.3.5 Dissemination formats

The kind of dissemination and the document formats suitable for it are susceptible to considerable change over time. The formats currently needed for the dissemination of documents may therefore differ from the archiving formats in which the digital documents are stored in the repository. Requirements for dissemination formats are oriented towards the velocity of access and the usability and kind of usage of the documents. It is therefore sensible to differentiate between requirements for dissemination formats of the documents on the one hand, and requirements for archivable formats for archiving purposes on the other hand.

5 The archiving process

5.1 Pre-archiving advisory services

The SFA offers advisory and training services on digital archiving:

- Instruction on theoretical concepts and practical solutions for digital archiving.
- Advisory services for document-producing agencies with regards to archival requirements for the creation of a new system (technical application, database, records and process management system) which contains digital data (project support).
- Advisory services for the document-submitting agencies with regards to the archival requirements concerning the preparation of a submission of digital documents to the SFA.

5.2 Appraisal

5.2.1 Media independence

The SFA archives documents within the scope of the ArchA, irrespective of the form the information is available in. This means that the content of the documents is appraised media-independently. In addition the appraisal criteria also allow to focus on the features of digital documents and to include these features in the appraisal.

5.2.2 Responsibilities for the appraisal of digital documents

The appraisal of documents is a joint task of the SFA and the document-submitting agency. An appraisal is therefore always the result of a close cooperation between those two parties. With regard to digital documents, the document-submitting agency's know-how concerning the administration of technical applications as well as the content of databases is of great importance. This knowhow is the basis for determining the legal/administrative as well as the historical value of documents.

5.2.3 Prospective appraisal before offer-oriented appraisal

The appraisal within the SFA is, wherever possible, carried out prospectively and based on the administrative agency, i.e. prior to the production of documents and on the basis of classification systems, or already during the development of technical applications or databases. Prospective appraisal facilitates an early identification of documents of archival value, by which it is possible to identify early on the requirements for accessibility of digital documents within the pre-archival as well as the archival realm. In order to fulfill these requirements, appropriate measures can be initiated based on the prospective appraisal.

5.3 Acquisition

5.3.1 Form of submission

Digital documents which are to be acquired by the SFA are acquired via a submission. For that, the digital documents must be submitted to the SFA as an SIP in accordance with the SIP specification.

5.3.2 Responsibility for the preparation of digital submissions

The document-submitting agency is responsible to prepare a submission to the SFA in accordance with the requirements of the regulations on the obligation of offers and on the submission of documents to the Federal Archives. (WBA, Art. 6.2). In case of digital documents, this preparation includes:

- provision of the primary data and the related metadata
- converting the files into archivable file formats
- creating a SIP in accordance with SFA requirements

The SFA provides document-submitting agencies with detailed requirements for the preparation of submissions.

5.3.3 SFA submission inspection

During the acquisition process, the SFA inspects the digital submission. It may reject deficient submissions. For the time being, the SFA does neither verify digital signatures nor certificates.

5.3.4 Document acquisition and storage

All digital documents (original) submitted to the SFA in the form of an SIP by the document-submitting agency will be stored in the SFA's digital repository as an AIP without alteration, as long as they fulfil the requirements.

5.4 Safe-keeping

5.4.1 Metadata within the archive information system

The SFA archive information system (AIS) for the management of description information (administrative, descriptive, structural and technical metadata) guarantees the retrievability of documents independently of the type of archive records. This description is therefore the same for the entire SFA archive records and for the whole system, independent of the form of the documents. The necessary metadata for description are taken from the package metadata, integrated into the AIS and managed in the AIS by the SFA.

5.4.2 Metadata within the package in the AIS

Metadata which are taken from the package and integrated into the AIS are kept up to date within the AIS. All metadata submitted by the document-submitting agency are unalteredly stored in the AIP in the digital repository, along with the primary data.

5.4.3 Storage infrastructure

The SFA stores digital documents in three copies on a specially secured infrastructure with controlled, limited access. That means, three identical copies of the AIP are written to three different storage devices. These storage devices are distributed over different geographical locations. To store the AIPs, the SFA uses well established storage technologies.

5.4.4 No data deletion from the digital repository

Once digital archive records are stored as an AIP, this AIP will not be deleted from the digital repository.

5.4.5 Versioning

When conducting preservation actions on the document level, the SFA will always create a new version of the AIP which will then be labelled as the most recent version. The old version is not lost, but will stay identifiably stored in the digital repository. Also, the retraceability of the versioning chain from the most recent version back to the original is guaranteed.

5.4.6 Preservation actions

The regular control of the archive records with regards to integrity and accessibility establishes the basis for the planning of preservation actions. For this, the following elements are part of the monitoring and risk assessment process:

- archivable file formats
- package structure
- hardware (storage media, servers)
- software (applications)

Preservation actions are always tested in a test environment. The results will then be evaluated. Following that the productive implementation of the projected preservation actions is carried out.

5.5 Dissemination

5.5.1 Access to digital archive records

The ArchA (Art. 9-16) regulations are binding for the access to SFA archive records. Current access regulations and closure periods will be disclosed as a standard feature of the AIS on the dossier level and – if required – even down to document level. Information by the document-submitting agency concerning the classification of documents (according to Art. 4 of the information protection regulation, ISchV), will be transferred to the digital repository as a part of the metadata, however not into the AIS, since they are not binding for the access to the archive records.

5.5.2 Identifying archived documents

The SFA ensures that digitally archived documents will be perfectly identifiable and retrievable at all times. The necessary information to guarantee this are filed within the AIS. Each dossier containing digital documents is retrievable and can be ordered for inspection from the digital repository via a uniquely assigned identification (ID). This identification is composed of the AIP-ID, which is unique among the content of the entire SFA, and the dossier-ID, which is unique within each package. «Universally Unique Identifiers» (UUID) are used for the AIP-ID, providing this unambiguity.

5.5.3 Ways of dissemination of digital documents

The SFA provides dissemination in three different ways for digital documents stored in the digital repository:

- The SFA provides users with access to documents in a suitable manner.
- The SFA provides document-submitting agencies with access to (their own) documents in a suitable manner. The form of this access is to be agreed upon by the SFA and the document-submitting agency.
- The SFA publishes selected documents according to demand and organizes online access to these documents.

5.5.4 Forms of dissemination of digital documents

In order to render contents of digital documents interpretable, it is imperative to provide the primary data along with the corresponding metadata. The SFA always disseminates primary data and the corresponding metadata combined in a DIP. The metadata within the DIP are a subset of the metadata in the AIP specifically defined to meet the requirements for the dissemination of digital documents.

6 Security

6.1 Protection against unauthorised access

All documents stored in the digital archive are protected against unauthorised access during the whole archiving process. Access to the documents is regulated, granted and controlled by clearly defined processes and procedures.

6.2 Transparency of actions

Clearly defined organisational procedures and technical measures ensure that every access to the documents is controlled, monitored and recorded. Transparency of all actions is guaranteed through the following measures:

- access privileges to the digital archive and especially to the digital documents stored in the digital repository are unambiguously regulated, limited to a certain circle of users, and technically controlled (user identification).
- the archiving process is organisationally predefined and documented, including defined roles.
- modifications, including the source of change, time of change and author of change, are recorded in log files and databases.
- archival procedures are stored in the information packages (AIP) in the digital repository.

6.3 Risk identification and risk management

Based on its increasing experience with digital archiving, the SFA keeps expanding its risk management (analytic tools, risk identification and risk management). The framework for digital archiving determines the general conditions for the SFA's risk management and its resulting requirements. Risks are analysed, identified and managed on the level of the digital archive records (with regards to formats, structures, regulations etc.), on the technological and on the organizational level (know-how, resources, processes). Based on its findings, the SFA purposefully develops measures of risk management.

7 Digital archiving development

7.1 Further development

The SFA commands competences and know-how concerning subject-specific archival requirements as well as IT requirements for the implementation and the further development of digital archiving. For the further development of digital archiving solutions, the SFA concentrates on guaranteeing efficient services and putting its solutions into operation. Further developments will be tackled focusing on demand, i.e. on the basis of an explicit orientation on the requirements and needs of the SFA's stakeholders.

7.2 Knowledge transfer

7.2.1 Digital archiving training

The SFA offers training courses on the archiving of digital documents. These courses aim at enabling the SFA's stakeholders, particularly the document-submitting agencies, to fulfil their digital archiving tasks. They are also meant to facilitate the knowledge transfer to interested and involved agencies outside the federal administration.

7.2.2 Cooperation

The SFA participates in national as well as international digital archiving projects, in order to share its knowledge and its solutions (tools, methods etc.) with other agents and institutions. In addition, the SFA is interested in testing different solutions which are already implemented in other institutions, integrating them into its own solutions if appropriate.

8 Organisation of the digital archiving process

8.1 Responsibilities within the SFA

In the SFA, the responsibilities in the area of digital archiving are fulfilled by the following functions or roles.

Digital Archiving Strategy	SFA executive board
Project Portfolio Management	
Digital archiving specialised projects	Management Information Preservation Division IPD
IT projects	SFA IT steering committee / SFA executive board for projects
Project responsibility Digital Archiving	Information Preservation Division IPD
Change Management	
Business assets	Archival Custody and Solutions Services ACS
IT assets	SFA IT coordination meeting
Ongoing tasks	
Pre-archival advisory services	Archival Custody and Solutions Services ACS (concepts, implementation), Appraisal and Information Management Services AIM (support)
Appraisal	Directorate (decision), , Appraisal and Information Management Services AIM (concepts implementation, support)
Acquisition	Archival Custody and Solutions Services ACS
Safe-keeping	Archival Custody and Solutions Services ACS (implementation)
Dissemination	Information Access Division IAD

8.2 Resources

8.2.1 Financial resources

The SFA's financial digital archiving resources are principally invested in the following areas:

- Operation of applications and infrastructure
- Organisation of ongoing tasks (business organization)
- Investments in the further development of digital archiving solutions (projects)

8.2.2 Human resources

Human resources in the field of digital archiving are invested in operational digital archiving tasks as well as projects for the further development of the solutions. Demand for human resources development will be planned in alignment with the available resources.

9 Release management and change management

The SFA defines processes for release management and change management for the solutions and objects (e.g. specifications, applications) implemented in the field of digital archiving. Thus, IT solutions with the SFA's stakeholders who exchange data with the SFA can be provided and – if necessary – enhanced in time. Internally, these processes are covered by the SFA IT management model.

10 Policy versioning and applicability

This is the first SFA policy on digital archiving. The SFA will monitor its contents on a regular basis and revise it if necessary. For further information, please contact the SFA's Digital Archiving Service (DAS).

Glossary

Term	Description
AIP	Archival Information Package: During the archiving process of digital documents, AIP are created from SIP. AIP constitute the form of information package in which digital documents are stored in the digital repository.
AIS	Archive Information System: the central SFA software, managing information about the analogue and digital fonds of the archives.
archive	1. Institution/administrative agency which appraises, secures, describes and disseminates archive records. 2. An organisation's archived documents. 3. Building or institution built or reconfigured for the purpose of document archiving.
archiving strategy	an archiving strategy describes procedures and techniques which are trend-setting for the implementation of the archiving processes.
archiving procedure	an archiving procedure takes place in the SFA. It incorporates and documents activities in the area of acquisition or preservation.
archivable	the SFA determines the file formats considered archivable. Archivable file formats fulfill the archives' requirements for the preservation of the digital documents.
archival value	documents of archival value are documents produced by federal administration agencies which are of legal or administrative importance or of high information value (i.e. which are valuable from a historical, social, or cultural perspective).
archive records	documents which were acquired for safe-keeping by the SFA or which are archived independently by other administrative agencies on the basis of the same regulations of the law are considered archive records (ArchA Art. 3, par. 2).
ArchA	Federal Archiving Act (Bundesgesetz über die Archivierung vom 26. Juni 1998 (Archiving law), SR 152.1
authenticity	authentic documents can proven to be a) what they purport to be, b) indeed created or sent by the person purported to have created or sent them, c) in fact created or sent at the time purported.
closure period	closure periods regulate the access to the archive records. Access to documents subject to a closure period may only be granted via an approval procedure (with the exception of the respective document-submitting agency). Access is regulated by ArchA, Art. 9 to par. 16.
digital archive	the institution which appraises, secures, describes and disseminates digital archive records.
digital repository	place where digital archive records are kept.
DIP	Dissemination Information Package: A DIP is the container for the dossiers a user has ordered via a request procedure.
document-submitting agency	the administrative agency or organisational agency which submits the documents to the SFA. Often times, but not necessarily, the document-submitting agency is identical with the document-producing agency.

Term	Description
document-producing agency	administrative agency or organisational agency which produced and managed the documents.
documents	documents, according to the ArchA, are all recorded information, irrespective of the medium, that is received or produced in the fulfillment of the public duties of the Confederation, as well as all finding aids and supplementary data that are required in order to understand and use this information. (ArchA Art. 3, par. 1).
dossier	the sum (collective) of all documents concerning the same business matter is considered a dossier. In principle, one dossier represents one business matter. This basic structure can be adapted to varying requirements, however, by summarizing related business matters or by dividing dossiers into different sub-dossiers dossiers are created on the basis of the classification system.
file system	a file system is primarily an assortment of files. With regards to digital archiving within the SFA, submissions which contain files that were submitted without a related classification system in the sense of records management with a GEVER system are considered file systems. These files may be arranged in different systematics.
integrity	the integrity of documents refers to their features regarding a complete and unaltered renderability of its content. (A digital document's appearance, structure and form can be altered by certain preservation actions.)
metadata	metadata can be described as «information on the primary data» (data on data), since they are of descriptive character.
OAIS	Open Archival Information System: The reference model passed as norm ISO 14721 describes an archive as an organization of people and systems, that has accepted the responsibility to preserve information and make it available for a Designated Community.
originality	In the context of digital archiving, the digital documents submitted by the document-submitting agencies are considered the original. They remain unmodified when archived in the digital repository. Even if preservation actions are taken, the original documents stay unmodified. Because the migration path is transparent, the source of migrated documents can be retraced all the way back to the original at all times.
primary data	primary data dare data which are exclusively and directly produced by the individual document-producing agencies.
records and process management (GEVER)	the sum of all activities and regulations concerning the planning, management, and controlling as well as the documentation of business matters. GEVER encompasses records management with regards to documents and dossiers (business document management) as well as process management with regards to business matters. GEVER serves an effective and efficient business operation of the administrative units.
SFA	Swiss Federal Archives
submission	denotes the process by which an administrative agency hands over documents to the SFA as well as the sum of all documents which are collectively submitted by an administrative agency in one submission.
SIP	Submission Information Package: SIP are information packages which are submitted to the SFA by the document-submitting agency. They contain the digital documents (primary data and metadata).

Term	Description
usability	documents are usable if they can be located, retrieved, presented and interpreted.
UUID	Universally Unique Identifier: A UUID is a special ID which facilitates a globally unique identification. UUID consist of 32 hexadecimals arranged in a specific order: 5 groups of characters/digits, divided by hyphens (8-4-4-4-12 characters/ digits) totaling 36 characters/digits, e.g.: 01234567-89ab-cdef-0123-456789abcdef.