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National Archives of India  
Government of India  
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**PROPOSED SoP FOR SUPPLYING OF NON-DIGITIZED RECORDS  
NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA**

The National Archives of India (NAI) has been constantly endeavoring to enhance and simplify access to its records holdings. A review of current policy of access to records was recently undertaken keeping in view the global best practices. It was observed that the ongoing digitization of records and archival holdings by the major archival repositories around the globe has changed the way people access records. The online access portal of the NAI - *Abhilekh-Patal* (<https://www.abhilekh-patal.in/jspui/>) – was launched on 11 March 2015 and has ever since become immensely popular amongst the users of archives. As on date it has nearly thirty thousand registered users from over 200 countries.

With a view to democratize information, a roadmap for ease of access to NAI's records holdings was presented to the HCM during his visit to the NAI on 1 October 2024. Accordingly, specific amendments have been proposed in The Public Records Rules 1997 to facilitate ease of access which have been sent to Secretary, Ministry of Culture for consideration.

Furthermore, to avoid damage to records and smooth service, a SoP for the supply of non-digitized records in a digital form is as follows.

**(A) CURRENT PROCESS FOR ACCESS TO THE NON-DIGITIZED RECORDS**

**1. Registration Process:**

1.1. The user/scholar undergoes a registration process wherein **Form-8** is mandatory as per extant Public Record Rules, 1997- [sub-rule (2) of Rule 10 of PRR, 1997] with the necessary documents enlisted as under:

- For Indian Scholars: (Letter of Introduction, Copy of Id proof)
- For Foreign Scholars: (Letter of Introduction, Copy of Passport & Diplomatic Letter from concerned Embassy)
- For Independent User/s: Submission of valid id proof

**2. Consultation of Reference Media**

2.1. Online consultation of reference media: Indices and Transfer Lists on *Abhilekh-Patal* [www.abhilekh-patal.in](http://www.abhilekh-patal.in)

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2.2. In case of some non-digitized reference media or cross verification: Physical Consultation of reference media is made available in Research Room (RR).

### 3. Requisition Process:

3.1. At one time, one user/scholar can requisition 15 slips per day.

3.2. The request for non-digitized records by the users is received in a duly filled proforma, and the Research Room forwards the same to the concerned repositories. The records received from the Repository are provided to the users for consultation.

3.3. The time period for consulting the files in the Research Room is seven (07) days as per SoP. In case the user/scholar is not accessing the files within the stipulated time period, RR returns the same to the concerned Repositories within seven (07) days for restoration.

### 4. Reprography Services:

Photo clicking of records is free of cost. The users can also avail photocopying/scanning services as per prescribed Reprography Service charges.

### 5. Record Returning Process:

The Records are returned to the concerned Repositories after consultation or completion of the photocopying and scanning process.

## (B) FUTURE PROCESS FOR ACCESS TO THE NON-DIGITIZED RECORDS

**Registration Process:** The process of registration and requisition for non-digitized files will remain unchanged. Changes in supplying the files in digital format are as under:

### 1. Non digitized records:

- a. The users will be allowed to send 15 requisitions per day in a prescribed proforma/requisition slip through Research Room (RR) email: [researchroomnail@gmail.com](mailto:researchroomnail@gmail.com).
- b. The RR will then forward the requisition slips/proforma to the concerned repository.
- c. After pagination, bar-coding and dashboard entry, each Repository will supply the 'A' and 'B' category files to the CBSL scanner located nearest to the Research Room, earmarked for research room work (referred to as Research Room Scanner henceforth).
- d. Thereafter, CBSL will digitize these files and make folders (scholar/user name wise) in TIFF format and supply it to RR in pen drive **immediately**. These files will then be returned to the respective repositories by CBSL through dashboard, after QC. TIFF images will be further converted to JPEG and PDF/A formats as per the normal procedure.

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e. As regards the 'C' category files, repositories will send these files to the Repair vendor after pagination, bar coding and dashboard entry. After repair the Repair Vendor will send it to the Research Room Scanner. Once again, the TIFF files will be stored on pen drive in folders (name wise), and **immediately** shared with RR so that the users/scholar can be informed accordingly.

f. For Hybrid Category Files, each Repository maintains a separate physical register. Hybrid category files requisitioned by users/scholar will be sent for partial repair after pagination. After receiving these partially repaired files, the concerned repository will treat these files as 'B' Category of files and send these to the Research Room Scanner for scanning after bar-coding and dashboard entry. Thereafter, CBSL will digitize these files, make folders of TIFF files (user name wise) and supply it to RR in pen drive **immediately**.

g. After the digitized files (arranged user wise) are received from CBSL in Research Room, Research Room will inform the user via email to visit RR within 03 working days' to view the digital images of the file in a read only format. If the user does not come **within 10 days** for reading the digitized document, then the same will be deleted from the RR computer/s.

h. In case the user/scholar needs print-outs, the same would be provided as per the existing rates of photocopy/scanned copies through Reprography Section, duly stamped as per current practice.

i. In case of any guidance and assistance required for smooth service of the digital records as per existing SoP, the scholars may contact RR. RR will forward the request to the concerned officers (handling digitization work) for resolving the issue.


j. Although top priority would be given to the Research Room work, if the designated scanner has surplus capacity, the same would need to be utilized for regular scanning work so that maximization of output is not affected adversely.

k. If a file requisitioned by a user/scholar has already been scanned, but has not been uploaded yet, the Repository concerned will inform Digitization Vendor and arrange for the TIFF images to be sent to Research Room for being perused by the scholar.

## 2. Exceptional Cases:

For certain time bound exceptional cases, such as VVIP cases, PMO cases, requests from Records Creating Agencies, Differently Abled Persons', Foreign User/Scholar', the process of providing records will be done **immediately** for which Repositories I/Cs will be requested to supply the records on time.

This has the approval of the Director General of Archives.

  
(Naoroibam Raju Singh)  
Deputy Director I/C  
National Archives of India