1. **Summary**

This preservation policy is an essential tool for ensuring the integrity and survival of the Library collection. It sets out the responsibility and duty of the State Library of NSW in caring for its collection and it addresses issues related to three key themes:

i. *meeting community and Government expectations for preservation and access*
ii. *mitigation of risk,* and
iii. *commitment to intergenerational responsibilities.*

2. **Policy statement**

Preservation includes all the technical, managerial and financial considerations including storage and accommodation provisions, staffing levels, policies, technologies, and methods involved in preserving library and archive materials and the information contained in them for the people of NSW and the world-wide research community.¹

For the State Library of New South Wales preservation policy addresses the immediate requirements of government and community and the need to ensure availability for future generations.

This policy defines the Library’s preservation responsibilities and provides a framework to Library staff engaged in making decisions and undertaking activities that may have an impact on the integrity and sustainability of the collection. Transparency and accountability are the two essential values that support its promulgation and the policy provides a framework for communication with internal and external stakeholders.

**Scope**

In setting out the role of the State Library of NSW in caring for its collection, this document addresses three key themes:

i. *meeting community and Government expectations for preservation and access*
ii. *mitigation of risk,* and
iii. *a commitment to intergenerational responsibilities.*

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3. **Legislative and Policy Framework**

Most relevant legislation
- *Library Act 1939 and Library Regulation 2010*
- *Work Health & Safety Act 2011*
- UNESCO Memory of the World [http://www.unesco.org](http://www.unesco.org)
- *Immunity from Seizure for Cultural Objects on Loan (in process – Office of the Arts discussion paper produced 2011)*

Related and/or most relevant State Library and government policies
- Australian Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Material (AICCM) Code of Ethics
- Australian Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Material (AICCM) Code of Practice
- Collection Disaster Plan
- Collection Development Policy
- Collection Storage and Service Delivery Policy
- Collection Storage Standards
- Collection Storage Master Plan
- Depreciation Policy
- Exhibition Policy
- External Exhibition Loans
- Occupational Health and Safety Policy
- Retention and Disposal Policy for Collection Material and Donations
- Security policy

4. **Definitions and acronyms**

*Conservation* Part of a total preservation program. Treatment is aimed at stabilising the physical condition of an item and maintaining an object in an unchanging state with the least possible intervention.

*Enclosure* A general term for various types of protective containers constructed for temporary or permanent storage of fragile materials, for example, boxes, folders, etc.

*Intergenerational* In the context of the Policy, ensuring that the storage of the Library’s collection, access to the collection (in any form) or treatment decisions, consider the rights of this and future generations of users.

*Integrated pest management* Integrated pest management (IPM) uses a range of preventive measures to control pests. It significantly reduces the need to use chemicals while providing the same, if not better, level of protection for collections².

*Relative humidity* The amount of water vapour contained in the air at a particular temperature compared with the total amount of water vapour the air can hold.

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Significance The meaning and values of cultural resources, what makes them important for individuals or communities. Significance is based on the historic, aesthetic, scientific and social values that cultural capital has for past, present and future generations.  

5. Outline  
Meeting community and Government expectations for preservation and access  
The Library pro-actively supports the community expectations and Government’s aspirations to provide state-wide access to the Library’s 5.5 million items valued at a total of 2.2 billion dollars. This is achieved through external exhibition loans, travelling exhibitions, regional events and digital access.  

Mitigation of risk  
The role of the Library’s Collection Preservation & Storage branch is to develop, manage and maintain programs to support efficient and effective access while minimising risks to the longevity of the collection. Minimising risk to the collection is dependent upon formulating strategies and the delivery of programs that mitigate risks or respond or adapt to environmental impacts.  

Typical strategies and programs include (but will not be limited to):  
- providing appropriate storage facilities for the collection  
- providing and maintaining appropriate environmental conditions in temperature and relative humidity, light exposure and air quality  
- ensuring the operation of an integrated pest management program  
- ensuring that new and remodelled facilities meet engineering specifications to provide optimal storage  
- providing storage systems to reduce the risk of theft, vandalism and damage or loss during retrieval or storage  
- maintaining current counter-disaster management plans and procedures.  

Commitment to intergenerational responsibilities  

When we weigh up our own situation and that of future generations, we usually choose to give priority to our own desires and let the future fend for itself.

While the role of Collection Preservation & Storage is to provide timely access to the collection, response without appropriate risk analysis has the potential for negative impact on future requirements. Current practice will take intergenerational needs into account.  

Operational approaches  
The Library’s preservation activities aim to maintain and preserve items in a manner consistent with their use, rarity, value and significance to the collection, New South Wales and Australia. The objective is to preserve collection items for as long as they are needed with an emphasis on devoting most resources to the items on the unique and significant items list, the Library’s Australiana, the rare and named collections (eg Mitchell, Dixson).  

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3 Significance 2.0: a guide to assessing the significance of collections by Roslyn Russell and Kylie Winkworth, Copyright Commonwealth of Australia, 2010, ISBN 97 80977544363 (pbk)  

4 Lomberg, Bjorn. 2001 The sceptical environmentalist Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
**Time allocation**

The treatment and time allocation decision process is informed by the *Depreciation* and *Collection Development Policy* with respect to areas of collecting, and follows a tier level approach:

- **Tier 1**: basic low-level treatments, such as simple paper repairs (less than 1.00 hour).
- **Tier 2**: items requiring structural treatment such as more complex paper repairs, backing removal, board reattachment and spine repairs (greater than 1.00 hour, less than 5.00 hours).
- **Tier 3**: significant or high value items assessed on an individual basis and where required, given full individual conservation treatment (greater than 5.00 hours).

The strategies operate in accordance with current national and international accepted best practice, standards and research. Processes and procedures relating to this policy will be available on the intranet.

**Meeting community and Government expectations for preservation and access**

The activities of the Library under this theme fall into:

- **Storage**
  - Physical Collection Storage systems (Onsite and Offsite)
  - Collection Storage Master Plan

- **Collection Outreach**
  - Exhibitions
  - Loans
  - Events

- **Collections conservation**
  - Collection care
  - Collection planning
  - Reformatting

- **Remedial conservation**
  - Individual items (significant, high priority)
  - Exhibitions
  - Loans

- **Mitigation of risk**
  - Preventive conservation
    - Pest management
    - The environment
    - Counter Disaster Management
    - Physical Collection Storage systems (Onsite and Offsite)
    - Digitisation

- **A commitment to intergenerational responsibilities**
  - Raise awareness about the implication of climate change on the ability to pursue the digital dream and high energy use technology
  - Raise awareness and educate staff about preservation and collection issues
- Produce conservation plans for items on the unique and significant list/individually valued items list ($1,000,000 +)
- Consider the immediate and ongoing costs of preservation (and storage) when considering the acquisition of material for the collection
- Contribute to research and development in preservation

6. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of Library Managers and Team Leaders to report any incidents which may result in collection damage or have an impact on collection storage.

*Intra-library communications*

All inquiries relating to this document should be addressed to the Manager, Collection Preservation & Storage: 02 9273 1414

Inquiries relating to specific projects should be addressed to the Preservation Projects Coordinator 02 9273 1414

*Resource deployment (structural arrangements)*

Experience indicates that there are three parameters that affect how people and other resources are allocated to meet demands for preservation activities. These are:

- Skills: individual projects require specific skill sets
- Response times: lead times and timeframes for projects differ
- Resource numbers: the scale of activity varies from project to project

Thus, a flexible and fluid approach needs to be an essential feature of the Library’s preservation operations and individual and group assignment. In essence, teams form, they meet their objectives, they dissolve and new teams are formed to meet the next set of demands.

To implement the Preservation Policy, the Collection Preservation & Storage branch will continue to operate as two discrete teams:

- Storage team – this small team, dedicated to the Library’s storage function will continue to co-opt staff from across the Library Services Division to assist as required.
- Conservation team – the operational model for the conservation team is allocating individuals to specific projects. Individuals are assigned to project teams based on skills or development needs and each project has a leader.

*Accountability and transparency*

With respect to accountability and transparency:

- The Library’s preservation practitioners adhere to the AICCM code of ethics and conduct.
- Treatment proposals are produced for unique and significant items; they are signed off by both the appropriate Curator and the Manager, Collection Preservation & Storage.
- Treatment reports for individual items are available to Library staff, benefactors and donors as required.
- Records of activities involved in the preservation, protection, maintenance, restoration and enhancement of collection items are created and registered in the Library’s recordkeeping system.
7. **Reporting requirements**
   Reports against the Library’s strategic plan and the divisional plan are submitted on a quarterly basis and in the Annual Report of the State Library.

8. **Approval**
   This policy was approved by NSW State Librarian & CE/Executive on 20 June 2012 for immediate implementation.

9. **Implementation**
   This policy is implemented on 20 June 2012.

10. **Prepared by:**
    Manager, Collection Preservation & Storage
    17 February 2012

11. **Document History and Version Control**

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<th>Date approved</th>
<th>Approved by</th>
<th>Brief description</th>
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<td>1.0</td>
<td>20 June 2012</td>
<td>NSW State Librarian &amp; CE/Executive</td>
<td>First release</td>
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## Appendix 1

### Summary of Activities

<table>
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<th>Program</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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| **Storage**                     | • Collection Storage Master Plan  
• Storage and Service Delivery Working Group                                                                                           |
| **Collection Outreach**         | **Collection Storage (Onsite and Offsite)**                                                                                              |
| **Internal Exhibitions**        | • Items assessment, condition reporting and treatment as required                                                                        |
| **External exhibition loans**   | • Items assessment, condition reporting and treatment as required  
• Security in transport  
• Registration activities                                           |
| **Events & filming**            | • Security  
• Safe handling of items                                                                                                              |
| **Collections conservation**    | **Conservation treatments**                                                                                                               |
|                                 | • High priority items assessment, condition reporting and treatment as required  
• Foundation and Bequest funded programs. Eg Jean Garling Conservation Program; Mitchell Centenary Appeal |
| **Collection Care**             | • Re-housing and enclosure supply  
• Binding and repair  
• Providing advice for acquisitions (original and published materials)                                                                    |
| **Reformatting**                | • Preparation of items for digitization  
• Microfilm Quality Control                                                                                                               |
| **Digital Collection Storage**  | **While out of scope for this policy, must not be forgotten for future activity**                                                    |
|                                 | • ICT systems/framework  
• Metadata  
• DAM  
• Pandora  
• Digital Preservation Policy (to be developed)                                                                                      |

**Technical responses to collection management**
| Preventive | The environment | • Environmental Monitoring  
• Integrated Pest Management |
|---|---|---|
| Preservation planning | • Security and Insurance  
• Shelving standards  
• Building Management System  
• Cold and frozen storage |
| Counter Disaster Management | • Counter Disaster Management Committee  
• Prevention - risk analysis  
• Policy, procedures and manual  
• Preparedness: training, equipment and supplies  
• Response and recovery as necessary  
• Awareness training: staff and contractors |

**A commitment to intergenerational responsibilities**

| Collection Planning | • Conservation Plans  
• Collection Stock-takes and Surveys  
• *High Priority Collection* Group  
• *Acquisition Committee* |
|---|---|
| Education and training programmes | • For all library staff  
• Training for specialist staff  
• User training |
| Research and development in preservation | • Policy on treatments  
• Standards and benchmarks for all types of material |