

Australian Government Archives online



When governments have contact with people, governments create records. The key to searching government archives is to think of how people had contact with government occurred and which was government it was.

New South Wales was settled by First Fleet in 1788.

Swan River Colony (Western Australia) settled 1829.

Australian states were part of New South Wales until:

- Van Diemen's Land: 1825 renamed Tasmania: 1855
- South Australia: 1836
- Victoria: 1851 (previously known as the 'Port Phillip district of New South Wales')
- Queensland: 1859 (previously known as the 'Moreton Bay district of New South Wales')
- Northern Territory (of South Australia: 1863-1911) under Commonwealth Government Control: 1911 ->
- Australian Capital Territory (ACT): 1911

Which government archives?

- **Commonwealth Government** (since 1901) records held by National Archives of Australia (NAA) – includes military records, internment, some Indigenous records, copyright, patents and trademarks
- **Immigration** was administered by states/colonies until 1922 & after that by Commonwealth Government
Exception – 20th century child migration schemes
- **Naturalisation** records from 1904 in Commonwealth government records, before that under state/colonial government
Exception – Victorian and South Australian naturalisation records prior to 1904 are held by NAA
- **State/territory governments** administer: bankruptcy & insolvency, 19th century census & musters, childcare, Colonial Secretary's correspondence, companies & partnerships, convicts, courts & gaols, police, cemeteries, deceased estates, probate, wills, intestacies, inquests, divorce, education, energy, health & quarantine, Indigenous Australians, immigration up to 1922 & later child migration records, land, 19th century military, soldier settlement, naturalisations & denizations until 1903, professions & occupations licensing, railways & transport
- **Local government / councils** administer roads, bridges, sewerage, community facilities, town planning & development approvals, waste disposal

Websites

- Ancestry – ancestry.com.au (*eg many records from state archives eg NSW digitised by Ancestry*)
- City of Sydney Archives – cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au
- ArchivesACT – archives.act.gov.au
- FamilyHistory SA – familyhistorysa.org
- List of Australian Councils – lgam.info/list-of-australian-councils
- Mariners and ships in Australian waters – marinersandships.com.au
- National Archives of Australia (NAA) – naa.gov.au
- New South Wales State Archives & Records – records.nsw.gov.au
Transcription agents who visit NSW SAR – nswtranscriptions.com.au & home.iprimus.com.au/lturtle/
- Noel Butlin Archives Centre – archives.anu.edu.au (*trade unions & big company records*)
- Northern Territory Archives Service – dtsc.nt.gov.au/arts-and-museums/northern-territory-archives-service
- Public Record Office Victoria – prov.vic.gov.au
- Queensland State Archives – archives.qld.gov.au
- South Australian land records (SAILIS) – sailis.sa.gov.au
- State Records of South Australia – archives.sa.gov.au
- State Records Office of Western Australia – sro.wa.gov.au
- Tasmanian Archives and Heritage – libraries.tas.gov.au/archive-heritage/Pages/default.aspx
- Trove (eg digitised photos & maps) – trove.nla.gov.au