ARMS: GUIDELINES FOR CONTRACTORS

1.   You should have appropriate written processes and procedures for managing records.

Comprehensive processes and procedures will provide appropriate guidance and support for staff for on-going work relating to records and will help embed good, consistent record-keeping throughout your organisation.

Things to Do/Note:

Your processes and procedures might include a number of specific guidance points to cover all records related matter, such as information security, information storage, email, access to information and records, data protection and other compliance requirements.

- The processes and procedures should identify clear responsibility for the records which need to be created, captured and managed.
- All relevant staff should receive appropriate training.
- The processes and procedures should be monitored and reviewed regularly.

2.   Identify person responsible for record-keeping.

A Senior Officer shall be identified as having overall responsibility for record-keeping matters and should ensure record-keeping responsibilities are known, documented and monitored for compliance. Day-to-day responsibility can be delegated to a nominated individual.

Things to Do/Note:

- All staff have a broad responsibility for managing records effectively.
- Staff need appropriate training and support to enable them to meet their responsibilities.

3.   Keep appropriate records.

Your organisation should take a systematic and planned approach to the creation and management of reliable and trustworthy records.

Things to Do/Note:

- Ensure the records which you create and maintain adequately support your business activities.
- The systems you use can be manual or electronic.

4.   Know where records are.

You should what records and information you hold.

Things to Do/Note:

- You should be able to produce records requested on demand and to support legal processes.
- You should be able to explain why you do not have records

5.   Records support compliance activities.
Records provide evidence of your business and will help to ensure your compliance with legislative requirements, standards and codes of conduct.

Things to Do/Note:

- You should know what legislation, standards, codes and other relevant compliance requirements are relevant to your organisation.
- You should review risks of record-keeping non-compliance.

6.   Managing personal data.
You must manage personal data in compliance with data protection legislation.

Things to Do/Note:

- Protect personal data provided to the organisation.
- You should be aware of where information is held that requires additional protection.
- Only appropriate staff should have access to personal information held about individuals.
- Individuals have a right to access information about themselves, to ensure that the details held about themselves are correct and to seek correction of details in cases where this is in dispute.
- Staff training ensures that organisational awareness of the issues is high, clear and maintained. You should monitor access and security breaches to help you identify potential problem areas requiring attention.

7.   Apply appropriate retention and disposal rules.
You will need to determine how long records are to be retained in line with business and statutory requirements. Further advice can be found on the National Records of Scotland website (http://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/record-keeping/public-records-scotland-act-2011), and on the Scottish Council on Archives website (http://www.scottisharchives.org.uk/scarrs).

Things to Do/Note:

- Staff know what records they can destroy.
- Disposal of records should be transparent, documented and routinely implemented.
- Procedures identify approved methods of destruction to reflect the sensitivity of the information in the records.

8.   Keep your records safe and secure.
You should keep manual records in an appropriate environment to ensure their continued preservation. You need to ensure digital records are accessible as long as they are required.

Things to Do/Note:

- Where possible avoid inappropriate areas, such as damp basements or inaccessible rooms.
- Keep rooms/cupboards locked and secure and ensure access is properly managed.
- Computer systems (or USBs etc.) housing records should be password protected
- Ensure that you regularly monitor the accessibility of digital records.

- Ensure business continuity plans are in place and regularly updated.