



Generic Valuation Tool

Cabinet Affairs

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Generic Valuation Tool (GVT)

CABINET AFFAIRS

How to use this tool:

- This tool is designed for IM specialists to use with relevant business areas when identifying information resources of business value (IRBV) and retention specifications.
- The IRBV and retention specifications contained in this document are recommendations only and should be customized to apply in each institutional context. The complete document should be read before using any recommendations.
- **This GVT does not provide Government of Canada institutions with the authority to dispose of information.** GVTs are not Records Disposition Authorities (RDA) and do not replace the Multi-Institutional Disposition Authorities (MIDA).

Validation: The business processes and IRBV of this GVT have been validated by subject matter experts from the following departments: Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, Canadian Heritage, Health Canada, and Environment Canada.

Defining the Activity

Cabinet Affairs is a common operational and enabling activity carried out by line Government of Canada (GC) institutions on behalf of all agencies in a minister's portfolio. It has the following advising and coordinating functions:

- to facilitate the proper development of Cabinet documents, such as Memoranda to Cabinet (MCs), aides-mémoire, and decks;
- to ensure that documents meet the standards outlined in MC templates and the *Memorandum to Cabinet: A Drafter's Guide*, prepared by the Privy Council Office (PCO); and
- to provide advice and analysis relating to internal public policy and legislative initiatives in light of external departmental or GC-wide policies.

This Generic Valuation Tool (GVT) provides recommendations related to advising and coordinating activities only. The preparation of Cabinet materials themselves should be managed within the business process in which they were created and by PCO.

Relationship to Other GVTs

Business processes and activities often overlap. When the IRBV from an activity is identified in another GVT, there is a note in the table of IRBV and retention recommendations (below) to direct the user to the proper tool.

This GVT should be considered in conjunction with other operational GVTs and within any other operational activities involving the preparation of materials for Cabinet, such as MCs, aides-mémoire, and decks (e.g., GVT for Transfer Payments, GVT for Regulatory Compliance and Enforcement).

Business Processes

Recommendations made on business value in this GVT were determined first through a business process analysis approach. Though no specific policy or legislative instrument guides the activity, there is great similarity in how it is carried out across institutions.

The Cabinet Affairs activity involves two sub-activities including:

- 1) Advising; and
- 2) Coordinating and liaising.

1. Advising:

Involves all aspects of providing guidance, including developing guidance tools; offering strategic advice to institutional staff and senior management about the preparation of material for Cabinet; and analyzing internal public policy initiatives in light of other institution-specific or larger governmental policy direction.

The sub-activity entails the following business processes:

- 1) Providing advice and guidance on the preparation of Cabinet materials (e.g., MCs, aides-mémoire, decks); and
- 2) Providing advice and analysis to senior management relating to the public policy direction of the department and of other departments and agencies.

2. Coordinating and liaising:

Involves all aspects of liaising within the department, between departments, and between the institutional operational staff and PCO, the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (TBS), the Department of Justice Canada, and the Department of Finance Canada; it ensures that Cabinet materials are prepared according to approved practices and contain the necessary information to enable Cabinet committees to make informed decisions about public policy. The sub-activity involves the following business processes:

- 1) Liaising within the department with internal operational staff as well as with the deputy minister and minister's offices;
- 2) Liaising with central agencies, line departments, and portfolio agencies to coordinate the preparation of Cabinet materials; and
- 3) Representing the department at interdepartmental meetings in consideration of Cabinet documents prepared by other departments.

Retention

Recommended retention specifications in GVTs are determined based on traditional or

best practices, a review of government-wide legislation and policy, and validation with subject matter experts. Retention periods are suggestions only; departments must take into account their own legislative requirements and business needs.

Retention recommendations were developed in consultation with representatives for Cabinet Affairs from Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, Health Canada, Environment Canada, and Canadian Heritage.

Retention specifications should be considered minimum retention periods and should be examined closely in the context of institution-specific business processes.

All information resources considered Cabinet confidences as defined in the *Policy on the Security of Cabinet Confidences* should be managed and retained according to policy requirements and any institution-specific policy that addresses the security of Cabinet documents.

Institutions are often responsible for the temporary, custodial care of Cabinet documents while they are being used for reference purposes. These documents should be temporarily managed, then returned to PCO; therefore, they will not appear as information resources of business value (IRBVs) in the recommendations.

Business Value and Retention Recommendations

1. Advising

Business Processes	Recommendations: Information Resources of Business Value (IRBVs)	Recommendations: Retention Period
Providing advice and guidance on the preparation of Cabinet materials [e.g., Memoranda to Cabinet (MCs), aides-mémoire, decks]	Guidance materials (e.g., drafters' guides, tools, timelines)	1 year after superseded or obsolete
Providing advice and guidance on the preparation of Cabinet materials [e.g., Memoranda to Cabinet (MCs), aides-mémoire, decks]	Correspondence/advice Annotated drafts Emails Notes Comments	2 years after last administrative use
Providing advice and analysis to senior management relating to the public policy direction of the department and of other departments and agencies	Briefing notes Correspondence/advice Decks Briefing materials/meeting package	5 years after last administrative use (for issues pertaining to internal matters or when the institution is the lead or co-sponsor of Cabinet materials) or 2 years after last administrative use (for issues pertaining to external matters or when the institution is not the lead or co-sponsor of Cabinet materials) within an active retention context (e.g., online, near line, on site storage) and an additional 20 years within an inactive or dormant retention context (e.g., off-line, off-site storage)

2. Coordinating and Liaising

Business Processes	Recommendations: Information Resources of Business Value (IRBVs)	Recommendations: Retention Period
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<p>Liaising within the department with internal operational staff as well as with the deputy minister and minister's offices</p> <p>Liaising with central agencies, line departments, and portfolio agencies to coordinate the preparation of Cabinet materials (e.g., MCs, aides-mémoire, decks)</p> <p>Representing the department at interdepartmental meetings in consideration of Cabinet documents prepared by other departments</p>	<p>Correspondence/advice Routing slips</p>	<p>2 years after last administrative use</p>
<p>Liaising within the department with internal operational staff as well as with the deputy minister and minister's offices</p> <p>Liaising with central agencies, line departments, and portfolio agencies to coordinate the preparation of Cabinet materials (e.g., MCs, aides-mémoire, decks)</p> <p>Representing the department at interdepartmental meetings in consideration of Cabinet documents prepared by other departments</p>	<p>Meeting summaries Internal summaries of proceedings Correspondence Comments Meeting minutes Decision documents/next steps/summaries Records of decision</p>	<p>5 years after last administrative use (for issues pertaining to matters directly affecting the institution, i.e., when the institution is the lead) or 2 years after last administrative use (for issues pertaining to external matters, i.e., when the institution is not the lead)</p> <p>within an active retention context (e.g., online, near line, on-site storage) and</p> <p>an additional 20 years within an inactive or dormant retention context (e.g., off-line, off-site storage)</p>