General Disposal Authority
for
Source Records

RD 2009027
Acknowledgements

The State Records Commission and the State Records Office would like to extend their appreciation and thanks to members of the Digital Records Working Group and government organization representatives for their valuable comments and contributions to the formulation of this Authority.
TABLE of CONTENTS

DEFINITIONS ......................................................................................................................................................................III

PART 1 ................................................................................................................................................................................1

1. INTRODUCTION...........................................................................................................................................................1

1.1 Background .................................................................................................................................................................1

1.2 Legislative, Regulatory and Policy Requirements.....................................................................................................2

1.2.1 Criminal Code Act 1913 .................................................................................................................................2

1.2.2 Electronic Transactions Act 2003 ......................................................................................................................3

1.2.3 Evidence Act 1906 ..............................................................................................................................................4

1.2.4 Freedom of Information Act 1992 ...................................................................................................................4

1.2.5 Local Government Act 1995 ..........................................................................................................................5

1.2.6 Public Sector Management Act 1994 ................................................................................................................5

1.2.7 State Records Act 2000 ..................................................................................................................................5

1.2.8 Treasurer’s Instruction 804 ............................................................................................................................6

2. USE OF THIS AUTHORITY ..............................................................................................................................................7

2.1 Scope of this Authority ................................................................................................................................................7

2.1.1 Replacement of Existing Disposal Coverage ...............................................................................................7

2.1.2 Records to which this Authority does not apply .........................................................................................7

2.2 Compliance and Risk Assessment .............................................................................................................................7

2.3 Quality Assurance ......................................................................................................................................................8

2.4 Responsibility for Destruction of State Records ..................................................................................................9
General Disposal Authority for Source Records

DEFINITIONS

**Accessible** means able to be read or interpreted as having meaning.

**Appraisal** means the process of determining which records are to be retained as archives and which will be destroyed.

**Archival value** means continuing or permanent value warranting preservation.

**Authenticity** means the digitized version replicates the attributes of the source record and can be proven to be what it purports to be.

**Born digital records** means records that are created and kept in the digital domain. *(For example: word processed documents, images created on a digital device such as a digital camera, databases, electronic facsimiles and emails.)*

**Completeness** means the digitized version has all the necessary or component parts of the source record.

**Digital record** means any record that exists in binary form and that requires combinations of computer hardware and software to be read and understood.

**Digitization** means the process of converting paper and other media (source records) to digital format.

**Electronic Document Record Management System (eDRMS)** means an automated system used to manage the creation, use, management and disposal of physical and electronically created documents and records for the purposes of:

- supporting the creation, revision and management of records;
- managing the retention and disposal of records;
- improving an organization's workflow; and
- providing evidence of business activities.
General Disposal Authority for Source Records

The system will maintain appropriate contextual information (metadata) and the links between the records to support their value as evidence.

**Government organization** means an organization listed in Schedule 1 or Schedule 3 of the *State Records Act 2000*.

**Government record** means a record created or received by a government organization, or a government organization employee or contractor in the course of working for the organization.

**Integrity** means the digitized version has the same degree of completeness as the source record, so that it is able to be used for the same purposes as the source record.

**Metadata** means data describing the context, content and structure of records. This must be captured to enable the record to be understood and to support its management and use through time.

**Migration** means the act of moving records from one system to another, while maintaining the records’ authenticity, integrity, reliability and usability. Migration involves a set of organized tasks designed to periodically transfer digital material from one hardware or software configuration to another, or from one generation of technology to another.

**Record** means any record of information however recorded and includes:

- a) any thing on which there is writing or Braille;
- b) a map, plan, diagram or graph;
- c) a drawing, pictorial or graphic work, or photograph;
- d) any thing on which there are figures, marks, perforations, or symbols, having a meaning for persons qualified to interpret them;
- e) any thing from which images, sounds or writings can be reproduced with or without the aid of anything else; and
- f) any thing on which information has been stored or recorded, either mechanically, magnetically or electronically.
General Disposal Authority for Source Records

**Recordkeeping Plan** means the plan required under Parts 2 and 3 of the *State Records Act 2000*. *(SRC Standard 2 provides details about the plan).*

**Recordkeeping system** means a system to capture, maintain and provide access to records over time that displays features for ensuring authenticity, reliability, completeness and usability of records that function as evidence of business transactions.

**Reliability** means the contents of the digitized version can be trusted to be a full and accurate representation of the contents of the source record.

**Source record** means any record from which a digitized version has been created.

**State archive** means a State record that is to be retained permanently.

**State organization** means a parliamentary department or a government organization.

**State record** means a parliamentary record or a government record.

**Temporary value** means a lack of archival value, allowing the legal destruction of records within an approved time frame.

**Usability** means the digitized version of the source record can be located, retrieved, presented and interpreted, and maintains the contextual links of the source record to the records and activities for which the source record was created.
PART 1

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The State Records Act 2000 (the Act) provides for the keeping of State records and for related purposes.

Under the Act, the State Records Commission of Western Australia is responsible for establishing principles and standards for recordkeeping across government and for approving Recordkeeping Plans. The State Records Office of Western Australia is, amongst other things, to advise State organizations on recordkeeping and on the preparation and compliance with Recordkeeping Plans.

With the general shift towards and reliance on digital records, State organizations are digitizing records created or received in another format (source records) as part of normal business processes and activities. The Act allows for State records to be reproduced in another form and for the destruction of State records if reproductions are kept.

This General Disposal Authority for Source Records (this Authority) (RD 2009027) provides for the digitization of records and the retention of the reproductions that meet the requirements of the Act and, having been approved by the State Records Commission at its meeting on 22 June, 2009, is the official and continuing authority for the destruction of source records that have been successfully digitized in accordance with this Authority and the Digitization specification (see Appendix 1). State organizations wishing to destroy source records outside the scope of this Authority should consult the State Records Office for further advice.

Organizations are responsible for ensuring that digital records are accessible for as long as they are required and for managing the migration process to new hardware and software platforms whenever these are upgraded. With the fragility of the media (magnetic tape, disks, optical disks etc) on which digital records are stored, and the frequent introduction of new hardware and software, special care must be taken to ensure the preservation of the digital records. If digital records have archival value, individual organizations are responsible for maintaining these records so that they will be accessible for all time.
General Disposal Authority for Source Records

For further information please see the State Records Commission’s Principles and Standards, including Standard 8: Digital recordkeeping, gazetted in 2008 and available online at the State Records Office website. http://www.sro.wa.gov.au/src/policies.asp#principles

1.2 Legislative, Regulatory and Policy Requirements

Legislation that affects the creation, retention and disposal of State records includes, but is not limited to, the:

- Criminal Code Act 1913;
- Electronic Transactions Act 2003;
- Evidence Act 1906;
- Freedom of Information Act 1992;
- Local Government Act 1995;
- Public Sector Management Act 1994;
- State Records Act 2000; and
- Treasurer’s Instruction 804.

1.2.1 Criminal Code Act 1913

The Criminal Code Act 1913 deals with damage to a record and fraudulently altering a record. Under the Code damage to a record “means to deal with the record so that —

(a) information recorded or stored upon the record is obliterated or rendered illegible or irrecoverable; or

(b) it can not convey a meaning in a visible or recoverable form...."
Forging a record means “to make, alter or deal with the record so that the whole of it or a material part of it —

(a) purports to be what in fact it is not;
(b) purports to be made by a person who did not make it; or
(c) purports to be made by authority of a person who did not give that authority....”

An offence is committed under section 85 of the Code if:

“Any public officer who, in the performance or discharge of the functions of his office or employment, corruptly —

(a) makes any false entry in any record;
(b) omits to make any entry in any record;
(c) gives any certificate or information which is false in a material particular;
(d) by act or omission falsifies, destroys, alters or damages any record;
(e) furnishes a return relating to any property or remuneration which is false in a material particular; or
(f) omits to furnish any return relating to any property or remuneration, or to give any other information which he is required by law to give....”

1.2.2 Electronic Transactions Act 2003

The Electronic Transactions Act 2003 is an Act to facilitate electronic transactions, and for other purposes. The Act provides for the validity of transactions that have taken place wholly or partly by electronic communication. That is, if there is a legal requirement to give information in writing, provide a signature, produce a document, or record information, then on fulfilling
General Disposal Authority for Source Records

certain provisions of the Act, those requirements would be taken to have been met if using electronic communications or electronic forms of documents.

1.2.3 Evidence Act 1906


Section 73A (1) states that:

“A document that accurately reproduces the contents of another document is admissible in evidence before a court in the same circumstances, and for the same purposes, as that other document, whether or not that other document exists.”

In determining whether a particular document accurately reproduces the contents of another, a court is not bound by the rules of evidence and may employ measures provided in sections 73A(2)(a)–(d) of the Evidence Act.

It is an organization’s responsibility in terms of its risk management analysis to decide whether to create, retain and rely on a reproduction, in whatever format, of an original record.

1.2.4 Freedom of Information Act 1992

The Freedom of Information Act 1992 prescribes rights and procedures for access to documents held by government organizations. If a request for access under the Act has been lodged, all records relevant to the request must be identified and preserved until action on the request and on any subsequent reviews by the Information Commissioner or the Supreme Court are completed. This applies regardless of whether the records in question are due for destruction.

FOI requests that are State archives must contain copies of the records that were the subject of the requests.
General Disposal Authority for Source Records

1.2.5 **Local Government Act 1995**

The *Local Government Act 1995* requires chief executive officers to ensure that records and documents of the local government are properly kept.

1.2.6 **Public Sector Management Act 1994**

State organizations create, receive and maintain a variety of records to fulfil statutory, business and accountability requirements. The *Public Sector Management Act 1994* section 7(h) requires that “…proper standards are to be maintained at all times in the creation, management, maintenance and retention of records…” and places responsibility for ensuring that proper records are kept with the chief executive officer or chief officer.

1.2.7 **State Records Act 2000**

The retention and disposal of State records falls primarily under the provisions of the *State Records Act 2000*. Under the Act, every State organization must have a Recordkeeping Plan approved by the State Records Commission. The organization and its employees must comply with the Recordkeeping Plan.

A Retention and Disposal Schedule is the retention and disposal component of a Recordkeeping Plan. It must set out which of the organization’s State records are State archives and the retention periods for records that are not State archives. State organizations must retain their temporary value State records for the designated minimum retention period before they may be destroyed.

**State records must be retained or disposed of in accordance with:**

- An approved Retention and Disposal Schedule for the functional records of a State organization; or
- the General Disposal Authority for Administrative Records; or
- the General Disposal Authority for Financial and Accounting Records; or
General Disposal Authority for Source Records

- the General Disposal Authority for Human Resource Management Records; or
- the General Disposal Authority for Local Government Records (for local government use only).

**NB: This Authority applies only to source records covered by one of the above disposal authorities.** State organizations are to contact the State Records Office regarding the retention and disposal of any State records not covered by the above disposal authorities.

### 1.2.8 Treasurer’s Instruction 804

Treasurer’s Instruction 804 - *Retention of accounting records*, is issued under the *Financial Management Act 2006*. 
2. USE OF THIS AUTHORITY

2.1 Scope of this Authority

This Authority applies to source records created or received by State organizations which have been digitized in accordance with the requirements of this Authority and the Digitization specification (see Appendix 1). It does not apply to records subjected to other forms of reproduction, conversion or migration or to born digital records.

2.1.1 Replacement of Existing Disposal Coverage

The requirements of this Authority will, in time, prevail over previously approved individual organizations’ Retention and Disposal Schedules which authorised the destruction of source records. State organizations which have had such a Retention and Disposal Schedule approved prior to the publication of this Authority, may continue to use their Schedule with the expectation that they will work towards implementing the requirements of this Authority within five years or until their Schedule is due for review, whichever is the sooner.

2.1.2 Records to which this Authority does not apply

Where a State organization holds source records to which this Authority cannot be applied, the organization must consult with the State Records Office.

2.2 Compliance and Risk Assessment

A State organization’s digitization process must meet the minimum compliance requirements of Principle 6 of SRC Standard 8 – Digital recordkeeping.

Before developing and implementing policy and procedures for digitization of and subsequent destruction of source records, State organizations are to conduct a compliance and risk assessment to ensure that the processes are appropriate for the organization’s business needs. Matters that are to be considered include, but are not limited to, whether:

- a written law, government policy or directive requires the keeping of the source records in their original format;
General Disposal Authority for Source Records

- the digitized versions of the source records are able to satisfy the requirements of section 79(3) of the State Records Act 2000 (See also: 1.2.7);
- the digitized versions of the source records are able to satisfy the requirements of the Evidence Act 1906 (See also: 1.2.3);
- the digitized versions of the source records are able to satisfy the requirements of the Electronic Transactions Act 2003 (See also: 1.2.2); and
- the digitized versions of the source records are able to satisfy the requirements of an investigation, or inquiry, or a Freedom of Information request, that is in progress or likely or imminent. (See also: 1.2.4).

NB: No source records should be destroyed until the requirements of investigations or inquiries have been satisfied.

2.3 Quality Assurance

Policies and procedures must be in place in accordance with SRC Standard 8, Principle 6 to ensure that the quality of the digitized versions meets the required standard; and that safeguards are in place to ensure the authenticity, reliability, completeness and usability of the record, including:

- comprehensive procedures;
- staff training in digitization procedures;
- procedures for the creation and management of digital masters, in accordance with the Digitization specification (Appendix 1);
- checks to ensure that digitizing equipment settings are correct and the resulting image is to the required standard, in accordance with the Digitization specification;
General Disposal Authority for Source Records

- checks to ensure that source records have been completely digitized, that is, all pages of a document have been scanned (including both front and back if there are markings on both sides);

- the registration of the digitized versions (records) in an eDRMS or business information system (refer to SRO Guideline Management of digital records for further information); and

- that the process is such that the digitized version can be certified as having the same evidential value as the source record.

Source records must be retained for an appropriate period of time prior to their destruction to ensure that all quality control and assurance procedures and checks are completed successfully, master formats have been created and re-digitization of the records has been undertaken where needed.

The minimum period the source records must be retained is six (6) months following successful digitization – see also 1.2.7 and section 3.

2.4 Responsibility for Destruction of State Records

It is the responsibility of the principal officer of a State organization to ensure that State records are not destroyed except in accordance with this Authority or other disposal authorities approved by the State Records Commission.

Officers undertaking disposal are to ensure that source records identified for destruction have been quality checked in accordance with the organization’s quality assurance methodology, and that the records do not fall within the scope of section 3.2 of this Authority. Lists or schedules of records due for destruction should be referred to the organization’s CEO, Corporate Executive, or an authorised senior officer for review and authorisation of destruction. Evidence of the destruction of source records should be included as metadata in the relevant eDRMS and in any other relevant recordkeeping system.

2.5 Recommended Methods of Destruction of State Records

The destruction of State records must be done completely so that no information is retrievable.

Source records approved for destruction should be destroyed by shredding, pulping or trommelling. Burning or burying of State records are not acceptable methods of destruction.
NB: State organizations in regional areas should consult with the State Records Office regarding appropriate destruction methods.
PART 2

3. This Authority

This Authority applies to source records which have been successfully digitized. Section 3.1 sets out the conditions under which source records may be destroyed and section 3.2 sets out the conditions under which source records are not to be destroyed.

3.1 Destruction of source records permitted

Destruction of source records is permitted ONLY IF ALL these conditions are met:

1. The organization’s digitization program meets the minimum compliance requirements of SRC Standard 8: Principle 6; and

2. The process used to create the digitized versions, including the creation and registration of a master copy where the record is to be retained for more than two years, meets or exceeds the specifications outlined in the Digitization specification (Appendix 1); and

3. The digitized versions are registered or captured in an eDRMS or business information system at the time of digitization; and

4. State records are digitized within 5 years of their creation, ensuring that they are physically capable of reproduction and that the digitization process is part of normal, current business practice; and

5. The digitized versions have the required degree of authenticity, integrity, reliability and usability necessary to substitute for the source records for the purposes for which the source records were created or kept; and

6. The digitized versions will be kept and be accessible for as long as required under the relevant approved disposal authority; and
7. The source records are covered by an approved disposal authority \((see \ section \ 1.2.7 \ of \ this \ Authority)\); \textbf{and}

8. The source records are kept for an appropriate length of time after digitizing for quality control purposes \((see \ section \ 2.3 \ of \ this \ Authority)\).

\textbf{NB: The source records must be retained for a minimum period of six (6) months following digitization – see also 1.2.7.}
3.2 **Destruction of source records NOT permitted**

*Destruction of source records is NOT permitted if any one of these conditions applies:*

1. Source records are digitized more than 5 years after the records were created, such as in a retrospective or backscanning records project; or

2. The source records have significant aesthetic or format-based value (*for example: original proclamations, charters, testimonials, intergovernmental treaties or artwork*); or

3. The source records contain a physical element attesting to their authenticity or evidential value (*for example: a corporate seal or watermark*); or

4. The source records are subject to a written law, or a government policy or directive that requires the source records to be kept in original format; or

5. The source records are not covered by an approved disposal authority (*see section 1.2.7 of this Authority*)
General Disposal Authority for Source Records

4. References


5. More Information

For more information relating to this Authority please contact the State Records Office of Western Australia ([www.sro.wa.gov.au](http://www.sro.wa.gov.au)).
Appendix 1

Digitization Specification
Digitization Specification

PURPOSE

The purpose of this specification is to ensure that State organizations create high quality digitized versions of records that are suitable for long term preservation.

Rationale

State organizations may undertake digitization of records, as part of normal business processes and activities, to achieve a number of business outcomes.

This specification applies to digitized versions of records that are created with the intention that the digitized version will stand in place of the source document.

Where the digitized version of a record is intended to stand in place of the source document, then the authenticity, reliability, completeness and usability of the digitized record must be ensured, regardless of the minimum required retention period. Scanning at higher resolution will allow organizations to provide access copies for intranet and internet use, while also providing for a range of other uses such as good quality printing and optical character recognition. Saving the resultant images in a master file format, consistent with international standards and best practice, will allow duplicate images to be made and manipulated well into the future.

If destruction of source records is not being undertaken and digitization is intended only to provide better access to the records for short-term business gain, or to provide alternative formats for storage and preservation of fragile or intensively used materials then a short-term, immediate scanning project may only look to the needs of the current business case, such as the provision of digital images online or through a web-based system. Scanning at low resolution will meet this immediate need, but may well necessitate undertaking another scanning project further down the line, if other business needs become apparent.

Digitization Processes

State organizations undertaking scanning must determine:

- what records are to be digitized;
Digitization Specification

- how the digitized versions are to be created, used, stored, maintained and manipulated;
- whether the source records are to be retained; and
- the costs and risks associated with all stages of the process.

State organizations must have approved policies and procedures for digitization in accordance with SRC Standard 8, Principle 6, which will include but are not limited to:

- **Preparation of source records**
  - Source records are checked to ensure they are physically suitable for digitization. For example, paper records are checked to see if they are free of tears or creases, that staples and pins are removed without damage to the document, and attachments are identified.
  - Records are scanned at original size. Where this is not possible, a resized scan may be made for access purposes only, and the source record retained.
  - Source records that are too big or too fragile to be scanned are identified and removed from the scanning process.

- **Creation of metadata**
  - Appropriate metadata for each record and each version is captured in a recordkeeping system in accordance with the State Records Office Guideline – *Management of digital records*.

- **Calibration of equipment**
  - All equipment is calibrated in accordance with relevant international standards and calibration checks are undertaken at regular intervals, such as monthly or annually, depending on the quantity of digitization undertaken.
  - A master calibration target should be maintained for the life of the digitization equipment, and calibration checks should be measured against this target by a second person.
Digitization Specification

- Calibration targets should include colour and density checks, as well as fine lines for detail. Such targets may be included with equipment purchased for scanning, purchased separately, or may simply consist of a printer test page.

- Use of scanning targets
  - A colour or greyscale target, (such as a Kodak colour scale) and measurement scale (such as a measuring tape or rule) along the horizontal or vertical axis or both, is made for each type of record scanned. Where this is not possible, original samples of the records are maintained.

- Verification of the digitized record
  - The digitized record is checked, preferably by a second staff member, to ensure that the source record has been completely digitized, that is, all pages of a document have been scanned (including both front and back if there are markings on both sides).
  - Source records are re-digitized when necessary.

- Creation of master formats
  - The minimum required retention period of the records is identified.
  - Where the minimum retention period of the records is longer than two (2) years the digitized version must be converted to or saved in an approved master format.
  - Where the minimum retention period of the records is less than two (2) years the digitized version may be saved in scan format as the digitized version should not achieve technological obsolescence in that time.

For further information on appropriate procedures for scanning records see ISO/TR 15801:2004 Electronic imaging - information stored electronically – recommendations for trustworthiness and reliability.
Digitization Specification

Technical Terms

**Bit** – basic unit of computing used to measure information storage capacity. A binary digit having a value of 1 or 0 is used.

**BMP** – Bitmap file format, usually uncompressed.

**Compression** – methods of encoding data so that fewer bits are required for storage.

**DPI** – Dots Per Inch, a measurement of resolution for a digitized document.

**GIF** – Graphics Interchange Format. Uses a patented lossless compression format and is being replaced by PNG.

**JPEG** – commonly used lossy compression format for photographs and images.

**JPEG2000** – International standard for lossless compression of images.

**Lossless compression** – computing algorithms that allow image data to be compressed for storage, while at the same time ensuring that the exact original data can be reconstructed for use.

**Lossy compression** – provides for approximate reconstruction of compressed image data.

**Master format** – describes the formats which must be used in order to best preserve the digital version.

**PDF/A** – Portable Document Format developed by Adobe Systems Inc, and is suited for archival storage of electronic information. It is defined by ISO 19005-1:2005.


**RGB** – Red, Green, Blue colour model used by most visual display technology, scanners and cameras.

**Scan format** – describes the most commonly available scanning formats available on digital copying devices.
Digitization Specification

**Scan resolution** – describes the number of dots per inch and bit resolution for visual scans and sampling rate and bit resolution for audio scans.

**Scan type** – describes whether the digitized version should be in colour or black and white, and the management system to be used in assessing the digitized version on a digital device.

**Source record** – describes the original format of the record to be digitized.

**SVG** – Scalable Vector Graphics. A W3C endorsed language using XML to define two dimensional images and graphics.

**TIFF** – Tagged Image File Format. It includes header data and image data, which may or may not include lossy compression formats. TIFF single images are generally widely supported, but multi-page TIFF documents are not.


**XML** – Extensible Markup Language.
## Minimum scan standards for digitized State records

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<tr>
<th>Source format: TEXT</th>
<th>Scan resolution</th>
<th>Scan type</th>
<th>Scan format</th>
<th>Master format</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>300 dpi</td>
<td>Black and white - 1bit</td>
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<td>Black and white - 1bit</td>
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<td>PDF/A, JPEG 2000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Single page text (A2 or less) – colour</td>
<td>300 dpi</td>
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<td>PDF/A, JPEG 2000</td>
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### Source format: COMPOUND DOCUMENTS

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</tr>
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<tbody>
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## Digitization Specification

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<tr>
<td>Photograph or glossy graphic - Black and white</td>
<td>600 dpi</td>
<td>Grey scale – 16 bit, 8 bits per channel</td>
<td>TIFF v. 6 uncompressed, PDF, JPEG uncompressed, JPEG 2000, PNG, GIF, BMP</td>
<td>JPEG uncompressed, JPEG2000, PNG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photograph or glossy graphic - Colour</td>
<td>600 dpi</td>
<td>Colour – 32 bit RGB, 8 bits per channel</td>
<td>TIFF v. 6 uncompressed, PDF, JPEG uncompressed, JPEG 2000, PNG, GIF, BMP</td>
<td>JPEG uncompressed, JPEG2000, PNG,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>