

Service Information – PROV Reading Room Service Charter

Assistant Director's statement

Public Record Office Victoria (PROV) is committed to providing modern, well-equipped and resource-rich client-facing services at its locations in North Melbourne and Ballarat. This Service Charter supports that commitment by providing clarity and guidance for PROV staff and clients on the range of services that we provide. It explains those services and also outlines how a researcher or other client can maximise the usefulness of a visit to a PROV Reading Room via prior preparation.

By following this Charter we aim to deliver a consistent, excellent service to support all clients in the enjoyment of their research experience.

Graeme Hairsine
Assistant Director, Access Services

Who we are

This charter applies to public and government agency visitors to Public Record Office Victoria's Reading Rooms.

Staff who work in the Reading Rooms are principally from the Access Services and Community Archives teams. However, staff from other areas within PROV regularly work in the Reading Rooms.

Our Vision:

Public Records, Publicly Available.

Our Mission:

To support the efficient management and use of public records in order that the Government is accountable to the community and the historical memory of the Victorian Government is secure and accessible.

Our Commitment to You:

We are committed to providing a quality service to our researchers. We will endeavour to provide access to the collection and services of PROV efficiently and with courtesy.

Services we perform

What we can do for you:

- Explain our services and collection to you.
- Provide research resources to help you identify records which may be relevant to your research. We aim to make these tools available on our web site.
- Provide advice on using these research tools to access the collection.
- Explain what records can and cannot be made available in accordance with the Public Records Act 1973.
- Provide copies of records within PROV service delivery timelines and at advertised prices.
- Deliver records ordered for viewing.

What we are unable to do

Some things we are unable to do for you:

- We are unable to undertake your research for you either within the Reading Room or in response to written or phone requests. We can provide you with contact details of independent search agents who can do research on your behalf for a fee.
- We are unable to interpret the meaning of records for you.
- We are unable to provide legal advice about the records or about any other matter.
- We are unable to provide training in basic computer skills.

Service Standards

Public records shall be made available for inspection subject to the restrictions and limitations imposed by the Public Records Act 1973.

Research Activities

We will:

- Endeavour to provide access to the collection and services of Public Record Office Victoria (PROV) efficiently and with courtesy
- Explain our services and collection to you in a friendly and helpful manner
- Provide research resources to help you identify records which may be relevant to your research and make this tools available on our website
- Provide advice on using our research tools and resources to access the collection
- Demonstrate the use of PROV's website to access PROV information
- Demonstrate and provide advice on using microform equipment and our in-house digital camera service

Timeliness

We will:

- Deliver records that have been ordered for viewing in the Reading Room within PROV service delivery timelines
- Provide copies of records within PROV service delivery timelines
- Issue and return records in the Reading Room in a timely manner

People with Special Needs

We aim to meet the special needs of visitors to our reading rooms. If you have a disability or have other special needs, you are welcome to contact us before your visit in order to discuss how we can best accommodate you.

Measurement and review

We encourage feedback about our services and will use it to review and enhance our services and inform future planning.

In our monthly section reports we measure researcher satisfaction based on feedback and complaints received and we measure service delivery outputs based on specified timeframes. We also conduct periodic reading room surveys.

We report on feedback received and results of our surveys in our section reports and in the PROV Annual Report. We also report our key performance statistics through the Department of Premier and Cabinet and these are published annually with the Treasury Budget Papers.

How you can help us

Research can be a long process and you may not be able to find immediate answers to your research questions.

In order to make the most of your visit:

- Check PROV's website, catalogue, online research resources and the PROVwiki to determine if the information you seek is available online and to better prepare you for undertaking your research.
- Make the most of your contact or visit with us by doing basic background research about your topic beforehand.
- If you are planning on viewing original records, pre-order them via PROV's website before you visit to ensure they are waiting for your arrival.
- If you have access to a digital camera, bring it along to make copies of records in accordance with PROV policy/procedure and providing that you meet the conditions of the Copyright Act (1968).
- It would be an advantage to have basic computer skills before attending our reading rooms, as very limited research can be undertaken without these skills. PROV staff can only provide limited assistance in this area.

In order to help us to help you, please:

- Familiarise yourself with, and abide by, the Terms and Conditions of entry to PROV Reading Rooms.
- Treat all PROV staff and other researchers with courtesy.
- Handle all records in our collection with great care to help preserve this rich and irreplaceable resource for future generations.
- Acknowledge PROV and cite the complete reference for records used in your work.

Contact us

Feedback:

PROV welcomes your feedback and will use it and other feedback to enhance our services and inform future planning.

You can contact us by mail: PO Box 2100, North Melbourne, VIC, 3051; by email at enquiries@prov.vic.gov.au or online at www.prov.vic.gov.au.

Appendix 1: Legal statements

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