



FIRST NATIONS MEDIA ARCHIVES

Digital File Naming and Directory Conventions

THE BASIC PRINCIPLES

In the management of First Nations media archives Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and Law are the guiding principles.

Local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are essential cultural authorities at the centre of all decision making associated with management of the archives.

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1. SIMPLE FILENAMING CONVENTIONS

1.1. File names

A simple file naming convention could comprise the following five components:

<i>Code for the media category (2 characters)¹</i>	<i>Preservation or access code² (2 characters)</i>	<i>Running number (4 characters)</i>	<i>Item number (3 characters)</i>	<i>File format code (up to 8 characters)</i>
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Example (for photograph):

<i>Code for the media category (2 characters)</i>	<i>Preservation or access code (2 characters)</i>	<i>Running number (4 characters)</i>	<i>Item number (3 characters)</i>	<i>File format code (up to 8 characters)</i>
SI	PM	0098	025	tiff

This would be expressed as **SI-PM-0098-025.tiff**, and can be decoded as:

- A still image
- A preservation media item
- The ninety eighth (98th) media set (event/project etc) catalogued
- The twenty fifth image in that ninety eighth (98th) set
- In tiff format.

The location code would be included in the relevant field (suggested as Location Code) in the Archive's database.

¹ See Appendix 1 for suggested codes.

² This component may be usefully extended to also include codes for rushes (RU) or for broadcast masters (BM).

1.2 Folders/directories

Digital files need to be stored³ within folders/directories on hard drives⁴. A simple way of organising the folders/directories on the relevant drives is to use the media category as the top level name for the folder/directory, followed by preservation/access type as subfolder/subdirectory.

For example:

- Still Image>PM
- Moving Image>PM
- Audio>PM
- Still Image>AC
- Moving Image>AC
- Audio>AC

³ For security purposes preservation media needs to be stored in 3 locations. These can include local storage with drives in different physical locations, with regular back up, shared cloud storage, or Virtual Private Networks.

⁴ See the Digital Storage documents on the FNMA Archive Resources Toolkit: toolkit.firstnationsmedia.org.au

2 MORE DETAILED FILE NAMING CONVENTIONS FOR MEDIA MANAGEMENT NEEDS

2.1. File names

A more detailed file naming convention could comprise the following seven components:

<i>Code for the media category (2 characters)</i>	<i>Preservation or access code⁵ (2 characters)</i>	<i>Year (4 characters)</i>	<i>Production running number within the year⁶ (4 characters)</i>	<i>Media title key words (as set by Archive)</i>	<i>Part number (3 characters)</i>	<i>File format code (up to 8 characters)</i>
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For example:

<i>Code for the media category (2 characters)</i>	<i>Preservation or access code (2 characters)</i>	<i>Year (4 characters)</i>	<i>Production running number within the year</i>	<i>Media title key words (as set by Archive)</i>	<i>Part number (3 characters)</i>	<i>File format code (up to 8 characters)</i>
SI	PM	2012	0098	SportsWeekend	025	tiff

This would generate the following file name **SI-PM-2012-0098-SportsWeekend-025.tiff**, decoded as:

- A still image.
- A preservation media item.
- Taken in 2012.
- Created as part of the ninety eighth (98th) production (or catalogued item) of 2012.
- The twenty fifth image in that ninety eighth (98th) production/catalogued item.
- In tiff format.

The use of SportsWeekend as the fifth component of the file name is a simple way to enable a visual scan of the file directory of a digital drive when looking for specific content. It can also be used by Digital Asset Management Systems such as Neofinder to locate files matching search terms.

⁵ This component may be usefully extended to also include codes for rushes (RU) or for broadcast masters (BM).

⁶ The first two digits could be used to represent month (eg January = 01, December =12) with remaining two day or project number- optional.

2.2. Folders/directories

Digital files need to be stored⁷ within folders/directories on hard drives⁸. It is strongly suggested that preservation media and access media be stored on separate drives.

A simple way of organising the folders/directories on the relevant drives is to use the media type (e.g. Still Image) as the top level folder/directory with the media categorisation (preservation master or access copy), followed by year as the subfolders/subdirectories⁹.

This maintains consistency with the file naming protocol above. For example:

- Still Image>PM>2012
- Moving Image >PM>2012
- Audio>PM>2012
- Still Image>AC>2012
- Moving Image >AC>2012
- Audio>AC>2012

Whilst it may seem that this is a repetition of components of the filename it is important to remember that:

- Files are easily “lost” without a coordinated approach to storage locations.
- Files can be moved accidentally and become “orphaned”.

The use of media type, media category and year codes ensures that files can be properly stored from the start and maintained in their correct folder/directory location.

⁷ For security purposes preservation media needs to be stored in 3 locations. These can include local storage with drives in different physical locations, with regular back up, shared cloud storage, or Virtual Private Networks.

⁸ See the Digital Storage documents at <https://www.firstnationsmedia.org.au/fnma-archiving-resources>

⁹ Additional folders/directories may be useful for rushes, as well as for broadcast masters for TV or radio.

3. FILE NAMES AND CULTURAL PROTOCOLS

3.1. Introduction

Before committing to a file name convention, codes relevant to culturally restricted media need to be considered. The Archive's Cultural Plan, as developed in consultation with the Archive's cultural custodians, is the primary source of information for this decision making stage.

The Cultural Plan will ideally have identified protocols for the layout and access arrangements for the Archive. These may include a separation of:

- Men's and women's restricted media into different areas of the Archive or across different digital drives.
- Sorry media in physical or digital areas that need approved access.
- Culturally restricted media in locked cupboards or password protected digital drives.

3.2. Including a cultural restriction code

A useful location for the restriction code is before the Preservation Master or Access code as follows:

<i>Code for the media category (2 characters)</i>	Restriction code¹⁰ (3 characters)	<i>Preservation or access code¹¹ (2 characters)</i>	<i>Year (4 numbers)</i>	<i>Production running number within the year (4 numbers)</i>	<i>Media title key words (as set by Archive)</i>	<i>Item number (3 numbers)</i>	<i>File format code (up to 8 characters)</i>
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An Archive may:

- Choose to create separate folders/directories and/or drives for different cultural restrictions according to the Cultural Plan; or
- Where the culturally restricted digital preservation media is stored together on a drive, the use of a cultural restriction code in the filename will inform Archive staff of what they can look at/listen to according to their own cultural status.

¹⁰ See list of suggested Restriction codes in Appendix below.

¹¹ This component may be usefully extended to also include codes for rushes (RU) or for broadcast masters (BM).

SECTION 4 COORDINATING FILE NAME ALLOCATION

Keeping track of running allocations needs coordination to ensure that numbers aren't skipped or duplicated. To achieve this, the relevant file directory should be sorted by file name to identify the next available running number.

APPENDIX 1

Suggested values for code components

Media category code

- SI for still images (photographs, etc)
- MI for moving images (videos and films)
- AU for audiorecordings (includes voice and music)
- TX for print materials

Preservation or access code

- PM
- AC
- *Optionally*
 - RU (for rushes)
 - BM (for broadcast masters)

Restriction code

- MEN
- OPN
- SEN
- SOR
- WOM