



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Culture and the Arts**
State Records Office of Western Australia

Information Sheet

Starting Your Research

The State Records Office of Western Australia (SRO) holds archives of past and present Western Australian State and Local Government agencies. At present, approximately 90% of the collection has been indexed in our online database - AEON (Archives Explored Online) at:

<http://aeon.sro.wa.gov.au/aeon>

Listings for the remainder of the collection are being added on an ongoing basis.

AEON provides title information about records (such as files, volumes, maps and drawings) transferred to the SRO, the series or class each record belongs to (such as minutes, correspondence files or school admission registers), and the agency (state or local) that was responsible for creating and looking after the record.

1) **Searching on AEON :**

- **Simple Search** – use this search to locate records on a particular topic or to search for a name related record.
 - **Exact phrase** – enter the name or word (or part thereof), or a phrase, such as Fremantle Hospital. The search identifies all agency descriptions, series and items that contain that word or phrase. If the word or name is very short the search will pull up all words containing those letters, e.g. an exact phrase search on “bar” will also find “barracks”.
 - **All words** – enter a phrase. The search identifies all agency descriptions, series and items in which all the words in the phrase are found. If the phrase was Fremantle Hospital, the search may also find other hospitals in the Fremantle area. An **All Words** search is frequently the most useful way of searching the database.
 - **Any words** – enter a phrase. The search will find all agency descriptions, series or items where any of the words are used.

- **Advanced Search** – Use this search if you are looking for records created by a particular government agency, or in a specific series, or where you know the exact item reference. You may also use this search if you are looking for all of a particular type of agency, eg all hospitals registered by SRO or all Police stations. You may also use item search if you have details of the item title.
- **Refining the search** - to fully identify the records you wish to view, use the blue “Detail” button on the right hand side of the page to navigate down to the “Record Item Detail” screen.



In this screen you will find the item number and consignment number, as well as the date range of the contents of the actual item. Use these details to request an item for use in the Search Room. (see our Information sheet **Requesting Archives** for all contact and use information). The “Item access status” field will show if the item access is different to the remainder of the items in the series. To check Series access details, click on the blue “Detail” button in the “Record series containing this item” field.

2) To find records in the AN system:

At present, not all record details have been transferred to the AEON database. Some records received by the SRO before 1988 may only be identified by hardcopy listings in the SRO Search Room. An ongoing work experience project is being undertaken to complete that task. The hardcopy listings are known as Archive Notes, or ANs. (Remote and regional users may email sro@sro.wa.gov.au for assistance in locating records in these listings).

Archival institutions, such as the SRO, document their holdings (the records for which they have custody) by their origin, according to the government body or agency that created or transferred the records. To find the government agency, and hence the AN you need to look at, use the AGENCY index listings in the SRO Search Room.

- Go to the volumes with the green labels and look for the AN number of the appropriate agency.
- Within the AN you will find a cover sheet which describes the series received and listed within that AN. Divisions within the AN note accessions of records which have been transferred to the State Records Office on a given date.
- Identify the series that contains the records you require. Browse through the listing(s) to identify the items you wish to see, noting Accession (similar to Consignment), item or file number and year. Use these details to request items for use in the Search Room, or to locate microfilm records in the Microfilm area. (see also our Information Sheet **Requesting Archives** for more details on using archival records.)

For more information on this or other research questions, please do not hesitate to ask the staff on the Search Room Desk or by phoning 08 9427 3360 or emailing us at sro@sro.wa.gov.au.