Department for Work & Pensions Procedures ▸ RIPA - Weed Applications

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RIPA - Weed Applications

The purpose of this procedure is to remove unnecessary applications for information. This procedure is used by the communications single point of contact (SPOC) to identify applications that are three years old, closed, or with no outstanding RIPA action and gain approval from the senior responsible officer (SRO) to remove them.

Under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) criminal legal enforcement investigators (at EO or HEO grade) can apply for information relevant to criminal enforcement, to be requested from communication service providers.

The SRO checks the details and either approves their destruction or approves their retention for a further period. When the SPOC receives the approval, they carry out the appropriate action, advising the investigator/s where appropriate, the reasons for retention.

For more information refer to the Policy, Law and Decision Making Guidance ⚖
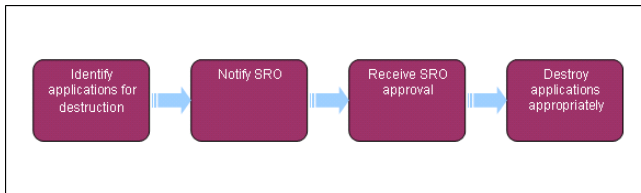
Identify applications for destruction

SPOC actions

1. Send applications for information to the senior responsible officer (SRO) to gain approval for their deletion. Complete the following:

   - Open the archive worksheet in the communication data spreadsheet

   - Highlight all cases that are three years old as of today's date

   - Select edit in the main toolbar and then copy

   - Open a new email and paste the chosen section of the spreadsheet into the email

   - Email the list along with a covering note to the senior responsible officer (SRO) (noting the email **FAO SRO**), advising that the list contains the cases that are three or more years old and are due for deletion.

   - Confirm to the SRO that applications are closed and no Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) action is outstanding on them

Senior responsible officer (SRO) actions

2. On receipt of the email including the section of the archive communication data spreadsheet to be deleted, complete the following:

   - Check the individual files for each application due for destruction held in the communications data shared folder, to confirm that all applications on the list are closed and no further RIPA action is being taken

   - For sensitive cases, open the secure locked cabinet and check the paper files for each application on the list, to ensure the case is closed and there is no outstanding RIPA action

   - Confirm by email to the SPOC that the cases can be destroyed

   - For cases that can be destroyed, ask the SPOC to delete any electronic copies of papers held on the system

   - If the case is sensitive, asks the SPOC to shred all paper files relating to the application

   - If there are cases that need to be retained as investigations are still ongoing, highlight these in a separate email to the SPOC, outlining the action that is required and the retention period

SPOC actions

3. On receipt of the email from the SRO, complete the following:

   For non sensitive cases:

   - Open the folder for the application to be deleted in the central shared directory

   - Delete all documents held within the folder

- Once the folder is empty, delete the folder for the individual application
- Open the home page and select the recycle bin. If the documentation deleted from the individual folder or the folder itself is shown there, delete it from the recycle bin
- Email the SRO to confirm the files that have been deleted using the application reference numbers

For sensitive cases:

- Retrieve the paper file for the individual application to be destroyed
- Shred each piece of documentation held for the application
- Update the sensitive case control log, using a black out pen to delete the sensitive case being destroyed from the list
- Email the SRO to confirm the files that have been destroyed, using the application reference numbers

4. If the SRO has confirmed that the application and associated information should be retained, complete the following:

- Contact the investigator to confirm that action is continuing on the case
- Make a **Note** in the **Comments** section of the communication data spreadsheet that the retention period has been increased to the date suggested by the SRO and will be reviewed on that date
- store the application for the future date

RIPA - Apply For Information

RIPA - SPOC Considers Referral

RIPA - SPOC Issues Notice

RIPA - Information Returned

RIPA - Pay Invoices

RIPA - Weed Applications