



# FIRST NATIONS MEDIA ARCHIVES DIGITISATION PRIORITIES

Three key criteria: Importance, Usage, Media Type

**IMPORTANCE. The importance of the content of the media.** Is the content of the media object significant and of value to the Archive and its communities? The cultural custodians of your Archive are important for this process. Some questions to ask about a media object are:

- Does it have cultural importance?
- Does it have language importance?
- Does it have importance for community history?
- Does it have importance for education?
- Does it have importance because of the law people in it?
- Does it have importance for the history of the media organisation?

**USAGE. If the content of the media isn't all that important, or you can't assess it's importance, does the current or planned usage of the media justify its digitisation.** Is the media object requested a lot, sometimes, never or is likely to be in the future by:

- Community members?
- Researchers?
- Media companies wanting footage for documentaries?
- The Archive itself for usage of the media for an historical anniversary?

**MEDIA TYPE. The deterioration risks of the media's recording material and carrier.** Is the media particularly at risk of deterioration compared to other media? Risks for different types of media can be summarised as follows:

Audio media types	Risk level	Still image media types	Risk level	Moving Image media types	Risk level
¼" Open Reel	High	Chromogenic Colour Print	High	16mm	High
8 Track	High	Silver Gelatin DOP Print (B&W Print)	High	8mm and Super 8	High
Compact Cassette	High	Chromogenic Colour Negative	Low to High	Betacam	Medium
Compact disc (CD)	Moderate	Silver Gelatin Negative (B&W)	Low to High	Betamax	High
Continuous Loop Cartridge (Cart)	High	Colour Film Slide	High	Digital Betacam	Medium
Digital Audio Tape	High	B&W Film Slide	Low to High	DVCAM	Medium
Digital Compact Cassette	High			DVCPRO	Medium
Microcassette	High			DVD	Medium
MiniDisc (MD)	High			MiniDV	High
				Umatic	High
				VHS	Increasingly high risk of loss
				Video8/Hi8	High

## 2. Assigning a Priority Rating

The manner in which Archives apply a priority rating will vary from Archive to Archive. There is no one way or right way to implement priorities. Small Archives may choose not to assign priorities at all. However, an Archive of over 500 hours of recordings will be better placed for digitisation if a staged approach to digitisation is used.

One way of assign a digitisation priority is to allocate scores for Importance, Usage and Type. An example could look like this:

Importance	Usage	Format	Digitisation Priority if scored in either or both Importance or Usage
3 = Important for any cultural or community or historical reason	3 = Requested regularly by community members		High
2 = Important for stock footage or potential reediting in media productions, or for any other reason	2 = Needed now or in the future by the Archive's media organisation for exhibitions, presentations, etc, or for any other reason	2 = At high risk of deterioration or player obsolescence	High
		1 = At medium/moderate risk of deterioration or player obsolescence	Medium
		0 = At low risk of deterioration or player obsolescence	Low
1 = Not important	1 = No record of being requested or needed		Not required

The interpretation of this rating method is as follows:

- Any media object that is scored a 3 in either of the Importance or Usage criteria is given a digitisation priority of High *irrespective of the media type*.
- Media objects that don't score a 3 at all but **do** score a 2 in either of the Importance or Usage criteria, are allocated a digitisation priority of High, Medium or Low *depending on the risk associated with the media type (see 2.1 above)*
- *Media objects that don't score a 3 or a 2 at all in Importance or Usage are rated as Not Required irrespective of the media type.*

*Examples:*

**A VHS of a trip to a dam for a swim is assigned a High Digitisation Priority rating:**

1 Not important

3 Regularly requested by community members

Media type is not relevant as it has scored a 3 in either of the Importance or Usage criteria

**An audiocassette of bush sounds is assigned a High Digitisation Priority rating:**

- 2 Important for production purposes
- 1 No record of being requested
- 1 At High Risk of media loss

**A CD of bush sounds is assigned a Medium Digitisation Priority rating:**

- 2 Important for production purposes
- 1 No record of being requested
- 1 At Moderate Risk of media loss

### 3. However: can you digitise it?

Before a media object is assigned a place in the digitisation queue two issues need to be addressed:

**The condition the media.** Is the media corrupted or damaged. If so, can you repair it yourself or does it need to be sent to specialists for repair.

**The status of the media.** Is the media the copyright of the Archive's organisation? If not, it's not legal to digitise it although you may seek formal permission of the publisher for this purpose.