



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

## Information Sheet

### A GUIDE TO COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE (CSO) INWARD AND OUTWARD CORRESPONDENCE

# 1883 – 1973

## EXPLANATORY NOTES

In 1883, the method of indexing and filing CSO correspondence was changed. Related correspondence was attached to one file. After 1895, copies of outward correspondence were attached to the relevant file. The main advantage of this new system is that related papers are filed together and the minutes on the cover sheet provides a complete record of action upon the matter in question.

The CSO indexed all CSO correspondence in large volumes. It is necessary to use these CSO indexes to locate a letter. For this period, both subject indexes (the subject matter and letter) and nominal indexes (the surname of the writer or the name of the association, club, etc.) can be used. These indexes are located at the following accession numbers:

#### **Subject indexes to inward and outward correspondence:**

Acc 554/7 - 16  
Acc 972/1 – 2  
Acc 752/20 - 31

#### **Nominal indexes to inward and outward correspondence:**

Acc 554/1 - 6  
Acc 752/32 - 40

These indexes cover a period up to 1918. For correspondence after 1918, it is necessary to use AN 24/1 which provides a complete listing of CSO files up to 1973.

On occasion, the indexes show another file reference in the column second from the right. These refer to related papers, but the letter may even have been placed with this other file at some stage. The best way to ascertain in which file the letter may be found if it cannot be located through the normal route is to check the file registers for this period.

#### **Registers to inward and outward correspondence:**

Acc 554/17 - 45  
Acc 752/1 - 16  
Acc 972/17 – 18

The **registers** provide a numerical listing of files for each year and will state whether they were placed with another file or transferred to the department most concerned with the subject. Please be aware, though, that this is still no guarantee that the file will be located as many have not survived.

*AN 24 provides more information about CSO correspondence.*

**Staff in the State Records Office Search Room are always happy to assist with your query.**

# QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

## Inward Correspondence

Use CSO **Subject and/or Nominal Indexes\*** to locate relevant letter (see listing overleaf).



Once the relevant letter is located, note the **file number** and the **year** the letter was written.



Inward correspondence between 1883 and 1900 is located at **Accession 527**.  
Inward correspondence between 1901 and 1973 is located at **Accession 752**.



As this correspondence has not been microfilmed, it is necessary to complete a call slip and hand it in at the 4<sup>th</sup> floor enquiry desk to view the original letters.

## Outward Correspondence

Use CSO **Subject and/or Nominal Indexes\*** to locate relevant letter (see listing overleaf).



Once the relevant letter is located, note the **file number** and the **date of the letter**.



Outward correspondence was copied into letterbooks **up to 1899**. Scan chronological listing in AN 24 (outward correspondence) and locate the correct date for the letter. Note the **volume number** the letter will be in. Then go to the appropriate volume which is on microfilm at **Accession 488\*\***.

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**From 1895**, copies of outward correspondence were attached to file with inward correspondence. To access outward correspondence for this period, complete call slip and hand in at the Search Room Enquiry Desk.

\* CSO *Subject and Nominal Indexes and Registers* can be accessed in the State Records Office Search Room.

\*\* Accession 488 is on microfilm in the State Records Office Microforms Area.