

MWA DATA RETENTION POLICY

Revision History

Version 1.0 (Johnston-Hollitt) 2020 October 14

Version 2.0 (Stapleton/Walker/Sleap) 2022 July 06 – Finalised for Board Approval

Version 3.0 (Stapleton/Chico/Sleap) 2024 August 29

Purpose

1. MWA data is archived at the Pawsey Supercomputing Research Centre (Pawsey). This policy addresses the retention and deletion of MWA data from the archive at Pawsey.
2. MWA's data storage allocation at Pawsey is limited, and as such there is no expectation that data will be kept indefinitely. The onus is on researchers to ensure that they conform to the data retention/publication policies and requirements of their institutions by downloading/copying their MWA data to an external location, if required, since MWA data may be deleted to ensure capacity for new observations.
3. The intent of this policy is to ensure that the MWA can continue to observe (i.e., take new data), while also preserving existing data for as long as possible before it is deleted to free up archive capacity.

Data retention and deletion

4. To ensure adequate storage for new MWA observation data, prior to the commencement of a new MWA observing season, data will be flagged for deletion by the MWA Operations team (refer to Procedure), having regard to the age and utility of the observations.
5. Current MWA Collaboration members will then be notified of a summary of the observations flagged for deletion and will have an opportunity to apply for the retention of data flagged for deletion during a 4-week consultation period. An application for data retention must be approved by the MWA Director, or delegate, in consultation with the Principal Scientist(s), where required.
6. All data flagged for deletion that have not been approved for retention will be deleted from the archive at the end of the consultation period.

7. Retained observations will once more become subject to deletion in accordance with the Procedure at the beginning of the following observing semester. If additional retention is required for observations that were previously approved to be retained, a new application must be submitted in accordance with item 5.
8. The Principal Investigator (**PI**) of an MWA project is also encouraged to nominate observations from their project to be flagged for deletion (for example: where data have been unused or found to be of limited value). PIs can nominate their own data for deletion at any time, and those observations will be flagged for the following semester (see Procedure).
9. MWA data collections may be eligible for externally funded ringfenced storage or protection methods. In these cases, the deletion clauses of this policy may not apply.

Approval Authority

10. This policy will be periodically reviewed and revised by the MWA Board, as required.
11. If users of this policy identify issues relevant to this policy, but not explicitly covered by this policy, these issues can be raised in writing to the MWA Board Chair, for consideration by the Board.

MWA DATA RETENTION PROCEDURE

1. At the finalisation of an observing semester's Call for Proposals, the MWA Operations Team will calculate the expected amount of data that will be ingested to the MWA data archive during the forthcoming semester. The MWA Operations team will then determine the observations in the MWA archive to be flagged for deletion, to ensure adequate storage for the observing semester.
2. The MWA Operations Team retain discretion to identify an additional 'margin' of observations for possible deletion, as a contingency to mitigate the risk of insufficient deletions.
3. The observations identified for deletion:
 - will be the oldest observations in the MWA archive;
 - will be of least utility, as determined by the Principal Scientist in consultation with the MWA Operations Team;
 - will include any observations nominated for deletion by their project PIs;
 - will not include any observations which have not completed their proprietary period (see MWA Data Access Policy);
 - will not include any observations which are included in any "data collections" stored using ring-fenced, separately funded storage.
4. MWA members will be notified of observations identified for deletion via the MWA members mailing list. The email will include:
 - a summary of observations identified for deletion including their date ranges and project codes (or a link to a web page showing the same);
 - identification of the observations which have been nominated by PIs for deletion; and
 - notification of commencement of a 4-week consultation period.
5. During the consultation period, MWA members may apply in writing to the MWA Director (or delegate) for data to be retained until the following observing semester.
6. The application for the retention of observations must identify:
 - the dataset in question (the observations list details within the notification email from the MWA Operations team is sufficient);

- total size of the dataset; and
 - the reason(s) for temporary retention of the dataset, for example, the significance of the dataset, the data retention requirements of the researcher's institute, and the proposed plan for copying and storing the dataset offsite.
7. The MWA Director (or delegate) will respond in writing to the applicant with an approval (with or without caveats) or rejection of their retention application. Their consideration of applications will include, but not be limited to:
 - The size of the dataset and the total size of all requested data retentions for an observing semester;
 - The current / potential / future utility of the observations in the dataset; and
 - Any previous applications for the dataset's retention.
 8. If an application for data retention is approved (or approved with caveats), the MWA Operations team will remove those observations from the list to be deleted.
 9. At the close of the consultation period and the Time Allocation Committee (TAC) process, the MWA Operations team will present the summary list of observations for deletion to the MWA Director for sign off.
 10. The MWA Operations team will then delete the approved observations in accordance with the Lead Institute's internal policies and procedures.
 11. At any time, the current PI of an MWA Project may nominate in writing to the MWA Operations team any observations related to their MWA Project for deletion, together with a rationale. An interface in the MWA ASVO web front end will provide this functionality. These observations will then be deleted in accordance with the Procedure outlined above, or otherwise, if their immediate deletion is supported by the MWA Director.
 12. At any time, the MWA Director may request the commencement of this Procedure if archive capacity limits the ingest of Director's Discretionary Time (DDT) observations.

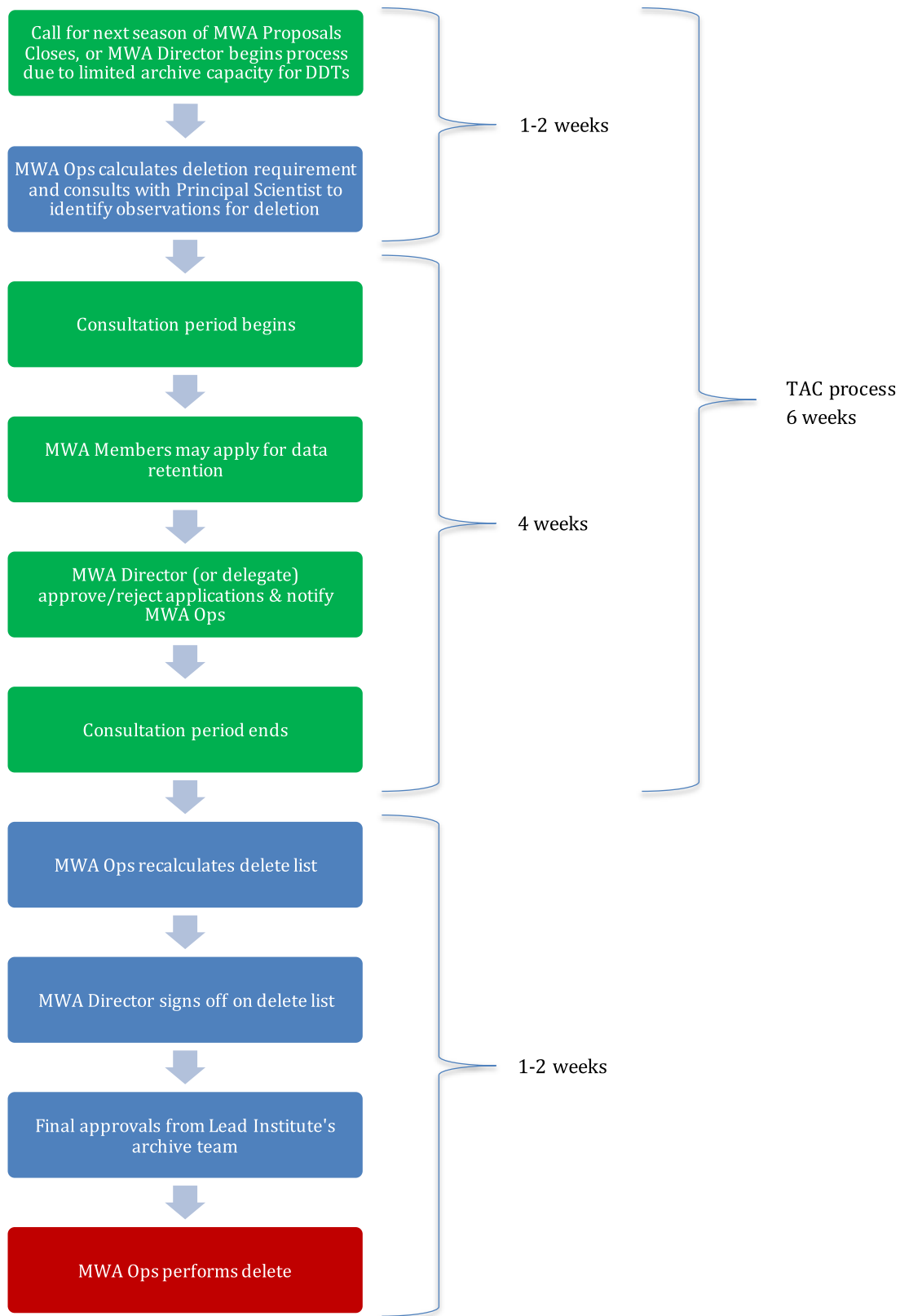


Figure 1: Flowchart of Data Retention procedure and notional timeline