



**ALBOX**  
AUSTRALIA PTY LTD

ABN 30 008 271 172

# ARCHIVE PRODUCTS CATALOGUE

ACID FREE - METAL FREE - ADHESIVE FREE



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# ARCHIVE STORAGE

## - Paperboard or Polypropylene

Progress has been made in Australia during the last four years in the quality, variety and availability of archive storage boxes and enclosures. Australian Archivists have used considerable initiative to influence an improved availability of better quality paperboard, made in Australia. Albox Australia Pty Ltd has also developed a range of box designs and archival storage systems in polypropylene.

It was natural that some overlap occurred during those development processes. Archivists are now being offered boxes and enclosures for particular applications in either paper or polypropylene, but there is little published information to help them choose which is best for the job. The relative merits of these materials are necessarily dependent on budget factors as well as chemical, physical and mechanical properties. The best answers may test budget limits but in some climatic conditions and for some situations, polypropylene provides the best solutions.

### Chemical Aspects

Many Archivists have been trained in paper practices not in plastics. To some Archivists choosing a plastic has meant taking risks

and Archivists have to be careful. In many cases this has however resulted in decisions being made in favour of the known bad characteristics of paperboard because it is cheap rather than using the unproven virtues of the more costly polypropylene.

This quandary has now been resolved by Albox Australia arranging for tests on Australian polypropylene by the Image Permanence Institute in Rochester, New York. Megara (Australia) Pty Ltd, who produce the "Promeg" polypropylene used by Albox, submitted their archive grade sheet to the Institute for testing. The Institute reported that the samples met all of the requirements of the internationally recognised "Photographic Activity Test". No paperboard box, acid free or otherwise, could be expected to perform so well.

Paperboard has had its problems. The Australian quality was not acid free. Australian Archives' co-operation with Australian manufacturers, and the fortuitous changes in papermaking practices that have been occurring in Australia for environmental reasons, have resulted in there now being considerable quality improvements. At this stage the improved quality is restricted to large buyers but it may eventually become more generally available. It is understood that it is alkaline buffered. Polypropylene is an inert and stable product which requires no buffering.

*White and damage - what happens when valuable items aren't stored properly.*



### Physical Aspects

The physical and mechanical properties of paperboard and polypropylene are quite different. It is not usually possible or desirable to simply make a paperboard box design out of polypropylene. As will be discussed later paperboard has the advantage of being often, but not always, a cheaper unit cost.

Polypropylene is however a superior material. It will not rot, support mould growth or absorb moisture. Polypropylene box designs feature outfitting lids, built-in closure clasps and greater strength, particularly along creases and folds, without any increase in weight. Independent tests performed on both paperboard and polypropylene boxes have shown that after repeated flexing and rugged handling no reduction at all in the strength of the creases and the folds was evident in the polypropylene boxes but the cardboard boxes showed considerable wear and breakage. Warehouse space requirements are normally 50% less for unassembled polypropylene boxes. Both paperboard and polypropylene boxes can be delivered flat and assembled at time of use. Ease of assembly is about the same.

Paperboard is of course flammable and so is polypropylene but polypropylene requires a temperature of some 600°C to ignite. The softening point lies between 140 - 150°C and the melting point is approx 165°C. The low thermal conductivity of polypropylene (about one hundredth that of brass) gives some protection against external temperature changes.

The most common real life fire risk situation in archives is not fire itself but when the sprinklers are activated or the fire brigade arrives. The fire is quenched but the paperboard boxes get soaked. Polypropylene boxes with outfitting lids will protect their enclosures, unless submerged, and the boxes themselves are not damaged by the water. Weight increase on exposure to water at room temperature is less than 0.2%. Furthermore solid polypropylene can be completely immersed in water without loss of mechanical strength or function.

### In The Tropics

In areas of high relative humidity, paperboard boxes will absorb moisture resulting in a marked decrease in the performance of the box. Polypropylene as a material has an extremely



*Inspecting white ant damage at the State Library of South Australia*

low, virtually zero rate of water absorption and will not become "soggy" as a result of use in humid climates.

The fact that polypropylene will not rot, mildew or support growth is significant, particularly in pre-use storage and handling where conditions are often not ideal. Polypropylene is not eaten by rats or vermin as it has no food value or attraction.

### Price

Paperboard is usually cheaper than polypropylene to produce. The price difference has however closed in recent years. Large contract buyers can get very competitive paperboard prices. However, polypropylene can be produced economically in smaller quantities and as a result can offer better prices for small and medium volume orders. If boxes of different colours are needed for archive coding, the shorter production quantities can usually be handled by polypropylene without penalty.

Australian polypropylene competes very favourably with imported acid free paperboard. In large items, such as textile storage boxes, the savings can be large.

Albox has a policy of stocking its more popular polypropylene lines to assist the archivists needing smaller quantities. The ability to buy a few at a time can save a lot of funds being tied up in warehouse stocks.

If whole of life value is more important than initial cost then polypropylene must be considered. Conservators responsible for relocating very old paperboard boxes know the high labour costs involved and the time taken in re-boxing.

### **Box Designs That Favour Either Paperboard or Polypropylene**

Because of the price factor there are some paperboard designs, eg: the standard or No. 1 Archive Box, which are produced in very large runs and at very low prices.

Because of its mechanical properties polypropylene is considered to be a superior product limited only by its initial price. It could be argued that very precious records justify the price difference. In some situations, such as photographic storage systems, polypropylene is virtually the only solution. Other examples include Large Textile Boxes, Glass Negative Boxes and Audio Tape Boxes. If durability is a factor (much rehandling) then polypropylene can be a preferred option for Microfilm Boxes, Satchels, Folders and Binders.

Albox has also developed archival quality ring binders with nylon ring fittings that are much more durable than paperboard or P.V.C. equivalents. As offices switch to using these archival binders - which cost no more - the tedious and costly transfer of files into storage can be greatly reduced.

For photographic materials the Albox polypropylene systems - including a variety of storage pages and enclosures - are the preferred option as they contain no adhesives or metals. They also cost much less than "mylar" and acid free paper systems.

### **The Environment**

Because of the need to strictly control the production chemistry it is unlikely that quality acid free archive boxes will ever be made from recycled materials. Both paperboard and

polypropylene are however recyclable. Polypropylene can be re-used indefinitely thus reducing the "trash factor" and no trees are cut down to produce it.

### **Summary**

Archivists and Conservators in Australia are getting a much wider choice of options when seeking storage materials. There is no single answer to whether paperboard or polypropylene is the best and most cost effective solution to any situation. The good news is that there are now quality options.

Polypropylene is here to stay but at this stage the only grade cleared for archival use in Australia is "Promeg" which is used exclusively by Albox.



*Albox Type 1 boxes as used by the Public Records Office of Hong Kong*

Many paperboard boxes will of course continue to be used, both acid free and non acid free, because of the initial cost factor. Polypropylene boxes are however finding a widening acceptance partly as a result of the whole of life value aspect. For records requiring maximum preservation standards they are now an available and approved quality option.

Thanks largely to these initiatives Australia is becoming, or has become, a world leader in archival practice and innovation. Australia is not the first to use polypropylene - it is in use by the Library of Congress in the U.S.A. - but the Australian range of design options is believed now to be well in advance of anything overseas.

#### Quality Control Tests

Independent tests by Image Permanence Institute at Rochester Institute of Technology New York have been undertaken on:

- "Promeg" polypropylene which is used in all Albox boxes and enclosures
- \* Polypropylene film used in the Albox photographic storage pages
- \* Polyethylene film used in the carton liners for No.1 Storage boxes - described in this catalogue.

The results on the above have been received and are favourable.

**"Promeg" polypropylene has also passed National Archives of Australia tests.**

Tests by E.T.R.S. Pty Ltd, an internationally recognised independent testing authority, were also undertaken. They compared the acid response and chemical stability of the Albox polypropylene boxes and the recently introduced Australian acid free paperboard boxes.

The results were:

#### **"Stability of Materials:**

During the acetone digestion, no significant degradation was observed of any of the polypropylene or cardboard samples. During the boiling water leach process, the polypropylene samples maintained their integrity. During the same process, the cardboard corrugations separated and sufficient fibres were released to slow subsequent filtration. An intense blue dye was also released. None of the samples gave a detectable acid



*Restoration and repairs are an on-going process in the State Library of South Australia*

response when filtrated. The detection limit corresponds to 0.1% by weight sulphuric acid in the original sample.

**No detectable metals were released from the polypropylene which gave the same results as a control blank.** Sodium and calcium were leached from the cardboard together with some potassium, magnesium and sulphur (probably as sulphate) and a small quantity of copper and aluminium."

#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:**

*Photographs have been supplied and reproduced by the kind permission of the State Library of South Australia.*

*Albox Australia acknowledges the assistance provided by senior management within the State Library, and Mr Peter Zajicek for his time and assistance in supplying photo images in digital format.*

## TYPE 1 ARCHIVE STORAGE BOX

The Type 1 Box is supplied in 1.0mm polypropylene.

The innovative finger pull device assists removal from the shelf. There are no finger holes to give access to pests or pollutants.

The outfitting lid ensures optimum protection from water or dust. The ideal Type 1 Box for records that are handled regularly.

380 x 260 x 175mm



**NOTE:**

**All dimensions are internal**

**All boxes will be delivered flat for easy assembly  
at the time of use**

## A2 AND A3 BOXES

Strong durable storage containers for documents and artefacts.  
A drop side base allows for easy access for handling of contents.



The bases of both the A2 and A3 boxes are made in 1.4mm black polypropylene with the lids in 1.0mm grey polypropylene

A2 Library Box -  
610 x 440 x 100mm

A3 Library Box -  
440 x 310 x 100mm

## A4 AND FOOLSCAP BOXES

The ideal library shelf storage system for magazines, documents and pamphlets.

Both the A4 and foolscap boxes are manufactured in 1.0mm grey polypropylene

A4 Box -  
320 x 230 x 100mm

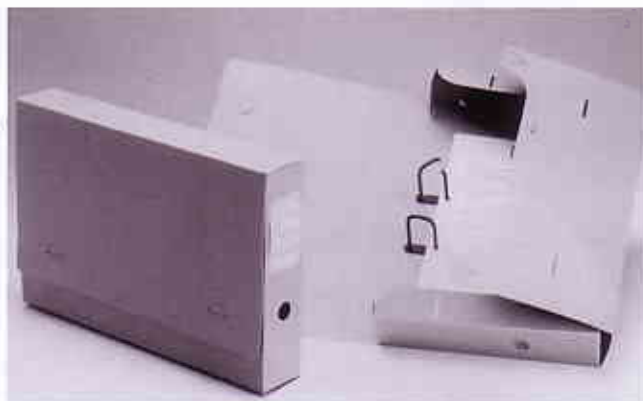
Foolscap Box -  
370 x 230 x 100mm



## 2-RING ALBOX FILE BOX - 55mm RING CAPACITY - 62mm SPINE

OPTIONAL/REPLACEABLE 2 RING FILING SYSTEM.  
Allows the File Box to be used as a box or as a file.

- \* PROVISION FOR INDEX CARDS
- \* EASILY ACCESSED "OPEN OUT" BOX DESIGN
- \* SUITABLE FOR **FOOLSCAP** and **A4** FILING



390 x 260 x 62mm  
Stocked in 1.0mm grey polypropylene

NB: Used for hole-punched documents only. Plastic sleeves will not fit in this file box

## MICROFILM BOXES

35mm and 16mm

- \* Lightweight yet strong/durable
- \* Colour options available
- \* Made in 0.8mm polypropylene

**35mm -**

98 x 98 x 43mm - stock

**16mm -**

98 x 98 x 23mm - contract



Can also be used to hold 12 or 6 diskettes.

# SMALL AND LARGE TEXTILE BOXES

## STRONG CONSTRUCTION - RESISTS BUCKLING

These textile boxes have been designed and manufactured in heavy duty 1.4mm polypropylene with a grey lid and black base.

They are an excellent alternative to the expensive imported paperboard products

Small -  
800 x 540 x 170mm

Large -  
1350 x 540 x 140mm



# PRINT MUSIC HOLDERS

## MUSIC SCORE COVER (PIC. 1)

Stock colour - Black; 320 x 255 x (up to) 25mm

## MUSIC SCORE AND CHORAL FOLDER (PIC. 2)

Score Stock colour - Black;

355 x 265 x (up to) 30mm

Choral Stock colour - Charcoal Grey;

310 x 235 x (up to) 30mm

## MUSIC SCORE AND CHORAL SATCHEL

(see satchels page 12 for pic.)

Stock colour - Grey; Score 330 x 250 x 20mm

Choral 280 x 185 x 20mm

## MUSIC SCORE BOX (PIC. 3)

Stock colour - Black;

390 x 275 x 62mm

(Optional handle available)



1



2



3

# ACCESSORIES

## POLYETHYLENE BOX LINER FOR TYPE 1 BOXES

Your Paperboard boxes provide little or no protection against accidental sprinkler or water damage. In such circumstances a box liner can save the contents even though the box is destroyed.

\*ACID FREE POLYETHYLENE



## ACID FREE TISSUE

Sheet size - 430 x 700mm in 18gsm. The tissue is non tarnish and is suitable for the wrapping of costumes etc. in textile conservation.

Non buffered.

## ACID FREE ADHESIVE LABELS

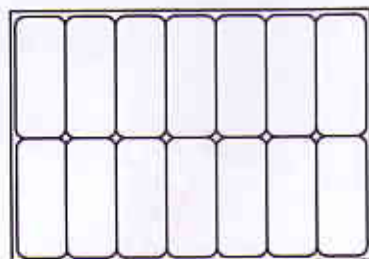
\* Specially formulated permanent acid-free adhesive to stick to polypropylene.

\* Supplied in A4 sheets for ease of printing

\* Two label sizes available:

99 x 33.9mm - 16 labels/sheet

99 x 38.1mm - 14 labels/sheet



CALL, FAX OR EMAIL ALBOX FOR PRICES OR A QUOTE.



## 'SOLANDER' TYPE BOXES

- A. 460 x 320 x 55mm
- B. 565 x 410 x 55mm
- C. 640 x 490 x 55mm
- D. 690 x 510 x 55mm
- E. 740 x 640 x 55mm
- F. 820 x 565 x 55mm
- G. 870 x 640 x 55mm
- H. 820 x 720 x 55mm
- I. 1020 x 820 x 55mm
- J. 1020 x 770 x 55mm
- K. 1225 x 820 x 55mm
- L. 845 x 665 x 55mm

### The lower cost alternative to 'solander' boxes

- \* 'Clam-shell' design
- \* Outer box 1.4mm grey polypropylene\*
- Inner liner 0.8mm black polypropylene +
- \* 12 sizes to choose from, or create your own size
- \* No minimum quantities apply to this product
- + **NOTE: Larger sizes may be supplied in varying colours of polypropylene, depending on material availability at time of production**

## TABLOID NEWSPAPER BOXES

- \* Base and lid style
- \* Lid made in 1.0mm and base in 1.4mm polypropylene.

Small size - 415 x 315 x 100mm

Large size - 485 x 325 x 100mm



# BOXES MADE TO ORDER

## SATCHELS

\* Various sizes and colours

Standard dimensions - 330 x 250  
with 7, 10, 15, 20, 25mm spines

Large - 510 x 407 x 25mm satchel

NOTE: 20mm in dove grey is a  
stock item



## GLASS NEGATIVE BOXES

Whole plate - 235 x 175 x 30mm

Whole plate - 235 x 175 x 63mm

Half plate - 280 x 160 x 130mm

Quarter plate - 145 x 120 x 37mm



## AUDIO TAPE BOXES

\* Made in 0.8mm polypropylene

10 1/4" - 275 x 275 x 25mm

10" - 270 x 270 x 17mm

7" - 185 x 183 x 17mm

5" - 135 x 133 x 17mm

3" - 85 x 83 x 14mm

NOTE: Available with built-in hub  
for 10" & 10 1/4" reels



## AERIAL FILM BOX

^ Made in 1.4mm polypropylene

260 x 140 x 140mm



## RECORD BOXES

\* Made in strong 1.4mm (16")  
or 1.2mm (12", 10" and 7")  
polypropylene

16" - 420 x 450 x 60mm

12" - 335 x 355 x 60mm

10" - 280 x 300 x 60mm

7" - 205 x 230 x 60mm



## 16mm CINEFILM BOXES

\* Made in 0.8mm polypropylene

\* 5 sizes available -

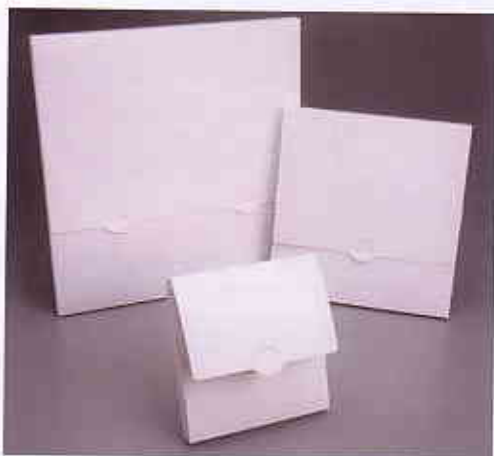
185 x 185 x 23mm

275 x 275 x 23mm

320 x 320 x 23mm

355 x 355 x 23mm

390 x 390 x 23mm



## MICROFICHE BOXES

\* Made in 0.8mm polypropylene

\* 3 sizes available -

168 x 125 x 44mm

168 x 125 x 22mm

168 x 108 x 22mm



# BOXES MADE TO ORDER

## HAT BOX

\* Originally designed for the storage of large hats

\* Made in 1.0mm polypropylene

450 x 450 x 300mm



## DIRECTORY HOLDER

\* Made in strong 1.4mm polypropylene

250 x 280 x 100mm



## CD BOX

\* Lightweight yet strong durable 1.0mm polypropylene

\* Holds 23 CDs in their cases

\* Holds 35 CDs in slimline cases

245 x 130 x 145mm



## TYPE 3, 5 & 8 BOXES

\* Australian Standard dimensions

Type 3 - 1.0mm polypropylene  
371 x 156 x 112mm

Type 5 - 1.4mm polypropylene  
380 x 215 x 140mm

Type 8 - 1.4mm polypropylene  
850 x 105 x 100mm



## MINIMUM QUANTITY ORDERS MAY APPLY

### CD FILE

- \* Made in 1.0mm polypropylene, with 25mm capacity rings
- \* Complete with 15 CD Pages (holds 30 CD's)
- \* Refill pages available



### SATCHELS

- \* Made in either 0.6 or 0.8mm polypropylene
- \* Choose from the solid or translucent range of colours
- \* Various sizes available including A4 with a range of capacities from 5mm to 60mm



### FILE COVERS

- \* Made in either 0.6 or 0.8mm polypropylene
- \* Choose from the solid or translucent range of colours
- \* Several styles to choose from. Ideal for lateral filing



### 'MANILLA' TYPE FOLDERS

- \* Made in 0.6 or 0.8mm polypropylene
- \* 4 sizes available - 345 x 235 x 3, 12, 21 or 30mm spines
- \* Expandable spine widths



# OTHER ALBOX PRODUCTS AVAILABLE

## CUSTOM MADE PRODUCTS

For more information about having a product made for packaging or presentation please contact Albox directly.



## SCREEN PRINTING AND FOIL STAMPING

You can personalise any of our products with screen printing or foil stamping. For only a small additional cost you can add your company's logo or name. Call Albox for details.

## PHOTOGRAPHIC ALBUMS AND PAGES

See separate Albox photographic catalogue.



**archfiles.com**  
For more information about our new 'green' self-assembly archfiles, please visit our new website: [www.archfiles.com](http://www.archfiles.com) or phone Albox for assistance.



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