



## ZURICH GROUP GERMANY

COMPLIANCE BOOST  
FOR INSURANCE GROUP

Zurich Group Germany consolidates document archives with Iron Mountain, enabling process standardisation with enhanced security and compliance

**CHALLENGE:**

To outsource, consolidate and centralise document archives from separate service centres across Germany

**SOLUTION:**

Unified records management service featuring a bespoke email-based ordering system and secure destruction of time-expired files

**VALUE:**

A secure archive process improving the retrieval of paper files with integrated access from a single source

“As a support services partner Iron Mountain has done a great job. Its continued support is highly appreciated.”

Raphael Lamskemper  
Head of Document  
Logistics, Germany  
Zurich Service GmbH



Raphael Lamskemper

**CLIENT**

Zurich Group Germany is part of the worldwide Zurich Insurance Group. With premium income of about EUR 6.1 billion (2012), investments of more than EUR 31 billion, and nearly 6,000 employees, Zurich is one of the leading insurance companies in Germany. It offers innovative and superior insurance, pension, and risk management solutions from a single source, with a focus on high quality and individual customer orientation.

Zurich Service GmbH runs the central support operation for Zurich Group Germany.

**CHALLENGE**

Although Zurich Group Germany has operated an electronic document and workflow management system for many years, it still has an extensive legacy archive of paper documents. To meet statutory and regulatory requirements it is required to retain some of these, particularly insurance contracts and any documents generated in support of insurance claims.

Historically, the document archives were stored at eight Zurich service centres and four other external storage locations across Germany. But with a planned rationalisation of service centres and the adoption of a new standardised and centralised workflow, the legacy archives had to be consolidated into one new home.

Raphael Lamskemper, Head of Document Logistics, Germany at Zurich Service GmbH, explains: “Our aim was to centralise the document archives and standardise the process across the business. Logistics and storage arrangements needed to assure security and allow fast and accurate retrieval of files when required.”

Zurich Group Germany issued a tender to prospective records management service providers for the consolidation and off-site storage of its paper archives. Iron Mountain emerged as the successful bidder.

Raphael Lamskemper says: “Our specialists audited the Iron Mountain facilities including processes, security and fire protection arrangements. Iron Mountain satisfied all our requirements and tabled a cost-effective proposal.”

# CASE STUDY INSURANCE

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“In selecting a service supplier one of the most important aspects was quality of service. Iron Mountain performs very well and delivers against the required service level to our satisfaction.”

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### SOLUTION

The file consolidation exercise was carried out over thirteen months and involved a project team from Iron Mountain. Files stored by Zurich on open shelves were catalogued and boxed. Each box of files was allocated a unique bar code and registered on the Iron Mountain records management system. For pre-boxed files, bar codes were allocated and cross-referenced against internal Zurich Group Germany records of content.

Iron Mountain worked with Zurich Group Germany to develop a bespoke ordering system that allows any employee to raise a retrieval request by email. These orders flow directly into the Iron Mountain archive management system for processing.

The standard retention period for files is ten years, in accordance with the Deutsches Handelsgesetzbuch (HGB) / German Commercial Code), but some vital documents have longer-term or even indefinite retention periods. To optimise costs, only vital documents and those that are likely to require retrieval are identified and placed into standard storage, whereas those designated as inactive are sent into deep storage. For files in standard storage, the agreed service level is to process retrieval requests within 24 hours for next day delivery by courier to the mail room at the required Zurich Group Germany office. Typically, around 300 file retrieval requests are processed every month.

Raphael Lamskemper confirms: “In selecting a service supplier one of the most important aspects was quality of service. Iron Mountain performs very well and delivers against the required service level to our satisfaction.”

Files reaching their designated retention date are flagged to Zurich Group Germany in a regular report. The company either extends the

retention period or authorises secure destruction, which is arranged by Iron Mountain using a sustainable process that takes account of data protection legislation. As evidence for compliance purposes, Iron Mountain provides Zurich Group Germany with a destruction certificate to confirm the procedure has been followed.

### VALUE

In choosing Iron Mountain for offsite storage of its archives, Zurich Group Germany has been able to free up accommodation, refocus internal resources, and standardise the archive process across its business, improving the availability of files through integrated access from a single source. Today, Iron Mountain holds nearly 85,000 boxes of documents containing over two million files for Zurich Group Germany, all catalogued in a centralised inventory. This equates to around 148,000 cubic feet of storage capacity or approximately 42 linear kilometres of files.

With support from Iron Mountain, Zurich Group Germany believes it can demonstrate compliance with national and international statutory and regulatory requirements such as HGB, Sarbanes-Oxley and Basel II/Basel III. This is reinforced by audits of the Iron Mountain facilities, conducted by data protection officers from Zurich Group Germany to verify the continued application of agreed processes and procedures, security arrangements, and confidentiality of records.

Five years following the initial appointment of Iron Mountain as its preferred central archive contractor, Zurich Group Germany demonstrated its satisfaction with the service by confirming an extension of the contract for a further five years to 2018. Raphael Lamskemper concludes: “As a support services partner, Iron Mountain has done a great job. Its continued support is highly appreciated.”